



## **IRL 6000: Research Methods in International Relations**

**Fall Semester, 2011**

**First Session August 29 to October 19**

**Class Location: Alliant Campus Mexico City**

**Class Time: Monday and Wednesday, 5-8.**

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Office Hours: by appointment.

Mailbox: Located in teachers's lounge

Grading: Letter

Units: 3

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### **I. Rationale:**

This course is designed to introduce advanced research methods to graduate students. Students will become familiar with how to formulate research questions, the types and selection of sources, methods of analysis, and academic writing. Students will complete exercises employing research methods, and will write an original research paper. During the class students will be working with social, economic, and demographic data from the United States Census Bureau web site at <http://www.census.gov/>.

### **Desired Program Outcomes for the Masters of Arts in International Relations**

The MA degree program in International Relations prepares professionals who are competent in international affairs by offering a thorough grounding in international relations theory and approaches to the analysis of global issues. The MA program prepares students for careers in government, non-governmental/non-profit organizations at home and abroad, international business, and journalism.

The mission of the Program is to produce broadly-trained global professionals who possess a keen awareness of the critical issues that impact world affairs and the global economy. Master's programs in International Studies are based at the San Diego, Los Angeles, and Mexico City campuses. The Program encourages study-abroad experiences both at Alliant-Mexico City and in conjunction with other universities. It also actively supports internships abroad so that students may gain valuable international experience.



## **Alliant's Mission Statement**

Alliant International University prepares students for professional careers of service and leadership, and promotes the discovery and application of knowledge to improve the lives of people in diverse cultures and communities around the world.

Alliant is committed to excellence in four areas:

1. Education for Professional Practice

Alliant's educational programs are designed to give students the knowledge, skills and ethical values they need to serve and lead effectively in a variety of professional settings. Alliant graduates are expected to achieve mastery of a body of knowledge and be able to apply that knowledge in professional practice in order to achieve desired and beneficial outcomes.

2. Scholarship

Scholarship in the Alliant context includes the discovery of new knowledge; the discovery of new applications of knowledge to solve practical problems; the integration of knowledge in new ways; and innovation in teaching knowledge and professional competencies.

3. Multicultural and International Competence

Alliant is an inclusive institution committed to serving diverse populations around the world by preparing professionals to work effectively across cultural and national boundaries; by increasing the number of professionals working in underserved areas; and by understanding and responding to the needs of diverse communities.

4. Community Engagement

Alliant's faculty, students, alumni and staff are dedicated to making a positive difference in the world through professional education and practice. We measure the success of our university in part by the impact we have, both directly and indirectly, on the welfare of individuals, families, organizations and communities.

**See also below, "Appendix: Alliant Mission, Values, Professional Practices and Competencies"**



## CALENDAR FALL 2011

### FALL SEMESTER 2011

Aug. 1 Monday: Last day to register for Fall Semester without paying a late fee

Aug. 22-27 Monday – Saturday: New student orientation -- Attendance is mandatory for new students

Aug. 29 Monday: Instruction begins for Fall Semester [full-term (16-week) and Session 1 (8-week) courses]

Sept. 13 Tuesday: Add/Drop Deadline for Fall Semester full-term courses. Last day to drop a full-term course for 100% refund

*Friday, September 16-- Mexican Independence Holiday—NO CLASSES*

Sept. 23 Friday: Last day to withdraw from Fall Semester Session 1 courses in good standing

Oct. 21 Friday: Last day to withdraw from Fall Semester full-term courses in good standing

Oct. 22 Saturday: *Alliant Makes A Difference Day*

Oct. 23 Sunday: Last day of Fall Session 1 courses

Oct. 24 Monday: Instruction begins for Fall Semester Session 2 (8-week) courses

*Wednesday, NOVEMBER 2 –Día de los Muertos Holiday—NO CLASSES*

Nov. 4 Friday: Fall Semester Session 1 grades due to Registrar's Office

Nov. 18 Friday: Last day to withdraw from Fall Semester Session 2 courses in good standing. Fall Semester Session 1 grades available on-line

*Monday, November 21 --Mexican Revolution Holiday—NO CLASSES*

Nov. 28 Monday: Registration for Spring Semester begins

Dec. 11 Sunday: Last day of Fall Semester full-term courses

Dec. 12-18 Monday – Sunday: Final Examinations; make up classes (in case of holidays, etc.); semester-end activities

Dec. 18 Sunday: Last day of Fall Semester Session 2 courses

Dec. 26 Monday: Last day to register for Spring Semester without paying a late fee

Jan. 6 Friday: Fall Semester full-term and Session 2 grades due to Registrar's Office

Jan. 13 Friday: Fall Semester grades available on-line

### ALLIANT INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY—MEXICO CITY 2012

#### SPRING SEMESTER 2012

Jan. 17 -20 Tuesday – Friday: New student orientation/Attendance is mandatory for new students

Jan. 23 Monday: Instruction begins for Spring Semester [full-term (16-week) and Session 1 (8-week) courses]

Feb. 6 Monday: Add/Drop Deadline for Spring Semester full-term courses. Last day to add or drop a full-term course without late fee. Last day to drop a full-term course for 100% refund

## **I. Course Description, Purpose, Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment:**

### *A. Course Description*

This course is organized as a research and technical seminar, where students will become familiar with research methods and types of sources. Most of the class time will be spent in the examination of and application of research methods, discussions, and oral presentations by, seminar participants. All participants are expected to come to each class prepared and able to participate fully, and to prepare oral and written presentations to be presented in class.

### *B. Purpose of the Course*

Students will gain familiarity with different research methods in the social sciences, political science and international relations.

### *C. Learning Outcomes:*

The following are the general learning outcomes for the MA in International relations.

By the end of this course, students you should be able to:

1. Demonstrate familiarity with the history and language of Advanced International Relations “theory,” paradigms, and ideological perspectives.
2. Distinguish between descriptive, evaluative and analytical approaches to the study of International Relations;
3. Distinguish between problem-solving and critical approaches to the application of “theory,” paradigms, and ideological perspectives in International Relations;
4. Identify and discuss the strengths and weaknesses of these alternative approaches; Analyse the application of theory in current real situations and cases.

In addition, upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

Develop social and political interaction skills for making a more positive impact on group cohesiveness and group processes.

### *D. Instructional Strategy*

- This course is designed to encourage **active learning**. Learning is more effective if students learn by themselves with faculty guidance and direction. The goal is to encourage your critical thinking commensurate with graduate level courses.

### *E. Description of Course Requirements and Assessment Methods*

As in any seminar, active participation is essential. Required readings should always be completed before class. Papers and oral presentations to be presented in class should be ready at the beginning of each class.

- Regular class attendance and participation:

You are required to attend all the classes (in accordance with the University regulations). If you cannot attend please let me know beforehand, or contact me (immediately) afterwards.

- Write a final paper:

Each student is required to write an original research essay of 25 to 30 pages in which the student examines and applies research methods studied in class. ***This is worth 60 percent of the class grade.***

The Essay (formal style), must contain: a Bibliography following academic standard format such as, Harvard reference style, endnotes or footnotes. The reference style must be consistent throughout the essay. Students must use a minimum of five sources. Be sure to cite all sources of information, and be careful to not plagiarize.

Please note that not all internet sources such as newspapers, magazines, documents, journals, and books are credible sources. Investigate the credibility of the sources before using them. In using internet sources, students must be careful to not engage in plagiarism.

Only word-processed or typewritten, double-spaced reports will be accepted. Students must write the paper using their own words, and not cut and paste from internet sources.

An academic essay contains the following elements:

#### ***Introduction***

***In the introduction the student should explain the topic the student is going to research, giving a brief introduction for the reader to understand. The student should also describe the methodology to be used, and the outcome from the research project.***

#### ***Main Body***

***In the body the student should develop the argument or arguments, and the evidence that supports to student's interpretation. The student should use only the evidence that supports the arguments being made, and should not include extraneous information that is not germane to the arguments the student presents. Each paragraph should present a discrete idea or interpretation with supporting evidence. Be sure to avoid redundancies.***

#### ***Conclusion***

***The conclusion should be the final part of the essay, where the student sums up the arguments presented and the findings that address the original question, if any.***

**Plagiarism: Students must adhere to the academic standards regarding the citation of sources. Plagiarism consists of using unique information from a source without properly citing the source, copying text from another source such as copying and pasting from a source found on the Internet, or paraphrasing a text without proper citation. Confirmed cases of plagiarism will result in the student failing the class. Please ask me if you have any questions regarding plagiarism.**

- Weekly Short Paper

Each student is to write a weekly paper of 5-7 pages that discuss and apply research methods studied in class. **These papers will constitute 20 percent of the class grade.**

- Oral presentations and class participation

Each student will lead class discussions and actively participate in class discussions. **Class participation constitutes 20 percent of the class grade.** This includes participation in class discussions as well as more formal oral presentations.

**The following grading scale will be used for this course:**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Per cent</b>
A	90%
A-	85% – 89%
B+	83% – 88%
B	77% – 82%
B-	71% – 76%
C	65% – 70%
F	Less than 65%

**Principal Rubrics:**

1. Class Participation: Preparation, presentation, and participation in the class should demonstrate your capacity to successfully demonstrate the identified outcomes. Class questions will focus on your preparation and participation, which will be evaluated on the basis of five criteria:

<b>Class Participation</b>	Clear Evidence – 50	Minimal Evidence	No Evidence – 0
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<b>Rubric</b>	points	– 25 points	points
Preparation, Familiarity & Reflection on reading	Student exhibits substantial familiarity with the reading (10 points)	Student demonstrates a basic familiarity with the reading. (7 points)	Student demonstrates a lack of preparation and familiarity with the reading. (0 points)
Understanding of Readings	Student has a clear understanding of the reading. (15 points)	Student has minimal understanding of the reading. (8 points)	Student lacks a basic understanding of the reading. (0 points)
Contribution to Others Learning	Student contributes to the learning of others. (10 points)	Student makes minimal contribution to the learning of others. (5 points)	Student failed to contribute to the learning of others. (0 points)
Clarity & Originality of Contribution	Student's contribution is clear and original. (15 points)	Student's contribution is minimal. (5 points)	Student contribution lacks clarity and originality. (0 points)

2. Presentations (incl. power point: Objectives for this type of presentation include

1. Quality of oral presentation,
2. Focused, relevant research presented in a student-friendly manner,
3. Defense of one's analysis,
4. Response to questions,
5. Prompting relevant dialogue on important issues.

*Presentation Scoring Rubric:*

<b>Grading Criteria</b>			
Objectives:	Excellent – 50 points	Minimal Evidence – 25 points	No Evidence – 0 points
Oral Presentation	10 points	5 points	0 points
Research Presented	15 points	7 points	0 points
Defense of Analysis	15 points	7 points	0 points
Response to Questions	5 points	3 points	0 points
Prompting Relevant Dialogue	5 points	1 points	0 points

### 3. Research Paper Scoring Rubric:

<b>Grading Criteria: Format</b>	Excellent – 50 points	Proficient – 30 points	Poor – 0 points
Grammar & Punctuation	The paper has no major grammatical and punctuation errors and very few minor errors. Any minor errors do not interfere with the understanding of the paper. (5 points)	The paper has a few major errors and multiple minor errors, but almost all sentences are clear and understandable. (4 points)	The paper has so many basic grammar errors that the paper cannot be readily understood. (0 points)
Style of paper	Presentation style assured real learning by reader and engaged the reader. (5 points)	Presentation style was adequate to advance reader learning. (4 points)	Style of paper was confusing to reader. (0 points)
Presentation of research and design to class	Presentation was engaging for classmates. (5 points)	Presentation was interesting but lacked clarity and explanation (4 points)	Presentation lacked clarity and was not engaging of fellow students in the class (0 points)
Adherence to APA style	Paper demonstrated full adherence to APA style. (5 points)	Paper demonstrated partial adherence to APA style. (4 points)	Paper failed to utilize APA style. (0 points)

<b>Grading Criteria: Content</b>			
Organization	Writing is clear, logical, and very organized around a developed thesis. (10 points)	Writing has minimal organization and a basic thesis statement. (4 points)	The paper is unclear with no organization. (0 points)
Support	Every important point is clearly supported by strong evidence. (10 points)	The use of evidence is minimal, but it does support the thesis. (5 points)	The paper does not attempt to support a thesis. (0 points)
Analysis	Analysis shows a strong relationship between evidence and thesis. (10 points)	Analysis of the evidence stretches its meaning in an attempt to support the thesis. (5 points)	The paper does not attempt to explain how the content relates to the thesis. (0 points)

		points)	(0 points)
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#### 4. Final Examination Rubrics:

<b>Short Questions</b>	<b>Answer</b>	<b>Superior-Exceeds Expectations</b>	<b>Proficient-Meets Expectations</b>	<b>Poor-Below Expectations</b>
Student uses relevant concepts to answer the question		Student uses multiple relevant concepts to respond to the question, beyond those mentioned in the question itself. (10 points)	Student uses the concepts that are specifically mentioned in the question. (5 points)	Student does not use all the concepts that are specifically mentioned in the question. (0 points)
Student exhibits understanding of the concepts/information		Student clearly and completely exhibits knowledge of the relevant concepts. (10 points)	Student exhibits basic knowledge of the relevant concepts used in the response. (5 points)	Student clearly lacks a basic understanding of the relevant concepts. (0 points)
The response is well-written and consists of 4-6 complete sentences		The response is highly readable and is at least 4 complete sentences. (5 point)	The response is basically understandable and consists of at least 4 complete sentences. (5 point)	Response is not understandable and/or consists of less than 4 complete sentences. (0 points)
<b>Essay Question</b>		<b>Superior-Exceeds Expectations</b>	<b>Proficient-Meets Expectations</b>	<b>Poor-Below Expectations</b>
Student uses relevant concepts to answer the question		Student uses multiple relevant concepts to respond to the question, beyond those mentioned in the question itself. (10 points)	Student uses the concepts that are specifically mentioned in the question. (5 points)	Student does not use all the concepts that are specifically mentioned in the question. (0 points)
Student exhibits understanding of the concepts/information		Student clearly and completely exhibits knowledge of the relevant concepts. (10 points)	Student exhibits basic knowledge of the relevant concepts use in the response. (5 points)	Student clearly lacks a basic understanding of the relevant concepts. (0 points)
The response is well-written and consists of 3-		The response is highly readable and	The response is basically	Response is not very

4 complete paragraphs	is at least 3 full, well-elaborated paragraphs. (5 points)	understandable and consists of at least 3 full paragraphs. (2 points)	comprehensive and/or consists of less than 3 full paragraphs. (0 points)
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## II. Course Readings and Materials

Texts:

1. H.T. Reynolds, Janet Johnson and Jason Mycoff, **Political Science Research Methods, 6th Edition.**

- Publisher:** CQ Press (December 19, 2007)
- Language:** English
- ISBN-10:** 0872894428

- ISBN-13: **978-0872894426**

Amazon.com: [http://www.amazon.com/Political-Science-Research-Methods-6th/dp/0872894428/ref=sr\\_1\\_7?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1302971292&sr=1-7](http://www.amazon.com/Political-Science-Research-Methods-6th/dp/0872894428/ref=sr_1_7?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1302971292&sr=1-7)

2. Janet Ruane, **Essentials of Research Methods: A Guide to Social Science Research**

- Publisher:** Wiley-Blackwell; 1 edition (September 13, 2004)
- Language:** English
- ISBN-10:** 0631230491
- ISBN-13:** 978-0631230496

Amazon.com: [http://www.amazon.com/Essentials-Research-Methods-Social-Science/dp/0631230491/ref=sr\\_1\\_4?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1302971292&sr=1-4](http://www.amazon.com/Essentials-Research-Methods-Social-Science/dp/0631230491/ref=sr_1_4?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1302971292&sr=1-4)

In addition, students Will be required to make use of information and data sets from the United States census bureau web site <http://www.census.gov/>, and any additional assigned readings.

## III. Policies and Procedures:

### *Behavioral Expectations/Attendance*

1. Policies Related To Class Attendance, Lateness, Missed Exams or Assignments

The University expects regular class attendance by all students. Each student is responsible for all academic work missed during absences. When an absence is necessary, students should contact the instructor as courtesy and to check for assignments. See the University Catalog for the complete policy on attendance.

Attendance criteria for this class are:

Punctuality: Please be on time!

Attendance: More than four unexcused absences will lower course grade one level.

2. Information on Participation/types of participation required by the course

Readings and participation are the central elements in the course. The assignments provide details for class discussions, small and large work groups; and will vary on each assigned topic. This is an interactive course and students are expected to read the assigned material prior to class. The amount and quality of participation in activities and discussions will be reflected in the students' final grades.

3. Instructor Assumptions

It is the student's responsibility to identify and complete any work missed in the course. All written work is due at the beginning of class on the assigned dates. Late papers will be accepted only at the professor's discretion and will be penalized. Grades will be determined on the basis of these course requirements as follows:

You are always welcome to discuss this course or other academic issues with me during my office hours. I will also be happy to make an appointment for another time if you cannot see me during office hours. Don't hesitate to ask if you have any questions or problems.

4. Responsibility to Keep Copies

Remember – it is good practice to keep copies of ALL major assignments/papers you turn in. On rare occasions, work may be lost because of computer failure or other mishaps.

5. Respectful Speech and Actions

Alliant International University, by mission and practice, is committed to fair and respectful consideration of all members of our community, and the greater communities surrounding us. All members of the University must treat one another as they would wish to be treated themselves, with dignity and concern.

As an institution of higher education, Alliant International University has the obligation to combat racism, sexism, and other forms of bias and to provide an equal educational opportunity. Professional codes of ethics (e.g., from the APA for psychology students) and the Academic Code shall be the guiding principles in dealing with speech or actions that, when considered objectively, are abusive and insulting.

6. Academic Code of Conduct and Ethics

The University is committed to principles of scholastic honesty. Its members are expected to abide by ethical standards both in their conduct and in their exercise of responsibility towards other members of the community. Each student's conduct is expected to be in accordance with the standards of the University. ***The complete Academic Code, which covers acts of misconduct including assistance during examination, fabrication of data, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and***

*assisting other students in acts of misconduct, among others, may be found in the University Catalog.* The University reserves the right to use plagiarism detection software.

7. Disability Accommodations Request

If you need disability-related accommodations in this class, please see me privately. All accommodations must be requested in a timely manner (at least 2 weeks ahead of time) with a letter of support for Alliant's Office of Disability Services. If you have questions about accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services.

8. Policy on Course Requirements During Religious Holidays

Alliant International University does not officially observe any religious holidays. However, in keeping with the institution's commitment to issues of cultural diversity as well as humanitarian considerations, faculty are encouraged to appreciate students' religious observances by not penalizing them when they are absent from classes on holy days. Alliant International University faculty will be sensitive to these matters. Students should be similarly respectful of faculty members' right to observe religious days.

9. Resources for Obtaining Tutoring or Other Student Support Services

Tutors are available to help students with course-based or exam-based needs. Contact the Director of Student Support Services for information on obtaining tutoring – or other student support services – on your campus.

10. Problem Solving Resources

If problems arise with faculty, other students, staff, or student support services, students should use the University Problem Solving Procedures located on the web at: [http://www.alliant.edu/academic/studentproblemsolving/Student\\_Grievance\\_Policy.pdf](http://www.alliant.edu/academic/studentproblemsolving/Student_Grievance_Policy.pdf).

**IV. Course Schedule:**

Class dates

**Mon. and Wed. 5 to 8, from August 29, 2011 to October 23, 2011 (subject to change)**

Content

**Tentative list of topics to be covered**

1. Introduction. The problem with early presidential polls in the 1930s

Another source of error is the use of samples that are not representative of the population as a consequence of the methodology used, as was the experience of the *Literary Digest* in 1936. For example, telephone sampling has a built-in error because in many times and places, those with telephones have generally been richer than those without.

2. Formulating research questions.
3. Sources and bias.
4. "There are three kinds of lies: lies, damned lies, and statistics." (Sir Charles Wentworth Dilke, 1843/1911).
5. Estimates (<http://www.census.gov/popest/estimates.html>)
6. Projections (<http://www.census.gov/population/www/projections/methodology.html>)
7. Income (<http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/method/index.html>)
8. **Poverty** (<http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/methods/index.html>)
9. **Income inequality**
10. ([http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/publications/ACS%20inequality%20report%202000-2005\\_v2.pdf](http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/publications/ACS%20inequality%20report%202000-2005_v2.pdf))(<http://www.census.gov/prod/2000pubs/p60-204.pdf>)(<http://www.census.gov/prod/2010pubs/acsbr09-2.pdf>)([http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/housing/housing\\_patterns/app\\_b.html](http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/housing/housing_patterns/app_b.html))
11. **Economic indicators** (<http://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/briefroom/BriefRm>)
12. **Business and industry** (<http://www.census.gov/econ/index.html>)
13. **13. Employment**  
(<http://lehd.did.census.gov/led/>)(<http://lehd.did.census.gov/led/datatools/datatools.html>)

### **Reminder that Syllabus is Subject to Change**

The preceding is the general structure and content of the course. Students should remember that the exact content and schedule of the syllabus is subject to change without prior notice to meet student, faculty, or other needs. We may spend more time on some topics as needed, and conversely, may move more quickly over other topics.

## **Appendix: Alliant Mission, Values, Professional Practices and Competencies**

### **A. Alliant Mission**

**Description:** Alliant's mission is:

Alliant International University prepares students for professional careers of service and leadership, and promotes the discovery and application of knowledge to improve the lives of people in diverse cultures and communities around the world.

**Purpose:** The purpose of this anchor is to ensure that the Program fits within the University and School mission and vision.

### **B. Alliant Core Values**

**Description:** The Alliant Core Values are Integrity, Intellectual Advancement, Diversity, Social Responsibility, Innovation, Stewardship, Partnership and Collaboration.

**Purpose:** The purpose of this anchor is to ensure that Alliant's Programs are planning and operating in accordance with Alliant's Core Values.

### **C. Alliant Professional Practice University Components of Excellence from the Mission**

**Description:** The four components of a professional practice university explained in Alliant's mission are:

- Education for Professional Practice
- Scholarship
- Multicultural and International Competence
- Community Engagement

**Purpose:** The purpose of this anchor is to ensure that the 4 components of Alliant as a professional practice university are incorporated into the Programs.

### **D. Professional Practice Competencies**

**Description:** The Alliant Professional Practice Competencies (A-IMPACT) are:

- A discipline-specific body of knowledge and research/scholarship
- Insight into the context of practice
- Multicultural/International competence
- Professional literacies
- Application of knowledge and research in new ways
- Conduct, judgment, dispositions and ethics
- Team-based and multidisciplinary approaches

**Purpose:** The purpose of this anchor is to ensure that the competencies are part of all Alliant's Programs (at an appropriate level) and thus become a hallmark of an Alliant Program.