

IR6690: Capstone in International Relations

Term 4, 2018-2019: March 18 – May 19, 2019 3 Credit Hours
Location: Camp Humphreys Education Center, Camp Humphreys, ROK
Meeting Times and Dates: 0900-1800 March 23-24, April 13-14

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Course Description

This course serves as the capstone course for the MSIR program and requires students to conduct a significant research project in an IR topic chosen by them in consultation with the instructor. Students will have 6 weeks to produce a conference level paper (5,000+ words) that will be graded by at least two faculty members. *Note: MSIR candidates must achieve a grade of “B” or better in IR6690 to complete degree program requirements. Prerequisites: Students must have completed all other IR core courses (IR 5551, IR 6601, IR 6620, IR 6652) as well as at least 15 hours of MSIR electives prior to enrolling in this course.*

Course Objectives

With this course, students should demonstrate ability to conduct an advanced research project and draft a graduate-level research paper. Students will build on the skills learned in the Research Methods in International Relations (IR) course by drafting a research design and fully executing a research paper. Students will incorporate relevant IR theory and apply appropriate scholastic methodology.

Required Texts

- Baglione, Lisa A. 2015. *Writing a Research Paper in Political Science: A Practical Guide to Inquiry, Structure, and Methods*, 3rd ed. Los Angeles: Sage/CQ Press: ISBN 9781483376165

Additional assigned readings will be available electronically through TROY library databases or through provided websites. Students will need to obtain a TROY e-mail account in order to access the TROY library databases. Students should not pay separately for articles; if an article cannot be found via the databases or listed websites, please advise the instructor. The instructor will also post items from the news on the course’s Canvas website.

Course Requirements

Students are expected to keep up with the readings and to participate in class discussion. Students should obtain a TROY e-mail account and check it regularly as this will be the means of providing notice of assignment changes, class cancellations, or other matters outside of class.

A. Paper

The Capstone paper will account for 100% of the course grade. The completed paper will be due at the end of Week 6 (April 28, 2019) in Canvas. As noted above, the paper must receive a grade of “B” or better in order for the student to pass this course. If the paper receives a grade of less than “B” from the instructor, the student will have to repeat the course. If the instructor believes

that the final research paper is at least at a “B” level, it will be sent to a second Troy international relations faculty member to review. If the second faculty member concurs with the instructor that the paper is at a “B” level or better, the student has successfully completed the course. If the second instructor finds the paper merits less than a “B” it gets routed to an additional grader. The decision of the third faculty member is final and will determine whether or not the student passes the class.

Students must choose a topic and have a specific research question approved by the instructor by the end of Week 1. The instructor will grant broad discretion as to substantive topics, but requires that students obtain written confirmation of instructor approval as to topic and a specific research question. Due to time limitations, students are encouraged to choose topics in which they are well-read. Students may wish to use a similar topic to the one used for the research design in the Research Methods course. Note this does not mean students may “recycle” a paper or use a paper used in a prior class. Rather, this means choosing a topic about which a student has a strong background so the student is not researching from a blank slate.

The paper must present and test a hypothesis via an appropriate research design. Thus, the topic must be something about which there is existing, accessible data. That means questions should not be about future events since data regarding the future is not available.

Papers must include a full literature review. The literature review will require a significant investment of time in researching and reading scholarly articles. The literature review must include at least ten scholarly sources. Newspapers and websites are generally not scholastic sources. The instructor recommends use of JSTOR and ProQuest as useful academic databases.

Papers must include a full research design, identifying a theory, hypothesis, dependent variable, and independent variables (including both the test variable(s) and control variables. Papers must explain how variables will be measured, justifying both the validity and reliability of proposed measures. Papers must identify the specific methodology used (e.g. case study, regression analysis, game theory), explaining why it is appropriate for the subject question.

Papers must execute the research design, providing analysis of the test employed, identifying whether evidence is consistent or not with the hypothesis, and generating conclusions with respect to how this research bears on the larger theory at issue and fits within the existing body of academic knowledge.

Format: The paper must be typed, double-spaced, in black, twelve-point, Times New Roman font, with one inch margins. Necessary citations may follow either the Turabian or the APSA system. A references list must be included.

Grading: Papers will be graded by the instructor on demonstrated understanding of the issue, thoroughness and propriety of the literature review, appropriate explanation and use of the chosen research methodology, logical coherence in execution of the design, logical coherence of the analysis, as well as attention to detail regarding the mechanics of writing. Poor spelling, grammar, punctuation or style will negatively affect the grade. Plagiarism will result in an F for the course. Late papers cannot be accepted due to grading timelines. Failure to turn in a paper on time will result in a grade of “C” or worse, requiring the student to repeat the course.

B. Discussion Boards

Departmental policy mandates use of discussion boards in Canvas. Accordingly, a series of questions will be posted in Canvas. Students must read all discussion boards and respond to questions over the course of the term.

C. Attendance & Participation

Regular attendance is imperative for understanding the subject as well as for maximizing your chances to succeed on the exams. By university policy, TROY's coordinator must be notified of students who miss more than 25% of classes. Attendance will be taken in compliance with College policy.

Grading Policy

90 - 100 A	70 - 79 C	0 - 59 F
80 - 89 B	60 - 69 D	

Incomplete grades: As the paper must be turned in by Week 6 and the timing is a material component of the course, an Incomplete is not available for this course.

Web-Enhanced Classes

A 3 credit course requires 45 contact hours. Class meetings cover 36 of these hours, so 9 additional hours must be accounted for via Canvas.

Troy University Deadlines

Students can find the Troy Online calendar at <https://my.troy.edu/online/academic-calendar.html> listing key dates for the term, including refund deadlines, payment dates, and Comp Exam dates. Note the last day to drop or withdraw from a course in Term 4 is April 26, 2019.

Americans with Disabilities Act

Troy University supports Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, which insure that post-secondary students with disabilities have equal access to all academic programs, physical access to all buildings, facilities and events, and are not discriminated against on the basis of disability. Eligible students, with appropriate documentation, will be provided equal opportunity to demonstrate their academic skills and potential through the provision of academic adaptations and reasonable accommodations. Further information, including appropriate contact information, can be found at the following link:
<https://my.troy.edu/student-disability-services/>

Academic Honesty

By their enrollment, students are responsible for following the "Standards of Conduct" as they apply in the Troy University Pacific Region. It is the student's responsibility to be familiar with these guidelines and to comply therewith.

Plagiarism is the use of another person's words or ideas without proper attribution; whether intentional or not, representing another person's words or ideas as one's own constitutes plagiarism. Plagiarism is an ethical offense violating Troy's Standards of Conduct and Troy's

Academic Code. All MSIR students are expected to understand the concept of plagiarism as well as the rules of proper citation. If a student has any doubt about proper attribution, it is the responsibility of the student to seek clarification from the instructor. Students deemed by the instructor to have engaged in intentional plagiarism in this course shall receive an automatic F in the class and are subject to additional discipline up to and including expulsion from the program. Students deemed by the instructor to have engaged in unintentional plagiarism are subject to disciplinary action to be determined by the instructor in accordance with the severity of the offense. The instructor uses on-line software to help detect plagiarism. Please note that no assignment prepared for or submitted in a different course may be used in this course without prior approval of the instructor.

Cell Phone and Other Electronic Devices

Use of any electronic device (cell phone, tablet, laptop, etc.) by students in the instructional environment is prohibited unless explicitly approved on a case-by-case basis by the instructor of record or by the Office of Disability Services in collaboration with the instructor. Cell phones and other communication devices may be used for emergencies, however, but sending or receiving non-emergency messages during a class meeting is forbidden by the University. Use of a communication device to violate the Troy University "Standards of Conduct" will result in appropriate disciplinary action (See pp. 42-52 of the Oracle.) In order to receive emergency messages from the University or family members, devices must be in a vibration, or other unobtrusive mode. Students receiving calls that they believe to be emergency calls must answer quietly without disturbing the teaching environment. If the call is an emergency, they must move unobtrusively and quietly from the instructional area and notify the instructor as soon as reasonably possible. Students who are expecting an emergency call should inform the instructor before the start of the instructional period. The instructor in this class has opted to permit use of tablets and/or laptops in class.

Library Resources

Students can access online information resources through Troy Library Services home page at <https://my.troy.edu/libraries/> These resources include a variety of full text databases that provide complete article texts from thousands of journals, magazines and newspapers. Among the most helpful databases are JSTOR, Academic Search Complete, and Lexis-Nexis. Remote access is available via the student's Troy User ID and Password. Specific help for Global Campus students, including a dedicated librarian, Jay Brandes at jayb777@troy.edu, is available.

Course Schedule

Week 1: Determine topic and research question; begin literature review

Saturday March 23

- Class introduction
- Discuss topics
- Explain requirements of paper
- Review theories/hypotheses

Sunday, March 24

- Review qualitative methodology
- Review quantitative methodology
- Review formal requisites of writing research papers

Week 2: Execute (write) literature review

Week 3: Conclude literature review; develop research design

Week 4: Execute research design and complete draft paper to turn in for comments

Saturday, April 13

- Student presentations of papers
- Peer review of class papers
- Classroom feedback on existing drafts

Sunday, April 14

- Workshop on editing / revising papers

Week 5: Complete all paper sections; edit and revise per comments

Week 6: Finish revisions; turn in Final Paper

Week 7 – 9: Instructor Grading period

*(Note: The schedule, readings and procedures in this course are subject to change.
Changes or additions will be posted on the course website.)*