

# POLS 442: GLOBAL POLICY ISSUES

NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY, SPRING 2019, 3 CREDITS

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## Basic Information

Professor: Dan Pemstein  
Email: daniel.pemstein@ndsu.edu  
Office: Putnam 104C

Class Location: Quentin Burdick 102  
Class Time: TuTh 9:30-10:45  
Office Hours: TuTh 3:30-4:30

## Course Description

### Overview

POLS 442 is an upper-level seminar that examines policy questions with a global scope. Using basic game theory to structure our investigation, we will explore a variety of key issues in global policymaking, including aspects of economic globalization, natural resource governance, and digital politics.

### Objectives

Students who complete POLS 442 should understand how to apply basic game theoretic tools to global policy questions in political and economic development. They should also have gained an understanding of core topics in economic globalization, natural resource governance, and digital politics, and developed experience in systematically investigating questions in these issue areas. Finally, students in POLS 442 will learn how to write a policy brief and develop their written and oral communication and argumentation skills.

## Texts

The following required textbooks are available for purchase at the University bookstore:

- Paul Collier. 2008. *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries are Failing and What Can Be Done About It*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Tarleton Gillespie. 2018. *Custodians of the Internet: Platforms, Content Moderation, and the Hidden Decisions That Shape Social Media*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Pietra Rivoli. 2014. *The Travels of a T-Shirt in the Global Economy: An Economist Examines the Markets, Power, and Politics of World Trade*. 2nd Ed. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons.
- Zeynep Tufekci. 2017. *Twitter and Tear Gas: The Power and Fragility of Networked Protest*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

- Wydick, Bruce. 2008. *Games in Economic Development*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

All other readings are available on the course's blackboard site. You are expected to read all of the assigned material before the class week for which it is assigned!

## Evaluation

### Summary

Midterm Exam	15%
Final Exam	15%
Reading Responses	10%
Paper Proposal	5%
Paper Draft + Defense	20%
Revised Policy Paper	15%
Paper Defense Committee Participation	10%

### Exams

The midterm and final exams will each count for 15% of your total grade. Each exam will consist of a handful of short answer/essay questions. The final exam is non-cumulative and each exam covers about half of the course material.

### Reading Responses

Reading responses will be due each Monday at noon, starting the second week of class. Responses should be roughly 500 words in length. Responses should raise a question about the reading and discuss potential answers, make a counter-argument to one posed in the reading, or carefully link the reading to current events. I will grade these responses pass/fail, based on how seriously students engage with the assigned material. Each class period I will use a random number generator to select two students at random. Each selected student will be responsible for leading a short class discussion based on her reading response. Students who are absent on days that I draw their name will lose 1% from their total grade.

### Paper

Working in groups, students will produce a 30-35 page policy paper dedicated to a global issue. The paper will make a specific policy proposal, provide a logical argument supporting the proposal, and present evidence to buttress this argument. The argument should build on topics and concepts developed in this class and students must apply some game theoretic logic to the policy problem that they tackle. You will complete the paper in multiple stages, as I outline below. We will discuss the paper format in greater detail, and I will provide a rubric for each stage, during the fourth or fifth week of class.

## **Proposal**

Groups will turn in a paper proposal consisting of a statement of purpose, statement of research methods, working outline, description of primary sources/data, and bibliography. The proposal will also contain a signed group contract laying out a plan of action for group members, specifying who is responsible for each portion of the paper drafting process. The proposal is worth 5% of your total grade.

## **Draft + Defense**

Groups will submit drafts prior to submitting their final policy papers. While I describe these submissions as drafts, groups should strive to produce finished products and should attempt to satisfy all paper rubric points. These drafts will be distributed to members of the paper defense committee (see below) assigned to your group. Students will also individually submit short notes to the instructor describing any deviations from the plan of action and contract, as specified in the proposal. We will conduct an oral defense of each draft paper. Paper writers will give a ten minute presentation, followed by ten minutes of questioning from the audience. Group members will answer questions in turn, sharing the load evenly. The draft and defense are worth 20% of your grade, and will be based both on the evaluation of the instructor and that of the defense committee (again, see below).

## **Revised Paper**

Revised papers are due at the end of the term. I will evaluate these revisions, which are worth 15% of your total grade, in light of both the paper rubric and how effectively they address issues identified by the instructor and defense committee.

## **Defense Committee**

I will randomly assign each student to serve on the defense committee for another group. Defense committee members will read the relevant policy paper draft and individually grade it based on the given rubric. Each committee member will also identify two major and two minor issues with the draft paper, write brief descriptions of these problems on the grading form, and publicly raise the major issues during the oral defense. After the defense the committee will meet outside of class and compose a three page evaluation of the draft paper, describing key outstanding issues. They will submit this document and their individual grade forms to both the instructor and the authors of the draft paper. Defense committee participation is worth 10% of your total grade.

## **Participation**

You are expected to attend every class and to participate in class activities and discussions. Participation is worth 10 percent of your final grade and will reflect your engagement in and contribution to class discussion, not simple attendance (which should be a given, although lack of attendance will negatively affect your grade). Participation can take many forms, including—but not limited to—asking questions, answering my queries, engaging in class

debate, organizing or participating in study groups, and taking an active role in group activities. Towards the end of the semester, each student will write a short (1-2 page) paper making an evidence-based case for the participation grade that she feels she deserves. These papers, and the persuasiveness of their arguments, will form the basis for students' participation grades. Although you have substantial leeway in how you make your case for your participation grade, your self-evaluation should follow this rough rubric:

- A Strong attendance, frequent and thoughtful verbal participation, active participation in group work
- B Strong attendance, regular and thoughtful verbal participation, active participation in group work
- C Strong attendance, some verbal participation, satisfactory participation in group work
- D Missed more than 3-4 classes, little to no verbal participation in class, lack of engagement in group work
- F Frequently miss class, no verbal participation, leave your group members hanging

## **Class Policies**

### **Grades**

I use a flat grade scale: A=90–100, B=80–89, C=70–79, D=60–69, F=59 or lower. If you have a complaint about an exam or paper grade you must type a formal appeal describing the problem. Your appeal should clearly explain why you believe that your original work deserved a better grade than it received and make a cogent argument for improving your grade. Attach a copy of the original exam or paper to your appeal.

### **Make-Up Exams and Assignments**

I will allow make-up exams only in extreme circumstances and only by prior arrangement or given a valid excuse. I will not accept late proposals, drafts, or papers. Students who miss their paper defense will receive zeros on the draft paper unless they have a valid excuse for their absence. Similarly, defense committee members who miss the relevant defense will receive no points without a valid excuse. Please notify me of potential defense conflicts as early as possible. In general, I will not accept excuses after the fact if you could have reasonably notified me ahead of time.

### **Academic Honesty**

The academic community operates on the basis of honesty, integrity, and fair play. NDSU Policy 335: Code of Academic Responsibility and Conduct applies to cases in which cheating, plagiarism, or other academic misconduct have occurred in an instructional context. Students found guilty of academic misconduct are subject to penalties, up to and possibly including suspension and/or expulsion. Student academic misconduct records are maintained by the Office of Registration and Records. Please do make sure that you understand common standards of academic integrity and plagiarism. You can find information about academic honesty at [www.ndsu.edu/academichonesty](http://www.ndsu.edu/academichonesty). I will deal with academic dishonesty

and plagiarism *harshly*. If you violate accepted standards you will certainly fail the relevant assignment. In most cases, you will, at minimum, fail the class.

## Electronic Devices

You may never use a cell phone in class. I discourage the use of laptops or other electronic devices because research shows that students who use such devices, and the students sitting near them, perform worse than students who take notes by hand. If you have a compelling reason to use an electronic device during class, please discuss it with me first.

## Veterans and Students with Disabilities

Veterans and student soldiers with special circumstances or who are activated are encouraged to notify the instructor in advance. Students who need special accommodations in this course are invited to share their concerns with the instructor and contact the Disability Services Office (<http://www.ndsu.edu/disabilityservices/>) as soon as possible.

## Schedule

Date	Topic	Reading
Week 1 (1/8,10)	Introduction	Smith & Larimer (2013)
Week 2+ (1/15,22)	Games, Politics & Development	Wydick (2008) Ch. 1-3
<b>No Class 1/17</b>		
Week 3 (1/24)	Poverty & Development	Collier (2008) Ch. 1-4; Easterly (2006) Ch. 2
Week 4 (1/29,31)	Poverty & Development	Collier (2008) Ch. 7; Banerjee et al (2015); Sexton (2017)
Week 5 (2/5,7)	Governance & Corruption	Collier (2008) Ch. 5, Wydick (2008) Ch. 9; Savedoff (2016)
<b>Paper Groups Assigned 2/14</b>		
Week 6 (2/12,14)	Common Pool Resources	Ostrom (1990) Ch. 3; Wydick (2008) Ch. 4
Week 7 (2/19,21)	Climate Change	Bernaer (2013); Obradovich & Zimmerman (2016)
Week 8 (2/26,28)	Midterm Review & Exam	
Week 9 (3/5,7)	Globalization & Trade	Rivoli (2014) Pt. 1-2
<b>Paper Proposals Due Midnight 3/8</b>		
Spring Break		
Week 10 (3/19,21)	Globalization & Trade	Wydick (2008) Ch. 12; Rodrik (2012) Ch. 3; Collier (2008) Ch. 10
Week 11 (3/26,28)	Globalization & Trade	Rivoli (2014) Pt. 3-4
Week 12 (4/2,4)	Internet Content Regulation	Gillespie (2018)
<b>Paper Drafts Due Midnight 4/5</b>		
Week 13 (4/9,11)	Twitter & Tear-gas	Tufecki (2017)
Week 14 (4/16,18)	Paper Defenses	
Week 15 (4/23,25)	Internet Censorship	Meserve & Pemstein (2018)
<b>Committee Reports Due Midnight 4/26</b>		
Week 16 (4/30,5/2)	Final Review & Exam	
<b>Final Papers Due Midnight 5/9</b>		