

PLSC 346: Seminar on Global Issues
MWF: 9:00-9:50
Welles 128

Fall 2009

Professor E. Drachman
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Office Hours: M, 12:45-1:45, W, 1:30- 3:30 and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course focuses on a number of global challenges facing the world. Among the topics that will be studied are the spread of nuclear weapons, poverty, energy and health. The aim of the course is to understand the root causes and background of these challenges and to identify and evaluate alternative strategies to meet them.

REQUIRED BOOKS

Fareed Zakaria. THE POST-AMERICAN WORLD. 2008
Tracy Kidder. MOUNTAINS BEYOND MOUNTAINS. 2003
CQ Researcher, GLOBAL ISSUES, 2009
Jasper Becker. ROGUE REGIME: KIM JONG-IL AND THE LOOMING THREAT. 2008

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Participation in class discussion:	20% of grade
Debates/discussions:	20% of grade
Position paper:	20% of grade
Midterm exam:	10% of grade
Final Exam:	30% of grade

PARTICIPATION IN CLASS DISCUSSION

- Volunteer responses in class discussion
- Answer questions from instructor
- Challenge positions/ideas/arguments/assumptions by instructor and fellow students
- Raise pertinent questions regarding class discussions and readings

**** Student participation in class discussion is essential to a successful seminar and to receiving a high grade in the course. Students with more than four unexcused absences will not receive credit for this course.**

POSITION PAPER

Each student will write a position paper on a selected global issue. These papers will be written as if they were to be presented to a select group designated by the UN or other relevant entity (e.g., a government, regional body, or NGO) for consideration and implementation. As such, papers must include the following:

- Statement of the problem (a few sentences or short paragraph)
- Analysis of the problem , with brief background
- Three major options to be considered, with pros and cons of each
- Recommended option with reasons for choice

Papers will be approximately 15 pages long, with evidence of use of the internet and traditional library research. Students must show that they have utilized at least 2 primary sources, 2 research journal articles and 2 books.

Grades will be based on the quality of writing, research, and analysis.

Due Date: In class, at the start of class on Wednesday, December 2. No late papers or email submissions will be accepted.

Warning: Plagiarism is a serious offense. If plagiarism is detected, students will fail this course and be reported to the Dean of the College for disciplinary action.

Students with Disabilities: Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodations must contact the instructor early in the semester.

COURSE FORMAT

For the most part each topic will be introduced in the first class (sometimes by a video), discussed during the next 1 or 2 classes, and then more formally debated or discussed on the last class of the scheduled time period.

DEBATES AND DISCUSSIONS

Each student will participate in 2 debates or formal discussions. Groups will be formed during the first class.

COURSE OUTLINE AND SYLLABUS

August 31: Introduction; formation of debate/discussion groups

September 2- 11: The problem of nuclear proliferation: How should concerned countries deal with the nuclear programs of North Korea and Iran?

Watch: PBS Frontline program: “Kim’s Nuclear Gamble” (2008), and “Showdown with Iran,” 2007

Read: Becker (entire); CQ *Global Issues* (hereafter CQ), Ch. 3; BBC, “Q &A: Iran and the Nuclear Issue;” David Harris, “Don’t Let Iran Cross the Nuclear Threshold,” *Christian Science Monitor*, May 28, 2009 Ray Tayekh, “Shaping a Nuclear Iran,” *Washington Post*, May 18, 2008; Noah Feldman, “Islam, Terror, and the Second Nuclear Age,” *New York Times Magazine*, October 26, 2006; Scott Peterson, “Iran’s Nuclear Program: Will More Sanctions Work?” *Christian Science Monitor*, June 13, 2008; Philip Taubman, “The Trouble with Zero,” *New York Times*, May 10, 2009; Anne Applebaum, “Yes, We Can . . . Disarm?” *Washington Post*, April 7, 2009; Hui Zhang, “How to Deal with North Korea,” *Boston Globe*, April 16, 2009; Dan Blumenthal and Robert Kagan, “What to do about North Korea,” *Washington Post*, May 26, 2009; Victor Cha, “Up Close and Personal, Here’s What I Learned,” *Washington Post*, June 14, 2009

September 14-21: The Rise of the Rest: Which Countries will be the most Dominant World Powers in the 21st Century?

Watch: PBS Frontline program: “Young and Restless in China,” April 2008

Read: Zakaria (entire); CQ, Chs 8 and 16; Robert Kagan, “In Europe, a Slide toward Irrelevance,” *Washington Post*, June 15, 2008; Blaine Harden, “For Japan, a Long, Slow Slide,” *Washington Post*, February 3, 2008; Richard Haas, “The Age of Nonpolarity,” *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2008

September 23-30: How should the war against Al Qaeda be waged? The “Af-Pak” Dilemma

Watch (inside and outside of class): PBS Frontline Program: “Afghanistan: The Other War” (April 2007); “Afghanistan: The Forgotten War,” (July 2008) “Pakistan: Children of the Taliban” (April 2009); and “Pakistan Under Siege,” (May 2009)

Read: CQ, Ch. 14; Marc Sageman, “Does Osama Still Call the Shots?” *Foreign Affairs*, July/August, 2008; Alan Krueger, “What Makes a Terrorist,” *The American*, November/December 2007; Peter Bergen and Paul Cruickshank, “The Unraveling,” *The New Republic*, June 11, 2008; Richard Scheuer, “The State of the Jihad, As He Might See It,” *Washington Post*, February 17, 2008; John Mueller, “How Dangerous are the Taliban?” *Foreign Affairs Magazine*, 2009; Council on Foreign Relations, “The Troubled Afghan-Pakistani Border,” March 20, 2009; Max Boot, “How to Surge the Taliban,” *New York Times*, March 13, 2009; Leslie Gelb, “How to Leave Afghanistan,” *New York Times*, March 13, 2009

October 2- 14: Three related questions:

- 1) Is Torture by Governments Ever Justified?**
- 2) Should the Guantanamo Camp be closed down?**
- 3) Should the Enablers of Torture be Prosecuted?**

Watch: PBS Frontline program: "The Torture Question," 2006; UCTV, "Torture and the Law: Can U.S. Officials be held Accountable?" (2009); and "Getting out of Gitmo," (2009)

Read: CQ, Ch. 5; "Dershowitz, torture could be justified," CNN. Com, March 4, 2003; Charles Krauthammer, "The truth about torture," *The Weekly Standard*, December 5, 2006, and "Torture? No. Except . . .", *Washington Post*, May 1, 2009; Darius Rejali, "Torture, American Style," *Boston Globe*, December 16, 2007; Michael Ignatieff, "Evil under Interrogation: Is Torture ever Permissible?" *Financial Times*, May 15, 2004; Tom Lassiter (chief writer), McClatchy News Service Series: "Guantanamo: Beyond the Law," June 11 +, 2008; Kenneth Roth, "After Guantanamo: The Case against Preventive Detention," *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2008; Linda Greenhouse, "Justices Rule Terror Suspects Can Appeal in Civilian Courts," *New York Times*, June 13, 2008; Joby Warrick and Peter Finn, "Psychologists Helped Guantanamo Interrogation," *Washington Post*, April 18, 2009; K Cox, "Obama Must Prosecute Bush-era Torture Enablers," *Christian Science Monitor*, June 15, 2009; Michael Kinsley, "Where This Buck Stops," *Washington Post*, May 1, 2009; Mark Danner, "If Everyone Knew, Who's to Blame?" *Washington Post*, April 26, 2009 and "US Torture: Voices from the Black Sites," *New York Review of Books*, April 9, 2009; Harry Silverglate, "On Torture Outrage, let's take a step back," *Boston Globe*, April 23, 2009; and Mark McKeon, "Why We Must Prosecute," *Washington Post*, April 28, 2009

ENJOY FALL BREAK: Monday, October 12

MIDTERM EXAMINATION: Friday, October 16

October 19-23: Should the Composition and Role of the UN Security Council be Changed to Meet the Challenges of the 21st Century?

Read: Norma Boustany, "Blueprint for a better United Nations," *Washington Post*, December 15, 2004; Farah Stockman, "UN Panel to recommend Security Council Expansion," *Boston Globe*, November 28, 2004; Online Newshour, "UN Member States Torn over Security Council Expansion," September 9, 2005; Global Policy Forum, "Articles on UN Security Council Reform, 2008 (especially Jonas von Freiesleben, "Reform of the Security Council")"

October 26-30: What are the Best Ways for a Government to Provide Health Care for its People?

Watch: PBS Frontline Program: "Sick around the World," April 2008 and skim related readings

Read: TBA

November 2-13: How Should the World Respond to the Genocide in Darfur?

4 Related Controversies:

- 1) The Right to Protect (R2P)**
- 2) Humanitarian Intervention**
- 3) Universal Jurisdiction**
- 4) The International Criminal Court (ICC)**

Watch: PBS Frontline Program: "On Our Watch," (2007); "Genocide in Slow Motion," (2007) and skim related readings

Read: CQ, Ch. 6; BBC, "Sudan's Darfur Conflict;" Samantha Powers, "Dying in Darfur," *The New Yorker*, June 2, 2007; Julie Flint, "Darfur, Saving itself," *Washington Post*, June 3, 2007; "The Responsibility to Protect and the International Criminal Court: America's New Priorities," Conference Report, December 5-7, 2007 (web); Hans Kochler, "Universal Justice and International Power Politics: Ideal versus Real," 2005 (web); Craig Whitlock, "Spain's Judges Cross Borders In Rights Cases," *Washington Post*, May 24, 2009; and "The Princeton Principles on Universal Jurisdiction," (web)

November 16-23: What are the Best Energy Alternatives to Reliance on Oil?

Read: CQ, Ch. 10; Joseph Kahn and Mark Landler, "China Grabs West's Smoke-Spewing Factories," *New York Times*, December 21, 2007; Rick Newman, "The Pros and Cons of 8 Green Fuels," *U.S. News & World Report*, January 11, 2008; Robert Bryce, "5 Myths About Breaking Our Foreign Oil Habit," *Washington Post*, January 13, 2008; Steven Mufson, "Siphoning Off Corn to Fuel Our Cars," *Washington Post*, April 30, 2008; Robert Samuelson, "Start Drilling," *Washington Post*, April 30, 2008; Philip Warburg, "Why Nuclear Power is Not the Answer," *Boston Globe*, May 9, 2005; Clifford Kraus, "Global Demand Squeezing Natural Gas Supplies," *New York Times*, May 29, 2008; Matthew Wald, "Mounting Costs Slow the Push for Clean Coal," *New York Times*, May 30, 2008; Elisabeth Rosenthal, "Biofuels Deemed a Greenhouse Threat," *New York Times*, February 8, 2008

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

November 30-December 7: How to Deal with Poverty around the World

Watch: Greg Mortenson Video; Paul Farmer Video from 60 Minutes

Read: CQ, Ch. 9; Kidder (entire); Deepa Narayan, L. Pritchett and S Kapoor, "Moving Out of Poverty: Success from the Bottom Up (World Bank Study, 2008); Jeffrey Sachs, "Common Wealth, *Time Magazine*, May 13, 2008

December 9: Are Cell Phones Revolutionizing Global Affairs?

Listen to: NPR, Talk of the World, "Mobile Phones around the World," May 28, 2009

December 11: Endangered Languages

Read: UNESCO, "Frequent Asked Questions on Endangered Languages" (web); Karl Lydersen, "Preserving Languages Is About More Than Words," *Washington Post*, March 16, 2009

December 14: Conclusions and Review

FINAL EXAM: Friday, December 18, 8-11 A.M.

DEBATES and DISCUSSIONS

The class will be divided into 5 groups of 4 students each. Each group will participate in 2 debates or discussions. If a group is involved in a second debate, participants will reverse taking the Yes and No positions.

Debate and Discussion Schedule

September 9: How should concerned countries respond to the nuclear weapons programs of North Korea and Iran? (group 1 discussion, 2 students)

September 11: Is the call for abolition of nuclear weapons realistic? (group 1 debate, 2 students)

September 21: Which countries are most likely to be the dominant world powers in the twenty-first century? (group 2 discussion. Each student chooses 1 country)

September 30: How should concerned countries respond to the Taliban and Al Qaeda in Afghanistan and Pakistan? (group 3 discussion)

October 9: Is torture ever justified? (group 4 debate, 2 students)

October 14: Should the Obama administration prosecute enablers of torture under the Bush administration? (group 4 debate, 2 students)

October 23: Should the role of the UN Security Council be changed (including membership of the 5 permanent members) to meet the challenges of the 21st century? (group 5 discussion)

October 30: What is the best way for a government to provide health care for its people? (group 1 discussion)

November 11: How should the world respond to the genocide in Darfur? (group 2 discussion, 2 students)

November 13: Should the U.S. support the principle of universal jurisdiction (include controversy over joining the ICC)? (group 2 discussion, 2 students)

November 23: What are the best energy alternatives to reliance on oil? (group 3 discussion)

December 7: What are the best ways to help people get out of poverty? (group 4 discussion)

December 11: How important is the preservation of indigenous languages? Case study: Should the Irish try to preserve Gaelic? (group 5 debate, 2 students)

December 11: As an American, which foreign languages would you consider most important to study now? (group 5 discussion, 2 students). Other students will develop their own list to bring to class.

Guidelines for debates and discussions

1. Each participant will make a 5 minute opening statement in support of a position. This time limit will be strictly enforced. (20 minutes)
2. Students not in the debate or discussion and the instructor will question the presenters (25 minutes)

Additional information for debates and discussions

1. Each debater/discussant must submit an opening statement (1-2 pages), with a brief bibliography.
2. Students not in the debate/discussion must submit a brief (1-page) statement or commentary on the issue(s) of the day's debate or discussion.