

**Carleton University – Winter 2026**  
**Department of Political Science**  
<https://carleton.ca/polisci/>  
**PSCI 1200 (B)**  
**Introduction to World Politics**  
**Friday 3:35-5:25pm**  
**Please confirm location on Carleton Central.**  
**Website: [Homepage - PSCI1200B Politics in the World \(LEC\) Winter 2026](#)**

---

## **I. General Information**

**Instructor:** Alex McDougall

**Office Hours:** Online by appointment

**Email:** [alexmcougall@cunet.carleton.ca](mailto:alexmcougall@cunet.carleton.ca)

## **II. Course Description**

This course examines world order in an age of crisis. In the 2020s, the world is experiencing multiple and overlapping upheavals that challenge the foundations of political and economic stability. The American-led system of global order that prevailed since the end of World War II appears to be weakening amid unprecedented and simultaneous crises—climate change, economic instability, renewed warfare in Europe, eroding civic trust, and the COVID-19 pandemic. It seems as though world politics stands on the brink of a transition from a U.S.-led system to something markedly different. PSCI 1200A introduces students to the study of global politics, helping them understand both historical dynamics and contemporary trends that have brought us to this critical juncture. This course provides a foundation for further study in World Politics and International Political Economy.

## **III. Course Format**

This course is delivered in person. It includes:

- Weekly two-hour lecture
- Weekly tutorial groups led by TAs (mandatory participation).
- In-class midterm, online quiz, and a final exam during the exam period.

## **IV. Learning Outcomes**

**Students completing this course will be able to:**

1. Describe and distinguish major theories of international relations and comparative politics.
2. Analyze world events using core concepts such as anarchy, power, institutions, democratization, and authoritarianism.
3. Explain political developments in key global regions and major powers.
4. Evaluate global economic issues including trade, globalization, and development.
5. Communicate arguments clearly in written and oral form, using evidence to support claims.

## **V. Texts**

### **Required text:**

- Pevehouse, Jon C., Joshua S. Goldstein, Sarah E Kreps and Edward D. Mansfield. *International Relations*. 13th ed. Boston: Pearson, 2025. (\$87.99)
- Other readings will be posted on Ares (journal articles, book excerpts, and policy analyses).

## **VI. Evaluation at a Glance**

<b>Component</b>	<b>Weight</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Midterm Exam (in class)</b>	25%	Feb 27, 2026
<b>Final Exam</b>	40%	Scheduled during the formal exam period
<b>Tutorial Participation</b>	10%	Weekly
<b>Topic paper and presentation</b>	25%	Paper due January 30, with presentations ongoing.

## **VII. Evaluation in Detail:**

**Midterm Exam** – Feb 27 (in class). Covers material from Weeks 1–6. Multiple choice. No notes or electronics permitted.

**Final Exam – During Exam Period:** Cumulative, with emphasis on Weeks 7–12.

**Tutorial Participation:** Attendance and active engagement in weekly discussion groups. Participation is assessed on preparation, contribution quality, and respectful dialogue.

**Topic paper and presentation:** Students will complete a short research paper and accompanying in-class presentation on a world politics topic selected from the list provided. The written component consists of a 1,000-word essay based on at least two scholarly or high-quality analytical articles relevant to the chosen topic. The paper must advance a clear thesis or core argument that reflects the student's own position on the issue, demonstrate appropriate use of the selected research, and show a general understanding of the topic. Strong organization, clarity of argument, and competent academic writing are expected.

The paper is due to your assigned Teaching Assistant on **January 30**.

Beginning January 23, students will deliver a brief **5-minute presentation** based on their paper. The presentation should explain, in the student's own words, the topic, what was learned through the research, and the main argument of the paper. Students should be prepared to answer one or two questions from the instructor or classmates. The presentation must be delivered orally (no reading from notes or slides). TAs will schedule the presentations at the beginning of the semester.

The presentation is a mandatory component of the assignment and should be completed in order for the assignment to be considered complete. Missing a scheduled presentation without a valid explanation or documented reason will also result in a zero.

### **Additional assessment criteria**

- clarity and coherence of the thesis;
- effective integration of the required readings;
- basic engagement with course concepts;
- adherence to the word limit and deadline;
- professionalism and preparedness during the presentation.

Potential questions:

1. Why did Russia invade Ukraine in 2022, and what does the war reveal about great-power politics?
2. Has China's Belt and Road Initiative strengthened China's global influence, or created new vulnerabilities?
3. Why has the European Union struggled to act cohesively in major foreign-policy crises?
4. Did U.S. intervention in Iraq (2003) undermine or reinforce American global power?
5. Was the Arab spring successful? Why or why not?
6. What factors prevent global action on climate change?
7. What is populism and what factors have contributed to its resurgence?
8. Is War between the U.S. and China inevitable?
9. Students choice: come up with a question and get your TA to approve (by email).

### **Class policies:**

- **Academic Integrity and AI Use:** Use of AI tools (including ChatGPT) is not permitted for any graded work unless explicitly authorized in assignment instructions. Unauthorized AI use will be treated as an academic integrity violation.
- **Late Policy:** Exams and quizzes cannot be taken late without documented accommodation. Tutorial participation cannot be made up unless officially excused. There are no late penalties for the exams/quiz, as deadlines are fixed

## **VIII. Course Schedule**

### **Week 1 – Jan 9, 2026**

- Chapter 1 - Pevehouse, Jon C., Joshua S. Goldstein, Sarah E Kreps and Edward D. Mansfield. *International Relations*. 13th ed. Boston: Pearson, 2025.
- Nye, Joseph. 2011. The Future of Power. Ch. 1: "What is Power in Global Affairs?" (pp. 3–24)

### **Week 2 – Jan 16, 2026: Theories of world politics (liberalism) and rise of the American-led liberal order**

- Chapter 3 - Pevehouse, Jon C., Joshua S. Goldstein, Sarah E Kreps and Edward D. Mansfield. *International Relations*. 13th ed. Boston: Pearson, 2025.
- Ikenberry, G. John. 2022. "Why American Power Endures." *Foreign Affairs* 101(6): 56–67

### **Week 3 – Jan 23 2026: Theories of world politics (realism) and the rise of China**

- Chapter 2 - Pevehouse, Jon C., Joshua S. Goldstein, Sarah E Kreps and Edward D. Mansfield. *International Relations*. 13th ed. Boston: Pearson, 2025.
- Allison, Graham. 2015. "The Thucydides Trap: Are the US and China Headed for War?" *Atlantic*, Sept 24: 1–11
- Weiss, Jessica Chen. 2022. "The China Trap." *Foreign Affairs* 101(5): 40–58

### **Part II: Crises and Issues in World Politics**

#### **Week 4 – Jan 30, 2026: Why do wars happen and the global war on terror**

- Chapter 5 - Pevehouse, Jon C., Joshua S. Goldstein, Sarah E Kreps and Edward D. Mansfield. *International Relations*. 13th ed. Boston: Pearson, 2025.
- Leffler, Melvyn P. 2023. "Bush, 9/11, and the Roots of the Iraq War." *Foreign Affairs*, March 23: 1–7
- Malkasian, Carter. 2020. "How the Good War Went Bad: America's Slow Motion Failure in Afghanistan." *Foreign Affairs* 99(2): 77–91

#### **Week 5 – Feb 6, 2026: Civil wars and failed states (note: moved online via zoom)**

- Chapter 6 - Pevehouse, Jon C., Joshua S. Goldstein, Sarah E Kreps and Edward D. Mansfield. *International Relations*. 13th ed. Boston: Pearson, 2025.
- Council for Foreign Relations (2025): [Conflict in Syria | Global Conflict Tracker](#)
- [What's driving conflict today? A review of global trends | ACLED](#)

#### **Week 6 – Feb 13, 2026: Democracy and authoritarianism**

- Bermeo, Nancy. 2016. "On Democratic Backsliding." *Journal of Democracy* 27(1): 5–19
- Chenoweth, Erica, and Zoe Marks. 2022. "Revenge of the Patriarchs: Why Autocrats Fear Women." *Foreign Affairs* 101(2): 103–116
- Diamond, Larry. "Facing up to the democratic recession." *Journal of Democracy* 26.1 (2015): 141–155.

#### **Feb 20, 2026 – No Class (Reading Week)**

#### **Week 7 – Feb 27, 2026**

#### **MIDTERM EXAM (in class)**

No lecture.

#### **Week 8 – Mar 6, 2026: Trade, finance, business**

- Chapter 8, 9 Pevehouse, Jon C., Joshua S. Goldstein, Sarah E Kreps and Edward D. Mansfield. *International Relations*. 13th ed. Boston: Pearson, 2025.
- Scott Lincoln (2023). "[The \(Updated\) Case for Free Trade](#)". Cato Institute

### **Week 9 – Mar 13, 2026 – Integration**

- Chapter 10 - Pevehouse, Jon C., Joshua S. Goldstein, Sarah E Kreps and Edward D. Mansfield. *International Relations*. 13th ed. Boston: Pearson, 2025.
- 2013. “Crash Course: The Origins of the Financial Crisis.” (3 pages)
- Jean Pisani-Ferry, “The Euro Crisis and the New Impossible Trinity.” *Foreign Affairs* 93, no. 1 (January/February 2014).

### **Week 10 – Mar 20, 2026 – North-South relations**

- Chapter 12 Pevehouse, Jon C., Joshua S. Goldstein, Sarah E Kreps and Edward D. Mansfield. *International Relations*. 13th ed. Boston: Pearson, 2025.
- Paul Krugman, “In Praise of Cheap Labor.” *Foreign Affairs* 76, no. 2 (March/April 1997).

### **Week 11 – Mar 27, 2026 – Environment and population**

- Chapter 11 of Pevehouse, Jon C., Joshua S. Goldstein, Sarah E Kreps and Edward D. Mansfield. *International Relations*. 13th ed. Boston: Pearson, 2025.
- Nowrasteh, Alex. “The most common arguments against immigration and why they're wrong”. Policy Institute, 2021.

### **Week 12 – Apr 3, 2026 - Trends in the future of world politics**

- Stephen Kotkin, “The Weakness of the Strongmen: What Really Threatens Authoritarians?” *Foreign Affairs* 105, no. 1 (January/February 2026).
- Steven Levitsky, Lucan A. Way, and Daniel Ziblatt, “The Price of American Authoritarianism: What Can Reverse Democratic Decline?” *Foreign Affairs* 105, no. 1 (January/February 2026).
- Nic Cheeseman, Matías Bianchi, and Jennifer Cyr, “The Illiberal International: Authoritarian Cooperation Is Reshaping the Global Order,” *Foreign Affairs* 105, no. 1 (January/February 2026).

## **Political Science Course Outline Appendix**

### **REQUESTS FOR ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION**

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

#### **Student Mental Health**

As a university student, you may experience a range of mental health challenges that significantly impact your academic success and overall well-being. If you need help, please speak to someone. There are numerous resources available both on- and off-campus to support you. Here is a list that may be helpful:

#### **Emergency Resources (on and off campus):**

<https://carleton.ca/health/emergencies-and-crisis/emergency-numbers/>

#### **Carleton Resources:**

Mental Health and Wellbeing:

<https://carleton.ca/wellness/>

Health & Counselling Services: <https://carleton.ca/health/>

Paul Menton Centre: <https://carleton.ca/pmc/>

Academic Advising Centre (AAC):

<https://carleton.ca/academicadvising/>

Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS):

<https://carleton.ca/csas/>

Equity & Inclusivity Communities:

<https://carleton.ca/equity/>

#### **Off Campus Resources:**

Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region: (613) 238-3311 or TEXT: 343-306-5550, <https://www.dcottawa.on.ca/>

Mental Health Crisis Service: (613) 722-6914, 1-866-996-0991, <http://www.crisisline.ca/>

Empower Me: 1-844-741-6389,

<https://students.carleton.ca/services/empower-me-counselling-services/>

Good2Talk: 1-866-925-5454, <https://good2talk.ca/>

The Walk-In Counselling Clinic:

<https://walkincounselling.com>

#### **Academic consideration for medical or other extenuating circumstances:**

Students must contact the instructor(s) of their absence or inability to complete the academic deliverable within the predetermined timeframe due to medical or other extenuating circumstances. For a range of medical or other extenuating circumstances, students may use the online self-declaration form and where appropriate, the use of medical documentation. This policy regards the accommodation of extenuating circumstances for both short-term and long-term periods and extends to all students enrolled at Carleton University.

Students should also consult the [Course Outline Information on Academic Accommodations](#) for more

information. Detailed information about the procedure for requesting academic consideration can be found [here](#).

**Pregnancy:** Contact your Instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For accommodation regarding a formally-scheduled final exam, please contact Equity and Inclusive Communities (EIC) at [equity@carleton.ca](mailto:equity@carleton.ca) or by calling (613) 520-5622 to speak to an Equity Advisor.

**Religious obligation:** Contact your Instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details [click here](#).

#### **Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:**

The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or [pmc@carleton.ca](mailto:pmc@carleton.ca) for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, please request your accommodations for this course through the [Ventus Student Portal](#) at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (*if applicable*). Requests made within two weeks will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. For final exams, the deadlines to request accommodations are published in the [University Academic Calendars](#). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally scheduled exam (*if applicable*).

**Survivors of Sexual Violence:** As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and its survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: <https://carleton.ca/equity/sexual-assault-support-services>.

**Accommodation for Student Activities:** Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the

individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation will be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist.

#### **PETITIONS TO DEFER**

Students unable to write a final examination because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control may apply within **three working days** to the Registrar's Office for permission to write a deferred examination. The request must be fully supported by the appropriate documentation. Only deferral petitions submitted to the Registrar's Office will be considered. [See Undergraduate Calendar, Article 4.3](#)

#### **INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY**

Student or professor materials created for this course (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the author(s). They are intended for personal use and may not be reproduced or redistributed without prior written consent of the author(s). Permissibility of submitting substantially the same piece of work more than once for academic credit. If group or collaborative work is expected or allowed, provide a clear and specific description of how and to what extent you consider collaboration to be acceptable or appropriate, especially in the completion of written assignments.

#### **WITHDRAWAL WITHOUT ACADEMIC PENALTY**

Please reference the [Academic Calendar](#) for each term's official withdrawal dates

#### **OFFICIAL FINAL EXAMINATION PERIOD**

Please reference the [Academic Calendar](#) for each term's Official Exam Period (may include evenings & Saturdays or Sundays)

**For more information on the important dates and deadlines of the academic year, consult the [Carleton Calendar](#).**

#### **GRADING SYSTEM**

The grading system is described in the Undergraduate Calendar section [5.4](#).

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

#### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Academic integrity is an essential element of a productive and successful career as a student. Students are required

to familiarize themselves with the university's [Academic Integrity Policy](#).

#### **PLAGIARISM**

The University Senate defines plagiarism as "*presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one's own.*" This can include:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else, including the unauthorized use of generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT);
- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, and presenting these as one's own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another's data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in "*substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.*"

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the course's instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of "F" for the course.

#### **RESOURCES (613-520-2600, phone ext.)**

Department of Political Science (2777)	B640
Loeb	
Registrar's Office (3500)	300 Tory
Centre for Student Academic Success (3822)	4 <sup>th</sup> floor
Library	
Academic Advising Centre (7850)	302 Tory
Paul Menton Centre (6608)	501
Nideyinàñ	
Career Services (6611)	401 Tory