

University of Western Ontario: Department of Political Science

POLITICAL SCIENCE 2531G

Foundations of International Relations

Winter 2026

Lectures: Mondays 1:30-3:20, Spencer Engineering Building (SEB) 1200

Tutorials: Mondays 3:30-4:20

Tutorial 002 SEB 1200, Tutorial 003 SSC 2020, Tutorial 004 SSC 3006, Tutorial 005 UC 2110

Course Director

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Course Description

This course provides students with an introduction to the study of international relations. It focuses on the different approaches to foreign policy and what they advocate across contemporary issues and cases. It also covers the basic institutions, policy tools, and history of international relations with a particular emphasis on Canada's place in the world.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to: recognize and apply the key approaches to international relations and foreign policy; identify and critique the application of these approaches across key debates in international relations; acquire knowledge of the history of the international system including key institutions, actors, and events; acquire knowledge of contemporary policy issues and debates in international relations; demonstrate knowledge of Canada's role in global affairs including key institutions, actors, and events; identify and describe some of the key tools and techniques of foreign policy; recognize the importance of listening and proper note-taking; acquire knowledge of and apply research skills related to primary and secondary documents; communicate ideas regarding the nature of international relations in a different written and verbal formats; and employ time management skills in meeting deadlines.

Required Readings

All course readings are posted on the course OWL BrightSpace site on the Home page in the 'Readings' folder and then under the specific weekly topic. All readings in the folders are required readings and will be tested on the Midterm and Final Exam as outlined in class. See the Reading Guide for the specific points that will be tested from each reading.

Course Structure

The course includes a two-hour lecture on Mondays from 1:30-3:20 followed by a one-hour tutorial from 3:30-4:20 pm. There are four double-sized tutorials for this class (Sections 002, 003,

004, and 005 of about 50 students each). All are on Mondays from 3:30-4:20 pm immediately following the lecture. The first two weeks' tutorials will be run by the course instructor in the lecture room and used to discuss the course assignments. Tutorial debates will start in the third week. Students in Tutorial 002 will remain in the main lecture room. Students in the other three tutorials will move to the rooms listed above. Debates are comprised of two teams of 4 students each debating a foreign policy issue with the rest of the tutorial acting as the audience.

Signing-Up for a Debate: Opens Sunday 4 January

All students must sign-up for a debate topic/team, in their assigned tutorial, through the course OWL BrightSpace site. Only sign-up for one spot. The sign-up will open on 4 January at 4 pm and all students must be signed-up by the end of the day on Monday 12 January or be assigned randomly. If all spaces on the debate teams are full, please email the course instructor. Debates start in the third week of classes. Students are encouraged to volunteer for the first week of debates. We go easier on the marking for the first week. After 12 January, you cannot change debate teams without the course instructor's permission.

To sign up, go to the course OWL BrightSpace Home page. Click the Communications drop-down menu and then Groups. Make sure you sign-up for a team only in the tutorial you are registered in. If you don't know what tutorial you are in, check the Tutorial Lists and TA Contact Info folder on the Home page where I have posted the classlist for each tutorial. If you register in the wrong tutorial, I will have to move you, and you may not get the same debate topic/side. The Debates folder also has the debate topics and instructions.

Evaluation

Debate	10%	In scheduled tutorials
Midterm Exam	25%	Monday 9 Feb – in class Friday 27 Feb: make-up exam
Essay	30%	Friday 20 Mar: e-copy on BrightSpace
Final Exam	35%	In-person during Exam Period

***Debate, Debate Written Summary, and Tutorial Attendance* 10%**

Each student will participate in one group debate which includes handing-in a group debate written summary and participating in the tutorial debate. Debates will take place from 3:30-4:20 pm during the tutorial period after the lecture. A list of debate topics and dates will be available on the course website. The debates will be graded based on an overall team mark worth 10% of the course. A Debate Instructions and Format document and a Debate Topics and Research Tips document are available in the Debates folder on the course website. Students who miss their debates without prior arrangement with the course instructor will be given a grade of zero. Tutorial attendance is mandatory. Attendance will be taken with penalty marks being deducted from individual debate grades as outlined below.

Missing Your Own Debate

- If you have to miss your own debate, email the other members of your group, your TA, and myself as soon as possible so that arrangements can be made for the rest of your team.

- Please also send your debate notes to your teammates as they will have to carry on without you.
- As this is a group assignment, missing your own debate is highly problematic. Therefore, all documentation will be followed up with phone calls to confirm. If you use your one Undocumented Absence, it cannot be used on any other assignment.
- If you miss your own debate, it will be replaced with an equivalent written assignment. This assignment will be *hand-written* to offset copying and pasting from other group members.
- Under no circumstances will you be allowed to miss your debate and have your other grades reweighted.

Missed Tutorials

- Tutorial attendance is mandatory. Any tutorials missed, without an accommodation, will be penalized with 3/100 per tutorial missed off your overall debate grade.
- If you have to miss a tutorial (other than your own debate), please do not email me or your TA. Accommodations for missed tutorials will only be dealt with at the end of the course. This is due to the otherwise prohibitive number of emails that must be managed.
- If you have to miss a tutorial for a medical or compassionate reasons, make sure you get and retain the relevant documents to hand-in at the end of the course. If you receive an accommodation from academic advising, keep a screenshot of it to hand in at the end of the course. The same applies for an undocumented absence. You must apply, have it approved, and keep a screenshot to send to your TA at the end of the course.
- If you have accommodations for any missed tutorials, you must send one overall email to your TA within 2 days following our last lecture. The email must contain:
 - A numbered list of the specific dates you missed and the reason for each.
 - A screen shot of each of your accommodations, including approvals for undocumented absences, from academic advising and/or your specific documentation for each missed tutorial.
 - If you do not send this email by the deadline, including all necessary screenshots/documents, your tutorial participation will be graded as if you received no accommodations and absences will count against you.
 - It is your responsibility to send this email to your TA by the deadline.

Debate Written Summary and Bibliography

- **Debate written summaries must be submitted on the course website before the start of the lecture** on the day of the debate. There is one debate written summary per team but each member must submit their own copy on time. Late submissions will receive an individual penalty of 2/100 on their debate grade. The team must also bring a hard copy of the write up for the TA due at the start of the debate.
- See the Debate Instructions for details on the content of the debate written summary.

Mid-Term Exam

25%

The midterm exam will occur in-person during the scheduled class time. Students with a formal accommodation to write the exam separately and/or with longer time must register with Accessible

Education as soon as possible. If you miss their registration deadline, you will have to write the exam with the rest of the class.

It will be a 1 hour exam with 50 multiple choice questions based on all the lectures and readings before the midterm. A brief study guide with example questions will be posted one week before the midterm.

The multiple-choice questions on the lectures will comprise 35/50 questions. They will focus on: concepts, organizations, and individuals associated with the different approaches to foreign policy and the cases discussed, differences between the approaches to foreign policy, key historical events, etc. Some questions will cross different lectures.

The multiple-choice questions on the readings will comprise 15/50 questions and will be based on the points listed in the Reading Guide including the main arguments/points, main supporting points/concepts, and, where relevant, any basic history from each of the articles. You must also know the approach of the author where relevant. The last page of the exam will include a list of the authors and titles of each of the readings as a memory aid as this is how some articles will be referred to in the questions. If you actually do the readings, take decent notes and study them, you will be well prepared. If you leave many of the readings until the end of the semester or only try to look for Control F shortcuts based on the reading guide, you won't be.

Accessibility Accommodations

- Students with a formal accommodation to write the exam separately and/or with longer time etc. must be registered with Accessible Education.
- You will write the exam with them and not with the rest of the class. They will tell you where you write. If you have not heard from them, make sure you contact them.
- We are not able to provide extra time or other accommodations in the main exam.
- Having the 'flexibility with assignment deadlines' accommodation does not apply to the date you write the exam.
- If you miss the midterm, you must register again with Accessible Education for the midterm make-up exam.

Make-Up Exam

- Exams cannot be written early under any circumstances.
- All requests for medical or compassionate accommodations must go through student counselling's absence/academic consideration portal. The course instructor will not grant any accommodations. Please do not email me unless it is absolutely necessary and not just because you are advised to by academic advisors. I will only return your email if your situation is not covered in the examples below.
- Any students using their one Undocumented Absence must also go through the absence/academic consideration portal and fill out the signed self-attestation and accompanying rationale. The only difference is you don't have to provide documentation.
- Any students missing the midterm will be required to write the scheduled midterm make-up.
- **The one hour make-up exam is scheduled for Friday 27 February.**
- The format for the make-up exam is exactly the same as for the main exam and it will cover the exact same material as the main exam and no more.

- Having another class or tutorial scheduled during the make-up exam will not be accepted as a reason to miss it. If you have a test or assignment that makes it impossible for you to attend the make-up exam, you must email me the course name and number, its exact start/finish times on the day, the professor's name and email (not a TA), and the reason you can't miss it. I will contact them to confirm.
- We cannot schedule multiple make-up exams. Accordingly, any requests to also miss the make-up exam will be denied without very good and very documented reasons that we will follow up with phone calls to confirm.
- If you miss the make-up exam with an accommodation, it will either be rescheduled or replaced with a significant essay based on all the lectures and readings covered on the midterm. This essay will be *hand-written* to offset copying and pasting from lecture notes and PDFs.
- If you miss the make-up exam without further accommodation, you will receive a grade of zero.
- Under no circumstances will you be allowed to miss the midterm and have your other grades reweighted.

Essay

30%

Students will write one essay that must be 9-10 typed double-spaced pages in length (not including the title page, endnotes, and bibliography). An Essay Instructions and Format document and an Essay Topics and Research Tips document are available in the Essay folder on the course website. They will be discussed in the two tutorials following the midterm. Essays must be submitted on the course website (through turnitin) by 11:59 pm on the due date. The threshold for each day late is then 11:59 pm. Late essays will be penalized at a rate of 3% per day - including weekends, holidays, and reading week - to a maximum of 10%. Late essays not handed in by 11:59 pm on the day of the last class will receive a grade of zero. **The essay is designated as 'not eligible' for an Undocumented Absence.**

Academic Fraud and Plagiarism

- There will be zero tolerance for academic fraud. Students submitting essays based in whole or in part on AI technologies such as Chat GPT will automatically receive a grade of zero on the essay. They will also be reported to the university. In most cases, two instances of academic fraud will get you expelled.
- The required format for the essay is no longer a suggestion. Papers that do not follow the required format will be penalized by 10 percent or greater depending on the deviation.
- You must have a hyperlink for each source in your bibliography so it can be confirmed by the TA if necessary. You must also keep copies of all sources cited as the TAs may ask for any they can't find.
- Turnitin.com is excellent. Do not copy-and-paste from your own or others' previous papers as they are in the Turnitin international database. Do not copy-and-paste from media, blogs, etc. as the Turnitin search engine will find it.
- Plagiarism and fraud are about intent, and we can tell the difference between that and legitimate misunderstandings about citations. If you make an honest mistake in your citations, that is no problem.

Extensions

- **The essay is designated as ‘not eligible’ for an Undocumented Absence.**
- All requests for medical or compassionate accommodations must go through student counselling’s absence/academic consideration portal only and must be no later than 48 hours following the due date. The course instructor will NOT grant any extensions. Please do not email me unless it is absolutely necessary and not just because you are advised to by academic advisors. I will only return your email if your situation is NOT covered in the examples below.
- If it is approved by academic advising, your extension will be for exactly how many days they approve. For example, if the due date was the 10th, and your accommodation is from the 10th to 12th, you will get a 3-day extension (10, 11, 12) meaning your essay is then due by 11:59 pm on the 13th. You must then submit your essay through the course website by 11:59 pm on the new due date. After that it will be counted as late, and the late penalty will start to apply.
- If the accommodation dates given by academic advising start a day or two after the essay due date, your extension is still only for the number of days between their start and end dates. For example, if the essay is due on the 10th, and your accommodation is from the 12th to 13th, you will receive a 2-day extension only from the original due date, making it due on the 12th with a penalty applying after that. Applying for an accommodation on a Friday and not hearing back from counseling until the Monday will not give you extra days.
- Students who have the ‘flexibility with assignment deadlines’ accommodation from Accessible Education do NOT need to email me. You must contact academic counseling to have an extension approved and it will be for a maximum of 3 days. Longer extensions will not be granted. Therefore, if the due date was the 10th, and you receive the 3 day ‘flexibility with assignment deadlines’ accommodation, your essay is then due by 11:59 pm on the 13th.

Final Exam

35%

This will be an in-person exam held at a time and date determined by the Registrar’s Office during the scheduled exam period. The course instructor has no control whatsoever over the time and date of the exam.

It will be a 2 hour exam with 75 multiple choice questions. The first 55 questions are based on the lectures. The final 20 questions are based on the readings and are drawn from the points covered in the Reading Guide.

The exam will cover:

- All lectures and readings after the midterm i.e. from Tools of Foreign Policy onward
- The last page of the exam includes a list of the authors and titles as a memory aide.

Accessibility Accommodations

- Students with a formal accommodation to write the exam separately and/or with longer time etc. must be registered with Accessible Education.
- You will write the exam with them and not with the rest of the class. They will tell you where you write. If you have not heard from them, make sure you contact them.
- We are not able to provide extra time or other accommodations in the main exam.
- Having the ‘flexibility with assignment deadlines’ accommodation does not apply to the date

you write the exam.

Make-Up Exam

- Final exams cannot be written early, or converted to online exams, under any circumstances. Avoid booking any flights or trains too early until the exam schedule is released.
- **As per university policy, final exams are not eligible for an Undocumented Absence.**
- All requests to write a make-up exam must go through student counselling's absence/academic consideration portal. The course instructor will not grant any accommodations related to the exam.
- Make-up exams for finals are very difficult to schedule. Accordingly, any requests to miss the final exam will be denied without very good and very documented reasons that will be followed up with phone calls to confirm.
- Make-up exams will occur in-person within 30 days of the main exam or they will be replaced with a significant essay based on all the lectures and readings covered on the final exam. This essay will be *hand-written* to offset copying and pasting from lecture notes and PDFs.
- If you miss the main exam without an accommodation, you will receive a grade of zero.
- The format for the make-up exam is exactly the same as for the main exam and it will cover the exact same material as the main exam and no more.
- If you miss the make-up exam date that you agree to, without a further accommodation, you will receive a grade of zero. Or, if you failed to complete the writing assignment substitute for the exam within 30 days of the main exam, you will receive a grade of zero.
- Under no circumstances will you be allowed to miss the final exam and have your other grades reweighted.

Redoing Exams or the Essay

Redoing exams or the essay, or completing a substitute assignment, due to a poor grade is not possible. Whenever profs do either, other students view it as unfair and we get a large number asking to rewrite exams or assignments, even when they've done well but just want a higher grade.

Appeals

All grade appeals must go through the TAs first by email and NOT in-person. You must email your TA a list of the reasons why you believe your assignment deserves a better grade (not why you need a better grade). No appeals will be considered more than 3 weeks after the assignment grades were released. If the student is not satisfied with the TA's explanation of the grade/new grade, they can ask for it to be marked by a second reader (generally another TA). If this option is approved, and the second reader assigns a grade that is only 3% higher or lower than the original grade, the original grade will stand. If the second marker assigns a mark that is more than 3% higher or lower than the original grade, then the final grade will be the average of the two grades, whether or not this is higher or lower.

Lecture Notes and PPT Slides

Lecture notes and PowerPoint slides will NOT be posted. If you miss class, you will need to get notes from other students. For students with accommodations, and accessibility accommodations, notes will be available from a volunteer notetaker.

Notice on Pre/Anti-requisites

Students are responsible for ensuring that they have successfully completed all course prerequisites and that they have NOT taken an anti-requisite course. Lack of prerequisites may not be used as a basis for appeal. If a student is found to be ineligible for a course, they may be removed from it at any time and they will receive no adjustment to their fees. This decision cannot be appealed. If a student finds that they do not have the course requisites, they should drop the course well before the end of the add/drop period. This will not only help their academic record but will also ensure that spaces are made available to other students.

Turnitin.com

Electronic copies of all assignments submitted on OWL are automatically processed by the plagiarism detection service turnitin.com Please be advised that: All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between the University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com.

WEEKLY COURSE SCHEDULE

- Jan. 5** **Lecture (1:30-3:20): Course Introduction and Interests/Ideologies in IR**
The first part of the class will be used to introduce the general subject matter of the course and to outline the course structure, readings, and requirements. The remainder will examine the role of interests and ideologies in international relations and Canadian foreign policy.
- Tutorial (3:30-4:20): Discussion of Debate Assignment***
This tutorial will be run by the course instructor with all students remaining in the main lecture room. It will cover the requirements and format for the student debates.
- Jan. 12** **Lecture (1:30-3:20): Liberal and Progressive Approaches to Foreign Policy**
This week examines left-of-centre approaches to foreign policy including liberal internationalism and progressivism.
- Tutorial (3:30-4:20): Research Tips***
This tutorial will be run by the course instructor with all students remaining in the main lecture room. It will cover some research techniques useful for the debates and essay.
- Jan. 19** **Lecture (1:30-3:20): Conservative Approaches to Foreign Policy**
This week examines right-of-centre approaches to foreign policy including those of neoconservative security hawks, conservative nationalists/paleoconservatives, and social/religious conservatives.

Tutorial (3:30-4:20): Debate 1

This tutorial will be the first debates. Students assigned to Tutorial 002 will remain in the main lecture room. Students assigned to Tutorials 003, 004, and 005 will proceed to their tutorial rooms (Tutorial 003 in SSC 2020; Tutorial 004 in SSC 3006; and Tutorial 005 in University College 2110). Attendance will be taken.

Jan. 26

Lecture (1:30-3:20): Realist and Libertarian Approaches to Foreign Policy

This week examines the realist and libertarian (economic neoliberalism) approaches to foreign policy and the so-called ‘restraint coalition’.

Tutorial (3:30-4:20): Debate 2

Students assigned to Tutorial 002 will remain in the main lecture room. Students assigned to Tutorials 003, 004, and 005 will proceed to their tutorial rooms (Tutorial 003 in SSC 2020; Tutorial 004 in SSC 3006; and Tutorial 005 in University College 2110). Attendance will be taken.

Feb. 2

Lecture (1:30-3:20): Canadian Foreign Policy

This week examines key events in the history of Canadian foreign policy as well as the different ideological approaches across Canadian political parties.

Tutorial (3:30-4:20): Debate 3

Students assigned to Tutorial 002 will remain in the main lecture room. Students assigned to Tutorials 003, 004, and 005 will proceed to their tutorial rooms (Tutorial 003 in SSC 2020; Tutorial 004 in SSC 3006; and Tutorial 005 in University College 2110). Attendance will be taken.

Feb. 9

MIDTERM EXAM DURING CLASS TIME – No Tutorials

Feb. 16

Family Day/Reading Week – No Class

Feb. 23

Lecture (1:30-3:20): The Tools of Foreign Policy

This week examines the key diplomatic, economic, and military/intelligence tools used in the conduct of contemporary foreign policy.

Tutorial (3:30-4:20): Discussion of Essay Requirements

This tutorial will be run by the course instructor with all students remaining in the main lecture room. It will cover the requirements and format for the essay.

Feb. 27

FRIDAY - MIDTERM MAKE-UP EXAM

Mar. 2

Lecture (1:30-3:20): The ‘Global South’

This week examines key eras and developments in the history of the ‘global South’ as well as current issues affecting developing countries and Canada’s relations with them.

Tutorial (3:30-4:20): Essay Grading

TAs will discuss how the essays will be graded, citations and other requirements, and other essay writing tips. Students assigned to Tutorial 002 will remain in the main lecture room. Students assigned to Tutorials 003, 004, and 005 will proceed to their tutorial rooms (Tutorial 003 in SSC 2020; Tutorial 004 in SSC 3006; and Tutorial 005 in University College 2110). Attendance will be taken.

Mar. 9 Lecture (1:30-3:20): Russia, Ukraine, and NATO

This week examines key eras and developments in Russia's modern history, current issues in NATO-Russia relations, and what the different approaches advocate in terms of dealing with Russia.

Tutorial (3:30-4:20): Debate 4

Students assigned to Tutorial 002 will remain in the main lecture room. Students assigned to Tutorials 003, 004, and 005 will proceed to their tutorial rooms (Tutorial 003 in SSC 2020; Tutorial 004 in SSC 3006; and Tutorial 005 in University College 2110). Attendance will be taken.

Mar. 16 Lecture (1:30-3:20): The Rise of China

This week examines key eras and developments in China's modern history as well as the key issues in US-China and Canada-China relations.

Tutorial (3:30-4:20): Debate 5

Students assigned to Tutorial 002 will remain in the main lecture room. Students assigned to Tutorials 003, 004, and 005 will proceed to their tutorial rooms (Tutorial 003 in SSC 2020; Tutorial 004 in SSC 3006; and Tutorial 005 in University College 2110). Attendance will be taken.

Mar. 20 FRIDAY - ESSAYS DUE BY 11:59 PM ON OWL/BRIGHTSPACE

Mar. 23 Lecture (1:30-3:20): Liberals vs Realists on the Future of World Order

This week examines liberal theories of the more linear progress of history and realist theories of the cyclical progress of history and what they predict for the future of world order.

Tutorial (3:30-4:20): Debate 6

Students assigned to Tutorial 002 will remain in the main lecture room. Students assigned to Tutorials 003, 004, and 005 will proceed to their tutorial rooms (Tutorial 003 in SSC 2020; Tutorial 004 in SSC 3006; and Tutorial 005 in University College 2110). Attendance will be taken.

Mar. 30 Lecture (1:30-3:20): The Trump Doctrine and the Western Hemisphere

This week examines the history of US foreign policy in the Western hemisphere, the Trump 2.0 national security doctrine, and its implications for the western hemisphere and world order.

Tutorial (3:30-4:20): Discussion

Students will discuss current events related to the Trump administration's foreign policy and/or this week's readings. Students assigned to Tutorial 002 will remain in the main lecture room. Students assigned to Tutorials 003, 004, and 005 will proceed to their tutorial rooms (Tutorial 003 in SSC 2020; Tutorial 004 in SSC 3006; and Tutorial 005 in University College 2110). Attendance will be taken.

Apl. 6

Nuclear Proliferation: Iran and North Korea

This week examines the key concepts related to the issue of nuclear proliferation, the basic history of US-Iran and US-North Korea relations, and what the different approaches to foreign policy advocate in terms of dealing with these countries.

Last Class, No Tutorial

Last day to submit late essays – by 11:59 pm.

Email tutorial absences and documentation to TAs by Wednesday 8 April