

Researching World Politics in Interesting Times

Fall Quarter/Semester 2020

UC Washington Center

September 22 – December 1

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Why pronouns matter : <https://lgbt.ucsf.edu/pronounsmatter>

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Class Meetings: Tuesdays, 10:00 am - 1:00 pm (Pacific Time)

Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:30 – 2:30 via zoom (first come, first served); by appointment

COURSE INSTRUCTOR

I have taught at UCDC since 2014. I am also a Research Fellow at the American University Center for Latin American and Latino Studies and have taught courses in Latin American politics at various universities in Washington, DC. My book *Emigrants Get Political: Mexican Migrants Engage Their Home Towns* (Oxford 2018) examines the ways in which Mexican migrants engage with and shape the politics of their home towns. I have also studied the politics of indigenous rights movements in Latin America and am co-editor of *Latin America's Multicultural Movements and the Struggle Between Communitarianism, Autonomy, and Human Rights* (Oxford 2013). My current research includes projects on the climate–migration nexus, migration and refugee studies, violent democracies in Mexico and Central America, and migrant mayors. When not teaching, I work as an expert consultant on social science research methodology, migration and displacement, and Latin American politics and society. Additionally, I regularly serve as an expert witness on country conditions in Mexico and Honduras in US immigration courts. I am a political scientist by training (PhD 2013, American University) with training in comparative and international politics and hold an MA in International Policy Studies from the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey (MIIS) and Spanish and Philosophy degrees from Santa Clara University.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This seminar is designed to help you to critically engage with the dizzying array of problems faced by human societies today and to guide you through the process of developing a significant research paper on a topic of your choice related to world politics. This is *not* a field seminar in international relations. Through a combination of pre-recorded presentations, live lectures and discussions via weekly zoom meetings, and readings, the course will provide you with theoretical and historical frameworks to identify, diagnose, and devise solutions to problems of world politics. To help you develop your own research, readings, lectures, and discussions will also focus on principles of social science and policy research.

To help bring theoretical discussions to life, a central component of the course will involve your participation in the on-line *Statecraft* simulation (<http://www.statecraftsim.com/>). In the simulation students will represent nation-states in a fictitious world, take on the roles of foreign policy decision-makers, and grapple first-hand with the sorts of tradeoffs and responsibilities that characterize world politics.

The issues and problems covered during class discussions and that you read and write about will be driven by your own geographical and substantive interests. The course is also designed to help you to connect your academic pursuits with your professional development through your internships and experiences immersed in the broader political ecosystem of Washington, DC, albeit remotely.

A NOTE ON TAKING A CLASS “IN INTERESTING” TIMES

While from an abstract distance, I believe the times we are living through in the United States and the world are indeed interesting. Of course, most of us do not have the luxury to live our lives from an abstract distance. “Interesting” is a euphemism; times are just hard; and things are harder for some than others. Some have home situations that will make it challenging to focus and full invest themselves in the course as they would if we were all together in DC. I understand this and will be accommodating and flexible with each of you to ensure that you succeed in the course. I expect that you will show up for our time together and that you will be prepared each time we meet. I also understand that prediction is difficult (especially concerning the future). Your well-being is my top priority. If you need anything as we move throughout the quarter, please let me know. I cannot be helpful if I do not know there is a problem, and I want to be as helpful as I can be.

LEARNING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal #1: Students will be able to relate their internship experience with the skills and substance learned in the course.

Objective #1: Through class discussion and group work, you’ll have opportunities to explore how the mission and objectives of your internship organization seeks to affect the policy process in the U.S. and/or globally. Course assignments and in-class exercises will also help you to develop useful skills for professionals working in policy, politics, government, and research fields, some of which may be applicable in your current internships.

Goal #2: Students will experience a cultural, historical, policy or other event in DC that relates to the course.

Objective #2: While you won’t be experiencing DC in person, class activities will include your participation in a Congressional hearing, a briefing, or a panel discussion on a pressing issue related to world politics, foreign policy, or international affairs. This will likely involve virtually

attending an event and reporting back to the class in writing, recorded video, and or in our live sessions, depending on event schedules, student interests, and other priorities.

Goal #3: Students will be able to communicate persuasively in writing and orally.

Objective #3: You will do a lot of writing in this course and your classmates and I will give you extensive feedback. You will also give an oral presentation of your research for the whole class via zoom, which, needless to say, is an increasingly important skill to develop.

Goal #4: Students will be able to critically examine competing arguments and use empirical evidence to research and apply theory to practice.

Objective #4: Readings and class discussions will help you to build and improve your understanding of the process of conducting social science and policy research. You will draw on this background to research and write a theoretically sound and empirically grounded research or policy paper on a topic that is **global in scope** (and not predominantly US-focused).

Goal #5: To provide a framework for making sense of current problems and debates that are global in scope.

Objective #5: Readings, lectures, class discussions, and the Statecraft simulation will help familiarize you with current debates, problems, and relevant cases. We will consider these in historical and theoretical perspective and as manifested in the fictitious world of the simulation, while drawing on these insights to better understand contemporary problems of world politics.

Goal #6: To learn about how to find and use key sources of knowledge on areas of international affairs, to improve research skills, learn how to identify high quality sources in writing, and integrate data and theory into cogent and persuasive arguments.

Objective #6: Through readings, discussions, lectures, and in-class workshops, as well as through feedback from your professor, you will learn about different types of data, how to gather and systematize them, and how to use them as evidence to support (and refute!) competing arguments.

REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION

Assignment	Points
Engagement	15
Research Question	5
Literature Review	20
Oral Presentation	10
Final Paper	30
Statecraft Simulation Manual Quizzes	5
Statecraft Simulation Memos	10
Statecraft Simulation Performance	5
Total Points Possible	100

*Semester students: These requirements will account for 85% of your final course grade. The remaining 15% of your grade will be earned in the four-week module at the end of the term taught by Professor Diascro. I will be your instructor of record; as such, I will add your module grade from Professor Diascro to your seminar grade and submit your final course grade at the end of the semester.

1. **Engagement [15 points.]**¹ This grade component is more typically referred to as “participation,” but engagement is a better word. You will be evaluated based on how engaged you are with the readings, supplementary materials, class discussion, and other course content. As a distance learning course, a significant amount of participation will be asynchronous (i.e., not live), but students will be required to be available during our scheduled weekly live meetings. Weekly activities beyond the required readings will be required to prepare for our weekly meetings and this preparation will be reflected in the engagement grade unless otherwise noted. Examples of such weekly preparation will include following and being prepared to comment on world news, participation in discussion boards on Canvas, reporting on the work you do at your internship or the initiatives, programs, or actions being pursued by your organization or office, virtually attending a Congressional hearing or panel discussion, etc.
2. **Research Question [5 points].** You should start thinking about the topic you want to research as early as possible. This assignment is meant to be the first step in the development of your final paper. A short (max 1 page double spaced) presentation and justification of a concise, important, interesting, and puzzling research question should be posted to Canvas by **9:00 pm EST on the day before our Week 4 meeting**. This assignment must include a preliminary bibliography of **at least 5** scholarly or applied research sources. Students will provide detailed peer review to at least one of their classmates. Additional guidelines will be circulated.

¹ Based on Elizabeth Cohn’s syllabus, American University.

3. **Literature Review [20 points]:** Submission by **9:00 pm EST** on the day of our **Week 7 meeting** of a 2,000 - 3,000-word review of the literature relevant to your research question to turnitin.com (class id: **TBD**; password: **TBD**).² You will draw upon this literature review to frame and present your final assignment (policy proposal or research paper). The review should track the existing academic and policy-oriented publications relating to your question or policy problem. You must include properly formatted citations and a reference list of **at least 10** cited sources (5 of which must be from peer reviewed journal articles or books or chapters from academic presses). Additional guidelines will be circulated.
4. **Oral Presentation of Research Project [10 points].** All students will give a short live, virtual presentation of their research via Zoom. Presentation guidelines will be circulated and discussed later in the term.
5. **Final Policy Proposal or Research Paper [30 points].** Submission by **11:59pm EST** on the final day of class of a ~4,000 to 5,000-word paper via turnitin.com (class id: **TBD**; password: **TBD**).
6. **Statecraft Simulation Manual Quizzes [5 points]:** During the first two weeks of the simulation (turn 0 and turn 1) you must complete two short on-line quizzes based on the student manual for the simulation. The purpose of this exercise is to provide an incentive to ensure that each student sufficiently masters the rules of the game before we begin.
7. **Statecraft Simulation Memos [10 points].** You must post a 300-word memo on *Statecraft* **BEFORE** each weekly simulation turn ends. In a sense, these memos will become your ongoing “journal” for the simulation experience. They are intended to help ensure that students are actively participating in, and thinking about, the simulation each week. **Late memos and memos shorter than the required length will not be counted.**
8. **Statecraft Simulation Performance [5 points].** Performance points are given to each country based on a range of competitive (e.g., healthiest country), cooperative (e.g., global peace), and country development (quality of life) goals.

READINGS

There is no textbook for this course. Some readings will be available online, but most will be posted as pdfs to a **G-drive** folder I'll share with you. Most readings will also be accessible through your home institution library databases. Readings are meant to prepare you to conduct your research, to provide a common foundation for our class discussions, and to help you to think analytically about international and global issues. You will be required to do a considerable amount of additional reading of scholarly works, government and think tank reports, and press articles related to your research topics.

² Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com site.

SCHEDULE

Week 1 September 22

Introduction: What World Are We Living In?

- Rose, Gideon. 2018. “Which World Are We Living In? A half dozen choices of grand narrative for an increasingly turbulent era.” *Foreign Affairs Anthologies*, July/August 2018. Access at: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2018-06-14/which-world-are-we-living>
- Zvobgo, Kelebogile and Meredith Loken. “Why Race Matters in International Relations: Western dominance and white privilege permeate the field. It’s time to change that.” *Foreign Policy*, June 19, 2020. Accessed at: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/06/19/why-race-matters-international-relations-ir/>

Week 2 September 29

Framework 1: Violence and Conflict: Hot and Cold, Great and Small

→Activities: Statecraft Turn 0 starts (Complete Manual Quiz, etc. before end of Turn 0)

Required Readings:

- Kotkin, Steven. 2018. “Realist World: The Players Change, but the Game Remains.” *Foreign Affairs Anthologies*, July/August 2018.
- Du Bois, W.E.B. 1915. “The African Roots of War.” *The Atlantic Monthly* 115: 707–14.

Recommended Readings:

- Cohn, Carol. 1987. “Sex and Death in the Rational World of Defense Intellectuals.” *Signs* 12, 4. *Within and Without: Women, Gender, and Theory*. (Summer, 1987), pp. 687-718.
- Seymour, Richard. 2014. “The Cold War, American Anticommunism and The Global ‘Colour Line,’” in *Race and Racism in International Relations: Confronting the Global Colour Line*, edited by Alexander Anievas, et al., Taylor & Francis Group, 2014. Check for e-Book at your campus library.

Week 3 October 6

Framework 2: International Institutions: Democracy and Global Governance

→Activities: Statecraft, Turn 1 starts

Required Readings:

- X, Malcolm. 1965. “Not Just an American Problem, But a World Problem.” Speech at Corn Hill Methodist Church, Rochester, New York, February 16. Access at: <http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/pds/maai3/community/text10/malcolmxworldproblem.pdf>
- Deudney, Daniel and G. John Ikenberry. 2018. “Liberal World: The Resilient Order.” *Foreign Affairs Anthologies*, July/August 2018.

- *Recommended Readings:*

Avant, Deborah, Miles Kahler, and Jason Pielemeier. "Innovations in Global Governance: How Resilient, How Influential?" International Institutions and Global Governance Program, The Council on Foreign Relations, September 2017, pp. 1-7. Also, scan other essays in this publication and read one (or more!) that match your area(s) of interest.

Watch:

- Haile Selassie addresses the United Nations General Assembly during the Eighteenth Session on October 4th, 1963 calling for world peace. Spoken in Ethiopia's official Amharic, the recording is accompanied by an English translation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MDscnpF4RsI>

Listen:

- Bob Marley and the Wailers' 1976 song "War", the lyrics of which come from a section of Selassie's speech

Week 4 October 13

Research Question Discussions

→ASSIGNMENT DUE: Research Question (Night before class meeting)

→Activities: Statecraft, Turn 2 starts

Required Reading:

- Baglione, Lisa A. 2016. *Writing a Research Paper in Political Science*, Chapter 2, "Getting Started: Finding a Research Question," pp. 15-39.
- Sources necessary to develop your research question.

Recommended Reading:

- Kofman, Ava. "Bruno Latour, Post-Truth Philosopher, Mounts a Defense of Science." *New York Times Magazine*, October 25, 2018. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/25/magazine/bruno-latour-post-truth-philosopher-science.html>

Week 5 October 20

Framework 3: Political Economy: Poverty, Inequality, Development

→Activities: Statecraft, Turn 3 starts

Required Reading:

- Varghese, Robin. 2018. "Marxist World: What did you Expect from Capitalism?" *Foreign Affairs Anthologies*, July/August 2018.
- Rodrik, Dani. 2020. "Why Does Globalization Fuel Populism? Economics, Culture, and the Rise of Right-Wing Populism." *Annual Review of Economics*, July 2020.

Recommended Reading:

- Amin, Samir. 1972. "Underdevelopment and Dependence in Black Africa—Origins and Contemporary Forms." *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 10: 503–24.
- Centeno, Miguel A. and Joseph N. Cohen. 2012. "The Arc of Neoliberalism." *Annu. Rev. Sociol* 38:317–40.
- Levi, Margaret. 2018. "Towards a New Moral Economy: A Thought Piece."

Week 6 October 27

Framework 4: Identity: Nationalism, Ethnicity, Race, Religion, Ideology

→Activities: Statecraft, Turn 4 starts

Required Reading:

- Chua, Amy. "Tribal World: Group Identity is Everything." *Foreign Affairs Anthologies*, July/August 2018.
- Marx, A.W., 1996. "Race-making and the nation-state." *World Politics*, pp.180-20. URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25053960>
- Bass, Gary. "The Terrible Cost of Presidential Racism." *The New York Times*, September 3, 2020. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/03/opinion/nixon-racism-india.html>

Recommended:

- Brubaker, Rogers. 2009. "Ethnicity, Race, and Nationalism." *Annual Review of Sociology* 35:21–42.

Week 7 November 3

→ASSIGNMENT DUE: Literature review

→Activities: Statecraft, Turn 5 starts

Required Reading:

- Knomp. 2006. "Doing a Literature Review"
- Obenzinger. 2005. "What Can a Literature Review Do for Me?"

NOTE: WE WILL USE THE FINAL THREE WEEKS FOR INDEPENDENT WORK ON YOUR RESEARCH, COLLABORATIVE ENGAGEMENT WITH EACH OTHER, ONE-ONE ONE DISCUSSIONS WITH THE PROFESSOR, AND ORAL PRESENTATIONS OF RESEARCH PROJECTS.

Week 8 November 10

→Activities: Statecraft, Turn 6 starts (possible)

Week 9 November 17

→Activities: Statecraft, Turn 7 starts (possible)

November 24: THANKSGIVING WEEK—NO LIVE MEETING

Week 10 December 1

FINAL PAPERS DUE FOR ALL STUDENTS BY 11:59 PM

GRADING POLICIES

There are 100 points possible in this course. Grades will be allocated according to the following criteria, on a 100-point scale (and I round up):

- A: for superior work (93-100 on scale)
- A-: for excellent work (90 - 92 on scale)
- B+: for very good work (88 - 89 on scale)
- B: for good work (83 - 87 on scale)
- B-: for work between good and just satisfactory (80 - 82 on scale)
- C+: for high satisfactory (78 - 79 on scale)
- C: for satisfactory work (73 - 77 on scale)
- C-: for borderline satisfactory work (70 or 72 on scale)
- D: for work which is not satisfactory, not completed, or demonstrative of some other failure on the student's part (such as to participate in class)
- F: failure to meet minimum course goals

CLASS POLICIES

By taking this class, you agree to adhere to the rules and obligations presented in this syllabus, but also acknowledge my right to alter them, as necessary, and accept that while I will notify all students of any changes via email, during our Zoom meetings, or via Canvas.

1. VIDEO: To the extent possible you should keep your video on during class. That said, if you find things going on around you may distract others or if you need to be off camera for any other reason, you are the best judge of that. Please feel free to go off video.
2. MUTE: I will put the class on mute when class begins. Please keep yourself on mute when not asking a question or participating in discussion.
3. BREAKS: I will give frequent bathroom/snack/stretch breaks. If you feel it has been too long between these breaks, please alert me. That said, if you need to urgently take a break for any reason, please do so. Please try, however, not to make this a habit.
4. DISTRACTIONS: Please refrain from doing other things on the computer during class (i.e., instant messaging, checking email, shopping, etc.) You will not retain information if you are distracted.
5. NOTES: I encourage students to take notes with paper and pen. Studies show that students who take notes longhand have a better retention of material. In addition, taking notes longhand will keep your fingers from doing other things (like instant messaging) and keep your mind engaged in the material.
6. RESPECT: This class will sometimes involve the discussion of controversial topics that you may feel passionate about. During these and all discussions students are expected to express themselves and engage with one another in a respectful and thoughtful manner.

7. Do all required readings. You are strongly encouraged to bring questions, comments, and criticisms of the material to class.
8. Attend all class sessions, arrive on time, and stay until the end. If you know in advance that you will arrive late or leave early, you should notify me before the class period begins and minimize disruption.
9. Show respect to me and to your classmates in all ways, both when live in Zoom, on discussion boards in Canvas, or in any other modes of communication (such as within the Statecraft simulations). This includes respecting the opinions and openly listening to arguments of your peers, not interrupting, and in general by paying attention and actively participating in class. When someone is speaking, I expect you to give their full attention.
10. You will lose **5 percentage points** for every day that written work is late. That means that a late piece of written work that would have a grade of 10/10 will receive 9.5/10. After 24 hours, the same assignment would receive a 9. After an assignment is a week late I may not be able to provide you with feedback, but I will do whatever possible to still work with you to progress in the course and develop your final paper (and get the best grade possible under the circumstances).
11. If something comes up during the term that you think may affect your ability to successfully complete the requirements for the course, please notify me as quickly as possible and I will do my best to accommodate you. If you do not let me know about your emergency with documentation in a timely fashion (at least 48 hours in advance), and you miss classes, turn assignments in late, or fail to do your work, you will be docked points accordingly.
12. UCDC has a zero-tolerance policy for cheating, plagiarism, and any other form of dishonesty. Students should refer to their home campus Student Code of Conduct for the regulations that apply to them. The burden is on each student to know what behaviors constitute cheating and plagiarism. Ignorance of these behaviors is not an adequate defense.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE

The University of California is committed to creating and maintaining a community where all individuals who participate in University programs and activities can work and learn together in an atmosphere free of harassment, exploitation, or intimidation. Every member of the community should be aware that the University prohibits sexual harassment and sexual violence, and that such behavior violates both law and University policy. The University will respond promptly and effectively to reports of sexual harassment and sexual violence, and will take appropriate action to prevent, to correct, and when necessary, to discipline behavior that violates this policy on Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence.

Students who wish to speak confidentially about an incident of sexual misconduct should contact UCDC's Counseling Services at UCDCCounseling@gmail.com. Students who wish to report sexual misconduct or to ask questions about UCDC policies and procedures regarding sexual misconduct may do so with any UCDC faculty or staff, or contact Debbie Deas, Acting Director of Student Services (debbie.deas@ucdc.edu, 202-872- 8937). Please note that because the University California is legally obligated to investigate reports of sexual misconduct, the confidentiality of reported misconduct cannot be guaranteed. This policy can be found at the following link: <http://policy.ucop.edu/doc/4000385/SHSV>.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

In compliance with the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (Public Law 93- 112) and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-336), University of California policy prohibits unlawful discrimination on the basis of disability in its programs, services, and activities. A link to the full policy can be found here: <http://policy.ucop.edu/doc/2710534/PACAOS-140>.

If you require accommodation for class, please let me know at our first meeting (if not earlier) so the necessary arrangements can be made.