

**World Politics: Security, Prosperity, and Justice FINAL**  
**An AU University College Seminar**  
**SIS-105.081UC • Fall Semester 2008**

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[PROCEDURE FOR HAVING A SCHEDULED OFFICE VISIT WITH PTJ]: regular office-hours are open and unscheduled, and are generally some combination of first-come, first-served plus a periodic triage for time constraints and the like. These hours may change from week to week, but generally will be Thursday afternoons when possible. During these regular office-hours, I am guaranteed to be in my office and available for a face-to-face chat. If you cannot make it to regular office hours, and you don't want to just drop in and take your chances, *you have to make appointments with PTJ by e-mail*. First, check PTJ's calendar online (<http://ical.mac.com/onyxdr/Patrick>); second, request an open time-slot; third, wait for an e-mailed confirmation before writing the appointment into your own schedule.]

This course will meet Tuesdays and Fridays, 11:20am-12:35pm, in the classroom on the first floor of Leonard Hall. There will also be some co-curricular activities scheduled on Wednesdays during the regular University College lab time, one Friday evening baseball game, and one Saturday expedition to Arlington National Cemetery. There will also be optional Sunday pizza dinners several times during the semester, held from 6:00-7:00pm in the 7<sup>th</sup> floor common room; please let me know on the Friday preceding each dinner if you plan to attend, so that I can order the proper amount of food and soda.

### Course Objective and Description

The purpose of this course is to provide you with a basic introduction to the study of world politics, or "international relations" as it is sometimes (perhaps inaccurately) called. Our avenue of approach to this extremely large subject-matter will be through an investigation of the major theoretical positions in the academic discipline of International Relations (IR), and a critical examination of how these theories hold up to the actual events of world politics both past and present (and perhaps even future). Our goal will be to develop critical, creative, and sustainable positions regarding three big issue-areas—security, prosperity, and justice—as they relate to a variety of empirical settings. Students should expect to do a lot of arguing, debating, and reflecting over the course of the semester, and should also expect to come out of the course with a better sense of your own take on some globally important questions.

Some knowledge of history and current events is indispensable to the work of the course; however, this is neither a history class nor a current events course. I suggest that each student in the class keep up with current events of relevance to the study of world politics; the best way to do this is to read the *New York Times* or *Washington Post* daily, or at the very least to watch a reputable nightly newscast or tune into CNN for a while. (*The Daily Show With Jon Stewart*, unfortunately, does not count as a “reputable nightly newscast.” Neither does *The Colbert Report*. Not yet, anyway.) The theories that we will be examining all claim to be able to explain events in the real world, and so when we consider them we will be trying to take them “on the road” and see how they hold up outside of the classroom.

World Politics is one of the foundation courses in American University’s General Education Area 3, “Global and Multicultural Perspectives.” It is the first part of a two-course sequence in General Education. In order to complete the sequence, students should take one of the following second-level courses in Area 3:

- COMM-280 Contemporary Media in a Global Society
- EDU-285 Education for International Development
- GOVT-235 Dynamics of Political Change
- HIST-225 Russia and the Origins of Contemporary Eurasia
- IBUS-200 The Global Marketplace
- LFS-200 Russia and the United States
- SIS-215 Competition in an Interdependent World
- SIS-220 Confronting Our Differences/Discovering Our  
Similarities: Conflict Resolution
- SIS-255 China, Japan and the United States
- SOCY-225 Contemporary Arab World

Each of these second-level courses explores in more depth a topic introduced in World Politics. Note that this list is dynamic, and items may be added or subtracted at any time. In addition, there are “wild card” General Education courses offered each semester that can fulfill this requirement; check the General Education website ([www.american.edu/gened](http://www.american.edu/gened)) for the most current listing.

### Assignments and Grading

Semester grades for this course depend on three areas of evaluation: *arguing*, *representing*, and *blogging*. These three areas are distributed across the two public fora (the classroom and your group’s course blog) in which you must participate, as well as the less public forum of the analytical essay.

ARGUING: 60%. This area covers class discussion and two analytical essays.

CLASS DISCUSSION: Every participant in the class is expected to participate regularly and vigorously in class discussion. “Regularly” does not mean that

you have to have something to say every day, or that you should talk in class simply for the sake of talking. “Vigorously” means that you both have a position on the issue under discussion and that you engage with the positions of others in a forceful but respectful fashion.

ANALYTICAL ESSAYS. In lieu of an in-class midterm and final exam, each student will be required to write two analytical essays during the course of the semester. The first essay topic will be distributed on 7 October; essays will be due on 13 October by 5:00pm. This first essay can be revised and resubmitted any time before 5:00pm on 10 November; the grade of the revised essay will be averaged with the grade of the initial essay when calculating semester grades. The second essay topic will be distributed on 5 December, the last day of class, and will be due one week later, on 12 December, by 5:00pm.

These assignments will require you to write a coherent essay that responds to the question by using the materials presented in the course; it is not necessary for you to use outside sources to write this essays. *Except by prior arrangement, no late papers will be accepted, unless you have a documented medical or family emergency. If a paper is not accepted, then you receive an F for the assignment.* I mean it. Don’t try to test my resolve on this; it will not go well for you.

Needless to say, the analytical essays should be typed; in addition, they *must* be submitted to me electronically. In order to do this, please save your essay in a format I can open (Word, .rtf, .pdf, Pages—check with me if you are using something else) format, and e-mail it to me at the address above. Please name your document as follows: yourlastname\_essay\_#.extension, where yourlastname is, of course, your last name, extension is the proper file extension for whatever program you are using, and # is either 1, 2, or “1b” (for revisions of essay 1). I will send an acknowledgment by e-mail when I receive each submission, and will return the document with comments embedded in the text when I have graded it. If you cannot see the comments, or if the document refuses to open, please e-mail me *immediately* so that we can resolve the problem.

REPRESENTING: 25%. This area covers the two in-class simulations—the “minor” simulation on 7 October, and the “major” simulation on 2 December. Students will work in assigned teams, and the entire team will receive a single grade for its participation in each simulation. Teams will *not* be the same for the major and minor simulations. For each simulation, teams will be required to produce short videos expressing their positions on the issues under discussion; technical assistance will be available through the New Media Center in Hurst Hall, as well as from me and from my padawan.

MINOR SIMULATION. For this first simulation each team will represent a different domestic interest group, and will be asked to weigh in concerning whether I, as the President of the United States, should intervene in a particular international conflict to be specified several days prior to the simulation. After each team shows its video and responds to questions, the President will make a policy decision.

MAJOR SIMULATION. For this second simulation each team will represent one of the actors invited to a major international conference on development assistance, and will be asked to develop a plan for promoting the well-being of a particular country to be specified several days prior to the simulation. Each team will be required to deliver a formal presentation stating their position, and to engage in parliamentary debate with other teams in order to craft a resolution.

Additional details for both of these simulations will be provided closer to the dates for which they are scheduled.

BLOGGING: 15%. During the first class session, each student will be (randomly) assigned to a particular group within the class. Groups will form the foundation for several in-class structured discussions and other activities. Each group must create a publicly-accessible blog (blogger.com offers free blogs, but you are not required to use their services if you have another favorite blogging interface or site) to which all members of the group can post; the blog must meet the technical requirements specified in the “blogging rubric” appended to this syllabus. The blogs are the site for two distinct but related course assignments:

STRUCTURED RESPONSES. Most Tuesdays I will toss out a question for you to wrestle with during the days between our first and second class meetings of the week; the question will be posted to my blog (<http://profptj.blogspot.com>) before 5:00pm, and will more likely than not emerge from the in-class conversation earlier that day. You need to post responses to *nine* of these questions to your group’s blog over the course of the semester in order to receive acceptable credit for this portion of the course; you will have at least twelve opportunities to do so. You will have until 9:01am Thursday to post a response to the question, and you will have until the start of class on Friday to post replies to other people’s posts—replies that can be very helpful in producing and sustaining the online conversation that blogs are intended to generate.

REFLECTION. In addition, each student in the class must post to their blog *one entry per week* reflecting on the course and their participation in it, and should comment on the entries of others in their group—or respond to comments on their own postings—as the occasion warrants. As with the structured

responses to the weekly discussion questions (which should be posted to the same blog as your reflections) posting *something* each week will earn you acceptable credit; engaging in a discussion and engaging with the contributions of others will earn you additional credit. *Note that you have to post a reflective post for each week of the course, even if you choose to skip the structured response question for that week.* Reflections should be posted before noontime on the Monday following the week on which you are reflecting. “Reflection” is defined broadly, and could encompass an application of that week’s course material to a situation that we did not discuss in class, a reaction to the material that you want to develop in writing, a meditation on how the class is affecting you, and so on.

For an example of the diversity of things that would fit under each of these headings, examine the blogs from a previous year’s World Politics course by following the links posted here: <http://profptj.blogspot.com/2006/09/world-politics-blogs.html>.] My padawan and I will be reading the course blogs and commenting on them regularly. In addition, as specified in the “blogging rubric,” you need to maintain a record of your posts and submit that record to me at the mid-semester point and at the end of the semester.

LETTER GRADES. At appropriate times during the semester I will be providing letter grades for the analytical essay and its revision, as well as for your team’s simulation participation and for your blogging. The university also forces me to provide a letter grade for your overall semester performance. What do these grades mean? A letter grade for an individual assignment is my assessment of the extent to which you have met the goals and requirements of the assignment, whereas your semester grade is my assessment of the extent to which you have met the course requirements consistently throughout the semester. I do *not* grade on a curve; grades represent less how you perform relative to your classmates and more how you perform in absolute terms.

Letter grades will be assigned according to the following criteria:

- A: outstanding work
- B: solid, capable work
- C: satisfactory work
- D: unsatisfactory work
- F: failure to meet minimum goals

I will also provide more detailed feedback about your performance in these and other aspects of the course periodically, or upon request. Make an appointment or drop by my office.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY. The General Education Program requests that all General Education instructors reproduce this statement on academic integrity in their syllabi:

“Standards of academic conduct are set forth in the University’s Academic Integrity Code, which can be found in the University catalog. By registering, you have acknowledged your awareness of the Academic Integrity Code, and you are obliged to become familiar with your rights and responsibilities as defined by the Code. Violations of the Academic Integrity Code will not be treated lightly, and disciplinary actions will be taken should such violations occur. Please see me if you have any questions about the academic violations described in the Code in general or as they relate to particular requirements for this course.”

Let me add that Web-based plagiarism does you no good, particularly since I have access to the very same InterNet search engines that you do; you probably won’t get away with it, and the penalties are *quite* severe if you are caught. And just so there’s no ambiguity: the Academic Integrity Code applies to *all* course work, *including blog entries, and any material used during a simulation presentation*. We will go over appropriate ways to acknowledge the use of material authored by others at various points during the semester, as the occasion warrants.

But let’s hope that this is the only time that the issue of plagiarism will come up during the semester.

#### UC Common Event

There will be two University College common events held this semester. Both will be on Wednesdays during our normal “Washington Lab” time. The first, held on September 10, will be an event devoted to exploring what it means to be a community. The second, held on November 12, will be an event devoted to the in-depth exploration of a contentious issue of clear intellectual importance: the role of faith in public life. During the first half of the semester, we will be reading Krista Tippett’s *Speaking of Faith*, a book that you have been provided with a copy of already; we will be joined on November 12th by the author, who will be answering a set of questions one of which has been generated by each of the twelve UC seminars.

#### Readings

I have ordered five books for this course. The first is *The Nation-State and Global Order*, second edition, by Walter Opello and Stephen J. Rosow (Lynne Rienner, 2004), abbreviated **O&R** in the schedule below. The second is *The Prince* by Niccolo Machiavelli, abbreviated **M**; please use the Wooton translation (Hackett Press edition) that I have ordered. The third is *The Conquest of America*, by Tzvetan Todorov (University of Oklahoma Press, 1999), abbreviated **T**. The fourth is *How Soccer Explains the World*, by Franklin Foer (Harper Perennial, 2004), abbreviated **S**. The fifth is *Snow Crash*, by Neal Stephenson (Bantam Books, 1992), abbreviated **SC**. All of these books have been ordered at the campus bookstore, and placed on reserve at the campus library.

There will be several articles assigned throughout the course of the semester; these will be available on-line. I will also deliver, via podcast, four lectures over the course of the semester; these will be available for download from my website [www.kittenboo.com](http://www.kittenboo.com) two days prior to the class for which they are assigned.

In addition, I expect that each student in the class will be keeping up with current events relevant to the study of world politics. We will begin many class sessions with a discussion of the news, so come prepared. Please feel free to bring up current events material during class discussion.

### Daily Schedule

Readings are assigned for the day on which they will be discussed; please come to class with the reading for that day completed.

19-20 August	Welcome Week activities: Discover DC “Glocal Politics: Baseball Returns to Washington.” We will be meeting with community leaders and team officials involved in the negotiations surrounding the move of the former Montreal Expos to Washington DC in 2005; we will also be touring the old baseball stadium (RFK Stadium) and its new replacement (Nationals Park), and attending a Nationals game (note that the Nationals game against the Padres will be on 19 September, a Friday evening).
26 August	Course Overview Readings: final version of this syllabus.
27 AUGUST	WEDNESDAY VISIT TO SMITHSONIAN EXHIBIT ON DC BASEBALL
29 August	The Local and the Global Readings: <b>S</b> , all.
2 September	Sovereignty and the International System Readings: <b>O&amp;R</b> , Introduction and Chapters 1-4.
3 SEPTEMBER	WEDNESDAY VISIT TO THE LIBRARY
5 September	Theories of International Relations Readings: Stephen Walt, “International Relations: One World, Many Theories,” <i>Foreign Policy</i> 110, Spring 1998; Jack Snyder, “One World, Rival Theories,” <i>Foreign Policy</i> 145, November/December 2004



9 September	Realism I Readings: <b>M</b> , all.
10 SEPTEMBER	FIRST UNIVERSITY COLLEGE COMMON EVENT, 10AM
12 September	Realism II Readings: PTJ "Realism" lecture; Christopher Layne, "Rethinking American Grand Strategy," <i>World Policy Journal</i> Summer 1998.
16 September	Liberalism I Readings: <b>O&amp;R</b> , Chapters 5-7; PTJ "Liberalism" lecture.
19 September	Liberalism II Readings: Michael W. Doyle, "Liberalism and World Politics," <i>American Political Science Review</i> 80:4 (December 1986). [Recommended: John Mearsheimer, "Liberal Talk, Realist Thinking," University of Chicago Magazine, February 2002, <a href="http://magazine.uchicago.edu/0202/features/index.htm">http://magazine.uchicago.edu/0202/features/index.htm</a> .]  <i>Baseball game at Nationals Park: Nationals vs. Padres</i> <i>The game starts at 7:35pm, but we will be leaving as a group from AU at 6pm.</i>
23 September	Constructivism I Reading: PTJ "Constructivism" lecture.
24 September	WEDNESDAY VISIT TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT
26 September	Constructivism Reading: Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics," <i>International Organization</i> 46:2 (Spring 1992).
30 September	The Global Political Economy Readings: Benjamin Cohen, "Bretton Woods system," Routledge Encyclopedia of International Political Economy (Routledge 2002), available at <a href="http://www.polsci.ucsb.edu/faculty/cohen/recent/pdfs/bretton%20woods%20system.pdf">http://www.polsci.ucsb.edu/faculty/cohen/recent/pdfs/bretton%20woods%20system.pdf</a> .
3 October	"Fair Use" presentation and simulation prep
7 October	MINOR SIMULATION



FIRST ANALYTICAL PAPER ASSIGNMENT HANDED OUT 7 OCTOBER; DUE BY 5PM ON 13 OCTOBER.

8 OCTOBER	WEDNESDAY VISIT TO THE IMF OR THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION
10 October	Other Spaces Reading: PTJ "Challenges" lecture; Cynthia Enloe, "Margins, Silences, and Bottom Rungs," in <i>International Theory: Positivism and Beyond</i> , ed. Steve Smith et. al. (Cambridge University Press, 1996), available on BlackBoard.
13 OCTOBER	FIRST ANALYTICAL PAPER ASSIGNMENT DUE BY 5:00PM
15 OCTOBER	MOVIE VIEWING: LORD OF WAR
17 October	NO CLASS—Fall Break
20 OCTOBER	MID-SEMESTER BLOG REPORT DUE BY 5:00PM
21 October	Security Readings: "NSC-68," available online at <a href="http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nsc-hst/nsc-68.htm">http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nsc-hst/nsc-68.htm</a> ; "The National Security Strategy of the United States of America" (September 2002), available on BlackBoard.
22 OCTOBER	WEDNESDAY VISIT TO THE SPY MUSEUM
24 October	Security II Readings: none.
28 October	Insecurity I Reading: Arnold Wolfers, "'National Security' as an Ambiguous Symbol," <i>Political Science Quarterly</i> 67:4 (December 1952).
31 October	Insecurity II Reading: John Mueller, "Simplicity and Spook: Terrorism and the Dynamics of Threat Exaggeration," <i>International Studies Perspectives</i> 6 (2005).
1 November	SATURDAY VISIT TO ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY
4 November	Prosperity

Reading: John Gerard Ruggie, "International Regimes, Transactions, and Change: Embedded Liberalism in the Postwar Economic Order," *International Organization* 36:2 (Spring 1982).

5 NOVEMBER WEDNESDAY POVERTY VISIT

11 November Poverty I  
Reading: Naeem Inayatullah, "Beyond the Sovereignty Dilemma" Quasi-States as a Social Construct," in *State Sovereignty as Social Construct*, ed. Thomas J. Biersteker and Cynthia Weber (Cambridge University Press, 1996), available on BlackBoard.

12 NOVEMBER SECOND UNIVERSITY COLLEGE COMMON EVENT, 10:00AM

14 November Poverty II  
Reading: transcript of Lomborg remarks about poverty and global warming, online at  
<http://www.cceia.org/resources/transcripts/5090.html>.

18 November Justice I  
Reading: T, Introduction and Part One.

19 November WEDNESDAY VISIT TO THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN

21 November Justice II  
Reading: T, Part Two; NPR program "Sustaining Language, Sustaining Meaning," free audio download from [http://speakingoffaith.publicradio.org/programs/sustaining\\_language/](http://speakingoffaith.publicradio.org/programs/sustaining_language/).

25 November Injustice  
Reading: T, Parts Three and Four.  
NOTE: THIS IS THE TUESDAY RIGHT BEFORE THANKSGIVING BREAK, AND IS A MAKE-UP FOR THE CLASS THAT WE MISS ON 17 OCTOBER. YES, IT IS REQUIRED. NO, YOU SHOULD NOT GO HOME EARLY. YES, AN ABSENCE WILL COUNT AGAINST YOUR COURSE GRADE. NO, YOU CANNOT COME TO ME IN LATE OCTOBER AND PROFESS IGNORANCE OF THIS CLASS SESSION, BECAUSE I WILL NOT BELIEVE YOU.

27 November NO CLASS — THANKSGIVING BREAK

2 December MAJOR SIMULATION

5 December      The Future  
Readings: **S**, all; O&R, Chapters 11-12 (recommended).

*5 December      Second analytical essay handed out*

*8 December      Final blogging report due by 5:00pm*

*12 December      Second analytical essay due by 5:00pm*

## ProfPTJ's Blogging Rubric • Fall 2008 edition

*What is a blog?* Short for “weblog,” a blog is a publicly-accessible online journal to which you can post thoughts, reflections, links to other websites, and the like. There are free blog-hosting services like blogger.com, as well as services that charge a small fee for hosting. The major advantage of a blog from my perspective is that it is viewable by anyone with a web browser, which means that anybody can join in the conversation; a secondary advantage is the fact that blogs are part of the wider web-based ‘Net, so that bloggers can, through their posts, join in wider conversations that take place between sites.

*Why do you require blogging for this course?* Once upon a time I assigned students traditional journals or weekly one-page critical response papers; such an exercise does get people thinking about the material outside of class and promotes self-reflection, but it had two major drawbacks: each student was simply carrying on a one-on-one dialogue with me, and if I got a bit behind on replying to those weekly papers the dialogue ground to a halt. Blogging serves the function of a weekly critical response paper, but goes one better by encouraging conversations between students *outside of class*, since all of the posts are publicly accessible.

*Why create blogging groups?* Rather than having each student maintain an individual blog, which might promote individual reflection but might impede conversation as each student focused on their own blog to the detriment of others, I will divide the class into groups of three to five people—a “blogging group”—and have each group maintain a blog for the course of the semester. Participating in a blogging group gives you a ready-made set of conversational partners, a series of posts that you would really have to work hard to avoid reacting to in your own posts, and an opportunity to try out ideas in a group setting before bringing them to wider class discussion—or to elaborate on a portion of the class discussion afterwards.

*Are we confined to our own group's blog?* No. I will make all of the blog addresses available to everyone (once they are e-mailed to me) through my public blog: <http://profptj.blogspot.com>. You are welcome to read other groups' blogs, and comment on things that are posted there, or to reference them in your own posts—preferably by including links to their posts in your own.

Your individual blogging grade—everyone will get an individual grade, although one portion of that grade will be the same for all members of a blogging group—will depend on three factors: the extent to which your course blog meets technical requirements; your individual posting history; and your conversational performance.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS. Each blogging group will create a blog before the second class session. The blog's url, and the real name and user ID of everyone enrolled in the blog, should be e-mailed to me as soon as the blog is set up. I am indifferent as to the blog hosting service that you use; I use blogger.com, mainly because it's free and easy to set up. Each of these blogs must have the following features:

- Every member of the blogging group *must be a member of the blog as an individual*. In practice this means that each member of the group must have their own user ID, so that posts that they make will be clearly identified as belonging to them. You need not use your true name as your blogging ID, as long as I know who you are.

- The blog must permit *comments* on individual posts. You may choose to permit anonymous comments or you may require people to create a user ID in order to comment.
- Each individual post must have a *readily-accessible static url* that people can use to reference the post. Different hosting services have different ways of making this static url available to readers, and you should make sure that your blog makes it obvious how people can obtain that address.
- The blog must be *syndicated through RSS*. This means that a reader—like, say, me—can subscribe to the blog and be automatically updated when new posts are made. Many blog platforms do this automatically, although in some cases you may have to enable the option.
- Finally, each blog must have some easy way that a viewer can bring up *all posts written by a specific author*. With Blogger, this is a matter of using Google’s “Blog Search” technology and then adding a link to your blog’s template, but *note that you have to add the search links to the blog template*; it is not enough to simply set up the blog! Other options exist for other blogging platforms.)

Every member of a blogging group will receive the same grade for this portion of their score; fulfilling all of the technical requirements gets you an A on this section. However, I am *not* going to take class time to explain how to do any of these technical issues. If you have technical questions, I suggest that you either a) hit the ‘Net; b) ask around; or c) come to see me during office hours.

INDIVIDUAL POSTING HISTORY. Each student is required to post two different kinds of things on their group’s blog. The first category, a response to the weekly discussion question, must be online before 9:01am on the Thursday of the week in which the question was posed (so that everyone will have a chance to read and perhaps react to the post before Friday’s class). The second category, consisting of “reflective” postings that begin with class discussion, or from an issue raised by any of the week’s reading(s), or from a point raised by someone else in one of their blog postings for the week, must be online before noontime on Monday of the following week. Hence, a typical week looks like this: Tuesday, discussion question tossed out; before Thursday 9:01am, response to discussion question posted; Friday, class; before the following Monday noontime, weekly reflections posted.

Note that you need only post replies to nine of the twelve weekly questions that I will toss out during the semester, but you have to post reflections on *every* week of the course, *without exception*. That includes the last week of the course, making for fifteen reflective posts in all.

Each enrolled student will keep a record of all of the postings that she or he makes, broken down by weeks. This record, which you should keep on your hard drive and update after you post an entry or make a comment on someone else’s entry, should clearly indicate the static url of each entry that you make and each entry to which you have posted a comment. An easy way to do this is to make each week’s section of the record look like the following:

Week X

Discussion question: <http://blah.blah.blah>

reflection: <http://blah.blah.blah>

comments: <http://blah.blah.blah>; <http://blah.blah.blah>; <http://blah.blah.blah>.

[Obviously, you should replace the X and blah.blah.blah by the appropriate information for each posting.]

Each student will be required to submit a report containing the information from their blogging record to me by e-mail *twice* during the semester: once in the middle of the semester (must be received by 5:00pm on 20 October), and once at the end of the semester (must be received by 5:00pm on 8 December). The e-mail in question should contain either clickable hyperlinks or plain text urls that I can cut-and-paste into a web browser. *Do not* submit the blogging report as a Word document or other kind of file attachment, or I will return it unopened.

Fulfilling all of the weekly posting and report-submission requirements will guarantee you an A in this portion of your score.

CONVERSATIONAL PERFORMANCE. If the previous two portions of your blogging grade were marks for technical merit, this is the portion of your grade that depends on creativity and artistic flair. In order to blog well, you need to be an active part of a series of online conversations. You signal your participation in such conversations in three ways:

- Referring to other people's posts in your own, preferably by embedding a link to their post's static url in your own post. Note that you are in no way limited to referring to posts made by other members of the class; the blogosphere is a vast place these days, and you should feel free to explore it—and link to relevant parts of it.
- Commenting on other people's posts, and reacting to comments on your own posts. This is the most direct way to engage someone in conversation: reacting to something that she or he has specifically written. Commenting is not strictly required, but it is the sort of thing that I expect stellar students to be doing on a regular basis. Once again, you are not limited to commenting on posts by other members of the class, or to posting comments on blogs maintained by class blogging groups. And you are in no way limited to posting *one* comment, especially if the author of the original post posts a comment to your comment...
- Using trackbacks to signal that a conversation is going on. If you find a post and want to post about it yourself, you can send a "trackback ping" to the first post indicating the static url of your post. That way people reading the post on which you have commented will know that there is a post out there in the blogosphere that discusses it or refers to it.

The point is that you need to be an active participant in online discussions over the course of the semester. Quantity is not the central issue here; the *quality* of your posts and comments is much more important. References, comments, and trackbacks are simply ways to trace the conversational threads, as is the individual posting record that you are maintaining.

I will send each enrolled student a mid-course report on their blogging at the approximate mid-point of the semester, and a final report will accompany their graded final analytical paper.