

POLS 383: International Political Economy
Northern Illinois University
Fall 2024

Instructor: Dr. Colin Kuehl
ckuehl@niu.edu
OH: Tuesday 1-3 PM- Zulauf 410/Online
& by appointment

Tuesday & Thursday 11-1215
DuSable 276

Course Description

This course is an introduction to the study of the international political economy. It provides students with a theoretically informed and empirically driven overview of the often dynamic and reciprocal interaction between international relations and the global economy. The course will focus on core issues global economy faces today with a particular focus on underpinnings of what others might consider purely economic issues. We will investigate prominent topics like the international trade, the international monetary system, economic governance, and the future of money.

Student Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course you will

- understand the basic economic functions and underlying political dynamics of the contemporary global economy.
- identify the rules and structures that shape domestic and international economic policy.
- improve critical analysis and written communication through iterative writing assignments and in-class assessment

Requirements and Grading:

Grade Breakdown

Position Papers (5 x 10%)	50%
Midterm (10/8)	15%
Final (12/5)	20%
In-Class Participation/Quizzes	15%

Midterm (Oct 8th) and Final (Dec. 5th): The midterm and final will consist of content covered in lecture, readings and current events (see below). The exam will be taken fully in class. Blue books will be required.

Position Papers (Every Second Wednesday starting Sept. 25th): The core of this assessment for the course will be a series of argumentative papers focused on a contemporary issues in IPE. Students will be given a choice of prompt and then make an argument affirming the statement or repudiating the claim (for example, “the US should invest in manufacturing” or “Trump’s rejection of globalization is responsible for his victory in 2016”). The essays will be short, four pages double-spaced, and the structure will be repeated for all five papers.

Discussion Participation and Reading Quizzes: Students are expected to attend and actively participate in course discussion. Attendance will be taken at random to gauge attendance. Of course, attending class is necessary to participate (though emails and office hours visits can substitute) Please come to class prepared, having done the reading, and ready to engage in a lively discussion of that day’s topic.

Reading Quizzes(as necessary): Quizzes will consist of multiple choice questions and short answers based on the assigned reading for the day (and/or recent days) as well as current events and will happen unannounced at the discretion of the instructor. Quizzes will be equally weighted (For example, if there are 10 throughout the semester, each will be worth 1 point each. If there are 16, each will be worth 0.625 points each).

Extra Credit: Limited extra credit opportunities will be provided throughout the semester. For example, watching and writing a response to the environmental documentaries or attending on campus events.

Your Responsibilities

Attend Lectures: Lectures will be posted to the course blackboard site each Friday. You will be responsible for actively watching each lecture. Please take notes as you would for a normal in-person lesson and have questions ready for discussion section or office hours. I highly recommend avoiding all distractions and taking notes during the lectures by hand. Research suggests it too.

Complete Required Readings: Readings are an essential part of this course. Students are expected to complete all assigned readings and be ready to discuss them before their corresponding lecture.

Pay Attention to Current Events: Consequential events in IPE will be happening throughout this semester. Accordingly, this course will rely on discussions that transcend reading material and beckon engagement with contemporary issues. It is therefore required that students stay up to date with current global affairs by following a major newspaper (e.g. New York Times, BBC, or the Economist). I highly recommend getting in the habit of reading the news every day and, if you can, purchasing a subscription (quality journalism does not come cheaply) to an outlet of your choice for the duration of the semester.

If a natural curiosity about the world or performing your civic duty is not enough to motivate a reading habit, current events will be discussed every week in discussion section (i.e. participation points) and be a component of the midterm and final.

Note: In addition to traditional news sources, I highly recommend these academic blogs for actual expert analysis on current events: The Conversation, Duck of Minerva, and Project Syndicate for general interest and political. For those that commute, NIU's WNIJ(89.5) has excellent political coverage and, in particular, the program marketplace has content that will help you excel in this course.

Course Policies

Course Materials: There are no required books for this course. All required readings will be posted to blackboard. In addition, optional readings, podcasts, and other multi-media will be listed on blackboard. These are highly recommended and will aid in understandings of core concepts.

Disability Accommodations: If you need an accommodation for this class, please contact the Disability Resource Center as soon as possible. The DRC coordinates accommodations for students with disabilities. It is located on the 4th floor of the Health Services Building, and can be reached at 815-753-1303 or drc@niu.edu. Also, please contact me privately as soon as possible so we can discuss your accommodations.

COVID Precautions: Masks are not required for this class (subject to changes in university protocols). Please be respectful of others decisions. Above all, please be considerate of your fellow students. If you are feeling sick stay home. If you might be sick wear a mask. At all times, please do your part to keep everyone healthy.

Email: All course announcements will be given over email. I will expect you to check your email at least daily during the week. I will check my email from the hours of 9 am - 5 pm, but am not available on weekends. If possible, please come see me in office hours or at another scheduled time. Communication is key to getting through the challenges of the semester so please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions you might have. Please don't surprise me with reasons you are struggling at the end of the semester. Communicate early and often.

Office Hours: Office hours will be simultaneously in Zulauf 410 and on Zoom(If I forget to login, please send a quick email). Please visit the version that you are comfortable with. These are drop-in times, and all students are always welcome to attend to discuss anything related to the course, or anything else you feel that I could potentially help with. No RSVP is required. Talking allows me to get to know you and is much more efficient than emails. Please take advantage of the access office hours affords.

Technology: I assume that you have regular access to a computer and high-speed internet. If this is not the case please contact me ASAP and we will see what we can do. Technology "challenges" will inevitably arise during the semester. Please be patient with each other and

your instructor. I highly recommend backing up your coursework to the cloud (like NIU's onedrive or dropbox) and/or an external hard drive.

Academic Integrity - I take academic misconduct very seriously. All work submitted must be a students' own in full. Any student in this course found to have plagiarized (accidentally or otherwise) the work of another individual (including, but not limited to, other students, existing scholarship) at minimum will receive a zero on the assignment and may be subject to additional sanctions by the University. Students are expected to have read and to abide by NIU's Student Code of Conduct. This is your responsibility and a requirement of this course. Please take NIU's Online Tutorial on Academic Integrity to re-familiarize yourself if you have doubts or concerns and/or speak to your Instructor in office hours. If you have any questions throughout the course relating to academic practices, academic integrity, and issues of plagiarism and/or citation please speak to the Instructor and/or consult the links noted above. Failure to understand these requirements does not constitute an excuse to deviate from them.

A Note on AI: The use of AI, such as ChatGPT, is not explicitly prohibited in this course. However, please understand that outputs are often inaccurate or flawed in ways that you won't understand unless you do the real work anyway. I understand that the use of these technologies will likely be a valuable tool for all of us in the future(I'm trying to figure them out too). AI tools can be beneficial for various tasks, including research, idea generation, overcoming writer's block, and grammar editing, but solely relying on AI-generated content without proper attribution is still plagiarism. If using these tools you must cite them appropriately. Furthermore, papers and exams will ask that you explicitly apply concepts discussed in this course and not doing so, or reporting falsehoods generated by AI, will be penalized appropriately.

Grade Appeals: If you wish to appeal a grade you must wait 48 hours after you receive the grade and send the instructor a 1-page email specifying why you believe your grade is incorrect.

Assignment Submission: Your papers will be submitted on blackboard. For every 24 hours the assignment is late you will receive a 10% reduction in the grade (starting at the beginning of class). After 72 hours late, the grade for the assignment becomes a zero. If your assignment is going to be late, please email before the original due date and we will set a new one.

Extensions I understand that "life happens" and accommodations are possible for documented medical or family emergencies and this will be particularly the case this semester. If you think you need to delay taking an exam or submitting a written assignment please talk to me as soon as possible. Extensions are never guaranteed, but are much more likely if you talk to me before the issue arises, not after. They will be based on University policy, exigency of the circumstances, and timeliness of the request (i.e. the earlier the better).

Recordings: Please do not record or distribute lectures or discussions without first getting permission from the instructor.

Our Academic Environment -Together, we will foster a comfortable, engaging, and accessible scholarly environment. All students should feel welcome to attend and speak freely in class and in office hours. Issues of politics can be controversial, and debates can become heated. However, we will approach this course as colleagues, and we will treat each other with respect and dignity at all times.

Mental Health: These are challenging and anxiety inducing times outside of this course. I understand this and have my own battles. We all will handle this uncertainty and stress in different ways. Please take the time for self-care and if you need extensions for mental health reasons do not hesitate to ask. If you or somebody you know is struggling with anxiety or other issues, do not hesitate to reach out. Resources available include the DRC, Student Counseling Services or call 815-306-2777.

Gender Identity: As a faculty member, I am committed to using your proper name and pronouns. We will take time during our first class together to do introductions, at which point you can share with all members of our learning community what name and pronouns you use, as you are comfortable. Additionally, if these change at any point during the semester, please let me know and we can develop a plan to share this information with others in a way that is safe for you.

Land Acknowledgement Statement: Northern Illinois University operates and is built on the traditional lands of the Oceti Sakowin (Sioux), Miami, Bodewadmiakiwen (Potawatomi), Sauk and Meskwaki, and Peoria. These lands are subject to Cession 50 and 148, though their terms have been consistently violated. We seek to acknowledge this land and these peoples in order to honor the legacies, struggles and current existence of Indigenous peoples; situate ourselves within settler-colonial projects; disrupt the erasure of Indigenous peoples; and begin/continue the work of collectively learning and fulfilling our obligations, for those of us who are uninvited guests on Indigenous peoples' lands.

Schedule

This syllabus is a living document and is designed to guide our learning. I reserve the right to adjust the schedule, readings and assignments as appropriate or necessary. All changes will be announced through NIU email. Dates below indicate the Tuesday of each week. If you have trouble accessing any materials please email Prof Kuehl.

Course Overview

1. 8/27 - What is International Political Economy?
2. 9/3 – Contending Perspectives and a Review of International Economics

3. 9/10 – International Trade
4. 9/17 – The Global Trading System
5. 9/24 – Preferences, Pushback, and Populism
6. 10/1 – Trade and Development
7. 10/8 – The International Monetary System
8. 10/15 – The Almighty Dollar and Its Challengers
9. 10/22- Economic Conflict and Sanctions
10. 10/29 – Capitalism and the Climate
11. 11/5 – Election Week – No in-person class
12. 11/12 – Subsidies and Sustainability
13. 11/19 – Class Choice (The IPE of Sport, AI, Transnational Crime, others?)
14. 11/26 – Thanksgiving Week - No in-person class
15. 12/3 – Conclusion and Final Exam

All required readings will be posted to Blackboard