

# You Decide! Critical Debates in International Affairs

Fall 2019  
FYS 007 (1129)

Professor Mary M. McCarthy

## Course Overview

This course is intended for anyone who is interested in expanding their knowledge and ability to critically analyze, discuss, and debate international affairs in this age of global citizenship.

By the end of this course, students will be able to

- knowledgeably and critically discuss significant issues in the international system today
- further develop critical thinking, information literacy, reading and listening comprehension, and written and oral communication skills

Critical thinking requires students to:

- Clearly define a question or problem.
- Gather information that is relevant to that problem.
- Rigorously identify assumptions and preconceptions, including their own, that influence analysis of that problem.

Information literacy requires students to:

- Evaluate information resources and identify quality resources relevant to the problem or issue investigated.
- Become aware of the intricacies of information use and misuse related to issues of academic honesty and plagiarism in order to pursue their educational goals with a high level of academic integrity.

Reading and listening comprehension requires students to:

- read and listen with discrimination and understanding.
- be able to remember and discuss what they have read or heard.

Written communication requires students to:

- write clearly and persuasively.
- shape their writing according to subject, purpose, medium, context and intended audience.

Oral communication requires students to:

- verbally convey information and ideas clearly and effectively.
- shape their speaking according to subject, purpose, medium, context and intended audience.

Through the structure of debate (preparation, implementation, and assessment) students will engage with all these goals. They will acquire the skills of analysis and argumentation, while also engaging in feedback provision and self-reflection. Feedback is an important part of this process, both to be able to provide effective feedback to others and to be able to hear and act on the feedback one receives. But since the writer themselves is the most immediate editor, self-reflection is also critical, as we learn how to assess and then improve upon our work and performance to do our personal best.

## **Course Requirements and Grading:**

This course will combine reading, writing, lecture, discussion, and debate. Students will be evaluated by class attendance and participation (11%), debate assignments (20% each, 60% total), audience assessment (3% each, 9% total), peer review (3%), self-reflective essays (3% each, 9% total), final reflective essay (4%), Writing Workshop (1% each, 2% total), and a weekly political trivia contest (2%).

### **Class Attendance and Participation (11%)**

Assigned readings must be read by the date under which they are listed. Students are required to come to class every session prepared to make quality contributions to the class session.

Quality participation:

- illustrates knowledge and understanding of the assigned readings through specific references to author arguments and evidence
- shows reflective reading of the texts through insightful arguments inspired by the readings
- includes original and thoughtful arguments or comments in response to in-class lectures, discussions, and debates

Students are allowed two unexcused absences. After two unexcused absences, students will begin to lose class attendance and participation points for every additional missed class. If a student has more than six unexcused absences, he or she will automatically fail the course.

This is with the exception of a documented illness (with a note from a medical professional). If a student will miss (or misses) more than one class due to a documented illness (or illnesses), he or she must consult the instructor to discuss how to make up the missed classes.

Note: If a student will miss class for a religious observance, sports event, etc. during the semester, he/she must let the instructor know before the end of the first week of classes. If the instructor is notified by the end of the first week of classes, these absences will count as excused absences. However, once again, if a student will miss (or misses) more than two classes due to such excused absences (or a combination of excused and unexcused absences), he or she must consult the instructor to discuss how to make up the missed classes.

### **Debates (20% each, 60% total)**

Each student will prepare for three debates during this class. For two of the debates, the student will submit written arguments only. For one of the debates, the student will present oral arguments in front of the class. Both written and oral arguments are due on Debate Day (see Course Schedule below).

Detailed instructions and criteria for evaluation will be provided on Blackboard and discussed in class.

Students will be required to work with a group for each of the debates but will receive individual, not group, grades for each debate assignment.

### **Audience Assessment (3% each, 9% total)**

During this course students will learn about listening, notetaking, and evaluating. This will help you to write up assessments of the oral debates you hear. Audience assessments are to be approximately two typewritten pages in length and are always due on the Debriefing Day (see Course Schedule), on Blackboard by 12:29pm. You may also want to bring a hard-copy to class to reference during the in-class debriefing. Details and criteria for evaluation will be available on Blackboard and discussed in class.

### **Peer Review (3%)**

You will also learn to do peer reviews of the written work of your classmates. The professor will provide guiding questions to help you provide feedback on the effectiveness of their use of persuasive language and evidence to support arguments. Peer reviews will compare two opposing written arguments (of 5 pages each) and provide approximately one typewritten page in response. The peer review is only written by the oral debate group members (one per member) and is due on Debriefing Day (see Course Schedule), on Blackboard by 12:29pm. Each student must also bring a hard copy to class. Detailed guidelines and criteria for evaluation will be available on Blackboard and discussed in class.

### **Self-Reflective Essays (3% each, 9% total)**

After each debate assignment (both written and oral), students will receive feedback from their classmates and the professor as described above. They will then have an opportunity to reflect on that feedback and their own self-evaluation of their performance, in written form. For each of these essays, specific questions will be distributed in class and/or on Blackboard to guide your response. These essays are each to be approximately two typewritten pages in length and are always due two weeks after the written submission or oral presentation of the debate (see Course Schedule), on Blackboard by 12:29pm. Additional details and criteria for evaluation will be available on Blackboard and discussed in class.

### **Final Reflective Essay (4%)**

At the end of the semester, you will reflect on everything you have learned this semester, particularly what you have found interesting, insightful, or helpful. To help guide you in your reflection, specific questions will be discussed in class and made available on Blackboard. Essays are to be approximately two typewritten pages in length and are due December 9 (Monday of finals week) by 5pm on Blackboard. For additional advice on how to write a reflective essay, go to the following website: <http://tcwrite.smumn.edu/home/writing-resources/forms-of-writing/>

### **Writing Workshop (1% each, 2% total)**

Students are required to attend sessions with a writing tutor at the university Writing Workshop (located in the basement of Cowles Library) *twice* during the semester, once prior to each of your two written debate submissions. Online scheduling for Writing Workshop appointments is available at:

<https://library.drake.edu/writing-workshop/>

Details will be discussed in class and we will do the first online scheduling together in class on September 12.

If you cannot attend a Writing Workshop session that you previously scheduled, you must go back online and cancel it. This allows another student to take that slot. Failure to show up for a scheduled appointment will lead to a reduction in the credit you receive for attending a tutoring session. Students are fully responsible for scheduling an appointment and attending the appointment that they schedule.

### **Weekly Political Science Trivia Contest (1% participation, 1% accuracy; 2% total)**

The Department of Political Science has installed a monitor on the second floor of Meredith to showcase announcements about exciting news, events, and other happenings around campus. It includes a weekly Political Science trivia contest. Questions are posted on Monday and responses are due by Friday at 12noon.

For 1% of your course grade (this is mandatory, not extra credit), you must participate in the contest at least four separate weeks during the first eight weeks of the semester (deadline for final submission is October 18). Participation means submitting an entry online at [bit.ly/polstrivia19](http://bit.ly/polstrivia19) as directed on the trivia slide, including your response to that week's question, your name and email address, and the course number (FYS007). (Important note: You must read the question from the monitor. Please do not ask Karen or your classmates about what that week's question is – they will merely refer you to the monitor. If you cannot read the monitor because of any disability, ailment, etc., please let the professor know by the second week of classes or whenever it arises and we will make other arrangements.)

For an additional 1% of your course grade (again, mandatory, not extra credit), you must submit at least two *correct* answers for the trivia questions during those eight weeks (deadline Oct. 18).

Although four submissions and two correct entries are required, you can submit every week if you so choose, including after October 18. But you will not receive extra credit in this course for doing so. The weekly Political Science trivia contest spans the entire semester.

As an added incentive, all correct answers will be entered into a pool for a weekly prize. Winners will be determined by department administrator, Karen MacKinnon, and she will contact only the winners.

### **Grading Policy Regarding Late Assignments**

Late assignments will not be accepted.

If a student is ill and, therefore, cannot complete an assignment by the due date, he or she must provide a note from a medical professional, in order to have the late assignment accepted. However, the professor always has the final say about whether or not late assignments will be accepted, even in the event of illness.

If you haven't completed all graded/credit-bearing assignments and requirements (including Writing Workshop appointments), you automatically fail the course.

Use the time-management tips to keep yourself on track. But, if at any point during the semester you are having a problem with an assignment, contact the professor immediately. Open communication is key.

### University Grading Policy

As of fall 2016, all instructors have the option of incorporating + and – grades into their grading scales. This course will adopt a +/- scale. If you have questions on the general policy, see Student Records (<http://www.drake.edu/studentrecords/gradesandgpa/>). If you have questions about grading in this course, speak with the instructor.

#### Course Grade Breakdown

94-100	A
90-93	A-
87-89	B+
84-86	B
80-83	B-
77-79	C+
74-76	C
70-73	C-
60-69	D
Below 60	F

### Required Readings:

\*There is one required textbook for this course:

James E. Harf, et al., *Taking Sides: Clashing Views on Global Issues*, 10<sup>th</sup> edition, 2019 (ISBN-13: 9781260206227)

It is available for purchase or rent at the Drake University bookstore. The University Book Store, located in the Olmsted Center, is open Monday through Saturday, 9am-5:30pm.

This publication is indicated by “Harf et al.” on the course schedule.

\*There is also a required coursepacket, which is available for purchase at CopyCat (3011 Forest Ave) for \$13.67 (plus tax). CopyCat is open Monday through Thursday 8am-6pm, Friday 8am-5pm, and Saturday 10am-4pm. The coursepacket includes the publication *Debating International Relations*, along with other materials for the course.

*Debating International Relations* is indicated by “DIR” on the course schedule.

Readings must always be completed by the day under which they are listed on the course schedule.

**Classroom Etiquette:**

During the semester, we may discuss issues that are controversial. You may disagree with the ideas presented by others. While you are encouraged to express your dissenting opinion, it should be done in a respectful manner. Personal attacks will not be tolerated.

Laptops, cell phones, earphones, and related equipment cannot be used in the classroom, unless specifically noted on the course schedule. If a student must be available to receive a phone call during class hours, he/she must let the instructor know before the start of class and should turn the phone to vibrate. If this student receives a call, he/she should excuse himself/herself from the classroom in the least disruptive manner possible.

**Academic Integrity:**

Academic dishonesty is an all-encompassing term involving any activity that seeks to gain credit for work one has not done or to deliberately damage or destroy the work of others. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to the following:

- (1) Plagiarism – The misrepresentation, either by intent or negligence, of another’s ideas, phrases, discourse, or works as one’s own.
- (2) Cheating – the act, or attempted act, of giving or obtaining aid and/or information by illicit means in meeting any academic requirements, including examinations.
- (3) Fabrication – intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic sense in any academic exercise.
- (4) Facilitating Academic Dishonesty – intentionally or knowingly helping attempting to help another to commit an act of academic dishonesty.

(Excerpted from College of Arts & Sciences handbook; see handbook for full statement on academic integrity.)

The penalty for engaging in any of these forms of dishonesty in relation to this class will be a grade of F on the assignment and may result in failure in the course.

**Policy on Disabilities:**

University policy is to accommodate students with disabilities. Any student with a disability who would like to take advantage of or learn more about the services that the university provides, should speak with the instructor or directly contact the Director of Student Disability Service, Michelle Laughlin (107 Old Main, 281-1835).

**Policy on Sexual Discrimination, Harassment, and Violence:**

The Prevention Coordinator for Sexual and Interpersonal Misconduct’s primary role is to act as a resource for students who have been subjected to interpersonal [gender] violence including sexual assault/harassment, dating/domestic violence, gender-based discrimination, and stalking. To contact the coordinator, Tess Cody, call 515-271-4141 or email

tess.cody@drake.edu. For a confidential discussion, call or text the Violence Intervention Partner (VIP) hotline at 515-512-2972.

### **Technical Assistance:**

If you have a technical issue with Blackboard or your computer, call the ITS Help Desk at 271-3001. There is also a link on Blackboard to connect you directly with the ITS site where there is additional information.

### **Academic Success:**

Drake University has an office of Academic Achievement, led by Josh Wallace, that provides academic support and information about tutoring, counseling, and other resources for student success. You can check the website (<https://www.drake.edu/acadassist/>) for general information or email Josh directly ([joshua.wallae@drake.edu](mailto:joshua.wallae@drake.edu)) to make an individual appointment.

### **Class Communication:**

The professor will communicate with students via email. These emails will come from the professor's Drake account or Blackboard (BB). Students are expected to check their Drake email every weekday and, therefore, be aware of any new information about the class. All handouts distributed in class will also be made available on BB. Students who miss a class session will be expected to access any handouts on BB and be fully prepared for the next class session. Students who have missed class have the responsibility to ask the professor or their classmates if there were any handouts they need to access on BB. The professor will also check email every weekday. Students can expect a response within 24 hours, except on weekends.

*The professor reserves the right to make any necessary changes to this syllabus*



## Course Schedule

(general academic calendar important dates in parentheses)

### I. Debating International Relations

#### Aug 27

\*Bring laptop (or other device that connects to the internet)\*

#### Aug 29

\*Bring coursepacket\*

\*Bring laptop (or other device that connects to the internet)\*

Harf et al.: Preface and Intro, pp.6-28

(Aug 30 last day to add a class)

#### Sept 3

DIR: pp.1-17

#### Sept 5

Des Moines Art Center

<https://www.desmoinesartcenter.org>

(Sept 9 Labor Day, classes do not meet)

#### Sept 10

\*Bring your top three topic choices for your first debate\*

Harf et al.: Read all in Unit 1 (pp.1-2, 29-100)

#### Sept 12

\*Bring laptop (or other device that connects to the internet)\*

DIR: Evidence and Case Design, pp.18-23

#### Sept 17

Library Session with Hope Biben, Cowles 45

#### Sept 19

DIR: pp. Logical Reasoning and Refutation, pp.24-30

**Class Outing:**

Fri, Sept 20 – Sun, Sept 22  
World Food & Music Festival  
Western Gateway Park, Des Moines

**II. Debate Topic 1: Global Population and Resources****Sept 24**

Group Work

**Sept 26**

DIR: During the Debate, pp.31-36 (up to but not including Evaluating Debaters)

**Oct 1**

DIR: (from Evaluating Debaters) pp.36-37

**Oct 3**

Group Work

**Oct 8**

Debate Day

**Oct 10**

Debriefing Day

\*Audience assessments and peer reviews due (12:29pm)\*

**Oct 15**

No class – Fall Break (Oct 14-15)

**III. Debate Topic 2: Expanding Global Forces and Movement****Oct 17**

\*Bring laptop (or other device that connects to the internet)\*

Harf et al.: Read all in Unit 2

**Oct 22**

Group Work

(Oct 23 last day to drop a class without extenuating circumstances)

**Oct 24**

Group Work

\*Self-reflective essay due (12:29pm)\*

**Oct 29**

Group Work

**Oct 31**

Debate Day

**Nov 5**

Debriefing Day

\*Audience assessments and peer reviews due (12:29pm)\*

**IV. Debate Topic 3: The New Global Security Agenda**

**Nov 7**

\*Bring laptop (or other device that connects to the internet)\*

Harf et al.: Read all in Unit 3

**Nov 12**

Group Work

**Nov 14**

Group Work

\*Self-reflective essay due (12:29pm)\*

**Nov 19**

Group Work

**Nov 21**

Debate Day

**Nov 26**

Debriefing Day

\*Audience assessments and peer reviews due (12:29pm)\*

(Thanksgiving recess begins after evening classes on Nov 26 and classes resume Dec 2)

**Nov 28**

No class – Thanksgiving holiday

## **V. Conclusion**

### **Dec 3**

Class Discussion and Course Debriefing

\*Self-reflective essay due (12:29pm)\*

### **Dec 5**

Class Discussion and Course Debriefing

(Dec 9-13 Final evaluation period)

### **Dec 9**

\*Final reflective essay due (5pm)\*

