

International Relations 101—Introduction to International Relations

Dr. Douglas Becker

M/W 9:30-10:50

Discussion Sections as scheduled

Where: MHP 101

dfbecker@usc.edu

Office: CPA 231C

Office Hours: MW: 5:00-7:00

email: dfbecker@usc.edu (preferred contact method, and I promise to respond within 24 hours except on weekends)

Overview: We are all world citizens. No matter our majors or professions, we live in a world that demands engagement, interaction, transparency, and political literacy. This course addresses the need to develop global awareness, critical analysis of political developments, and the use of social science techniques to understand events and developments around the world. We will explore the main areas of international relations, ranging from traditional security issues and the role of international organizations in peacekeeping and peacebuilding, through the international political economy, human rights, gender, and finally identity. The goals of the course are:

- 1) Building political and critical literacy about the main issues in global politics;
- 2) Introducing concepts in international relations theory, with a focus on the application of the descriptions as well as prescriptions of these theories in ongoing cases;
- 3) Developing analytic frameworks which can organization not only contemporary cases but also future cases in world politics;
- 4) Fostering research skills that emphasize a critical analysis of competing sources and develop tools to determine the veracity, logical consistency, and empirical evidence of each source and narrative;
- 5) Advancing writing skills and argumentative styles that emphasize integration of ideas and data into analysis that advance policy options

Some key norms and rules for the classroom. Please be aware of these as we progress throughout the semester:

- **Share responsibility for including all voices in the conversation.**
 - I want to hear from all of you this semester. These issues can be contentious—any good international relations class will have disagreements. Let's make sure everyone has a chance to speak. If you find yourself being shut out of conversations, please let me know privately and I will make adjustments.
- **Listen respectfully.**
 - In conversations, we tend to spend 25% listening and 75% thinking about how we want to respond. Let's reverse this! A great classroom is a dialogue. It is not simply my thoughts and you trying to memorize and reconstruct them for exams. I want to hear from all of you. And I want you to hear from one another. We need to listen respectfully but also actively and critically.
- **Be open to changing your perspectives based on what you learn from others.**

- Nothing is more exciting than learning something new. This allows us to evolve our perspectives and develop as scholars. I have learned something new from students every semester I've taught. I change material from semester to semester based on what I have learned. Always be prepared to change your mind.
- **Understand that we are bound to make mistakes**
 - I may have been raised Roman Catholic, but I am not infallible. That's a joke I make throughout the semester. I will make mistakes. You will too. We learn from our mistakes, but we can't be afraid to present our work and our thoughts on an issue because we might make one. When we do, we will respectfully update the information and learn from them.
- **Understand that your words have effects on others.**
 - Respect is based on the understanding that words matter. Freedom of speech means we can express ourselves freely. But it does not mean we don't consider the effects these words have on others in the classroom. The classroom should never chill free expression and speech. But we all know there are different ways to express ourselves and we need to respect each other with our commentaries.
- **Understand that others will come to these discussions with different experiences from yours.**
 - The best thing about a campus like USC is the rich diversity of the student body. We have students from all over the world. And I think I learned as much as an undergraduate from the conversations I had with my classmates than even from class work. Toleration of different experiences is boring. Revel in them! Learn from one another. And be aware of them.
- **Make an effort to get to know each other.**
 - I like a class that's loud and boisterous before I come in. Spend some times getting to know each other. The real virtue of being back in person are the people we will meet, the social interactions, the long conversations, and learning from one another. Think of the big class as a chance to get to know a lot more people. And many of you are new to the university experience. I don't want to hear that you are having trouble meeting new people. This class is a great place to meet everyone!
- **Understand that there are different approaches to solving problems.**

This is what we mean by interdisciplinary. We do more than just study different material. We also approach issues differently. In particular, some of us have a background in business. Most have a background in social sciences. But it may be international relations, or it may be economics. Some of us study the humanities. But it is truly exciting to see the different ways we solve problems and wrestle with material.

The assignments for the class are

2 in-class exams:	20 % each
3 short essays:	15% each (45% total)
Debate in discussion sections:	10%
Participation and attendance:	5%

There are 2 in-class exams. These are objective exams that test whether you are keeping up with the reading, attending classes and taking notes, and generally understand the material. They will be multiple choice or short answer exams and scheduled on the syllabus. The first 2 paper topics will deal with the two existential crises the world faces: nuclear proliferation and climate change. The third will explore the future of international relations and will be much more open-ended (and integrate the

material from the entire semester—think of it like a take-home final essay). The discussion sections will have debates on topics we introduce in class and you will pair with a partner in the sections on one of six topics. Participation requires attendance, and we will use the Qwikly function in Brightspace with a daily code to enter. The code will be open for 15 minutes at the start of each class. And discussion section participation will comprise the majority of this grade. In short, you can't participate if you are not present. But merely being present will not get you the points. **The penalty for late work is 5 points a day.** When work is turned in late, you may email me a copy only to establish when it was completed. I do not accept emailed copies of papers, but only hard copies. The only excuses accepted are University sanctioned excuses and must be documented. Also, this course will follow all of the guidelines for reasonable accommodations laid out in the University Handbook.

Dates and topics of debates in discussion sections

Week 6: September 30-October 23 **What should US policy be toward Israel and Palestine?**

Week 9: October 21-24 **Should the Internet be Governed?**

Week 10: October 28-31 **Should the World Ban Single-Use Plastics?**

Week 11: November 4-7 **How should global sports organizations determine women's eligibility?**

Week 13: November 18-21 **What should be the status of Puerto Rico?**

Week 15: December 2-5 **How should the WHO reform to confront the next pandemic?**

Grading Scale

Course final grades will be determined using the following scale

A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
A-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	59 and below

Grading and Correction of Grades

Excerpts for this section have been taken from the University Grading Handbook, located at <http://www.usc.edu/dept/ARR/grades/gradinghandbook/gradingpolicies.html>

Please see the link for the course before the semester ends. All missing grades must be resolved by the instructor through the Correction of Grade Process. One calendar year is allowed to resolve a MG. If an MG is not resolved [within] one year the grade is changed to [Unofficial Withdrawal] UW and will be calculated into the grade point average a zero grade points.

A grade of Incomplete (IN) "is assigned when work is not completed because of documented illness or other 'emergency' occurring after the twelfth week of the semester (or 12th week equivalency for any course scheduled for less than 15 weeks)."for more details on grading concerns.

Vipin Narang, Seeking the Bomb: Strategies for Nuclear Proliferation. Chapter 2, pgs 15-52. **Brightspace**

Harald Muller, "The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in Jeopardy? Internal Divisions and the Impact of World Politics." **Brightspace**

John Borrie, Michael Spies & Wilfred Wan "Obstacles to understanding the emergence and significance of the treaty on the prohibition of nuclear weapons" **Brightspace**

Haass, pgs 173-182

Paper #1 assignment handed out

Week 2 discussion sections: How should the world confront the existential challenge of nuclear war (Monday sections will make arrangements for this material)

9: Russia/Ukraine

Jade McGlynn, Russia's War, pgs 1-43 **Brightspace**

Douglas Becker, "The Rationality and Emotion of Russian Historical Memory: The Case of Crimea." **Brightspace**

Haass, pgs 59-81

11: Hard Power/Soft Power: Saudi Sports Washing

Gris et al "Sports Mega-Events and the Concept of Soft Power." **Brightspace**

Aaron Ettinger "Saudi Arabia, sports diplomacy and authoritarian capitalism in world politics, International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics." **Brightspace**

Gris et al "Qatar's Global Sports Strategy: Soft Power and the 2022 World Cup." **Brightspace**

Week 3 discussion sections: What is soft power?

Nye, "Soft Power" and "The Limits of Soft Power" in Soft Power and Great Power Competition, **Brightspace**

Part 3: Liberalism: Democracy, Organizations and the Evolution of Cooperation

16: Liberalism explained

Sterling-Folker, pgs 67-126

Haass, 296-304

18: The democratic peace theory—Democratic Backsliding

Democratic Backsliding cases—Hungary, Poland and Israel

Valeriya Mechkova, Anna Lührmann, and Staffan I. Lindberg “How Much Democratic Backsliding?” *Journal of Democracy* 2017 **Brightspace**

Michael Bernhard Democratic Backsliding in Poland and Hungary **Brightspace**

Neta Oren and Dov Waxman “King Bibi” and Israeli Illiberalism: Assessing Democratic Backsliding in Israel during the Second Netanyahu Era (2009–2021) **Brightspace**

Haass, 288-295

Week 4 discussion sections: How much faith should we have in the democratic peace theory?

23: The UN and the conflict in Sudan: Peacekeeping or Non-Intervention?

Danesh Sarooshi, The United Nations Collective Security System and the Establishment of Peace **Brightspace**

Christopher Tounsel “Sudan Crisis Explained” [The Conversation](#) **Brightspace**

LINK: [Scholars’ Circle – Sudan’s war between its Generals ; Wars in perspective – May 7, 2023 – The Scholars' Circle \(scholarscircle.org\)](#)

Link: CFR The President’s Inbox, the Ongoing War in Sudan [Sudan’s Ongoing Civil War, With Michelle Gavin | Council on Foreign Relations \(cfr.org\)](#)

Haass, 131-142, 296-304

25: International law and treaties: Will the Moon and Antarctica Remain Undeveloped?

Nong Hong. Weighing the Sources of International Law The Arctic, Antarctica and the South China Sea” **Brightspace**

Naman Khatwani Common Heritage of Mankind for Outer Space, Astropolitics, 17:2, 89-103, **Brightspace**

Week 5 discussion sections: Liberalism: What does the UN do? The six organs of the UN.

Haass, 264-279

30: Economic interdependence: US China Trade War and the Potential for conflict

Jan Wouters and Jed Odermatt “Comparing the ‘Four Pillars’ of Global Economic Governance: A Critical Analysis of the Institutional Design of the FSB, IMF, World Bank, and WTO **Brightspace**

Guoyong Liang and Haoyaun Ding [US China Trade War](#) Chapter 2 and 4 **Brightspace**

Haass, 215-239

October 2: Israel/Palestine Explained
Anne Perez, The Foundations of Zionism pgs 11-31 **Brightspace**
Rashid Khalidi, The Hundred Years War on Palestine. Pgs 17-54 **Brightspace**

Week 6 discussion debate: What should US policy be toward the war between Israeli and Palestine?

- 7: Global War on Terror
Rebecca Sanders (Im)plausible legality: the rationalisation of human rights abuses in the American 'Global War on Terror' **Brightspace**
Gregory Johnson, "60 Words and a War Without End" **Brightspace**
Jenna Pitchford, "The "Global War on Terror," Identity, and Changing Perceptions : Iraqi Responses to America's War in Iraq" **Brightspace**
Haass, 111-130, 166-172
- 9: First in class exam

Week 7 discussion sections: no sections due to Fall Recess

Part 4: Constructivism: The role of Identity in Politics and Critiquing our Definitions

- 14: Constructivism explained
Sterling-Folker, pgs 127-168, 299-325
Haass, 155-165
- 16: Historical Memory and Mnemonic Security
Zheng Wang, "Collective Memory and National Identity" **Brightspace**
Douglas Becker, "Memory and Trauma as elements of identity in foreign policymaking" **Brightspace**
Maria Malksoo: Memory Must be Defended! **Brightspace**

Week 8 discussion sections: Identity, Israel/Palestine, and the Kushner Proposal

- 21: Post-Modernism and Critical Constructivism
Sterling-Folker, pgs 169-216
- 23: Cyber Security and Globalization
P.W. Singer, "#LikeWar, 181-257 **Brightspace**
Haass 201-207

Week 9 discussion debate: Should the internet be governed?

Part 5: The Environment and Global Politics: Re-introducing the planet to the nations

- 28: Environmentalism and global politics
Sterling-Folker, pgs 327-349
Jose Felix Pinto-Bazurco, "The Precautionary Principle." **Brightspace**
Pamela Chasek, Linking scientific knowledge and multilateral environmental governance **Brightspace**
Paper 2 assignment handed out
- 30: Climate Change
David Held and Charles Roger. Three Models of Global Climate Governance: From Kyoto to Paris and Beyond **Brightspace**
Eric Hirsch. "It won't be any good to have democracy if we don't have a country": Climate change and the politics of synecdoche in the Maldives." **Brightspace**
W. Neil Adger "Loss and Damage from climate change: legacies from Glasgow and Sharm el-Sheikh" **Brightspace**
Haass, pgs 183-192

Week 10 discussion debate: Should the world ban single use plastics?

Part 6: Gender and International Relations: Hey where are the women?

- November 4: Feminism and having a feminist curiosity
Sterling-Folker, pgs 263-298
Cynthia Enloe "Pink Pussy Hats vs. Patriarchy" in The Big Push: Exposing and Challenging the Persistence of Patriarchy **Brightspace**
- 6: Iran Protests and the Global #MeToo movement
Rachel Vogelstein and Meighan Stone Awakening: #MeToo and the Global Fight for Women's Rights, Introduction **Brightspace**
Maryam Alemzadeh, Iran Protests and Patterns of State Repression **Brightspace**
Azra Rashid. The Politics of Veiling and Unveiling **Brightspace**
Paper 2 due

Week 11 discussion debate: How should global sports organizations determine women's eligibility

- 11: No class, veterans Day

13: Global LGBTQ issues

Kelly Kollman & Matthew Waites. "The Global Politics of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Human Rights: an Introduction." **Brightspace**

Kaoma, Kapyra J. "The Marriage of Convenience: The U.S. Christian Right, African Christianity, and Postcolonial Politics of Sexual Identity." Global Homophobia Book Subtitle: States, Movements, and the Politics of Oppression **Brightspace**

Gino Pauselli and Maria-Jose Urzura. "Why Autocracies Feat LGBTQ Rights." Journal of Democracy. **Brightspace**

Week 12 discussion sections: The US abortion debate and global reproductive rights and health (Monday section will make arrangements)

Part 7: Colonization and Post-Colonialism: Self Determination as a Norm

18: Post-Colonialism

Sterling-Folker, pgs 217-261

Sanjay Seth, "Postcolonial theory and the critique of International Relations" **Brightspace**

Paper 3 assignment handed out

20: India, Pakistan, and the Partition (and Kashmir)

Rathnam Indurthy, India-Pakistan Wars and the Kashmir Crisis **Brightspace**

Week 13 discussion debates: What should be the status of Puerto Rico?

Daniel Immerwahr. "The Greater United States: Territory and Empire in US History." **Brightspace**

Amilcar Antonio Barreto "American Identity, Congress, and the Puerto Rico Statehood Debate." Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism. **Brightspace**

Part 8: Poverty: Casting our eyes on those left behind

25: Global poverty

Benjamin Curtis and Serena Cosgrove "Building a framework for understanding poverty" **Brightspace**

Majda Bne Saad "The World Food System: Challenges and Options" in The Global Hunger Crisis: Tackling Food Insecurity in Developing Countries **Brightspace**

Haass, 97-110, 143-154, 240-250

27: Thanksgiving, no class

Week 14 discussion sections: no sections, Thanksgiving Break

Part 9: Crisis and Global Order: Globalization as Threat or Opportunity?

December 2: The Refugee Crisis: Poverty, Statelessness, and Reaction

Jeff Cris "UNHCR at 70 An Uncertain Future for the International Refugee Regime" **Brightspace**

Ruth Ellen Wasem. "More than a Wall: The Rise and Fall of US Asylum and Refugee Policy" **Brightspace**

Ranjoo Seodu Herr. "Liberal nationalism and Central American refugees: What is America's national responsibility?" **Brightspace**

Haass, 193-200

4: COVID, pandemics, and public health

Martin Broberg "A Critical Appraisal of the World Health Organization's International Health Regulations (2005) in Times of Pandemic: It Is Time for Revision" **Brightspace**

Katerini Tagmatarchi Storeng, Antoine de Bengy Puyvallee and Felix Stein. "COVAX and the rise of the 'super public private partnership' for global health" **Brightspace**

Haass, 208-214

Paper 3 due

Week 15 discussion debates sections: How should the WHO reform to confront the next pandemic?

Final Exam Review Session: Monday, Dec 9, 9:30-11:00 (this is voluntary)

Final Exam: Monday, December 16, 11-am – 1 pm

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Academic Integrity

The University of Southern California is foremost a learning community committed to fostering successful scholars and researchers dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Academic misconduct is in contrast to the university's mission to educate students through a broad array of first-rank academic, professional, and extracurricular programs and includes any act of dishonesty in the submission of academic work (either in draft or final form).

This course will follow the expectations for academic integrity as stated in the [USC Student Handbook](#). All students are expected to submit assignments that are original work and prepared specifically for the course/section in this academic term. You may not submit work written by others or "recycle" work prepared for other courses without obtaining written permission from the instructor(s). Students suspected of engaging in academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity.

Other violations of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication (e.g., falsifying data), knowingly assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty, and any act that gains or is intended to gain an unfair academic advantage.

The impact of academic dishonesty is far-reaching and is considered a serious offense against the university and could result in outcomes such as failure on the assignment, failure in the course, suspension, or even expulsion from the university. These outcomes are based on the severity of the violation, but recognize that the best outcome you can expect from academic dishonesty is a failure of that graded assignment. This is a big deal. Please come talk with me with concerns, questions, or clarifications.

For more information about academic integrity see the [student handbook](#) or the [Office of Academic Integrity's website](#) and university policies on [Research and Scholarship Misconduct](#).

And the Policy on the use of AI (welcome to 2024!)

Since creating, analytical, and critical thinking skills are part of the learning outcomes of this course, all assignments should be prepared by the student working individually or in groups. Students may not have another person or entity complete any substantive portion of the assignment. Developing strong competencies in these areas will prepare you for a competitive workplace. Therefore, using AI-generated tools is prohibited in this course, will be identified as plagiarism, and will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity.

And a note on ChatGPT and other forms of AI: When you attempt to write a paper via ChatGPT, it just makes up sources. So I and the graders will pay special attention to sourcing. I am much less concerned with students who might use AI to draw a draft of a paper and then edit it thoroughly (though it is not nearly as ideal as writing the initial draft yourself). BUT the AI is terrible at citations. It often makes them up. It often only references very dated material. So I will tell you that the detection tool I plan to use is, first and foremost, referencing the citations. Be aware of the importance of citations.

And notes on the distribution of class material, including recordings of the class and distribution of notes:

Recording a university class without the express permission of the instructor and announcement to the class, or unless conducted pursuant to an Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) accommodation. Recording can inhibit free discussion in the future, and thus infringe on the academic freedom of other students as well as the instructor. We live in an age of recording of classes for clickbait online stories. This is a free space of discussion and is intended as such to be nurturing of new ideas. You can find more on this university policy at: ([Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook](#), page 13).

Distribution or use of notes, recordings, exams, or other intellectual property, based on university classes or lectures without the express permission of the instructor for purposes other than individual or group study. This includes but is not limited to providing materials for distribution by services publishing course materials. This restriction on unauthorized use also applies to all information, which had been distributed to students or in any way had been displayed for use in relationship to the class, whether obtained in class, via email, on the internet, or via any other media. There will be some classroom distribution, usually a Google Doc for studying purposes. But obviously selling any of this material for future use is prohibited. And don't bother keeping old exams in files for future classes. I change them every semester. ([Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook](#), page 13).

Students and Disability Accommodations:

USC welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. [The Office of Student Accessibility Services](#) (OSAS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter disability-related barriers. Once a student has completed the OSAS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and accommodations are determined to be reasonable and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be available to generate for each course. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at osas.usc.edu. You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at osasfrontdesk@usc.edu.

Support Systems:

[Counseling and Mental Health](#) - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

[988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline](#) - 988 for both calls and text messages – 24/7 on call

The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States. The Lifeline is comprised of a national network of over 200 local crisis centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices. The new, shorter phone number makes it easier for people to remember and access mental health crisis services (though the previous 1 (800) 273-8255 number will continue to function indefinitely) and represents a continued commitment to those in crisis.

[Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services \(RSVP\)](#) - (213) 740-9355(WELL) – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender- and power-based harm (including sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking).

[Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX \(EEO-TIX\)](#) - (213) 740-5086

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

[Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment](#) - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

[The Office of Student Accessibility Services \(OSAS\)](#) - (213) 740-0776

OSAS ensures equal access for students with disabilities through providing academic accommodations and auxiliary aids in accordance with federal laws and university policy.

[USC Campus Support and Intervention](#) - (213) 740-0411

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

[Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#) - (213) 740-2101

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

[USC Emergency](#) - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

[USC Department of Public Safety](#) - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-1200 – 24/7 on call

Non-emergency assistance or information.

[Office of the Ombuds](#) - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC)

A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.

[Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice](#) - (323) 442-2850 or otfp@med.usc.edu

Confidential Lifestyle Redesign services for USC students to support health promoting habits and routines that enhance quality of life and academic performance.