

Senior Research Seminar in International Studies

INS 4930 – 3 Credits
Spring Semester 2026
University of Florida
International Studies Program
Bob Graham Center for Public Service

Course Information:

Instructor: Timothy Karis, PhD
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Phone number: 352-846-1575
Course location: TUR 2328
Course time: Tuesdays, 1:55-4:55 PM
Office location: Pugh Hall 232
Office hours: Tuesday 12:00-1:00 PM (drop-in), Wednesday 2:00-3:30 (by appointment),
Friday 2:00-3:00 PM (drop-in)
<https://calendly.com/dr-karis-office-hours/>

Course Description:

This course offers seniors in the International Studies major the opportunity to engage with readings on contemporary international issues, conduct guided research on a topic and region of their choice, and write an original, interdisciplinary 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, political movements, citizenship and rights, 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 all regions of the world and draw on scholarship from a variety of disciplines in the social sciences.

Student Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the semester, students will be equipped to:

- Effectively engage with social science scholarship to compose an interdisciplinary research paper
- Take critical approaches to understand major global events of the last decade
- Understand connections between global political-economic phenomena and local experiences
- Present research findings at the graduate or professional level both verbally and in writing
- Be able to describe, explain, and apply knowledge of a particular country or region of the world

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 Monday 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 review workshoping** sessions 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 to actively engage. Please always maintain respect for your classmates even when discussing controversial subjects. Please **turn off your phone** prior to entering the classroom and refrain from non-class-related activities on other devices)

This course schedule 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.

This course complies with all UF academic policies regarding accommodations, attendance, course evaluations, honesty and plagiarism, and recording course lectures. For information on those policies and additional resources for students, please see [this link](#).

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 workshoping (**due 2/3**)

Step 2: Final research proposal – Submit 4-page proposal in class for grade/feedback (**due 2/17**)

Step 3: Annotated bibliography – Submit bibliography in class for grade/feedback (**due 3/3**)

Step 4: First draft of research paper – Bring your draft (>12 pp) to class for workshoping (**due 3/31**)

Step 5: Class presentation – Share findings with the class in a 10 minute presentation (**last 3 weeks**)

Step 6: Final research paper – Submit your final research paper as final graded work (**due 5/2**)

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. 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. Class participation will be assessed based on your contributions to class discussions and your engaged participation in peer review workshop activities. 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%
Total	100%

Course Materials:

All readings listed on the syllabus are required and will be made available for download on the class Canvas site. No additional materials will be needed.

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
F	<60

Course Schedule:

All readings will be posted to the class Canvas site.

Tuesday, 1/13: **Introduction to the class; syllabus review**

Tuesday, 1/20: **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 how this research project may support your wider academic or professional goals.

Tuesday, 1/27: **Global and Regional Conflict**

→ *Writing Guide: Finding a Topic*

Readings

1. Harris, J. (2022). "The Conflict Between National and Transnational Power: The Russian Trap" in *Race and Class* *RG
2. Kintsler, L. (2025). "Why Wars Don't End Anymore" in *New York Times*

Tasks

1. Work on narrowing down your topic ideas to an appropriate scope.
2. Identify key words and phrases to conduct effective literature searches.

Tuesday, 2/3: **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 ON 2/3 BY 1:55 PM*****

Tuesday, 2/10: 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.

Tuesday, 2/17: 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 ON 2/17 BY 11:59 PM*****

Tuesday, 2/24: 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 information, and the cases and examples you will include.

Tuesday, 3/3: 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
2. Current events news article TBA

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 ON 3/3 BY 11:59 PM ON CANVAS*******

Tuesday, 3/10: Public Health and Neoliberalism

→ *Writing Guide: Introductions and Conclusions*

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. Write an introduction that presents your topic and argument(s), previews your main points, and outlines the organization of the paper.

Tuesday, 3/17: No Class – Spring Break

Tuesday, 3/24: Gender and Development

→ *Writing Guide: 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.

Tuesday, 3/31: 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, 3/31 (HARD COPY)*****

Tuesday, 4/7: Student Research Presentations

Tuesday, 4/14: Student Research Presentations

Tuesday, 4/21: Student Research Presentations

*******FINAL PAPER DUE BY FRIDAY, 5/2 AT 11:00 AM 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, 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.

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.