

## The Course Essay

International Politics  
Oklahoma State University

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The purpose of this assignment is to determine how much of the material from the class (including in-class discussions, out-of-class events, and readings) you have seriously considered. As such, *use the question to demonstrate your mastery of the material*. For instance, in sections where you discuss the liberalist perspective, you will first define (and cite your appropriate definition) what we mean by liberalism, including what differentiates it from the other perspectives.

### Notes and Caveats

In addition to handing this assignment to me, you also need to email a copy of it to me. Email it to me as an attachment, either in .doc or in .rtf format. I will convert it to .pdf format. The second part of this assignment will have some of your fellow classmates evaluate your paper (and you theirs). I, too, will be evaluating your paper. I will explain more on that when the time comes.

*Remember:* The easiest way to fail this course is to fail to cite and reference the sources you use to provide information. Since you will be using sources other than the text, you will need a reference list—properly formatted. The reference list will be a separate page. Before you send this paper to me, have someone proofread it. Poor grammar, spelling, and presentation will lower your grade significantly. Maybe you should review the rules on using commas and other punctuation. Maybe you should review the course style sheet, as well.

Do either one of the following two questions.

### Question 1

The Charter of the United Nations (especially the preamble and the first two articles) provides a (primarily liberalist) guide to the hoped-for post-World War II world. The ideas contained in it are not original, however. Many have been with us at least since the dawn of the current interstate system. In a well-organized essay, trace one of the ideas (your choice, so choose wisely) expressed in the UN Charter from the Treaty of Westphalia through the UN Charter.

You will need to organize this essay logically, using specific sections; I suggest a chronological ordering would be best, using major treaties as your *sections*. As with any essay, you are laying out an argument. Your argument is that this idea (whichever one you choose) has undergone some changes throughout Western European history, but has existed since the creation of the current state system. You will need to discuss the major events, treaties, and intents of this period. This list includes, but is not limited to (in no particular order): Thirty Years' War, Peace of Westphalia, Concert of Europe, Treaty of Versailles, Atlantic Treaty, Wilson's Fourteen Points, Treaty of Paris, League of Nations, United Nations, World War I, and World War II.

## Question 2

Throughout the entire textbook, Nau unites the many realist theories into one perspective he calls Realism. There are benefits and drawbacks to doing this. He does similar things with the Liberalism and the Identity perspectives. One of the benefits is that we are able to focus on the core of the theory. One of the drawbacks is that the theories are over-simplified. This writing assignment seeks to fix this drawback.

In a well-organized essay, expand the Realist perspective into its four constituent theories. Explain each theory. Clarify the differences between the theories. Use examples to demonstrate the explanatory power of each theory. Those four constituent theories are Classical Realism, Neoclassical Realism, Liberal Realism, and Structural Realism (Neo-Realism).

### *Outline to Follow for Question 2*

- I. Introduction (The Realist perspective)
  - Definition of Realist perspective
  - a. Explanation of this perspective
  - b. Why using perspectives may not be optimal
  - c. A brief overview of the four constituent theories
- II. Classical Realism
  - Transition paragraph
  - a. Definition of Classical Realism
  - b. Explanation of Classical Realism
  - c. Event (with Classical Realist explanation)
- III. Liberal Realism
  - Transition paragraph
  - a. Definition of Liberal Realism
  - b. Explanation of Liberal Realism
  - c. Event (with Liberal Realist explanation)
- IV. Structural Realism
  - Transition paragraph
  - a. Definition of Structural Realism
  - b. Explanation of Structural Realism
  - c. Event (with Structural Realist explanation)
- V. Neoclassical Realism
  - Transition paragraph
  - a. Definition of Neoclassical Realism
  - b. Explanation of Neoclassical Realism
  - c. Event (with Neoclassical Realist explanation)
- VI. Conclusion
  - Reflect the Introduction

## **Final Notes**

Notice that I say ‘section’ and not ‘paragraph.’ Paragraph appropriately and label each of the sections appropriately. The main section headings should be base font and size, but **bolded** and on its own line (like the one labeling this section). The sub-section headings should be base font and size, but *italicized* and on its own line. Introductions do not get a heading (or sub-heading); the conclusions do. Furthermore, the first sub-section beneath a section does not get a heading; it is an introduction.

Again, remember that you do not give a heading to any introduction. Also remember (know) that each major section (except for the Introduction) should have a transition paragraph between it and the previous major section. These transition paragraphs should be about four lines long and should tie the current section into the previous.

In addition, in the interest of broadening your repertoire beyond *Wikipedia*, I require you to use at least ten non-Internet sources in this paper. Of course, more is acceptable. You can use neither Wikipedia nor your text as a final source. Use them as a start, but follow the citations to better sources.

## **Cover Page**

Your cover page should include your name, the date, the question you are answering, and the following statement, with your name signed at the end on a separate line (the emailed version will not have your signature):

**“I understand and will uphold the ideals of academic honesty as stated in the Honor Code.”**

## **Length**

This should be as long as it needs to be for you to do a good job of the question. However, I would expect the answer to be no less than five pages long.