Course Title: International Relations: Theories for Making Sense of Real-World Problems
Course Code: POL 03
Instructor: P. Lutomski, Ph.D., J.D.

Course Summary:
This course uses the concepts of theories of International Relations (or perspectives on International Relations) to address all aspects of international relations. We will use a textbook that introduces the concept of perspectives and applies them consistently throughout all its chapters. Theories (or perspectives) focus on certain facts and emphasize certain causes. All three main perspectives address all aspects—power, institutions, and ideas—but the causal relationship between them differs.

Realism, for example, does not ignore ideas; it just concludes that power is the primary source of ideas—big powers think one way, and small powers another. Liberalism does not devalue force; it just sees diplomacy as the primary means to constrain the use of force. And, constructivism does not diminish practices, institutions, or material power; it just sees identities and discourse interpreting and giving meaning to these variables. A fourth perspective, critical theory, critiques the other perspectives by casting doubt on whether we can actually isolate the primary causes of events. It argues instead that events must be understood in the broadest historical context and often caused by deep-seated forces that we can master, if at all, only by achieving new form of self-consciousness not by the manipulation of individual variables.

In our course, we will treat all the three principal approaches evenhandedly. This course does not start with the presumption that one theory/perspective is best. Rather, the course leads the students into different worlds, looking at the same reality from different angles. This is the meaning of “critical thinking,” that is, by alternatives—and to make their own informed intellectual choices. Also, the course is genuinely interdisciplinary. In this course, the students learn history and economics through the relevant political science concepts.
Grade Options and Requirements:

- No Grade Requested (NGR)
  - This is the default option. No work will be required; no credit shall be received; no proof of attendance can be provided.
- Credit/No Credit (CR/NC)
  - Score will be determined by student attendance and participation.
- Letter Grade (A, B, C, D, No Pass)
  - Written work, as assigned by the instructor, will determine a student’s grade.

*Please Note: If you require proof that you completed a Continuing Studies course for any reason (for example, employer reimbursement), you must choose either the Letter Grade or Credit/No Credit option. Courses taken for NGR will not appear on official transcripts or grade reports.

Tentative Weekly Outline:

**WEEK ONE**

Why Do We Disagree About International Relations?

The Role of Perspectives and Levels of Analysis: understanding the 9/11 Attacks:
- Weak versus Strong
- Failed Negotiations
- Democratic Reform of Governments
- Pervasive Violence

Is one Perspective or Method Best? The Role of Judgment and the Role of Ethics and Morality
- Relativist Values versus Universal Values versus Pragmatic Values
- Moral Choice and the Role of History

How to Think About International Relations: Perspectives and Levels of Analysis

Prisoners Dilemma

The Realist Perspective
The Liberal Perspective
The Identity Perspective
Critical Theory Perspective
Levels of Analysis
Interaction of Perspectives and Levels of Analysis

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365 Lasuen St., Stanford, CA 94305
continuingstudies@stanford.edu
650-725-2650
**WEEK TWO**

**Perspectives on World History:**

**The Realist View of World History**
- Age of Equilibrium
- Emphasizing Power over Institutions and Ideas

**Liberal Accounts of World History**
- From Villages to States
- From Anarchy to Legitimacy
- Modernization not Westernization

**Identity Views of World History**
- Religion and Pope Innocent III
- French Culture and Richelieu
- England and Domestic Ideologies
- Identity and Westphalia
- Norms and the Concert of Europe
- Bismarck and German Identity

**Critical Theory of World History:**
- Feminist Views of State Construction
- Marxist Critique of Industrialization
- World Systems Theories

**WEEK THREE**

**The Origins and End of the Cold War:**

- Two Bookends: The Long Telegram and the Fall of Berlin Wall
- Realist Explanations of the Origins and End of the Cold War: Two superpowers and the bipolar world
- Identity Explanations: how ideas started and ended the Cold War
- Liberal Explanations: United Nations, NATO and European Community, the Information Revolution and the end of Cold War

**WEEK FOUR**

**Terrorism and the World after 9/11:**

- Liberal Perspective: Diplomacy and Collective Goods (globally) and Peacekeeping and Reconciliation (locally)
• Realist Perspective: Counterbalancing and War; Ancient Hatreds and Partition
• Identity Perspective: Ending Tyranny in the World, Fundamentalist Islam, Nationhood and Civic Identity?

**WEEK FIVE**

Globalization and World Economy:

• Realist Explanations: Age of Mercantilism and Colonial Expansion, Pax Britannica, Pax Americana
• Liberal Explanations: Agricultural and Industrial Revolutions, Bretton Woods Institutions, Complex Interdependence and Financial Crises
• Identity Explanations: Renaissance and Protestant Ethic, Classical Economic Liberalism, Washington Consensus

**WEEK SIX**

Trade, Investment, and Finance: How the Perspectives View Them?

• Trade: Specialization and Division of Labor, Comparative Advantage, Exceptions to Unrestricted
• Investment: Resource-Based Foreign Investments, Manufacturing Foreign Investments, Are Multinational Corporations Too Big?

**WEEK SEVEN**

World Environment:

• As Globalist Ideas?
• As a Common Task?
• As a Resource?
• Or, as System Failure?
• Population, Resources – Food, Energy, Water, and Biodiversity
• Pollution and Global Warming
• Pandemics

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WEEK EIGHT

Global Civil Society:
- Nonstate Actors and Human Rights
- Global Governance: its forms and norms
- Transnational Nongovernmental Organizations
- Evolution of Human Rights
- United Nations Human Rights Regime

WEEK NINE

Global Governance:
- State Intergovernmental Organizations
- United Nations
- International Economic Organizations

WEEK TEN

Review, Conclusion:
- Applying Perspectives and Levels of Analysis: The Case of Democratic Peace (Evidence, Explanations)