Description

This course is designed to (1) identify and use campus resources that will enhance your academic activities and plans for the future, (2) create life-long habits that will help you be more aware of and better understand national and global events, (3) encourage critical thinking, (4) enhance speaking skills.

We will accomplish these goals by reading in the news magazine The Economist about current events both in the United States and in the world. You will suggest topics and we will learn about these topics through discussion, presentation, questioning, debates, and quizzes. For each class period there will be a good number of assigned readings and you should come to class not only having read the assigned readings but also being prepared to actively participate in our course discussions and activities. You, and the events of the past few weeks, will determine which topics we discuss. My goal as instructor is to provide background information, context, theory, and connections so that you can better understand and interpret the world around you.

This course is both an introductory course and only a one-credit course. Because there are many one-credit courses at BYU that have minimal requirements, some people might assume that there is little work in this course. University documents, however, specify an expectation of 2 hours of work outside of class for every hour in class. In previous semesters students in this class reported working about 2 hours per week outside of class. This workload is consistent with University guidelines and less than for a typical three-credit class, but the workload is more than the workload of many other one-credit courses taught at BYU.

Prerequisites

This course is open to all students at the University. There are no prerequisites. In fact, the course is designed for a student that has no prior knowledge of political science or current events.

Texts & Materials

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<td>The Economist</td>
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You are required to order a student subscription (discounted) to The Economist through their web page at www.economistacademic.com. (Please go to this website and not to www.economist.com They have subscriptions available there too, but they are not the same and will end up costing you more money) A 12 week subscription costs $25. You will have the opportunity in class to ask questions and direct our discussion of current events based on your readings in The Economist. Please note any questions that you have as you read The Economist and bring those questions to class.

It is also possible to read The Economist on line, using the link at the BYU Library website. From the main library page, search "Economist" under
journals. When the search pages comes up, under the search phrase "economist" change the selection from "contains" to "exact" and press the search button (to redo the search). Then click on the link for "The Economist." Then click on "full text online, proquest . . . available from 1992." It is the second option from the top (under EBSCOhost). Under "Browse specific issues," you have to click on the year and dates to find the right issue. This is a perfectly fine method to read The Economist, but be aware of a few potential problems. 1. Sometimes the dates don't exactly coincide with the digital and print edition. Make sure that you are reading the correct edition. You can go to the Economist website and see what the print edition looks like and the articles inside to make sure that you are reading the right edition. 2. Sometimes (for a reason that I can't understand) the online edition categorizes the articles differently. For example, an article in the print edition that is under a regional topic such as "The Americas" will appear in the online edition under the topic "International." Again, you may want to check the online version of the print edition that is at The Economist website to make sure that your readings are including all of the assigned articles.

Grading Policies

This course is graded pass or fail. Students who earn a 60 percent or higher as their course grades will earn a pass. Those whose course grades are lower than 60 percent will earn a fail. Most students will pass the course, but if a student misses class often or doesn't prepare for the quizzes or the final exam, it will also be possible to fail the course. **This course is not graded on attendance; rather you are expected to complete and remember assigned readings for the quizzes and learn the material discussed in class for the final exam.**

Quizzes

You will need to learn about current events by reading the weekly magazine *The Economist*. Quizzes will have questions about the articles in the most recent edition of *The Economist* with a question about very recent current events that have occurred too recently to be in *The Economist*. In addition, a quiz question will also come from additional assigned readings for that week's specific topic that are posted on Blackboard under course materials. You should prepare for quizzes by reading *The Economist* (giving priority to the first part of the magazine, the “Leaders” section as well as the area sections—United States, The Americas, Middle East and Africa, Asia, Europe) and keeping up with daily events through a reliable new source that you prefer. You should also make sure that you have read the additional assigned readings for that week that are posted under Course materials on Blackboard. The quizzes will be given each class day at the beginning of class. In addition, if you leave class after the quiz, you will forfeit the points for that day's quiz. In order to earn quiz points, you must be in class at the beginning of class to take the quiz and must be in class at the end of class.

Quizzes count fifty percent of your course grade. I will drop your two lowest quizzes. If you have to miss class or are late for class and miss the quiz, I expect you to use that missed quiz as one of your dropped quizzes. Make up quizzes are only given when a student has more than two excused absences. There will be 14 quizzes given in our class, so 12 of them will count towards your grade. If you add the class after the first day of class, you will miss one or more quizzes. These missed quizzes count as your dropped quizzes.

Final Exam

There will be a final exam at the scheduled time for final exams in this course. It will be held in our classroom. The final exam will cover what we discussed in our class periods. You should take notes on what we discussed about current events, background information, theories, and competing arguments surrounding those current events. Taking notes will make it possible for you to review before you take the final exam. The final exam will be comprehensive, and it will count fifty percent towards your course grade. If the date and time of the final exam is inconvenient for you, you may want to take this class a different semester. University policy does not allow giving final exams early. If you absolutely must miss the final exam and also decide to take the course, your only option is to take an incomplete in the course and take the exam when you return to campus.
Extra Credit

Students may earn extra credit points by submitting written work in advance of class. The specific extra credit option for each class period will be given in a weekly e-mail. The amount of extra credit earned will depend on the quality of your effort. All extra credit points must be approved by Brother Christensen in advance, and must be done at the same time as each topic during the semester. Do not expect to be able to create your own extra credit assignments at the end of the semester to make up for too many missed quizzes. The maximum number of extra credit points that can be earned is thirty.

Learning Outcomes

- **Participation in the Political Process**
  Read The Economist weekly, as well as another source of news, and learn about important national and international events.

- **Political Process, Theory, and Thought**
  Learn the historical context, theories, arguments, and data that illuminate discussions of the most important political issues.

- **Politics, International Relations, and Political Philosophy**
  Meet professors in the Political Science Department and learn about their areas of specialization.

BYU Honor Code

In keeping with the principles of the BYU Honor Code, students are expected to be honest in all of their academic work. Academic honesty means, most fundamentally, that any work you present as your own must in fact be your own work and not that of another. Violations of this principle may result in a failing grade in the course and additional disciplinary action by the university. Students are also expected to adhere to the Dress and Grooming Standards. Adherence demonstrates respect for yourself and others and ensures an effective learning and working environment. It is the university's expectation, and my own expectation in class, that each student will abide by all Honor Code standards. Please call the Honor Code Office at 422-2847 if you have questions about those standards.

Preventing Sexual Discrimination and Harassment

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination against any participant in an educational program or activity that receives federal funds. The act is intended to eliminate sex discrimination in education. Title IX covers discrimination in programs, admissions, activities, and student-to-student sexual harassment. BYU's policy against sexual harassment extends not only to employees of the university, but to students as well. If you encounter unlawful sexual harassment or gender-based discrimination, please talk to your professor; contact the Equal Employment Office at 422-5895 or 367-5689 (24-hours); or contact the Honor Code Office at 422-2847.

Students with Disabilities

Brigham Young University is committed to providing a working and learning atmosphere that reasonably accommodates qualified persons with disabilities. If you have any disability which may impair your ability to complete this course successfully, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities Office (422-2767). Reasonable academic accommodations are reviewed for all students who have qualified, documented disabilities. Services are coordinated with the student and instructor by the SSD Office. If you need assistance or if you feel you have been unlawfully discriminated against on the basis of disability, you may seek resolution through established grievance policy and procedures by contacting the Equal Employment Office at 422-5895, D-285 ASB.