

**RARITAN VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
ACADEMIC COURSE OUTLINE**

**POLI 231 – International Relations**

**I. Basic Course Information**

A. Course number and Title: POLI 231 – International Relations

B. New or Modified Course: Modified

C. Date of Proposal: Semester: Fall Year: 2023

**D. Effective Term: Fall 2023**

E. Sponsoring Department: Humanities, Social Sciences, Social Work & Education

F. Semester Credit Hours: **3**

G. Weekly Contact Hours: 3                      Lecture: 3  
   Laboratory: 0  
   Out of class student work per week: 6

H. ☐ Prerequisite (s):

☐ Corequisite (s):

☒ Prerequisite (s) and Corequisite (s): Placement into ENGL 111 English Composition I with ENGL 070 English Composition I Workshop, or higher.

I. Additional Fees: None

J. Name and E-Mail Address of Department Chair and Divisional Dean at time of approval: Dr. Isabel Gutierrez-Bergman ([Isabel.Gutierrez@raritanval.edu](mailto:Isabel.Gutierrez@raritanval.edu))  
Dr. Patrice Marks ([Patrice.Marks@raritanval.edu](mailto:Patrice.Marks@raritanval.edu))

**II. Catalog Description**

Prerequisites/Corequisites: Placement into ENGL 111 English Composition I with ENGL 070 English Composition I Workshop, or higher.

Examines the field of International Relations from both the general and particular levels of analysis. Subject areas to be considered include the historical and philosophical development of international

relations, the various methodological and theoretical perspectives most commonly used in the field presently, as well as foreign policy, national interest, causes of conflict, international law, arms control and international organization.

### **III. Statement of Course Need**

A. This course serves as a standard elective in undergraduate liberal arts education. It also provides the opportunity for students interested in current events and the historical framework in which they have developed, as well as others considering teaching careers, international finance, etc.

B. No lab component

C. Transferability

1. This course transfers as a general education and social science elective.
2. This course transfers as a social science elective
3. This course is an elective for the Social Science A.A. Degree

### **IV. Place of Course in College Curriculum**

A. Free Elective

B. This course serves as a General Education course in Social Sciences.

C. This course meets a program requirement for a International Studies degree

D. To see course transferability: a) for New Jersey schools, go to the NJ Transfer website, [www.njtransfer.org](http://www.njtransfer.org); b) for all other colleges and universities, go to the individual websites.

### **V. Outline of Course Content**

- A. General introduction to study of the International Relations as one of the principal fields in Political Science
- B. Examination of current issues and controversies in comparative and historical perspective.
- C. Consideration of the theories of major thinkers such as Machiavelli, Grotius, Kant, Clausewitz, Marx and various contemporary leaders in the field, including Kaplan, Morgenthau, Walz and others.
- D. Discussion of contemporary issues in light of the course's historical and analytical categories, based on comparative readings drawn from the relevant journals, such as *Foreign Affairs*, *International Security*, *Foreign Policy*, *National Interest* and others.
- E. Major historical developments of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, especially the First and Second world wars and the Cold War, as background to current issues and events
- F. Examine the concept of "national interest" and its relation to foreign policy among nation-states
- G. Domestic Political Institutions, Political Culture and foreign policy
- H. Conflict and its causes, theories of prevention
- I. Diplomacy, trade, coercion and other instruments of foreign policy

- J. International Law and Organization, including the League of Nations, the United Nations, and other types of international groupings, such as NATO
- K. Arms control and disarmament
- L. The future of the nation-state and international relations, in light of the growth of multi-national corporations, regional entities such as the European Union, the diffusion of nuclear devices after the end of Cold War, and the rise of terrorist organizations

## **VI. A. Course Learning Outcomes:**

At the completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Apply comparative methods in the introductory study of international relations and politics (GE 8)
2. Compare, contrast and analyze theories in political philosophy (GE 5, \*)
3. Discuss contemporary issues and trends in international relations within a larger historical framework (GE 1, 7, 8)
4. Identify the various schools of thought among contemporary teachers and writers in international relations
5. Effectively communicate ideas in essays and research projects (GE 1, \*)

\* (Embedded Critical Thinking)

## **B. Assessment Instruments**

1. lecture/discussion
2. small-group work
3. student oral presentations
4. essays
5. term papers

## **VII. Grade Determinants**

- A. essays
- B. projects and/or term papers
- C. exams
- D. presentations
- E. article summaries
- F. discussion participation

Primary formats, modes, and methods for teaching and learning that may be used in the course:

- A. lecture/discussion
- B. small-group work

- C. student oral presentations
- D. student collaboration

### **VIII. Texts and Materials**

1. Open Education Resources
2. Textbook – *Global Politics*, 10<sup>th</sup> ed., by Ray and Kaarbo
3. *Classic Readings of International Relations*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. by Williams, Goldstein and Shafritz, editors.

(Please Note: The course outline is intended only as a guide to course content and resources. Do not purchase textbooks based on this outline. The RVCC Bookstore is the sole resource for the most up-to-date information about textbooks.)

### **IX. Resources**

Students will need to regularly visit the RVCC library or others nearby in order to complete regular assignments in the foreign policy and opinion journals noted above. In most instances, the instructor will also place relevant periodicals on reserve at the College's library.

### **X. Honors Options [if relevant]**

N/A