

# Senior Research Seminar in International Studies

**INS 4930**

Fall Semester 2025

University of Florida

International Studies Program

Bob Graham Center for Public Service

## Course Information:

Instructor: Timothy Karis, PhD  
Email address: [tkaris@ufl.edu](mailto:tkaris@ufl.edu)  
Course location: MAT0151  
Course time: Wednesdays, 1:55-4:55 PM  
Office location: Pugh Hall 232  
Office hours: Tuesday 11:00AM-1:00PM (by appointment), Wednesday 12:00-1:00PM (by appointment), Thursday 12:00-1:00 PM (drop-in)  
<https://calendly.com/dr-karis-office-hours/>

## Course Description:

This course offers seniors in the International Studies major the opportunity to examine current debates and theoretical trends in the field, conduct guided research on a topic and region of their choice, and write an original research paper. Each week, our readings and discussions will address both 1) research and writing strategies to guide your project, and 2) issues and concepts of contemporary relevance to international studies scholars, including debates about globalization and the nation-state, global political movements, citizenship and rights, the environment and social justice, political-economic change, migration and refugees, urbanization, power and resistance, gender and development, and humanitarianism. We will use the readings not only to extract insight and information, but also to serve as models for the presentation of research findings. We will cover most regions of the world and draw on scholarship from a variety of disciplines in the social sciences.

## Learning Objectives:

By the end of the semester, students will achieve an understanding of:

- The steps involved in writing a strong, interdisciplinary, critical research paper
- Critical approaches to the global events of the last decade
- The connections between global political-economic phenomena and local experiences
- How to present academic research and findings clearly and effectively
- How to collaborate with peers to improve academic writing

## Course Texts:

All readings are required and will be made available for download on the class Canvas site.

### **Student Responsibilities:**

Please arrive in the classroom on time and well prepared. Attendance for each session is vital since we only meet once weekly and because each class will feature important guidance for planning and composing your final paper. The reading schedule also reflects the fact that we will meet only once weekly; if you wait until Tuesday night to complete your reading, you may not have enough time! The class will include discussion, lectures, and peer review sessions designed to advance your research papers. The peer reviews give you the opportunity to share your work and receive feedback from your classmates. Although large, the course is a seminar and your active participation figures in your final grade, so please put forth your best effort. Please always maintain respect for your classmates even when discussing sometimes controversial subjects. Please refrain from using your phone for any activities unrelated to our class, including reading and sending text messages.

This syllabus is a living document responsive to student interests, current events, and the pace of class, and therefore subject to change. You should regularly check the class Canvas site for readings, announcements, and information about assignments and class activities. There is also a discussion board on Canvas where you can post comments about readings, and additional resources you think might be of interest to your classmates.

### **Academic Honesty:**

Please do not engage in plagiarism or any other behaviors that would violate the University of Florida Academic Honesty Policy. It is the student's responsibility to read, understand, and abide by the policy: <https://archive.catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/1617//advising/info/student-honor-code.aspx>

### **Assignments:**

The primary assignment for this class is your research project. This project will require preliminary literature-based research to choose and refine a topic, additional investigation to properly understand your topic and build expertise, and the planning and composition of an 18-25 page research paper and accompanying presentation. The research project will be divided into a number of steps to complete over the semester. You will find detailed guidelines on Canvas for each assignment leading to the final submitted research paper.

Step 1: First draft of research proposal – Bring your proposal to class for workshopping

Step 2: Final research proposal – Submit 4-page proposal in class for grade/feedback

Step 3: Annotated bibliography – Submit bibliography in class for grade/feedback

Step 4: First draft of research paper – Bring your draft to class for workshopping

Step 5: Class presentation – Share your findings with the class in a 10-12 minute presentation

Step 6: Final research paper – Submit your final research paper as final graded work

In addition, each week you will complete a “reading guide” (typed or handwritten is fine) for one assigned reading (noted with \*RG), designed to help you uncover the author's research questions and arguments, theoretical perspectives and key concepts, and evidence employed. Blank reading guides

will be distributed in class and uploaded to Canvas (in “Files”). You may turn in the reading guides either online or as a hard copy, but please find a way to access it in class to prepare you for class discussion. The reading guides will give you practice extracting ideas and examples from sources, skills you will apply in researching for your own work.

Late work will be penalized according to the length of the delay. Please work hard to submit your assignments on time. You are permitted **one missed reading guide** over the course of the semester.

### **Student Evaluation:**

Your grade will be based on the steps of the research paper as well as class participation. Your final research paper will be graded using the rubric on the last page of the syllabus. You can view your grades any time through the “Grades” page of Canvas. Your final grade will be determined as follows:

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| Research proposal (avg. of first and final drafts) | 15%         |
| Annotated bibliography:                            | 10%         |
| Research paper draft:                              | 10%         |
| Class presentation:                                | 15%         |
| Final research paper:                              | 30%         |
| Reading guides                                     | 10%         |
| Class participation                                | 10%         |
| <b>Total</b>                                       | <b>100%</b> |

### **Grading Scale:**

|    |        |
|----|--------|
| A  | 94-100 |
| A- | 90-93  |
| B+ | 87-89  |
| B  | 84-86  |
| B- | 80-83  |
| C+ | 77-79  |
| C  | 74-76  |
| C- | 70-73  |
| D+ | 67-69  |
| D  | 64-66  |
| D- | 60-63  |
| E  | <60    |

## Accommodations:

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs as early as possible in the semester.

## Course Evaluations:

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner: <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or <https://ufl.bluer.com/ufl/>.

## Course Schedule:

**Wednesday, 8/27**      **Introduction to the class; syllabus review**

**Wednesday, 9/3:**      **Nation-states and Nationalism**

→ *Writing Guide: Foundations of a Research Project*

### Readings

1. Antonsich, M. (2009). "On Territory, the Nation-State, and the Crisis of the Hyphen" in *Progress in Human Geography*
2. Harris, J. (2022). "The Conflict Between National and Transnational Power: The Russian Trap" in *Race and Class* \*RG

### Tasks

1. Begin thinking about paper topics and consider about how this research project may support your wider academic or professional goals.

**Wednesday, 9/10:**      **Markets, Inequality, and Public Health**

→ *Writing Guide: Finding a Topic*

### Readings

1. Harvey, D. (2005). *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (excerpt) \*RG
2. Saad-Filho. (2020). "From COVID-19 to the End of Neoliberalism" in *Critical Sociology*

### Tasks

1. Work on narrowing down your topic ideas to an appropriate scope.

2. Identify key words and phrases to conduct effective literature searches.

### **Wednesday, 9/17: Global Political Change**

→ *Writing Guide: Workshopping - Research Proposal Peer Review*

#### Readings

1. Golder, M. (2016). "Far Right Parties in Europe" in *Annual Review of Political Science* \*RG

#### Tasks

1. Find and take notes on at least five useful sources.
2. Complete a first draft of your research proposal and bring to class for workshopping.

**\*\*\*\*FIRST DRAFT OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL DUE IN CLASS AND ON CANVAS BY 1:55 PM\*\*\*\***

### **Wednesday, 9/24: Immigration and Asylum**

→ *Writing Guide: Developing Research Questions*

#### Readings

1. Andersson, R. (2012). "Europe's Failed Fight Against Irregular Migration: Ethnographic Notes on a Counterproductive Industry" in *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* \*RG

#### Tasks

1. Identify guiding research questions to frame and direct your project.

### **Wednesday, 10/1: Humanitarianism**

→ *Writing Guide: Arguments and Evidence*

#### Readings

1. Barnett, M. and Walker, P. (2015). "Regime Change for Humanitarian Aid: How to Make Relief More Accountable" in *Foreign Affairs* \*RG

#### Tasks

1. Brainstorm and determine clear/specific arguments that you will make in your paper.
2. Incorporate feedback from proposal first draft and prepare final draft for submission.

**\*\*\*FINAL DRAFT OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL DUE ON CANVAS BY 11:59 PM\*\*\*\***

### Wednesday, 10/8: Urbanization, Citizenship, and Rights

→ *Writing Guide: Organizing and Outlining your Paper*

#### Readings

1. Holston, J. (2009). "Insurgent Citizenship in an Era of Global Urban Peripheries" in *City and Society* \*RG
2. Karis, T. (2013). "Unofficial Hanoians: Migration, Urban Citizenship, and the Politics of Belonging in Urban Vietnam

#### Tasks

1. Outline your paper, making decisions about the main points you will pursue, the organization of the paper, and the cases and examples you will include.

### Wednesday, 10/15: Power and Resistance

→ *Writing Guide: Writing Style and Voice*

#### Readings

1. Bellin, E. (2012). "Reconsidering the Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Lessons from the Arab Spring" in *Comparative Politics* \*RG

#### Tasks

1. Begin writing your first draft if you haven't started already, aiming for original analysis and clarity in composition.
2. Prepare your annotated bibliography for submission

\*\*\*\*\*ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE BY 11:59 PM ON CANVAS\*\*\*\*\*

### Wednesday, 10/22: The Global Commons

→ *Writing Guide: Introductions and Conclusions*

#### Readings

1. Cumbers, A. (2015). Constructing a global commons in, against and beyond the state in *Space and Polity* \*RG

#### Tasks

1. Write an introduction that presents your topic and previews your main points and the organization of the paper.

### **Wednesday, 10/29: Gender and Development**

→ *Writing Guide: Introductions and Conclusions + Presenting your Findings*

#### Readings

1. Padgett, A. and Warnecke, T. "Diamonds in the Rubble: Institutions, Gender Equity, and Human Development in Haiti" in *Journal of Economic Issues* \*RG

#### Tasks

1. Think about which points and findings to include in a 10-12 minute presentation.

### **Wednesday, 11/5: Diplomacy and International Relations**

→ *Writing Guide: Workshopping – First Draft Peer Review*

#### Readings

1. Current events – TBD

#### Tasks

1. Bring your first draft to class for peer review workshopping

**\*\*\*\*FIRST DRAFT OF RESEARCH PAPER DUE IN CLASS (HARD COPY)\*\*\***

**Wednesday, 11/12: Student Research Presentations**

**Wednesday, 11/19: Student Research Presentations**

**Wednesday, 12/3: Student Research Presentations**

**\*\*\*\*\*FINAL PAPER DUE BY WEDNESDAY, 12/10 AT 11:59 PM ON CANVAS\*\*\*\*\***

### **Resources for Students:**

#### Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu), 352-392-1575, or visit U Matter, We Care website to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit the Student Health Care Center website.

University Police Department: Visit UF Police Department website or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

### Academic Resources

E-learning technical support: Contact the UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu).

Career Connections Center: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.

Teaching Center: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

Writing Studio: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.