

POSC 474.001: CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS FALL 2011 - Towson University

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Course Description (from the catalog): POSC 470-479 [570-579] SPECIAL TOPICS IN POLITICAL SCIENCE (3) "An examination of current topics in political science. The content of the course will depend upon mutual faculty and student interest. Prerequisite: POSC 101, 105, or 107 or consent of instructor.

Statement on Repeating the Course: "May be repeated for a maximum of 9 units provided a different topic is covered." If the same topic, "students may not repeat this course for credit. It may be repeated once to replace the grade. It cannot be repeated more than once without prior permission of the Academic Standards Committee."

Course Outcomes and Learning Objectives: Political Science Department

The goal of the Department of Political Science is to provide students with an understanding of politics that will prepare them for further study in graduate or professional education or that will prepare them to enter the world of domestic or international public service or business. To meet this goal, the department seeks to accomplish the following four general student learning objectives:

1. Substantive Knowledge about Politics - Describe the structure and nature of politics in international relations.
2. Critical Thinking Skills – **Identify** historical, cultural, and socio-economic assumptions that underlie understandings about politics and **explain** how they affect one's perspective and actions. (Below, 2a refers to the passage that starts here with "Identify..." and 2b refers to the part that starts with "and explain...")
3. Affective Meanings of Politics – Explain the importance of politics in the attitudes and beliefs about current issues that affect local, national, and international affairs.
4. Skills for Learning and Life – Present articulate and persuasive arguments about politics in written and oral communications.

Course Outcomes II: This Class

Point 1 above is fulfilled through assigned readings, class discussions, essays, and research project/presentation.

Following successful completion of the class, students should be able to:

- Discuss the role of citizens as participants in democratic societies, both on domestic and international issues
- Explain the current roles of the United Nations and many of its organs and associated agencies in the world and in the greater Baltimore area

Point 2 above is fulfilled through class discussions, essays, and research project/presentation. Following successful completion of the class, students should be able to:

- Identify key points and/or authors in the debates on the roles and responsibilities of citizens, elected representatives, and universities in a democracy
- Explain how and why the United Nations and some its organs were created and what their current activities are

Point 3 above is fulfilled through assigned readings, class discussions, essays, and research project/presentation.

Following successful completion of the class, students should be able to:

- Explain how and why citizens matter in democracies
- Explain how current international relations issues and certain organs of the United Nations affect lives of Americans and Maryland residents

Point 4 above is fulfilled through class discussions, essays, and research project/presentation. Following successful completion of the class, students should be able to:

- Present evidence-based arguments about international issues in written and oral communications
- Participate as civically engaged members of the community

COURSE OVERVIEW:

This course seeks to connect the idea and practice of civic engagement with international affairs. We begin with a review of some important writings on citizenship, participation, and democratic societies followed by exploration of the United Nations and its role in the world today. The United Nations is selected as a vehicle for learning about the need of citizens to be informed about issues and events outside of their borders and the web of connections between what happens abroad and what happens at home. While other international institutions could be used, this class connects with the Towson University-Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) Model UN Conference program held at TU for 10th grade gifted and talented BCPS students. This program will serve as the civic engagement vehicle for this class. Conference events begin this year in November, and students are required to help with this event. Students will also go to a BCPS high school in mid-December to present their research work (discussed below). Students are encouraged to continue working with the conference program through its completion in March, for which they may receive independent study credit upon arrangement with the instructor and if sufficient progress is made on work in the fall. In sum, we seek to connect what is learned in the classroom and the library with participation in our democratic society.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING:

Attendance & Participation:	20%
First Essay:	15%
Second Essay:	15%
Class/High school Presentation:	20%
Research Project:	30%

Attendance & Participation: For this class, there will be **30** mandatory class meetings. For each class, students can earn *up to* 5 points. The first 2 points can be earned by attending the class, arriving *no more than* 10 minutes after the scheduled starting time, and remaining until the class is dismissed. Each student is allowed 1 unexcused absence. Each student is also allowed one excused absence *only during scheduled student class presentation periods* on or immediately preceding the day when you make your presentation to a high school class, so long as that day is not the last day of class. Other excused absences include *serious* injury to the student or her/his immediate family member, death of an immediate family member, religious observances as noted by Towson University, car accidents *for commuters on that class day only with written documentation of the accident*, and participation in university groups/sports where cause can be provided by a faculty adviser/coach. In all hospital-related and university-related cases, written notification must be provided by the relevant authority. You will also be excused for an absence Class is NOT excused for work-related activities, minor illnesses, regular medical appointments, car mishaps (except as noted above), social events, student club/organization events, early or late school break departures/arrivals. The second 3 points are earned depending on the quality and level of a student's participation that day. Class participation includes asking questions about the day's topic or readings, presenting one's own related perceptions/ideas, and oral (or when asked, written) input into class and group discussions. It does NOT necessarily follow that those who talk the most get the best grade; rather, it is quality of logic, understanding, perception, and

appropriateness of the comment and/or question that determine grades in discussion. On days when presentations are being given, you will receive a handout to evaluate each presenter, which will be part of the basis for your points earned that day. Overall....Rule 1: Be Prepared and attend class. Do the readings. I highly recommend bringing readings to class. Rule 2: Speak out! Explore your ideas and question others' points of view!! Think out loud!! Rule 3: Respect the diversity of viewpoints. Questioning others is fine; ridiculing them is unacceptable.

You **MUST** also be part of the UN Training Day for the Towson University-BCPS Model UN conference, which will be held **Friday, November 18**. One regular class meeting is in essence replaced by this meeting. We will plan each student's part(s) in that day's activities in class, and the Model UN Day is an integral part to this class. You can earn up to 25 points for your work on Model UN day, which includes being on time, properly fulfilling all duties, and maintaining a polite and positive attitude.

Class Report/Class Leader Day: We will also be participating in the *New York Times* Collegiate readership program to facilitate discussion of current events. Students are required to pick up the paper daily M-Fri, which will be free at select pickup points around campus for members of this class. As part of this program, each student will be assigned one day to discuss an article from the *NYT* that was printed sometime in 2011 that is relevant to the day's topic. Editorials may be used as well as regular articles. Assignments will be made after the end of the add/drop period. You must give a 3 minute oral summary for the class that summarizes the article and goes a bit beyond the article to explain the situation discussed in the article (ex: explain historical context, add some relevant econ data, raise associated issues) AND connect it to some theme/issue raised in that day's reading. On your presentation day, you must also submit a one-page typed summary of your comments with a copy of your article and email the instructor a weblink to the article so that it can be posted on the class webpage. Report is worth 10 points.

As class discussion leader, you must submit an agenda of discussion questions/topics for one class period via email by 6pm on the day before the assigned class period. The instructor will reply with comments on the agenda by 11pm. In some cases (depending on student enrollment), students will each get half of a class period to lead, in which case each student must divide work with the other person leading that day's discussion to ensure coverage of all topics and prevent repetition. Class leaders are responsible for running the class discussion for the time allotted. This component is worth 20 points. Late agendas are penalized by 3 points per hour after 6pm.

In sum, you may earn up to 205 points in this class; however, you only need 200 to get the equivalent of a 100 A+.

Essays: Two essays are required. The first is due on **Tues. Sept. 20** and should be 3-5 pages, typed, double-spaced; the second is due on **Tues. Nov 8** and should be 4-7 pages, typed, double-spaced. Late essays will be penalized ½ letter grade per day beginning at 2pm on the day it is due (i.e., the first last "day is from 2pm-4:30pm; the next "day is from 4:30pm on the due date to 4:30pm on the next day). Students may consult any assigned course materials in formulating their answers; however, you may NOT consult with another person, whether or not he/she is a

student at Towson University. Essay questions will be handed out the class before they are due and will be based on class readings and discussions. Essays will not be accepted via email, except in the case of a University-declared emergency.

Presentations: Students will be required to do two presentations of their research idea. The first will be in class; the second will be for a 10th grade gifted and talented world history class, which will have many participants in the Model UN conference. A professor in secondary education will come to class one day to help us learn how best to present research ideas to these high schoolers. Students will be required to arrive at the high school *15 minutes before* their scheduled presentation time. Lateness will be harshly reflected in your grade. If you have a class that conflicts with your scheduled time, you must notify me *at least one week in advance* and I will formally ask (but cannot guarantee) your instructor if you can be excused from that class. You should also discuss the absence with your instructor and arrange to make up any missed work. You may be excused from one day of presentations in our class to compensate for your time spent doing your second presentation.

Presentations should have two parts. Part one should be the substantive presentation of research, lasting 15-20 minutes in length, and should include overheads and handouts as teaching tools and/or use PowerPoint. The second half of the presentation, lasting 20-25 minutes (total: 45 minutes), should incorporate discussion and an interactive and/or group work activity, with a 5 minute wrap-up discussion of primary points and lessons learned. The handouts should include useful background material (dates, facts, figures) and list at least five sources for those wanting to learn more about your agency. We will discuss this presentation in depth with examples on **Tuesday Oct 25**, a day that I highly recommend you not miss for anything.

Research Project: Students are required to submit a 25-30 page research project, which includes a 20-25 page research paper and a 5-10 page reflective statement. For the research paper: students must choose one organ or associated agency of the UN - UNICEF, ILO, WHO, etc. Only one student will be permitted to do each organ/agency, and choices must be registered with me ASAP. The purpose of the paper is to answer the following questions: what is the stated, overall purpose of this organ/agency? What is it currently doing in the world to achieve its goals? Is it successful? Why/why not? And what is this agency/organ's connection/effect on/interaction w/ the greater Baltimore area? Paper proposals are due **Thursday, Oct. 27**. They should be 2-3 pages and must 1) explain the agenda for the paper, discuss preliminary ideas, and rationale for topic choice; 2) provide full bibliographical listings of at least ten sources, two of which may be scheduled interviews. Late proposals will be penalized 2 points per day. Papers and paper proposals will NOT be accepted via email.

As with all research papers, sources must be fully documented. A bibliography is required, but is not part of the page length count. Cases of plagiarism, whether it be from directly quoted sources or paraphrased material, will be handled according to university regulations as stated in the Student handbook. Such cases will be treated seriously and promptly. *It is your responsibility to accurately prove what the sources of your information are.*

The reflective statement (5-10 pgs) must incorporate some class readings, and its goal is to synthesize the class readings and discussions with your two civic engagement encounters.

You should in essence explain what - if anything - you got out this class. First, you should discuss what you actually did as your civic engagement activities (max 3 pages). The bulk of this section should be focused on reflecting on your experience in the class. Consider these questions as food for thought: Any lessons learned personally or key experiences through this class that are integral parts of your college years? Which ones and why? Has it changed or augmented your thinking about citizenship or a citizen's role in a democracy? Have your experiences altered or refined your ideas about democracy, foreign affairs, or the connection between these two?

The final project is due **WED DEC 21** at 3pm in my office. Projects must include: research paper, original paper proposal with my comments, final Carnegie survey, reflective statement, final powerpoint slides, summaries of class activities, any handouts given for class presentation, and high school teacher evaluation of presentation. Projects submitted after the **21st** will NOT be accepted, as it will be treated as if a final exam were missed, and you will fail the class.

**Failure to complete any one of the major assignments - both essays, both presentations, and/or the research paper - will automatically result in a failing grade (F) for the course. No exceptions.*

Plus/Minus Grading Policy: Plus/minus grading will be used for this class, as denoted below.

Ranges that associate point scores with letter grades:

Letter Grade	Range	Score Recorded when only a Letter Grade is Assigned	Letter Grade	Range	Score Recorded when only a Letter Grade is Assigned
A	92-100	95	C+	78-79	78
A-	90-91	90	C	70-77	75
B+	88-89	88	D+	68-69	65
B	82-87	85	D	60-67	65
B-	80-81	80	F	Below 60	Varies

Grading Criteria: (note that these are general guidelines only)

Grade A: The student thinks critically. The work is without major weaknesses and flawlessly executed. The student performs consistently at a level of intellectual excellence compared against the criteria outlined above. Quality of research (papers) or demonstrated understanding of class materials (exams) is high.

Grade B: The student is less consistent in thinking critically than is a student who performs at an A level. Work reflects more strengths than it does weaknesses. It demonstrates a good grasp of thinking critically, is on the whole precise, measured against the criteria outlined above, but lapses occasionally into common sense and unreflective thinking. Quality of research (papers) or demonstrated understanding of class materials (exams) is good, but could use more depth.

Grade C: The student inconsistently thinks critically. The work reflects as many weaknesses as it does strengths (see F and D for specific criteria). Quality of research (papers) or demonstrated understanding of class materials is average/adequate but lacks sophistication, depth, and rigor.

Grade D: The student thinks critically at a minimal level. This kind of work is often poorly executed, shows only occasional critical thinking, and generally lacks discipline and clarity. The student "goes through the motions" of the assignment but does not engage it in earnest. The work mirrors F work. Quality of research (papers) or demonstrated understanding of class materials (exams) is poor.

Grade F: The student does not think critically and/or has failed to do all of the required work. The work of this kind of student will be based on "common sense" thinking. This includes basing conclusions on opinions and on irrelevant information. There will be no awareness of underlying assumptions, identifying key concepts, nor competing points of view. The student will not trace implications and consequences. Student's work lacks evidence of consistent reflection and of problem solving skills. Quality of research (papers) or demonstrated understanding of class materials (exams) is very poor and insufficient for credit in this subject at this level.

CLASS POLICIES:

Cell phone and pagers may be kept on silent ONLY. However, their usage is limited to emergency situations only during normal class periods. All electronic devices must be completely off during exams. Should a student be concerned about a potential emergency situation, the professor will hold the pager or cell phone during the exam and alert the student should a message appear. Otherwise, a student text messaging during class will be asked to leave the class for that day.

Plagiarism: *Cases of plagiarism, whether it be from directly quoted sources or paraphrased material, will be handled according to university regulations (see the fundamental principles of academic integrity outlined in the Code of Students Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct). Such cases will be treated seriously and promptly. Penalties include failure (grade of zero points) of the paper and/or the entire class. It is your responsibility to PROVE that your work is your own.* Since the burden of proof is on YOU, it is crucial that you make proper notes/documentation in all drafts of your work and save notes/documentation as you work on the paper. Plagiarism will not be tolerated in any form in any work or piece of work submitted for a grade and will be handled according to University rules as stipulated in the Student Academic Integrity Policy, which is detailed in the Student handbook and available online at <http://www.towson.edu/provost/resources/studentacademic.asp>. As with all research papers, sources must be fully documented. A bibliography is required, but is not part of a page length count.

Late assignments: As stated above, exams may only be missed for a reason sanctioned by the University. Late exams are not accepted. Papers will be penalized ½ grade per day, with each "day" ending at 4pm. Papers must be printed out and handed to the instructor or the POSC department administrative assistant, not emailed.

Recording Devices. No electronic recording devices of any kind - audio or visual - are allowed for any class meeting, discussion, or activity. Examples include: smart pens or use of cellphones or computers for this purpose. Devices for deaf or blind students are exempted, but these students must see the professor prior to their use to discuss how they may and may not be used.

Student Disability Policy: This course is in compliance with Towson University's policies for students with disabilities. Accommodations can be made on exams and assignments for students with disabilities. Students with disabilities are encouraged to register with Disability Support Services (DSS), 7720 York Road, Suite 232, 410-704-2638 (Voice or TDD). Students who expect that they have a disability but do not have documentation are encouraged to contact DSS for advice on how to obtain appropriate evaluation. A memo from DSS authorizing your accommodation is needed before any accommodation can be made.

Course Webpage: This course has an accompanying webpage available via Blackboard.

Office Hours: My office hours are Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10-10:50am and 3:30-4pm. If I am not in my office during these times, I should be there shortly, having stepped out briefly to check mail, xerox, etc... Otherwise, the best way to contact me is via email. Email is great for simple questions, concerns about assignments, and so forth. My office phone and other info is at the beginning of the syllabus. Please feel free to contact me at any time with any questions or concerns, no matter how small. If you cannot make my scheduled office hours, email me or see me after class and we can work out a mutually convenient time.

Non-English Speakers: If English is not your first language, it is recommended that you have all written assignments reviewed at the Writing Center(LI 4th floor). Appointments must be made in advance.

Withdrawal Deadline: The deadline to withdraw from the course is Wednesday, November 9, 2011.
University Emergency Policy In the event of a University-wide emergency, course requirements deadlines and grading schemes are subject to changes that may include alternative delivery methods, alternative methods of interaction with the instructor, class materials, and/or classmates, a revised attendance policy, and a revised semester calendar and/or grading scheme. Class will continue, albeit in an online format, so you MUST check your email. In the case of a University-wide emergency, please refer to the class webpage and email for instructions. Information about emergencies can be obtained at the TU main webpage: www.towson.edu, or sign up for TU Text alert system.
<http://www.towson.edu/adminfinance/facilities/police/campusemergency/>

Course Evaluation: Student evaluations play a crucial role in my delivery of this course. This semester, all course evaluations will be administered online during the last two weeks of the course. You will receive an email with a link to the website with directions on how to access the survey. It is important that you complete the survey because I use the results to modify the course and assess my teaching, and the University uses the results to address technology and facility needs. You can be assured that your responses will be confidential. The results will be

transmitted to me after the grading period and they will not include any identifying information.

Course Bibliography: Please refer to the bibliographies in the three assigned class books.

COURSE MATERIALS:

Class materials can be purchased at the Towson University bookstore. Other assignments are noted as available on the class Blackboard webpage **by the symbol (W)**, which follows the selection title in the Daily Assignments section of the syllabus

- 1) Thomas G. Weiss, David Forsythe, Roger A. Coate, and Kelly-Kate Pease, *The United Nations and Changing World Politics*, 6th edition, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 2010. ISBN 9780813344355 (Noted as **Weiss** in daily assignments)
- 2) Dulcie Leimbach, ed. *Global Agenda: Issues Before the United Nations, 2011-2012*. New York: United Nations Association, 2011. ISBN 97809845691-3-7 (noted in daily assignments as **GA**)
- 3) Ricardo Blaug and John Schwarzmantel, eds., *Democracy: A Reader*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2000. ISBN 9780231124812 (noted in daily assignments as **DR**)
*this book is also sometimes assigned for classes in political theory – hold on to it.

DAILY SCHEDULE

**Note that all readings should be completed before the class for which they are scheduled. Students should read the entire assigned chapter, unless page numbers are provided.

Thurs. 9/1- Introduction: Why combine learning about civic engagement and international relations?

LABOR DAY!

Tues. 9/6 - Democracy, the citizen, and the system of representation

Readings: John Stuart Mill, "Representative Government," **DR**, 59-67
Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "The Social Contract," **DR**, 147-149
Edmund Burke, "Speech at the Conclusion of the Poll, 3 November 1774," **DR**, 150-152
Hannah Fenichel Pitkin, "The Concept of Representation," **DR**, 157-160

Thurs. 9/8 - Citizens participation in a representative democracy

Readings: Will Kymlicka and Wayne Norman, "The Return of the Citizen," **DR**, 220-227
Geraint Parry and George Moyser, "More Participation, More Democracy?" **DR**, 442-446
Benjamin Barber, "Strong Democracy," **DR**, 447-451
Hannah Fenichel and Sara M. Shumer, "On Participation," **DR**, 452-457

Tues. 9/13 - Deliberation and Civil Society

Readings: Jean L. Cohen and Andrew Arato, "Civil Society and Political Theory," **DR**, 478-482

Robert D. Putnam, "Bowling Alone," **DR**, 483-485

B. Manin, "On Legitimacy and Political Deliberation," **DR**, 501-508

J.S. Fishkin, "The Dialogue of Justice: Toward a Self-Reflective Society," **DR**, 515-521

Thur. 9/15 - The Role of Universities: College and Civic Engagement/Lab Day

Readings: Thomas Ehrlich, "Civic Engagement" (2000) **W**

Stephen T. Leonard, "'Pure Futility and Waste': Academic Political Science and Civic Education," *PS: Political Science and Politics*, December 1999

W

handout first essay

Tues. 9/20 - Discussion: Democracy and Civic Engagement

ESSAY DUE at the beginning of class

Thur. 9/22 - The Structure of the United Nations

Readings: Weiss, Introduction

GA, Appendices A-G

Tues. 9/27 – MDGs and Health

Readings: Weiss, ch. 11

GA, ch. 7, appendices J & K

Thurs. 9/29 -Collective Security and the Development of UN Peacekeeping

Readings: Weiss, chs. 1-3

Tues. 10/4 - Peacekeeping in 2011

Readings: Weiss, ch 4

GA ch. 1 part 3; ch 2 parts 1 & 6 (Sawyer, Laurenti); ch 4 parts 1-3;

Appendices H & I

Thurs. 10/6 – Current Security Issues and the UN

Readings: Weiss, ch. 5

GA, ch. 2 parts 2-5; ch. 4 part 5 (Leopold)

Tues. 10/11 - UN's Role in Human Rights Standards

Readings: Weiss, chs. 6 & 7 (p. 177-201)

GA, ch. 1 parts 1 & 2; ch. 3 parts 1, 2 & 4

Thur. 10/13 - Human Rights Part II

Readings: Weiss, ch. 7 (p. 201-220) , and ch. 8
GA, ch. 3 part 3; ch. 4 part 4

Tues. 10/18- Sustainable Development and Aid

Readings: Weiss, chs. 9 & 11
GA ch. 6 (all)

Thur. 10/20 - International Law, the UN, and Sovereignty

Readings: Weiss, conclusion, p. 376-386
GA, ch. 8 (all)

Tues. 10/25 – Designing and Delivering Presentations in a High School Classroom

Readings: None, BUT bring your ideas for your UN agency

Thur. 10/27 - Global Climate Change and the UN

Readings: GA, ch. 9
Weiss, ch. 10

****Paper Proposals due****

Tues. 11/1 – A UN for the 21st Century?

Readings: GA ch 5 (all)
Weiss, conclusion p. 363-376; 386-391
handout second essay

Thur. 11/3 - Creating a UN Presentation

* meet in 1st floor social sciences computer lab

Tues. 11/8 - Discussion: The United Nations in the World in the 21st Century

2nd ESSAY DUE at the beginning of class

Thur. 11/10 - Class Presentations

Tues. 11/15 - Class Presentations

- Leading Discussions on UN Training Day

Thur. 11/17 - Class Presentations

- Preparation for UN Training Day

FRIDAY, NOV. 18 - UN TRAINING DAY 8am-3pm

Tues. 11/22- Discussion: Reflection on the first encounter
Class Presentations

Thanksgiving Break - enjoy!

Tues. 11/29- Tues. 12/13 - Class Presentations

TUES. 12/20 12:30-2:30pm - FINAL EXAM PERIOD - Class Presentations

*****FINAL PROJECT DUE WED. DEC. 21 at 3pm in my office*****