

Secondary Social Science: American Government & Political Science

Course of Study for AGO1 & AGT1



Description

This document outlines the sequence of the steps, through reading; research; activities; and, assessments, required to develop the necessary competence in Government and Political Science.

Competence is measured by the successful completion of the AGO1 Objective Exam and the AGT1 performance assessment (task) located in TaskStream.

The completion of the activities contained in this Course of Study (COS) is necessary to gain the required competence to successfully pass the graded Objective Exam and Performance Assessment. It is strongly recommended that you complete the activities to assure your mastery of the required knowledge and competence to satisfactorily pass this course of study.

Introduction

Generally the purpose of this course is to introduce the fundamentals of government and politics, particularly the major institutions and processes. Further, it aims to develop skills and abilities in analyzing and evaluating issues and public policies in American politics.

The founder of political philosophy was Socrates. And political philosophy is the correct name for the material presented in those of Plato's dialogues in which Socrates appears and/or political matters are discussed. The first true political science or systematic study of politics and related matters as such is found in Aristotle's works, especially his treatises *Politics* and *Ethics*. Aristotle's political science, like his natural science, prevailed until the Enlightenment, when it began to be replaced by that of political thinkers like Thomas Hobbes, Francis Bacon and John Locke. Their (new) political science was of a

different character. Hobbes and Locke are the primary founders of liberalism, that is, of the notion of politics which has at its foundation the free individual. This is the fundamental principle that emerges from the “state of nature” as discussed by Hobbes in his major work *Leviathan* and by Locke in his *Two Treatises of Government*. The state of nature is a hypothetical state. It is state where human beings are free to preserve themselves using whatever means necessary. They have no prior obligations or allegiances. Hence they are free also to enter into a “social contract” with others.

The American Founders were inheritors of the social contract teaching. The argument of the Declaration of Independence, for example, is based on Lockean social contract theory. The founding of the United States was also influenced by the notion of “republicanism”, which emphasizes the liberty of self-government but not necessarily on the basis of the rights-bearing individual of liberalism, and hence not necessarily on the basis of private property. The better we come to understand these things the better we come to understand ourselves as citizens of a particular kind of political regime. In this course of study we will devote more time to these matters as well as to other important developments in the history of political theory, such as Marxism. We will also study two additional branches of political science.

Political science as it exists today is very diverse and specialized. The study of government and political science in university departments of political science is generally divided into several different areas or subfields. Although there are many of these subfields, in this course of study we focus on three that provide a broad, general view of political studies: political theory, comparative politics and international relations. As we look at each of these areas we will be reflecting on how the perspective from which they view politics sheds light on the institutions and practices of our American government.

Learning Resources

Divine, R., Breen, T.H., et al. (2007). *America Past and Present*, Single Volume Edition (8th Edition). New York, New York: Pearson Longman. ISBN 978-0321446633 (Note: This book is used sparingly for this Course of Study, but it is the main text for the Courses of Study covering United States History)

Mansfield, H. (2000). *A Student's Guide to Political Philosophy*. New York New York: ISI Books. ISBN 978-1882926435

Rourke, J. (2007). *International Politics on the World Stage* (11th Edition). New York, New York: McGraw Hill. ISBN 978-0073261188

Wilson, J., Dilulio, J. (2006). *American Government*. (10th Edition). Boston, Mass. Houghton Mifflin. ISBN: 0-618-55662-1

[Thinkwell “American Government” \(online\)-Request through AAP](#)

Disposition Statement

Western Governors University supports the development and demonstration of professional teaching dispositions throughout the course of its teaching licensure programs. All teacher education students and faculty will demonstrate the following dispositions described in the WGU conceptual framework and code of ethics. Competent and caring; Respectful and embracing of diversity; Reflective practitioners; Equitable and fair; Professional practice consistent with the belief that all students can learn; Collaborative professionals; Professional leaders and change agents. Please review the Code of Ethics found in the WGU Student Handbook. Practice the dispositions above while working through the readings and activities that follow. Reflect on your learning. Believe that you will learn the material needed to demonstrate your competence on the assessments. Care about your education by scheduling time each week to devote to your studies. Collaborate with other current and prospective teachers by interacting in the community. Be a leader of change by making suggestions to improve this learning document.

Competencies

The topics and activities in this course of study are based upon the following competency statements:

Competency 111.3.1: Political Theory and Forms of Government: The graduate can discuss fundamental ideas and concepts in political theory.

Competency 111.3.2: Divergent Forms of Government: The graduate can describe and discuss divergent forms of government.

Competency 111.3.3: International Politics: The graduate can describe and discuss international politics.

As you can see, these competencies define three broad areas of study within the study of government and political science. The topics that follow highlight specific aspects of each area with the intention of helping you to develop a foundation upon which to build your knowledge through further study and work as an educator.

Week 1

Preparing for Success

To successfully complete UTC1, you need the appropriate learning resources. Prepare a calendar outlining the days and times you will work on this COS; share this with your family/friends so they are aware of your obligations.

Acquire Learning Resources

Purchase and or enroll in the learning resources listed below so there will be no delays in your progress. The Learning Resources are essential for success in this assessment.

Order the Textbooks

The WGU Bookstore has this book available for immediate purchase and delivery. You may shop at other online bookstores, but be sure to order early and use the correct ISBN to get the correct edition

□ Enroll in Thinkwell: American Government

□ Access and Peruse the Social Science Political Science and Economics Learning Community

Click on the Communities link in the Student Portal, the Community will be listed. Peruse the site and familiarize yourself with the Discussion Tool and Instant Message function. This is where you will post some of your questions for discussion and where you can communicate with the Community Leader if you have any questions.

□ Download Flashcard Exchange

<http://www.flashcardexchange.com/>

This is a Free Study Activity Tool students will use to make Flashcards

□ Download Study Charts from Have Fun Teaching

<http://www.havefunteaching.com/printableworksheetsgraphicorganizers.html>

This is a Free Study Activity Tool students will use to make Compare & Contrast Charts, Cause & Effect Charts and Note Taking & Summarizing Charts

Week 2

Political Theory—Part 1

The readings and activities for Week 2 will introduce students to fundamental concepts related to the history and development of political theory.

Background Information

As noted in the introduction to this course of study, political science has a long history. Strictly speaking, political science, like science generally, is a Western phenomenon, meaning that it belongs to the Western tradition of intellectual development. Just as the thinkers of the Enlightenment changed science generally they also changed political science (or theory). Accordingly, it is important to understand the difference between the original, classical approach to political theory and the modern approach. It is also important to understand that the terms “liberal” and “conservative” as they originally were used differed in meaning from how we use them today. In this course of study we are using the term “political theory” to encompass a number of terms, including “political philosophy” and “political thought.” And we are approaching it simply from the point of view of the history of political theory, our goal being to understand that history and some of the essential ideas that continue to form our way of life.

Competency 111.3.1: Political Theory and Forms of Government: The graduate can discuss fundamental ideas and concepts in political theory.

After completing this week’s activities, you will be able to explain what political theory is; describe and discuss the major differences between classical political theory and modern political theory; describe the political theory of “classical liberalism” and that of “classical conservatism”, and how the classical or original use of these terms, i.e., “liberal” and “conservative” differs from how the terms are used today.

Classical and Modern Political Theory

Classical political theory originated with Socrates, and the term “classical” generally refers to political philosophy in the western world prior to the Italian Renaissance. It includes, thus, the political theory of the Greek philosophers Plato and Aristotle as well as that of thinkers within the Catholic tradition, such as St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas, who contemplated the relationship between Greek philosophy and Christian doctrine. This form of political thought also existed within Judaism and Islam, whose thinkers, e.g., Maimonides and Al-Farabi, sought to harmonize Greek philosophy with what they understood to be revelations of divine law (i.e., the right order of the political community) to prophets.

Modern political theory generally refers to the efforts of political thinkers as early as the Renaissance (Niccolo Machiavelli) and later Enlightenment figures such as Thomas Hobbes and John Locke who, in the case of the latter two in particular, sought to free politics from claims about ultimate truth and thus from bitter religious wars, by grounding good government in a hypothesized “state of nature.”

□ Read

Chapter 1 of *American Government* and *A student's Guide to Political Philosophy* (all).
And consider the following review of political theory:

<https://web5.wgu.edu/aap/content/tc%20social%20science%20doc%2016%20psc%20political%20theory.pdf>

□ Visit Thinkwell.com

Review all of Section I. When you have completed the section, take the associated quiz.

□ Reflect

What makes government legitimate? In politics this question is often argued about, or fought over, by competing groups or interests. What role does the question of the common good play in these debates? Does anyone have a particular right to rule? Why might this question be fundamental to ‘political science’? A corollary question is, “Can political science answer the question of legitimate government, or should political science concern itself with other matters”?

“Classical Liberalism” and “Classical Conservatism”

Today, especially in American political discourse, the term “liberal” or “liberalism” indicates someone who leans to the “left” on any number of political, social or economic issues and thus favors more government intervention, redistribution of wealth and so on. “Conservative” generally indicates someone who leans to the “right” in favoring a weaker central government, lower taxes and greater state or local control. Originally, or in their classic sense, however, these terms had quite different meanings.

□ Read

In the *American Government* text, read the chapter titled “Political Parties” (Chapter #s may differ depending on text edition).

In the *Comparative Politics* textbook, see the sections on Liberalism and Conservatism in the chapter titled “Ideology.”

See also: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Classical_liberalism &
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conservatism>

□ Create a Compare & Contrast Chart

Create a chart that compares the classical meaning of the term 'liberal' with its contemporary usage. Do the same thing for 'conservative'. In addition, see if you can discover the origin of the usage of the terms "right" and "left" in politics.

Week 3

Political Theory—Part 2

The readings and activities for Week 3 will introduce students to fundamental concepts related to the history and development of political theory.

Background Information

"Republicanism" is a difficult term to define. In fact, some authors argue that it has been used to refer to so many different ideas of government that it really does not belong to any single one. While there is some justification for such a view, it is important to try to study it because it represents a very influential idea (or set of ideas) that also inspired the American Founding, and because it continues to be a prominent term in titles of governments, e.g., the "Democratic Republic of the Congo." Of no less influence on the founders was what at the time was called "political economy", primarily the thought of Adam Smith.

Competency 111.3.1: Political Theory and Forms of Government: The graduate can discuss fundamental ideas and concepts in political theory.

After working through this week's topics and completing the associated activities you will be able to do the following: define and discuss "republicanism" and explain how it relates to both classical liberalism and classical conservatism. You will also be able to identify some of the basic concepts in Marxist political theory.

Republicanism

As noted, the term "republicanism" is susceptible to various definitions. In general, however, it stands for a form of self-government with an emphasis on citizen or civic virtue. It does not necessarily require a written constitution, and neither does it necessarily promote specifically defined individual rights (as are emphasized by liberalism). The story is told about Benjamin Franklin, that at the conclusion of the constitutional convention someone asked him what sort of government had been devised. His reply: "a republic, if you can keep it." America is somehow a hybrid of liberal constitutionalism and republicanism.

□ Read

Review Chapter 1 of *American Government*

See also: <http://www.seop.leeds.ac.uk/entries/republicanism/>

□ Reflect

On the basis of your reading, consider the words of the Pledge of Allegiance. "I pledge allegiance to the flag, of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands . . .". What does the word "republic" in the Pledge mean? How is the United States a "republic"?

□ Create a Note Taking and Summarizing Chart

Summarize the key features of classical liberalism on the one hand and of republicanism on the other. Which theory do you find more prominent in the argument of the Declaration of Independence?

Capitalism

Capitalism is a third strand of thought that contributed to the American founding. It is, of course, essentially a theory of economics. Its assumptions, however, may be thought to require particular governmental forms.

□ Read

Read the section on “Laissez-Faire Capitalism” in the *Comparative Politics: A Global Introduction* text. The chapter is titled “Political Economy” (ch. 13 in 2nd ed.; ch. 14 in 3rd ed.).

See also: <https://web5.wgu.edu/aap/content/tc%20social%20science%20doc%202-adam%20smith%20and%20the.pdf>

□ Reflect

Who was Adam Smith? What was the influence of his major work on economics, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*? What are the main assumptions of capitalism? What is the connection between capitalism and liberal constitutionalism?

□ Create a Note Taking & Summarizing chart

Visit: <http://www.havefunteaching.com/printableworksheetsgraphicorganizers.html>
Create a chart wherein you summarize the basic assumptions and requirements of capitalism on the one hand and socialism on the other.

Week 4

Political Theory—Part 3

The readings and activities for Week 4 will introduce students to fundamental concepts related to the history and development of political theory.

Background Information

Although Marx advocated state ownership of resources or taught that it was inevitable, Marxism is not the same as socialism. Strictly speaking, Marxism refers to the whole theory of Karl Marx (and Friederich Engels), which cannot be separated from the (supposedly inevitable) historical development that Marx describes. Meanwhile, there are countries that call themselves socialist but not Marxist or communist. Aside from that, however, the tensions within capitalism about which Marx wrote continue to make socialism an attractive alternative to many political thinkers.

Competency 111.3.1: Political Theory and Forms of Government: The graduate can discuss fundamental ideas and concepts in political theory.

After working through this week's topics and completing the associated activities you will be able to do the following: discuss the fundamental concepts of socialist thought and explain how it relates to capitalism. You will also be able to explain socialism and capitalism as distinct theories of political economy and describe the forms of government these theories may or may not require.

Socialism

It is difficult to separate socialism from Marxism, though they are not necessarily the same thing. Socialism predates Marxism, and is not, by itself, part of a theory about the history of the world (Marxism is such a theory). Socialism had great appeal in the United States beginning in the era of industrialization, and it continues to appeal to many people. All Marxists are socialists in some way, but not all socialists are Marxists.

□ Read

Review the sections on "Socialism" and "Marxism" in the chapter "Ideology" in the *Comparative Politics* textbook.

See also:

<https://web5.wgu.edu/aap/content/tc%20social%20science%20doc%2018%20psc%20socialism%20-%20document.pdf>

□ Reflect

When and why did socialist thought arise? What is the relationship between socialism and Marxism? What is the difference between socialism and communism?

Marxism

Marxism teaches that the triumph of communism is inevitable. Historically speaking, it became clear pretty quickly that Marx had overestimated the propensity of the proletariat to instigate the necessary revolt against the bourgeoisie (see the readings for this week). This is why Lenin emphasized the need for a "Vanguard of the proletariat" to lead the way. What is often called "Marxism-Leninism" is defined mainly by this amendment to Marx's theory.

The influence of Marx's thought on political events and developments in the Twentieth Century is difficult to overstate. And despite the fact that the main theoretical claims of Marxism have been discredited, there are still communist countries, e.g., North Korea, and still elements of Marxism that appeal to many political thinkers. What are the basics of Marxism, and wherein lies their appeal?

□ Read

In the *Comparative Politics* text, read the section on Marxism in the chapter titled "Ideology". For comparison, you might research Marx and Marxism at internet sites such as Wikipedia or the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy

□ Outline a lesson

Suppose you were given the task to teach a brief introduction to Marxism to a small group of people. Outline your presentation. What points would you include? What would you tell the group about the influence of Marxism?

Political Theory Review

□ Create flashcards and review

Create flashcards with the fundamental terms and concepts of political theory. Review each of the topics above and visit the Political Science and Economics Learning Community to discuss any topics about which you have questions.

Week 5

Comparative Politics—Part 1

The readings and activities for Week 5 will introduce students the subfield of political science known as comparative politics.

Background Information

Comparative politics examines a wide variety of political phenomena in the contemporary or present context, including the public policy, political participation and political culture of different countries. But one of its main focal points, and the one on which we focus in this course of study is the study of different forms of government. We are particularly interested to understand different forms of democratic government as well as different forms of non-democratic government.

Competency 111.3.2: Divergent Forms of Government: The graduate can describe and discuss divergent forms of government.

After working through this week's topics and completing the associated activities you will be able to do the following: define the goals of comparative politics and identify the essential characteristics of several different forms of government.

The Goals of Comparative Politics

Comparative politics is in some ways self-explanatory, i.e., it involves comparing governments or political systems. In this sense, Aristotle wrote one of the first, if not the first work of comparative politics. His *Politics* compares different types of political “regimes”, and on the basis of the comparison Aristotle devised a list of regime types based on the criteria as to whether rule was by many, few, or one and whether they ruled with a view to the common good or with a view to their own good. What are the aims or goals of comparative politics today?

□ Read

Read chapters 1 and 2 of *Comparative Politics*, titled “Comparative Politics: What is it? Why Study it?” and “Major Topics of Comparative Politics”.

□ Create a Chart

List the various areas of inquiry and the sorts of questions comparative politics explores. What does comparative politics hope to discover?

Forms of Government

Aristotle's list of regime forms includes the following: polity (many), aristocracy (few), monarchy (one). All three were considered good forms of rule, since they ruled with a view to the common good. The bad forms were the corollaries: democracy (many), oligarchy (few), tyranny (one). For Aristotle and the Greeks in general, democracy meant the rule of the many in their own interest, as opposed to the common interest. At any rate, in Aristotle's view, these were the political alternatives. As you complete the readings and activities for this week, think about how you would define the fundamental forms of government today.

□ Read

Review Chapter 2 of *Comparative Politics* and the chapter, titled "Democracy: What is it?"

□ Review Questions (Chapter 2)

How does the text distinguish between authoritarian and democratic regimes? Are the distinctions between these types of regimes always clear cut? Why or why not? What examples can you give of each type of regime?

□ Review Questions (Chapter 7)

What is the defining characteristic of democracy? How many different forms of "democracy" can you list? Does the fact that a country calls itself democratic make it so?

Week 6

Comparative Politics—Part 2

The readings and activities for Week 5 will introduce students to the essential characteristics of various forms of government.

Background Information

Comparative politics examines a wide variety of political phenomena in the contemporary or present context, including the public policy, political participation and political culture of different countries. But one of its main focal points, and the one on which we focus in this course of study is the study of different forms of government. We are particularly interested to understand different forms of democratic government as well as different forms of non-democratic government.

Competency 111.3.2: Divergent Forms of Government: The graduate can describe and discuss divergent forms of government.

After completing the readings and activities for this week you will be able to discuss the justifications given for theocratic forms of government as well as the characteristics and justifications of authoritarian regimes.

Forms of Government II (non-democratic/authoritarian)

The fundamental question implied by every existing government is what makes it legitimate. Why should the currently ruling government be in power? If there is a common agreement among the ruled that the government is legitimate, then the government is much more secure than if the ruled believe otherwise. What about “authoritarianism”? What is it, and are there circumstances in which it is or can be justified?

A purely objective, i.e., modern scientific, study of forms of government would not judge whether any of the forms of government it studies is good or bad. We may wonder whether such a study is possible, that is, whether we can separate our opinions of good and bad from our study. Is the modern comparative approach objective in this sense, or does it prefer one or more forms of government over another or others?

□ Read

In the *Comparative Politics* text, read the chapter titled “Ideology” (ch. 12, 2nd ed.; ch. 13, 3rd ed.) and read the following sections of the text as related to the forms of government they discuss:

Socialism—See the chapter “Ideology” and review the reading under “socialism” above in this course of study. What are the defining features of a socialist regime? Can it also be democratic?

Fascism—See the chapter “Ideology” What, in particular, characterizes fascism? Can “fascism” be found in combination with other forms?

Theocracy – See the definition in Chapter 1 and the section “Power in Iran” in the chapter titled “Power” (ch. 4, 2nd ed.).

Totalitarianism—See the definition in the same chapter (4) listed above. Can you list any current totalitarian regimes?

□ Create a Note Taking & Summarizing Chart

Summarize the differences between regimes considered democratic and those considered authoritarian. You might pay particular attention “checklists from Freedom in the World” in Chapter 2.

Week 7

Comparative Politics—Part 3

The readings and activities for Week 7 will introduce students to parliamentary forms of government, including a comparison of parliamentary and presidential forms of democratic government.

Background Information

Many countries have parliamentary forms of government. The focus of this week’s readings and activities is the fundamentals of parliamentary government. It is interesting to note that parliamentary forms have been attractive to many American political thinkers, including President Woodrow Wilson. For a time prior to his own tenure as president, Wilson saw the US Constitution as a barrier to effective government and favored a parliamentary system for the United States. He later changed his view. But

it is interesting in this light to compare the characteristics of a parliamentary system to those of a presidential one. What are the advantages and disadvantages of each?

Competency 111.3.2: Divergent Forms of Government: The graduate can describe and discuss divergent forms of government.

After completing this week's readings and activities you will be able to do the following: describe parliamentary forms of government and their advantages and/or disadvantages vis-à-vis other forms of government, such as the presidential system of the United States.

Democracy and Parliamentary Government (“Parliamentarianism”)

As noted above, parliamentary forms of government are attractive to many democratic political thinkers. What are the fundamental characteristics of a parliamentary system?

□ Read

In the *Comparative Politics* text, read the chapters titled “Democracy: How Does it Work?” (ch. 8), and “Democracy: What Does it Take?” (ch. 9).

□ Create a Note Taking & Summarizing Chart

Return to Chapter 8 and re-read the section on “Parliamentary Government.”

□ Create a Note Taking & Summarizing Chart

List the basic features of parliamentary government. Summarize its advantages and disadvantages.

List the “ten conditions for democracy”. Given these conditions, how likely is democracy to be able to take hold in a country where it has not previously prevailed?

Parliamentary and Presidential Systems

If parliamentary systems are an attractive form of democratic government, how do they compare to presidential systems like that of the US? What are the advantages and disadvantages of each form?

□ Review

In the *American Government* text, read the beginning of the Chapter titled “Congress” and the beginning of the chapter titled “The Presidency”.

Review Chapter 8 of the *Comparative Politics* text.

□ Create a Compare and Contrast Chart

List the basic characteristics of parliamentary government and the basic characteristics of “presidentialism”, and list the advantages and disadvantages of each? Which of them is to be preferred?

Comparative Politics Review

□ Create flashcards and review

Create flashcards with the fundamental terms and concepts of comparative politics and forms of government. Review each of the topics above and visit the Political Science and Economics Learning Community to discuss any topics about which you have questions.

□ Outline a Presentation

On the basis of your studies outline a presentation you might make comparing the governments of two foreign countries, for example Japan and Brazil. Factual information about the governments of these and other countries is available in the second part of the *Comparative Politics* text.

Week 8

International Relations—Part 1

The readings and activities for Week 8 will introduce students to the study of international politics and relations.

Background Information

International relations (IR) is the study not only of the various countries of the world in their interactions with one another but also of various kinds of organizations that are international in character, including international businesses. The world today is more interconnected than it has ever been and is very likely to become only more connected as technology continues to advance. But the approach to international relations always begins from our point of view as citizens of a particular country. It is important in the first place, therefore, to understand how our own government provides for relations with other countries.

Competency 111.3.3: International Politics: The graduate can describe and discuss international politics.

After completing this week's readings and activities you will be able to do the following: identify how the US Constitution delegates the powers necessary to conduct foreign affairs and describe the ways in which foreign policy is crafted and executed.

The US Constitution and Foreign Affairs

The US Constitution provides specific grants of powers to the executive and the legislature to conduct foreign affairs. As you recall what the powers are and to whom they are granted, reflect on whether there are tensions between how foreign policy is conducted today and what the Constitution specifies.

□ Read

In the text *American Government*, read the chapter titled "Foreign and Military Policy".

In the text *International Politics on the World Stage*, read the chapter titled "Thinking and Caring about World Politics" (chapter 1 in the eleventh edition)

□ Visit Thinkwell.com

Complete Sections 6.4 and 6.5. When you have completed the sections, take the associated quizzes.

□ Create a Note Taking and Summarizing Chart

Visit: <http://www.havefunteaching.com/printableworksheetsgraphicorganizers.html>

List the powers pertaining to foreign policy that are granted by the Constitution.

Summarize the different kinds of foreign policy and the ways that foreign policy is shaped. In what important ways is US foreign policy different today than during the first 100 years of the nation's existence?

Foreign Policy Execution

The execution of foreign policy usually depends on the policy. Different policies require different measures. Our objective here is just to review and recognize how foreign policy gets from the formation stage to the execution stage.

□ Read

In the text *International Politics on the World Stage*, read the chapter titled “Levels of Analysis and Foreign Policy” (chapter 3 in the eleventh edition)

□ Review

Review “Foreign and Military Policy” in the *American Government* text. Pay particular attention to the sections on “the machinery of foreign policy” and “the structure of defense decision-making.”

□ Create a Note Taking and Summarizing Chart

Visit: <http://www.havefunteaching.com/printableworksheetsgraphicorganizers.html>

Summarize how foreign policy executed in the United States. And, summarize the many factors that affect the development of foreign policy worldwide.

Week 9

International Relations—Part 2

The readings and activities for Week 9 will introduce students to various international organizations and issues.

Background Information

Some of the most prominent actors on the world stage are non-governmental organizations. This includes those that are interested in economic development (sometimes profit) or improvement in health, wellness and matters of human rights. The readings and activities for this week focus on a just a few of the major organizations and issues in this category.

Competency 111.3.3: International Politics: The graduate can describe and discuss international politics.

After completing the readings and activities for this week you will be able to do the following: describe several prominent international organizations and their objectives; discuss the importance of human rights in the study of international relations.

International Organizations (Economic)

Various international organizations are involved in international affairs. Those that are interested in economic development include businesses as well as non-profits. Our interest is to understand the purpose and goals of a few of these economic organizations, such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

□ Read

In the *International Politics on the World Stage* text, read the chapters titled “National Economic Competition” and “International Economic Cooperation” (chapters 12 and 13 in the eleventh edition).

□ Visit Thinkwell.com

Complete Sections 6.6.3 and 6.6.4. When you have completed these sections, take the associated quizzes.

□ Create a Note Taking & Summarizing Chart

List the main organizations discussed in the chapters and summarize what each does. How effective are these organizations in pursuing their goals.

International Organizations (Non-Economic)

International organizations that are not directly involved in economic development have various aims. The United Nations is the most obvious example, though its interests cut across both economic and non-economic lines. Other examples of such organizations are Green Peace and Amnesty International.

□ Read

In the *International Politics on the World Stage* text, read the chapters titled “Preserving and Enhancing Human Rights and Dignity” and “Preserving and Enhancing the Biosphere” (chapters 14 and 15 in the eleventh edition).

□ Visit Thinkwell.com

Review Section 6.5.3

□ Create a Note Taking & Summarizing Chart

On your chart, list organizations that pursue non-economic goals. What does each of these organizations do? How effective are they?

Human Rights (and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights)

Human rights are those freedoms to which all human beings are thought to be entitled. Obviously this does not mean that they are everywhere observed. Can human rights be enumerated exhaustively? What is the purpose of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights?

□ Read

In *International Politics on the World Stage*, review the chapter titled “Preserving Human Rights and Dignity” (chapter 14 in the eleventh edition). See also the section on “Sovereignty” in the chapter “National States: The Traditional Structure” (ch. 6, 11th ed.).

See also: *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights*

<https://web5.wgu.edu/aap/content/tc%20social%20science%20doc%2019%20%20psc%20unive%20rsal%20declaration%20of%20hr.pdf>

□ Reflect

How do the notion of sovereignty and the claims of human rights sometimes come into tension?

□ Create a Note Taking and Summarizing Chart

List several ways in which the UN and other organizations work to enhance the recognition of human rights worldwide.

Week 10

International Relations—Part 3

The readings and activities for Week 10 will introduce students to theories of international relations.

Background Information

We conclude our study of international relations with a review of two main theories of how such relations are best approached: “realism” and “liberalism.” Each of these theories has something to recommend it. As you complete the readings and activities, ask yourself which of the theories you find more persuasive. As you study and think about globalization, ask yourself whether one the other of the theories, or neither, seems more appropriate in the context of globalization and transnational interaction.

Competency 111.3.3: International Politics: The graduate can describe and discuss international politics.

After completing the readings and activities for this week you will be able to do the following: describe and compare “realism” and “liberalism” as theories of international relations; define globalization and explain how it influences countries across the globe.

International Relations Theory: Realism and Liberalism

There are several theories of international relations. The two that we examine here are what are called “positive” approaches, meaning that they are attempts to understand international relations scientifically or objectively. “Realism” is the first of these ‘positive’ approaches.

□ Read

In the text *International Politics on the World Stage*, review “Thinking and Caring about World Politics” (chapter 1 in the eleventh edition) and read “The Evolution of World Politics” (chapter 2 in the eleventh edition).

□ Outline a Short Presentation

Outline a short presentation that you might prepare to give to a small group of students. How would you explain the liberal and realist approaches to the study of international relations? In your view, which of these theories better accounts for the evolution of international relations throughout history?

Globalization

International relations cannot be separated from the question or fact of globalization. Whatever one's opinion about globalization, it is not likely to reverse course. How does it affect the study of international politics?

□ Read

In *International Politics on the World Stage*, read the chapters titled "Nationalism" and "Globalization and Transnationalism" (chapters 4 and 5 in the eleventh edition).

See also: <https://web5.wgu.edu/aap/content/doc%2015-globalization.pdf>

□ Create a Compare and Contrast Chart

Compare "Nationalism" as discussed in the text with "Transnationalism". What are the characteristics of each? Define globalization and summarize its effects and implications.

International Relations: Review the Concepts

□ Create flashcards and review

Create flashcards with the fundamental terms and concepts of international relations. Review each of the topics above and visit the Political Science and Economics Learning Community to discuss any topics about which you have questions.

Conclusion

Congratulations on completing the WGU Course of Study for Government and Political Science!

We hope you will be able to share the knowledge you have gained from this experience with your future and/or current students.

Assessment

It is now time to review and reflect on your learning progress up to this point. Make sure to review the Compare & Contrast Charts, Note-taking & Summarizing Charts, Maps, Timelines, Flashcards and Cause & Effect Charts you've created to study for this assessment. Discuss with your mentor a date to take the pre-assessment. When you have completed it, meet with your mentor to go over the results, if passed schedule a date to take the AGO1 Objective Exam. Once the AGO1 Objective Exam is passed your Mentor should refer you for the AGT1 Performance Assessment.

Performance Assessment

After passing the AGO1 Objective Exam students will enroll in the Performance Assessment (AGT1), which requires the completion of three performance tasks.

Review the associated competencies given throughout this course of study, as you begin to work on these performance tasks.

Taskstream Task 111.3.1-01 Subject Matter of Political Science
Taskstream Task 111.3.1-04 The Argument of the Declaration
Taskstream Task 111.3.1-10 Human Rights and Sovereignty

When you have completed both the objective assessment and the performance assessment, you have demonstrated your competency in American Government and Political Science.

Review of Major Points

The following topics are the essential points in this course of study; they are the topics on which your competency is based. Please consider carefully what you have learned regarding each. Review sections of the Course of Study as necessary and visit the Political Science and Economics Learning Community for further discussion.

Political Theory: Classical Liberalism and Conservatism
Political Theory: Republican Government
Political Theory: Classical and Modern Theory
Political Theory: Marxism
Political Theory: Socialism and Capitalism
Comparative Politics: Forms of Government
Comparative Politics: Authoritarianism
Comparative Politics: Parliamentarianism
Comparative Politics: Parliamentarianism vs. Presidential
International Relations: US Constitution and Foreign Affairs
International Relations: Foreign Policy Execution
International Relations: International Economic Organizations
International Relations: International Organizations: Non-Economic
International Relations: Human Rights
International Relations: Realism, Liberalism
International Relations: Globalization