

**POLS 1005**  
**INTRODUCTION TO INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**  
**Semester 1 2017**

**Response Paper**

**Due date:** Your response paper should be submitted to the Turnitin link on Wattle by **17 May by 12pm**.

**Word limit: 1,000 words**, not counting footnotes or bibliography. University policy states that a 10% range of the target word count is acceptable. Therefore, for this assignment 900-1,100 words is acceptable.

**Value:** 15% of your final mark

**Estimated return date:** 31 May by 12pm

**Description**

The main means to evaluate several course learning outcomes (specifically #3 & #4) is through this writing assignment. The main goal of this paper is to have you synthesize your knowledge of the theoretical topics covered in this course, your Syrian simulation experience, and the links you see between theories of international relations, current events, and their individual views of these links.

Respond to the following question, addressing all sub-questions in your answer:

**To what extent was your actor able to achieve its objectives in the Syria simulation?**

1. How did your actor's position align with other actors' positions in your pre-conference group?
2. How successful was your tutorial in devising resolutions and undertakings in the conference? Did your actor achieve their objectives? Why or why not? In retrospect, would you have done something differently?
3. What connections can you make between the simulation and the theories and topics of International Relations covered in the lecture and readings?
4. As a learning tool, to what extent did the simulation highlight actors' interests, institutions' behaviour and ability to constrain actors, and interactions in International Relations? Why or why not?

## Grading rubric

Essay grades will be calculated using the following rubric.

Cohesive formulation (40%): The response paper poses a well-formulated response to the all parts of the question.

Critical engagement (40%): The response paper critically engages with the student's experience of the simulation.

Structure (10%): The essay has clear topic sentences, it is well structured, and paragraphs are clearly organised.

Editing (10%): The essay has clearly been proof-read and drafted and contains no/few grammatical errors.

## Essay submission and marking

All writing assignments at the ANU are submitted via Turnitin. A Turnitin assignment for the response paper is at the top of the POLS1005 main Wattle page. All response papers are submitted using Turnitin on the course's Wattle site. You will be required to electronically sign a declaration of authorship as part of the submission of your assignment. Please keep a copy of the assignment for your records.

Turnitin is a text-matching service that analyses student submissions for originality. Footnotes and bibliographies are excluded from the plagiarism results. Students can view their originality report after submission. It is also important to note that you can delete submissions and resubmit up until the due date and time. Originality reports are generated for resubmissions with a 24-hour delay.

For details of how to **submit** a paper to Turnitin on Wattle see the following ANU guide: <https://services.anu.edu.au/files/system/Turnitin%20Student%20Guide%20%20How%20to%20interpret%20a%20Turnitin%20Originality%20Report.pdf>.

There is a **practice Turnitin site** that the ANU has created to enable you to practice submitting papers to Turnitin. This site can be accessed at: <https://services.anu.edu.au/training/turnitin-practice-site-for-students>.

For details of how to **interpret** a Turnitin Originality report see the following link: <https://services.anu.edu.au/files/system/Turnitin%20Student%20Guide%20%20How%20to%20interpret%20a%20Turnitin%20Originality%20Report.pdf>.

Marking will occur in Turnitin and will include both in-line comments and feedback in the Comments area of the Turnitin page. For details of how to download markers' comments from Turnitin see the following ANU guide:

<https://services.anu.edu.au/files/system/Turnitin%20Student%20Guide%20How%20to%20Download%20Comments%20from%20Turnitin%20Assignment.pdf>.

All papers receiving a mark of under 50 or over 80 will be reviewed by the convener. Papers will also be graded and moderated by the course convener to ensure that grading is consistent across markers.

## Late papers

Late papers are marked down per university policy. Penalties (5 points per business day for up to 10 business days) are out of 100 points possible, not the mark the essay received. Papers submitted late without previous

approval from the instructor will receive a mark but no feedback. If the extra time after the due date is arranged with us beforehand, then feedback should be given. All direct quotes from sources must have page numbers.

### Formatting

This is an essay, and so it should be in essay format, not a series of unconnected bullet points.

Your paper should have **2cm margins** on all sides. **Double-space all text** (not footnotes or the bibliography). This allows sufficient room to make comments on your work. Using other margins or font sizes looks like you are trying to pad your paper—or (less likely) are trying to fit a longwinded paper under the maximum word limit.

Further, please use **Times New Roman twelve-point font**. Other fonts might be the default in your word processing software or ones you prefer, but nonstandard fonts are distracting to read and can make it harder to focus on your argument. In addition, be sure to delete the extra space in between paragraphs that is now standard in Microsoft Word. A cover page is not necessary but is acceptable. Taking up half of your first page for the title and your name looks like a blatant effort to take up space.

Lastly, using the **Chicago Manual of Style author-year citation style** is strongly preferred. Details can be found at: [http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\\_citationguide.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html). **Outside sources are not strictly necessary** for this paper, but can be used if they help strengthen your argument.

### Common Errors

**Using the passive tense**—This is one of the easiest traps to fall into. A first draft is bound to be filled with the passive tense. This is why leaving time for a revision is crucial.

**Not planning ahead**—It is virtually impossible to write a thorough and complete paper at the last minute (trust me, I have tried). It always helps to make a plan for your semester and break your research and writing into manageable chunks.

**Insufficient word count**—It is always important to follow instructions. The word count mentioned in the course guide refers to the number of words of *text* and does not include any cover page, footnotes, or bibliography. Fight the natural urge to focus obsessively on the word count. Rather think about first outlining your paper then fleshing out your paper's sections as suggested above. If you have an interesting subject and a good argument the length will take care of itself.

**Using conjunctions**—A research paper is not an appropriate venue for conjunctions like “isn’t,” “didn’t,” “wasn’t,” etc. Please spell the words out: “is not,” “did not,” “was not,” etc.

### Writing tips

The following tips are suggestions that I have found to be useful in writing a paper—whether a five-page book review or a 300-page book manuscript. Hopefully, they will make your writing process a bit smoother. They are far from revolutionary, but I have found it helpful to refer repeatedly to this list.

**Read the assignment**—It might seem obvious, but the assignment description contains important information about the instructor's expectations.

**Give yourself enough time**—Procrastination is a human impulse, but in the long run it will stress you out and make your job more difficult.

**Start with an outline**—Beginning the writing process by constructing an outline is a good way to get the writing process started. It also helps decrease stress by enabling you to easily fill up several pages. It also helps you avoid staring at an empty Word document—unable or unwilling to begin the writing process. Just having a document started and saved on your computer can make it easier to start plugging ideas or facts into the outline as you progresses. Before you know it, you are on your way towards a complete first draft.

**Proofread!**—The first draft of any work is but the beginning of a well-written paper. It takes time to revise your thoughts and words both for meaning as well as for clarity.

**Have others read your paper**—Nothing beats a fresh set of eyes to help find errors in spelling or of logic. Be sure to reciprocate!

**Read your writing aloud**—Often hearing your words aloud you to spot tortuous grammar or highlight more direct and clear ways of making your argument.

**Use the present tense whenever possible**—Active verbs written in the present tense are much easier to read and comprehend. For example, write "Frank (2017) argues that..." rather than "It is clear from his article that Frank (2017) believed that..."

Learning how to write a good paper will help you in many ways long after your time at ANU has ended. For example, when applying to graduate school having a writing sample can come in handy both in demonstrating writing proficiency and highlighting your skills as a researcher and writer.

The basic outline described above can be used in a broad number of contexts besides political science. Clarity and conciseness will always enable your argument to be more easily grasped and more likely to be convincing regardless of the setting.

## Useful Resources

These books, articles, and websites were useful in putting together this guide and provide much more detailed analysis and suggestions.

### Published works:

Becker, Howard S. 1986. *Writing for Social Scientists: How to Start and Finish your Thesis, Book, or Article*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane & Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Orwell, George. 1946. "Politics and the English Language." *Horizon* (76).

Strunk, William, Jr. & E.B. White. 1999. *The Elements of Style*. New York: Longman.

Truss, Lynne. 2004. *Eats, Shoots and Leaves*. New York: Gotham.

Turabian, Kate L. 2010. *Student's Guide to Writing College Papers*. Fourth Edition. Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams, and the University of Chicago Press Staff, eds. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

University of Chicago Press Staff. 2010. *The Chicago Manual of Style*. Sixteenth Edition. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

### Online works:

Blattman, Chris. This University of Chicago professor's blog (<http://chrisblattman.com/2010/02/17/how-to-write-an-essay/> [Accessed September 6, 2010]) has a number of useful tips about writing, political science, and academia.

Enterline, Andrew J. 2007. "A Guide to Writing Research Projects in Graduate Political Science Courses." Unpublished manuscript. Denton, TX: University of North Texas. Available from: <http://www.psci.unt.edu/enterline/projectguidev4b.pdf>. (Accessed September 6, 2010). While geared for graduate students, much of this guide can be applied to undergraduate writing.

Farrell, Henry. 2010. "Good Writing in Political Science: An Undergraduate Student's Short Illustrated Primer." Unpublished manuscript. The George Washington University. Available from: [http://www.henryfarrell.net/pol\\_science\\_essays.pdf](http://www.henryfarrell.net/pol_science_essays.pdf) (Accessed September 6, 2010). A highly recommended resource.

Leeds, Ashley. "Writing a Research Paper for a Graduate Seminar in Political Science." Unpublished manuscript. Rice University. Available from: [www.ruf.rice.edu/~leeds/Leedsrespaperguide.pdf](http://www.ruf.rice.edu/~leeds/Leedsrespaperguide.pdf) (Accessed September 6, 2010). *Another graduate level resource that can be applied to undergraduate writing.*