POL4176 B: International Political Economy

Syllabus

Winter 2011

Professor: Jacqueline Best
Office: DMS 9154
Email: jbest@uottawa.ca
Website: http://aix1.uottawa.ca/~jbest/
Office hours: Tuesdays, 2:30-3:30 pm and Thursdays, 2:00-2:30 pm

Classes: Tuesdays 10:00-11:30 a.m and Thursdays 8:30-10:00 a.m.
Simard 503

Official course description

The place and role of the state in the evolution of the global economy. Transformations in the international division of labour; evolution of institutional structures and of modes of internationalisation. Current debates relating to the global political economy.

Course objectives

While wars, guns and bombs often dominate our imagination when we think of international relations (IR), the global political economy is an equally important aspect of world politics. It often takes a crisis like the recent global financial crisis to remind us of the centrality—and potential instability—of the global economy. While financial and economic crises have punctuated the history of international political economy (IPE), a study of political economy also helps us to understand the day to day functioning of international politics, and to reflect on many of the most important problems in IR, from the persistence of global poverty to the conflict among powerful states.

Most popular and many academic representations of current international economic issues tend to treat them as purely economic problems and to ignore their political dimensions. One of the central objectives of this course will be to challenge such assumptions by insisting on the political aspects of the international economy, as well as on the effects of economic processes on international politics. More than that, however, the course will question the separability of the political and the economic, suggesting that the very effort to define them as distinct domains is itself a political act.

This course will examine the past, present and future of IPE through the lens of the recent global financial crisis. After a brief introduction to the field of IPE, we will spend a couple of weeks tracing the historical evolution of the global political economy. We will then examine a range of
different problems in the global economy, from the internationalization of production to the challenges of international development, the effects of globalization and the transformation of the state. Our final weeks will be spent focusing on the recent financial crisis, not only trying to understand it in its own terms, but also to consider how different theoretical approaches in IPE provide their own explanations for what happened and proposals for where to go next.

**Assessment methods**

**Reading analyses (3 x 5% = 15% of final grade)**

Prepare three (3) critical analyses (3-4 pages each, double-spaced) examining two or more of the readings assigned for a class. The objective is to analyze (and **not simply summarize**) the texts, examining one or more key themes and discussing their strengths and weaknesses. These analyses must be handed in during the class in which the readings will be discussed. I will circulate a sheet to enable you to sign up for the classes for which you will prepare an analysis. You must submit at least one analysis before reading break, and one after. You can reschedule a maximum of one analysis if you miss the deadline, after which you will receive a zero for any analysis not completed on time.

You will be assessed based on the following criteria: 1) the quality of your analytic insight; 2) your demonstrated knowledge of the readings; and 3) the clarity and coherence of your writing. You are also welcome to be creative.

I have provided several examples of strong reading analyses, to give you an idea of what is expected.

**Debate (40% of final grade)**

During several classes throughout the semester, there will be a debate on a key controversial issue in international political economy. Towards the beginning of the semester, you will have a chance to sign up for one of these debates. The perspective that you will take during the debate will be determined by lottery. You should prepare yourself for the debate by researching the perspectives both for and against the question. The required and recommended readings for that class will provide you with a starting point for your own research into the subject. You must coordinate with the other students who are taking the same side as you in the debate. I will provide more detailed guidelines for the debate and essay.

One week after the debate, you must submit an essay (8-10 pages, double-spaced) setting out arguments for and against the issue and developing your own conclusion. Your oral presentation will count for 10% of your final grade (5% based on your side’s performance and 5% based on your individual performance). Your written paper will count for 30% of your final grade in the course.

**Exam (30% of final grade)**

There will be a **2-hour** final exam during the exam period. The exam will evaluate your ability to think synthetically and critically about the material in the course. To do well, you must make explicit reference to the required readings.

**Participation (15% of final grade)**

Given that this is a fourth year course, active and informed classroom participation is essential. Your responsibilities as a member of the class are to:

- Complete the required readings every week before each class in order to be able to participate actively in the discussion.
• Participate actively during class discussions. You will be assessed on the basis of the quality rather than the quantity of your contributions.

I will regularly make use of full or partial “roundtables” in order to provide students with a chance to raise a question or issue relating to the readings.

I will grade your participation for each class out of 10: 0 for non-attendance (you can miss one class without penalty); 6 for attendance; 7 for minimum participation; 7.5-10 for quality participation, based on its quality. A quality contribution is one that demonstrates knowledge of the course readings, engages critically with course themes and is respectful of the perspectives of others in the class.

Assessment policies

Attendance: Class attendance is necessary to successfully complete this course. I will circulate a sheet for your signature at the beginning of each class. You are responsible for ensuring that you sign it. If you persistently arrive late, this will also affect your participation grade.

Late assignments: Late assignments will lose 5% per day (a weekend counts as three days). Analytic papers will only be accepted during the class in which the readings that you are writing on are discussed. You can reschedule a maximum of one analytic paper if you miss the deadline (i.e. by choosing to write on a different week’s readings), after which you will receive a zero for any analysis not completed on time. Late assignments must be handed in either directly to the professor, in class, or at the Departmental Office (DMS 9101) where they must be date-stamped. You may also leave them in the drop box in the door of DMS 9103, although they will be date-stamped the following day. To have a paper counted as handed in that day, it must be date-stamped before 4:30 pm that day. Assignments WILL NOT be accepted ELECTRONICALLY.

In case of illness: University regulations require all absences from exams and all late submissions due to illness to be supported by a medical certificate. The Faculty reserves the right to accept or reject the reason put forth if it is not medical. Reasons such as travel, work and errors made while reading the exam schedule are not usually accepted.

Incomplete assignments: All of the assignments are required. As per Faculty of Social Sciences policy, if you do not complete all of them, you will receive an “Incomplete” for the course, which translates into a failing grade.

Quality of writing: You will also be judged on your writing abilities: your ability to write grammatically and to communicate and organize your ideas effectively. It is recommended that you take the appropriate measures to avoid mistakes.

Academic fraud: Plagiarism and other forms of academic fraud are taken very seriously at the University of Ottawa. You are responsible for providing clear and accurate references for all of your written work. Direct quotes must be clearly indicated as such. Paraphrased passages must be written in your own words and clearly cited. You will find a statement about academic fraud and its consequences at the end of this syllabus. Please take the time to read it in order understand your responsibility to ensure the academic integrity of your work.

Readings

A course reader with all required readings not available electronically is available for sale at RYTEC Printing (404 Dalhousie). All required readings that are available electronically (noted with § in the syllabus) are posted on the Virtual Campus. If at any time you have difficulties with the virtual campus, these same readings are available through the university online library catalogue, or simply by searching for the title in Google.
Course schedule

§ Available for download on the Virtual Campus (required readings) or online through uOttawa e-Journals

1. Introduction: getting our bearings

January 6 Introduction
No required readings

January 11 What is International Political Economy?

January 13 IPE today: the financial crisis
Video to be shown in class.

2. How did we get here?

January 18 The invention of the economy

January 20 Empire & inequality

January 25 The creation of the Bretton Woods system

January 27 And its erosion

3. What’s going on today?

International production

February 1 From fordism to flexibility
February 3  The internationalization of production: a debate


Recommended readings

Globalization and the state

February 8  Globalization


February 10  Debate: Is globalization good?


Recommended readings
February 15  The transformation of the state

February 17  The erosion of the state: a debate

Recommended readings

February 22 & 24: Reading week

Development

March 1  International development: a new paradigm? Guest lecturer: Prof. Brown

Recommended readings

March 3  Debate: Is governance conditionality a good idea?
Recommended readings


Environment

March 8  Economics of climate change

Evans, Kate. “So What is this Greenhouse Effect?” Funny Weather: Everything You Didn’t Want to Know about Climate Change but Probably Should Find Out. Sal Van, 2006, Ch. 1.


March 10  Debate: Should Canada adopt a cap-and-trade system for carbon?


Recommended readings


Evans, Kate. The Carbon Supermarket: Your Future for Sale. (on Virtual Campus)

Evans, Kate. Funny Weather: Everything You Didn’t Want to Know about Climate Change but Probably Should Find Out. Sal Van, 2006.


4. Understanding the financial crisis

Roots of the crisis

March 15 The liberalization of finance

March 17 The financial crisis begins
Video to be shown in class: Frontline: Inside the Meltdown

March 22 Subprime 101


Recommended readings


Different perspectives on the crisis

March 24 The return of Keynes?


March 29  Power politics: the US & China

March 31  A crisis of capitalism: the Marxist perspective
Video: *RSA Animate: Crises of capitalism* (to be viewed in class)

April 5  The role of risk

April 7  Cultures of finance
Resources for you

Mentoring Centre - http://www.sciencessociales.uottawa.ca/mentor/fra/
The goal of the Mentoring Centre is to help students with their academic and social well being during their time at the University of Ottawa. Regardless of where a student stands academically, or how far along they are in completing their degree, the mentoring centre is there to help students continue on their path to success.

A student may choose to visit the mentoring centre for very different reasons. Younger students may wish to talk to their older peers to gain insight into programs and services offered by the University, while older students may simply want to brush up on study and time management skills or learn about programs and services for students nearing the end of their degree.

In all, the Mentoring Centre offers a place for students to talk about concerns and problems that they might have in any facet of their lives. While students are able to voice their concerns and problems without fear of judgment, mentors can garner further insight in issues unique to students and find a more practical solution to better improve the services that the Faculty of Social Sciences offers, as well as the services offered by the University of Ottawa.

Academic Writing Help Centre - http://www.sass.uottawa.ca/writing/
At the AWHC you will learn how to identify, correct and ultimately avoid errors in your writing and become an autonomous writer. In working with our Writing Advisors, you will be able to acquire the abilities, strategies and writing tools that will enable you to:
• Master the written language of your choice
• Expand your critical thinking abilities
• Develop your argumentation skills
• Learn what the expectations are for academic writing

Career Services - http://www.sass.uottawa.ca/careers/
Career Services offers various services and a career development program to enable you to recognize and enhance the employability skills you need in today’s world of work.

Counselling Service - http://www.sass.uottawa.ca/personal/
The有许多 reasons to take advantage of the Counselling Service. We offer:
• Personal counselling
• Career counselling
• Study skills counselling

Access Service - http://www.sass.uottawa.ca/acces/
The Access Service contributes to the creation of an inclusive environment by developing strategies and implementing measures that aim to reduce the barriers to learning for students who have learning disabilities, health, psychiatric or physical conditions.

The Student Resources Centres aim to fulfill all sorts of students needs.
Beware of Academic Fraud!

Academic fraud is an act committed by a student to distort the marking of assignments, tests, examinations, and other forms of academic evaluation. Academic fraud is neither accepted nor tolerated by the University. Anyone found guilty of academic fraud is liable to severe academic sanctions.

Here are a few examples of academic fraud:

• engaging in any form of plagiarism or cheating;
• presenting falsified research data;
• handing in an assignment that was not authored, in whole or in part, by the student;
• submitting the same assignment in more than one course, without the written consent of the professors concerned.

In recent years, the development of the Internet has made it much easier to identify academic plagiarism. The tools available to your professors allow them to trace the exact origin of a text on the Web, using just a few words.

In cases where students are unsure whether they are at fault, it is their responsibility to consult the University's Web site at the following address: http://www.socialsciences.uottawa.ca/eng/writing_tools.asp « Tools for Writing Papers and Assignments ».

Persons who have committed or attempted to commit (or have been accomplices to) academic fraud will be penalized. Here are some examples of the academic sanctions, which can be imposed:

• a grade of « F » for the assignment or course in question;
• an additional program requirement of between 3 and 30 credits;
• suspension or expulsion from the Faculty.

Last session, most of the students found guilty of fraud were given an « F » for the course and had between three and twelve credits added to their program requirement.

For more information, refer to:

http://www.uottawa.ca/academic/info/newsletter/fraud_e.html