**Miyazaki International College**

**Spring 2019**

**Course Syllabus**

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| Course Title (Credits) | | SSI204 Comparative Political Issues | |
| Course Designation for TC | | N/A | |
| Time and Location | | Tuesdays and Thursdays 09:05 – 10:35 | |
| **Content Teacher** | | | |
| Instructor | | Atsushi Yasutomi, Ph.D. | |
| Email address | | ayasutomi@sky.miyazaki-mic.ac.jp | |
| Office/Ext | | MIC 1-332/ Ext. | |
| Office hours | | Tuesdays 13:00-17:10 | |
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| **Course Description** | | | |
| A comparative study of different political cultures, histories, and institutions of selected number of nation-states and their impact on national policies and solutions in areas such as education, unemployment, health care, ethnic conflict, security, and social welfare. | | | |
| **Course Goals/Objectives** | | | |
| This course is an introduction to global studies. It introduces and examines key political issues from the global perspectives. This course will first examine the concepts of globalization and asks ourselves why we need to study globalization. Key global political issues will be examined. The topics covered will include, amongst others, health and pollution, energy consumption, population and migration, ethnicity and religion, and global peace and global war.  Students will gain a familiarity with the basic knowledge, concepts, and theories in the areas of Global Studies from the political perspectives. In the end of the class, students will be able to critically discuss and analyze key issues and challenges that international society is facing today. Students therefore should accomplish these objectives with a focus on developing their critical thinking and communication skills.  Students’ Communication and Critical Thinking Skill Objectives  1) Students should try to improve the following communication skills this semester:  Write and speak with clarity (communicate without ambiguity or confusion)  Write and speak with precision (communicate in deﬁnite and exact terms)  Write and speak with depth (communicate complex issues effectively)  2) Students should try to improve the following critical thinking skills this semester:  Identify salient information  Determine underlying presumptions or presuppositions  Evaluate conclusions from premises  Avoid fallacies - authority, expertise, straw man, etc.  Ask the right questions to understand a problem  Categorize appropriately  Evaluate the effects of conclusions/judgments on different parties  Develop a new way to solve an old problem | | | |
| **Course Schedule** | | | |
| **Session #** | **Topic** | | **Content** |
| **1**  9 Apr (Tue) | Syllabus & Course Introduction | | - Self-introduction / icebreaking  - Explains the course structure, class requirements, examinations, etc.  - Familiarizes with the geography of the world. |
| **2**  11 Apr (Thu) | Globalization 1)  - What is it? Why study Globalization?  - Guidance to group presentation | | - Examining different definitions of Globalization. This class especially examines definitions from the political perspectives.  - Examines the values and significance of studying Globalization and Global Study. |
| **3**  16 Apr (Tue) | Globalization 2)  - Different dimensions of Globalization  - Global citizenship  - Sustainable Global Goals  - International Politics in Global Studies | | - Examines the economic, political, and cultural dimensions of Globalization. Focusing on the political dimension, this session introduces the concepts of nation-state, state sovereignty, and global governance. It also examines the idea of “global citizenship” and its implication to international politics. |
| **4**  18 Apr (Thu) | Unit 1: Inequality and global poverty 1) | | - Global poverty and inequality is one of the serious challenges in the 21st century. This session examines the origins of the world inequality and poverty. |
| **5**  23 Apr (Tue) | Unit 1: Inequality and global poverty 2) | | - Continuation of Session 4  ■ Assignment: Reading |
| **6**  25 Apr (Thu) | Unit 1: Inequality and global poverty 3) | | - Continuation of Session 5  □ Discussion on the assignment reading  ■ Preparation workshop for presentation project |
| **7**  7 May (Tue) | Unit 2: Health issues and food security 1) | | - Discusses the current situations related to health issues and food security, including maternal health, hunger and malnutrition, and infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS |
| **8**  9 May (Thu) | Unit 2: Health issues and food security 2) | | - Examines international politics on the health issues and food security.  - Focuses on the role of International actors in fighting against infectious diseases, pollution, and climate changes including the United Nations and its specialized agencies such as WHO, UNAIDS. Roles of non-state actors like NGOs are also examined.  ■ Assignment: Film |
| **9**  14 May (Tue) | Unit 2: Health issues and food security 3) | | - Continuation of Session 8  □ Discussion on the assignment film |
| **10**  16 May (Thu) | Unit 3: Energy and pollution 1) | | - Examines the current issues of the global use of energy and issues of global pollution, including the problems of access to clean water, and climate changes |
| **11**  21 May (Tue) | Unit 3: Energy and pollution 2) | | - Continuation of Session 10  - Introduces the current debates on the use of nuclear power  ■ Assignment: Reading |
| **12**  23 May (Thu) | Unit 3: Energy and pollution 3) | | - Continuation of Session 11  - Examines energy as a major source of conflicts and wars in international politics of the 20th and 21st centuries  □ Discussions on the assignment reading |
| **13**  28 May (Tue) | Review & quiz: Units 1-3 | | - Reviews Units 1-3  - **Review quiz** (in-class essay) |
| **14**  30 May (Thu) | Unit 4: Population 1) | | - Focuses on the current global population issues including mortality, and demographic transition |
| **15**  4 Jun (Tue) | Unit 4: Population 2) | | - Examines population pressures: aging, urbanization  ■ Assignment: Reading |
| **16**  6 Jun (Thu) | Unit 4: Population 3) | | - Focuses on population pressures: Migration. Migration has become one of the serious challenges in the global politics. By examining the current events, including the cases in Europe and Central America, this session examines the causes of the mass migration and the political impacts  □ Discussions on the assignment reading  ■ Assignment: film |
| **17**  11 Jun (Tue) | Unit 5: Women and Children 1) | | - Examines various problems concerning women’s rights, maternal health, children’s health, and education |
| **18**  13 Jun (Thu) | Unit 5: Women and Children 2) | | - Continuation of Session 17 |
| **19**  18 Jun (Tue)  (substituted) | Unit 5: Women and Children 3) | | - Continuation of Session 18  ■ Assignment: film |
| **20**  20 Jun (Thu)  (substituted) | Review & Quiz: Units 4-5 | | - Reviews Units 4-5  - **Quiz (in-class essay)** |
| **21**  25 Jun (Tue) | Unit 6: Information and Communication Technologies 1) | | - Introduces the current advance of technology and the Information Age  - This session also examines various political impacts of the internet |
| **22**  27 Jun (Thu) | Unit 6: Information and Communication Technologies 2) | | - Focuses on the current discussions of cyber security  ■ Assignment: film |
| **23**  2 Jul (Tue) | Unit 6: Information and Communication Technologies 3) | | - Continuation of Session 22, Discussions  □ Discussions on the assignment film |
| **24**  4 Jul (Thu) | Unit 7: Transnational crimes 1) | | - Examines different types and dimensions of transnational crimes and the impacts on international security |
| **25**  9 Jul (Tue) | Unit 7: Transnational crimes 2) | | - Focuses particularly on human trafficking and its impacts on global society  ■ Assignment: Reading |
| **26**  11 Jul (Thu) | Unit 7: Transnational crimes 3) | | - Discusses other forms of transnational crimes including trafficking of firearms, money laundering, and drug smuggling  □ Discussions on the assignment reading |
| **27**  16 Jul (Tue) | Unit 8: Project workshop 1) | | - Review various global issues covered in this course. Other important global issues are discussed.  - Workshop for presentation preparation |
| **28**  18 Jul (Thu) | Unit 8: Project workshop 2) | | - Workshop for presentation 1 |
| **29**  23 Jul (Tue) | Unit 8: Project workshop 3) | | - Workshop for presentation 2 |
| **30**  25 Jul (Thu) | Reviews: Units 6-8 | | Reviews all the sessions |
| **EXAM**  **WEEK**  30 Jul (Tue)? | Final Exam | | **Final Exam** |
| **Required Materials** | | | |
| Students will not be required to purchase a specific textbook. We will work from a number of handouts to be distributed during the class. | | | |
| **Course Policies (Attendance, etc.)** | | | |
| Attendance: Attendance is mandatory. Students with ﬁve unexcused absences risk failing the course and will be asked to withdraw. Excusing absences is the prerogative of the instructor. Students must notify the instructor of their absences before the start of class and provide college-approved documentation. Attendance is not part of the grade for this class. Participation is part of the grade, and students must attend class to participate.  Assignment Deadlines: Students must turn in assignments on the due date. Students with an ‘excused absence’ on the due date should submit assignments on the due date via email unless granted an extension by the instructor. All late submissions of assignments that are not approved by the instructor will be penalized by minus 5% per day (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and national holidays).  Academic Integrity: MIC’s Academic Honesty policy prohibits cheating, fabrication, and plagiarism. The Bulletin and Handbook of Student Information explains this policy. Students should understand it and ask the instructor if they have any questions. Violating the Academic Honesty can result in losing all credit (0%) for an assignment, being asked to withdraw from the course, or other appropriate actions. | | | |
| **Student Preparation & Review Time** | | | |
| Students are expected to spend at least one hour preparing for every hour of lesson and one hour reviewing and doing homework. Therefore, because we meet for 90 minutes per week, you should be doing at least 180 minutes preparing and reviewing each week. In principle, graded work will be returned within one week of submission with appropriate feedback, i.e., grade, comments, etc. | | | |
| **Grades and Grading** | | | |
| 20% Participation in discussions  20% Presentation  20% Homework  20% Quizzes  20% Final examination  The grading system at MIC is as follows:   * A (Excellent) 90-100% * B (Above average) 80-89% * C (Average) 70-79% * D (Below average) 60-69% * F (Fail) 59% or less | | | |
| **Methods of Feedback** | | | |
| In principle, graded work will be returned within one week of submission with appropriate feedback i.e., grade, comment, rubric, etc. | | | |
| **Diploma Policy Standards Satisfied by Course Objectives** | | | |
| Work completed in this course helps students achieve the following Diploma Policy objective(s):  1. Advanced thinking skills (comparison, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation) based on critical thinking (critical and analytic thought)  2. The ability to understand and accept different cultures developed through acquisition of a broad knowledge and comparison of the cultures of Japan and other nations  3. The ability to identify and solve problems  4. Advanced communicative proficiency in both Japanese and English  5. Proficiency in the use of information technology | | | |

