

Discussion Section Guidelines: International Relations
PSC 124.M200—Fall 2015

M202 (Th 3:30 – 4:25 PM; Eggers Hall 111) & M206 (Th 5:00 - 5:55PM; Sims Hall 331)

Instructor: Sefa Secen

Office Hours: Thursday, 12:30 – 2:00PM

Office Location: 027 Eggers Hall

Email: ssecen@syr.edu

Section Structure and Objectives:

Discussion sections for PSC 124.200 are designed to review and discuss the topics covered in each week's lectures and assigned readings. As such, students are expected to have read each week's readings before discussion section and to come prepared with any questions or discussion points they would like to raise. You are also expected to bring readings of the week to the class since you will need to consult them.

Most discussion sections will consist of three parts:

- A short quiz on the readings and the lectures of the week to make sure that you follow the course day by day
- Discussion of the questions you have regarding the readings of the week
- A discussion period where debate or review questions will be provided by myself

This itinerary may be deviated from in any given week for other discussion section activities, as determined by your TA.

Section Expectations:

Each Thursday section fulfills the discussion section component of PSC 124.200. You are required to attend every session for whichever discussion section you are signed up for: you may not attend a different discussion section for PSC 124.200 in order to fulfill this requirement.

You will have 20% of your PSC 124 course grade devoted to discussion section participation and attendance. This portion of your grade will be broken down as follows:

- 10 % for quizzes (1% per quiz)
- 10 % for in-class participation and attendance (determined at the end of the semester)

Each week I will take note of your in-class participation during discussion parts: asking questions and commenting about the readings, being active in your group discussions, replying to my questions will bring you extra credits. At the end of the semester, I will compare each student's frequency of participation with the average amount of participation per student for their particular section. If you are close to or above this average you will receive all 10% of this portion of your grade. I will provide feedback on this portion of your grade throughout the semester.

If you miss one of the discussion sessions without informing me, you will get 0 from the quiz and the participation score of that day.

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Absence Policy:

Excused absences will be given for documented illness—a doctor’s note must be provided to me or to Professor McDowell for each absence—and for religious observance requests filed through the online notification system via Myslice. Full instructions for religious observance are available on your course syllabus. Students with excused absences will be given the opportunity to make up quizzes.

Academic Integrity and Disability-Related Accommodations:

Plagiarism is strictly forbidden in this class and students are expected to be familiar with what counts as plagiarism. The guidelines listed on your course syllabus for violations of academic integrity and requests for disability-related accommodations apply equally to discussion section assignments and activities. Please refer to these sections of your course syllabus and notify Professor McDowell or myself if you have any questions.

Technology Policy:

Use of mobile phones is forbidden during the class; and use of laptops is permitted only for the purposes of note taking and reviewing the articles. Using laptops for anything other than note taking during discussion sections will damage your participation grade. If you are paying attention to your laptop instead of discussion section activities, I will notice. I will not warn you since I find it humiliating but this will be reflected to your participation grade. If you are worried that I will mistake your note taking for inattention, I suggest you switch to handwritten notes and/or discuss the issue with me during office hours.

Extenuating Circumstances:

Naturally, situations that do not provide a doctor’s note or fit into the University’s religious observance policy will occur throughout the semester and lead to absences from section or lecture or the failure to complete assignments. It is your responsibility to communicate such circumstances to Professor McDowell and/or myself as soon as you are able to. Professor McDowell and I will consult each other in these situations to determine how best to help you.

Some of you may feel unable to speak up during discussion section, and so will worry about your participation grade. If you feel this applies to you, please let me know as soon as possible so we can discuss how to help you earn full credit for participation in sections.

It is possible that I will be unable to be in my office during office hours or to be present at discussion sections. In such circumstances, I will do my best to contact you as soon as possible via email through blackboard. Thus, you should make a habit of checking your email regularly.