

**PAPERS AND CLASS DEBATES/ DISCUSSIONS ON “ISSUES OF THE WEEK”  
PSCI 102  
FALL 2003**

Each student will be assigned to write two 5-page double-spaced papers (12 point font, one inch margins) on two different issues of the week included on the course reading list. These papers will be due at the *beginning* of the class the topic the paper addresses is to be discussed. *Late papers will be ineligible for a grade of “A,” and papers more than one day late will be penalized an additional half grade for each additional day of delay.* (Students assigned to the first debate topic on “Will the Bush Doctrine Promote a More Secure World?” can turn in their papers one week after that debate/discussion, on Thursday, January 30<sup>th</sup>, or Friday, January 31<sup>st</sup>. Students assigned to debate topics the week *after* midterm examinations may also have one additional week after their scheduled debates/discussions to turn in their papers.)

A typical structure for these papers would be as follows: It should begin with a cover page. Put your name on it, and a title, at least. Also, number your pages, and use headings, and perhaps even subheadings. In addition you should (1) State the issue or question the paper addresses. Be sure to make it clear from the beginning which position your paper defends. (2) Summarize *briefly* and criticize opposing arguments on both sides of the issue or question, and (3) Within the limits of the short time and space available to you, support your position on the issue at hand with logic and evidence. Ideally, at least half of the paper will be devoted to this last purpose. This is only a typical outline, and creativity in organizing your paper is encouraged. But however the paper is organized, at least half of it should be focused on your own analysis and criticism, rather than description of other people’s ideas.

Citations of articles and books, as well as the list of citations or references at the end of the papers, should be formatted in the form used by the International Studies Quarterly. Basically, this means that in the body of the text when you cite a source, it should be cited in the following form: (Smith, 1998:34-35). In other words, provide the name of the author (or authors), the date of the publication, and the page numbers from which you have provided a direct quotation (if you have a direct quotation. If you are not citing anything that specific, you do not have to provide page numbers. You should, however, still provide the name of the author and the date of the publication.) At the end of the paper, you should cite books and articles in the following (ISQ) format:

**References**

CORTES, F., A PRZEWORSKI, AND J. SPRAGUE. (1974) *Systems Analysis for Social Scientists*. New York: John Wiley and Sons.

GOERTZ, G., AND P.F. DIEHL (1998) “The ‘Volcano Model’ and Other Patterns in the Evolution of Enduring Rivalries.” In *The Dynamics of Enduring Rivalries*, edited by P.F. Diehl, pp. 98-125. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

KINSELLA, D. (1995) Nested Rivalries: Superpower Competition, Arms Transfers, and Regional Conflict, 1950-1990. *International Interactions* 21:109-125.

You are welcome to use footnotes in your papers, but do not use them to cite sources. (Sources, to repeat, should be cited in the ISQ format.) Footnotes should instead be devoted to comments and information of interest but insufficiently central to the argument to be included in the body of the paper. They should appear (as in ISQ, as their name suggests, and as God intended)<sup>1</sup> at the bottom of the page, not at the end of the paper. Styles for citing web sources are still evolving. You may cite them in any informative way that you wish; please be consistent.

Do not rely entirely in writing these papers on the readings in *Taking Sides*. Integrate materials from class lectures and discussion, as well as other readings from the course when possible. Extensive research is not expected, but ideally at least one source cited will be a book (or edited volume) found at the library, as opposed to sources located electronically. Ideally, you will cite at least 5 sources. (Under a heading like “sources consulted,” you might also cite an additional 5 sources that you did consult, but did not cite or quote specifically.) You may well find that the best single source of materials for your papers can be located at **Proquest**. Such “Research Databases” at the Central Library can be found at <http://www.library.Vanderbilt.edu/elecdata.html>. In any case, your paper should cite at least *two articles* from academic journals, as opposed to more journalistic sources. You are of course welcome to use any source you can locate through any system or process you devise.

These papers will be evaluated first on the quality of the writing. That is, your papers should be free of spelling errors, grammatical errors, or poorly structured sentences and paragraphs, for example. *They will also be evaluated according to the extent to which they conform to the formal structure described in this handout.* The number and quality of the outside sources you cite will also be taken into account. Finally, the papers will be evaluated according to the extent to which they make a persuasive case in favor of the position they defend.

We will have rather informal debate/discussions of the “issue of the week” during the meetings of the discussion sections. One or more students will be assigned to each side of the “issues of the week” listed in the course syllabus. Each of these students will also be asked to write one of their papers on that topic. **These papers may defend the side on the issue to which the student has been assigned for the debate/discussion, or that side which the student happens to prefer.** (We will attempt to assign students to the side of the debate they prefer, but this might not always be possible.) Each student should write one paper on one of the topics under Sections III through VII on the syllabus. (The first topic, “Was the War with Iraq Unjustified?,” will serve as the basis for a general discussion in the section meetings. No papers will be assigned regarding that topic, and there will be no presentations by individual students on that topic.) In other words, every student should select one topic among that set starting with “Will the Bush Doctrine Promote a More Secure World?” (Section III) and ending with “Do International Financial Organizations Require Radical Reform?” (Section VII) And then all students need to select another topic within that set starting with “Are Military Means the Best Way to Defeat Terrorism?” (Section VIII) and ending with “Do Environmentalists Overstate Their Case?” (Section XII)

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<sup>1</sup> Endnotes are clearly an instrument of the Devil.

At the first meetings of the discussion sections (Thursday, August 28<sup>th</sup> , and Friday, August 29<sup>th</sup> ), students will be asked to indicate on note cards to which two topics within each set of issues they would prefer to be assigned. Typically, more than one student will be assigned either to the “No” and/or the “Yes” side of a given issue. It is vitally important for these students to coordinate their remarks. *Whenever more than one student is assigned to one side of an issue, the first student to speak for that side should begin by explaining how the speakers on that side have decided to structure their presentations so that they complement one another, rather than duplicate each other.* For example, one speaker might concentrate on developing the arguments in favor of their side on the issue, and another speaker might focus on criticisms of the arguments on the opposing side. These presentations should be about 5 minutes long. (Presentations running over 5 minutes may be penalized.)

It is understood that many students would prefer not to make presentations of this kind to a group. Every attempt will be made to make these discussion/debates informal, supportive, and non-threatening. One reason that they should not be too threatening is that only a small portion of the grade for the course will be based on these verbal presentations. The papers each count for 15% of the grade for the course. Only about a third of the overall grade for each of the papers will be based on the verbal presentations. In other words, each presentation will only count for about 5% of the overall grade for the course.

Nevertheless, it is crucial that the presenters *talk to*, rather than read at, the class. So, students making presentations should *not* depend on notes containing their entire presentation, word for word. Rather they should rely on brief notes containing only an *outline* of their remarks, and be sufficiently familiar with the material they want to present to *talk to*, rather than read at, their audience.

It is also very important that students not scheduled to make formal presentations to the meetings of the discussion sections be prepared, nevertheless, to be active participants in those meetings. First, each student should come prepared with one question to ask student presenters on each side of the issue of the week. There will be time, after the formal presentations, for class discussion, which will be based primarily on comments and questions from the students not giving presentations that day. Students in the class not assigned to a make a presentation for the day *are expected to do the assigned readings*, AND, to be prepared to ask questions of the students who have made presentations that day. Those students not making presentations should bring with them every day a **Debate evaluation form**, copies of which are obtainable at the class web site. Every week, they should fill out the first portion of the debate evaluation form on line, so that their input can be recorded in print on the form before they bring it to class. (Your class participation grade will depend in part on the consistency with which you bring these forms to class with printed input. That printed input on those forms establishes that you have done some thinking about the issue for the day before the discussion section meets. Those forms also will comprise a record of your attendance at the meetings of the discussion section.) They will then be asked to complete the second part of the form, evaluating the debate for the day, at the end of the meetings of the discussion sections. All the presentations together should only take no more than 30 minutes of the discussion section meeting times. The remainder of the discussion section meetings will be devoted to questions and discussion regarding the topic for the day.

10% of your grade for the course will be based on your participation in these discussions. To repeat, that 10% will be based on the **Debate evaluation forms** that you will hand in at the end of every meeting of the discussion section, as well as the quality of the questions you are prepared to ask when you come to the discussion section. The quality of your contribution to the discussions in the sections will not necessarily be directly related to the *quantity* of your contributions. In fact, if it is entirely obvious to every one in the class that you consistently provide the highest number of verbal comments during the meetings of the discussion section, then it is probably true that you are talking more than you should.

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

The group email address for the class is [PSCI102\\_RAY@list.vanderbilt.edu](mailto:PSCI102_RAY@list.vanderbilt.edu). I will be using this address to send email messages to the class periodically. Students in the class should feel free to use this address if there are topics they want to address via group email, or information they would like to distribute.

Both this document and the class syllabus are available on the web page for the course. **Also available on the web page is a table listing those students assigned to each of the “issues of the week.” This table will be updated periodically to reflect changes in those assignments that may occur during the semester. (One reason such changes may occur is that mutually agreed students may exchange topics and assignments with each other, as long as I am informed about such changes.)**

However, you must have on your computer an *Adobe Acrobat Reader* to read these documents. Fortunately, the *Adobe Acrobat Reader* (enabling you to read “pdf,” or “portable document format” files) can be downloaded free. Go to <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html> and read the instructions.