

International Studies 300: Senior Capstone Seminar

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Course Description

The capstone seminar is designed to help students in developing creative thinking in researching, analyzing and writing about international issues. Each student is expected to undertake a major research project as a central activity in this course. The objective of this course is to assist and guide students in the writing of a major research paper.

Course Requirements

It is expected that all assignments will be turned in on time. **Late assignments will not be accepted. Attendance is required in all classes.** Missing more than one class or portion of a class will result in an automatic failure of the participation portion of your grade. Each subsequent absence will result in the reduction of your final grade by 5%. Missing another student's presentation or arriving late will also result in a 0 for participation or if that is already the case, the reduction of your final grade by 5% for each absence or tardiness. Plagiarism will result in failure of the course. All assignments are described in the course schedule below for the day on which they are due.

*All assignments that are to be submitted are marked with an asterisk. These are due at the **beginning** of each class (with the exception of the first day), and should be submitted via Blackboard at 11:00am on the due date unless otherwise indicated.

Course Goals

- Students will understand how social science arguments are made.
- Students will conceptualize a research project.
- Students will develop writing skills.

Learning Outcomes

- Students will identify the main components of a research paper.
- Students will understand how theory informs an argument.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to distinguish between quantitative and qualitative methods.

Grading: The following are the weights given to assignments in the course:

- Peer review 5%
- Attendance & participation 10%
- Preliminary assignments 20%
- Final oral presentation 15%
- First complete draft of the research paper 20%
- Final draft of the research paper 30%

Recommended Reading

1. Catherine Marshall, Cretchen Rossman, 2010. *Designing Qualitative Research*, 5th Edition. Sage Publications. ISBN-13: 9781412970440
2. Paul D. Leedy and Jeanne Ormrod, 2009. *Practical Research: Planning and Design*, 9th Edition. Prentice Hall. ISBN-13: 9780137152421
3. Barbara Geddes, 2003. *Paradigms and Sand Castles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics*. University of Michigan Press. ISBN-13: 978-0472068357
4. John W. Creswell, 2002. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 2nd Edition. Sage Publications. ISBN-13: 978-0761924425
5. Kenneth S. Bordens and Bruce Barrington Abbott, 2007. *Research Design and Methods: A Process Approach*, 7th Edition. McGraw-Hill. ISBN-13: 978-0073129068
6. International Research Network: *The Research Planner*, available at: http://irn.uit.tufts.edu/research_planner/
7. International Studies Capstone Library Guide: <http://librarybestbets.fairfield.edu/il300>

Course Schedule:

September 2 – Introduction to the course and review of expectations. Key word activity, discussion of refereed journals, annotated bibliographies and how to analyze another person's, as well as your own, research. *Turn in paper topic.

September 9 – Library visit with reference librarian, instructional lab, room 114

September 16 – Read and analyze an article on your topic from a refereed journal and a non-referred source (like the Economist). *Submit preliminary bibliography of 15 sources from scholarly books, refereed journals and two web sites from international organizations that are involved in your topic. *Submit copy of notes taken on five scholarly sources. You must submit at least one page for each source. If you are taking notes on books you may submit three sources and notes on 100 pages of readings from books. *Bring to class a one-page outline and your thesis statement.

September 23 – Analyze a sample paper from a past seminar. We will discuss the paper in class, as well as literature reviews and academic writing. * Submit a preliminary bibliography of 30 sources, including revisions of the earlier 15. Only five may be from non-scholarly sources. * Submit copy of notes taken on five scholarly sources. *Bring in the name and e-mail of the faculty member you will interview next week.

September 30 – Individual 30- minute meetings with professor in my office. *Bring revised thesis statement and an outline that include notations showing how each of the 15 sources you have read thus far will fit into your paper. Also bring to the meeting *one article you have read which includes a literature review on your topic. Due Sept 30th: *notes from five scholarly sources, including an interview with a Fairfield faculty member who teaches or does research related to your topic. Due Oct 7th: *ten-page draft of your paper that includes the main argument (with bibliography and outline). *notes from five sources.

11:00 –	2:00 -
11:30 –	2:30
12:00 –	3:00
12:30 –	3:30
1:00 –	4:00
1:30 –	4:30

October 7 – *Hand in literature review of 3 pages, and covering at least 3-5 sources.

October 14 - Quantitative session. *Bring to class two tables, graphs, maps, pictures or other visual form of data that you will be using in your paper. Be prepared to present one or both of these to the entire class. *Submit notes from five scholarly sources.

October 21 – Peer review session. *Bring two copies of your peer review – one for your partner and one for the instructor. * Submit notes from five sources.
*Turn in one page abstract (100 word) of paper. Discussion: How to prepare and deliver an oral presentation.

October 28 – Formal Oral Presentations. Each individual presentation should last a maximum of 30 minutes with time for a 15 minute Q&A session following. Presentations may include video clips, but they are limited to a maximum length of two minutes.

*Turn in first complete draft. The first draft must be polished and must include a full bibliography.

11:00

11:45

12:30

November 4 - Formal Oral Presentations

11:00

11:45

12:30

November 11 – Formal Oral Presentations

11:00

11:45

12:30

November 18 – Formal Oral Presentations

11:00

11:45

12:30

November 25 – no class (Thanksgiving)

December 2 – last day of class

Final draft is due on Wednesday, December 2nd at 11:00a.m. Please submit a hard copy in class and an electronic copy via Blackboard no later than 11:00a.m.

Fairfield University Writing Center

The Fairfield University Writing Center is a free resource available to all Fairfield University students. At the Writing Center, a trained peer tutor will work individually with a student on anything he or she is writing, at any point in the writing process from brainstorming to editing. Tutors have special training to work with students for whom English is a second language. The tutoring conference is collaborative; peer tutors do not write, proofread, or grade papers for students. Appointments are recommended, but not required. For more information or to make an appointment, visit the Writing Center website at www.fairfield.edu/writingcenter or stop by DMH 255.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

The following is an excerpt from the 2008-2009 Course Catalog, stating Fairfield University's policy regarding academic honesty, academic dishonesty, and plagiarism. This policy will apply to this course:

Fairfield University's primary purpose is the pursuit of academic excellence. This is possible only in an atmosphere where discovery and communication of knowledge are marked by scrupulous, unqualified honesty. Therefore, it is expected that all students taking classes at the University adhere to the following Honor Code:

"I understand that any violation of academic integrity wounds the entire community and undermines the trust upon which the discovery and communication of knowledge depends. Therefore, as a member of the Fairfield University community, I hereby pledge to uphold and maintain these standards of academic honesty and integrity."

Academic Dishonesty

Students are sometimes unsure of what constitutes academic dishonesty. In all academic work, students are expected to submit materials that are their own and are to include attribution for any ideas or language that are not their own. Examples of dishonest conduct include, but are not limited to:

- Falsification of academic records or grades, including but not limited to any act of falsifying information on an official academic document, grade report, class registration document or transcript.
- Cheating, such as copying examination answers from materials such as crib notes or another student's paper.
- Collusion, such as working with another person or persons when independent work is prescribed.
- Inappropriate use of notes.
- Falsification or fabrication of an assigned project, data, results, or sources.
- Giving, receiving, offering, or soliciting information in examinations.
- Using previously prepared materials in examinations, tests, or quizzes.
- Destruction or alteration of another student's work.
- Submitting the same paper or report for assignments in more than one course without the prior written permission of each instructor.
- Appropriating information, ideas, or the language of other people or writers and submitting it as one's own to satisfy the requirements of a course – commonly known as plagiarism. Plagiarism constitutes theft and deceit. Assignments (compositions, term papers, computer programs, etc) acquired either in part or in whole from commercial sources, publications, students, or

other sources and submitted as one's own original work will be considered plagiarism.

- Unauthorized recording, sale, or use of lectures and other instructional materials.

In the event of such dishonesty, professors are to award a grade of zero for the project, paper, or examination in question, and may record an F for the course itself. When appropriate, expulsion may be recommended. A notation of the event is made in the student's file in the academic dean's office. The student will receive a copy.

(Fairfield University's Course Catalog 2008-2009, p. 29)

Students with Disabilities

Fairfield University is committed to providing qualified students with disabilities an equal opportunity to access the benefits, rights, and privileges of its services, programs, and activities in an accessible setting. Furthermore, in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and Connecticut laws, the University provides reasonable accommodations to qualified students to reduce the impact of disabilities on academic functioning or upon other major life activities. It is important to note that the University will not alter the essential elements of its courses or programs.

If a student with a disability would like to be considered for accommodations, he or she must make this request in writing and send the supporting documentation to the director of Academic and Disability Support Services. This should be done prior to the start of the academic semester and is strictly voluntary. However, if a student with a disability chooses not to self-identify and provide the necessary documentation, accommodations need not be provided. All information concerning disabilities is confidential and will be shared only with a student's permission. Fairfield University uses the guidelines suggested by CT AHEAD to determine disabilities and reasonable accommodations.

(Fairfield University's Student Handbook 2008-2009, p. 11)