

# INTERNATIONAL POLITICS ON THE WORLD STAGE

BRIEF

FIFTH EDITION

JOHN T. ROURKE • MARK A. BOYER

# INTERNATIONAL POLITICS ON THE WORLD STAGE, BRIEF

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International Politics on the World Stage, Brief Fifth Edition

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# Preface

We live in an era of unprecedented change and challenge in world politics. From the 9-11 terror attacks and their far-flung repercussions, to uncertainties in global economic conditions, to shifts in political relationships, we are constantly confronted with new political, economic, and social phenomena. *International politics on the World Stage*, *Brief*, Fifth Edition, has been developed as a shorter international relations text in order to provide students and teachers with the opportunity to explore international relations and its new challenges in a straightforward, accessible way. In contrast to a course that centers on the original, longer edition of this text, this brief edition is designed to allow for greater use of supplemental materials (such as cases, simulations, special topical approaches to the field, or computer applications). The course can thus be tailored to fit a variety of teaching and learning styles.

The brief edition is, however, more than just an abridged version of the longer edition. It has been updated both in terms of substantive examples and scholarly research. This edition also has four fewer chapters than the longer one and has been reorganized considerably to reflect the needs of a shorter approach to the field. Still it retains the sense of international political drama portrayed in the original *International Politics on the World Stage*, Ninth Edition.

This book makes extensive use of the growth in information technologies and provides the student and teacher with a well-developed Web site of resources to aid in student learning. These Web-based resources, all flagged with Web icons within the chapters, augment the material in the book itself. In addition, the Web site of each chapter has a list of links to external Web sites. These links are based on the main topics covered in the chapter. The book can be used without these digital resources, but we have endeavored to make this Web site something new and different, as well as a valuable enhancement to the student's learning experience. In particular, we have created interactive exercises for each chapter of the book. Some of these activities allow students to compare their ideas with their peers who are accessing the Web site, while others are focused on in-class activities. In each case, they emphasize the active learning orientation of the authors of this book and of the book itself. In essence, we developed this Web site on the firm conviction that students learn and retain more by doing rather than by reading alone. We welcome your feedback on this initiative, so if you have thoughts or ideas about this material, or anything related to the book, please contact us at the Web site Message Board.

The text is organized in the following way: Chapters 1, 2, and 3 focus on approaches to the study of international relations. Chapter 1 makes the case that international relations do matter to the average student and that the individual student can have an impact on international relations. It also lays out the basically theoretical



and conceptual debates, in particular the recurrent divide between the realist and liberal approaches to analysis and prescription in world affairs. Chapter 2 is primarily historical. It traces the evolution of the international system, concentrating on how the contemporary international system has its roots in the past and the degree to which both centralizing and decentralizing tendencies coexist in world affairs today. Chapter 3 lays out the conceptual framework of the levels of analysis to show students the different perspectives that can be used to structure our study of international relations.

The second section of the book comprises chapters 4 through 9 and follows the structure of examining the traditional versus the alternative approaches to world politics. Chapters 4 and 5 examine the forces of nationalism and transnationalism, respectively. Chapters 6 and 7 focus on the traditional dominance of national states in international affairs and the rising role and influence of international organizations. And chapters 8 and 9 lead the reader through the traditional role of power and diplomacy in the world to the impact of international law on constraining behavior of actors on the world stage.

The last portion of the book, chapters 10 through 14, discusses an array of the substantive issues of world affairs. Chapter 10 focuses on the traditional high politics issues of war and peace, military influence, and arms control. Chapters 11 and 12 highlight the importance and rising influence of economic issues in the world. Chapter 12 in particular discusses the dual tendencies of competition and cooperation in international political economy. Chapter 13 examines the human condition internationally, showing how culture, economics, and power impact the ways people live and are treated around the world. And lastly, chapter 14 elucidates the issues of ecological quality and sustainable development as well as the challenges that are emerging in that substantive area.

Even with all these changes, *International Politics on the World Stage*, *Brief*, maintains the conceptual and theoretical sophistication of the long edition and employs the same standards of timeliness and readability found therein. *International Politics* presents the student and teacher with the most up-to-date coverage of the substance of current international relations, including the shift in policy focus in the wake of the 9-11 terror attacks, the disarmament crisis in Iraq, the resurgence of the North Korean nuclear threat, and the changing roles of the UN and NATO during crises. This provides the student with stronger ties to the real world of international relations. In other words, illustrations of current events make the concepts and theory of the textbook come alive in demonstrative ways.

The brief edition also seeks to be student-friendly. Its wide use of graphics such as photographs, figures, tables, and maps gives visual life to the text ideas. A glossary, chapter outlines and summaries, and an extensive bibliography are also included to aid the student in studying and the faculty member in teaching.

Finally, this edition maintains the standards of the longer edition in continuously accessing scholarly research. We have included the insights of newly published research, even material that has been published since the last edition of the parent text came out. This means that the student today is reading a state-of-the-art discussion in international relations.

Before closing, we would like to acknowledge a number of the scholars who took the time to review our initial plan to condense the material of the longer edition. Their input and ideas were invaluable in the process that we have undertaken over the past years. They are:

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The time and effort they put into reviewing our approach is greatly appreciated.

We would also like to thank two other young scholar-teachers whose contributions to this project have been invaluable. For the past two years, Michael Butler, University of Connecticut, has produced "World Politics Weekly" for the book's Web site. His ability to link current events with the conceptual substance of the book is far-reaching and rich. By taking on this responsibility, he helps keep the book current on a weekly basis and brings the book alive and connected with the ever-changing world in which we live. We are very grateful for his continued work with us.

Secondly, Natalie Florea, University of Connecticut, was a real lifesaver during the most recent revision process. As we pushed toward fast-approaching production deadlines, Natalie did an excellent job of updating data throughout the book to make sure we were as current as possible in our facts and figures. In addition, she has a wonderful eye for photo ideas and choices, and all the graphics in the book are much better because of her work.

Last, but absolutely not least, we would like to thank all the people at McGraw-Hill who made the development of this fifth edition a smooth and creative process. First, we wish to thank Ava Suntoke for her exemplary editorial work and attention to the detail of world politics. She not only does great work in making our writing sound intelligent, but her ability to stay abreast of world politics helps us make better use of current events in the body of the text. The project is much better for her efforts. Pam Carley continues to do a great job as our photo editor and researcher. Her eye for good photos that can bring the substance of world politics home visually is truly remarkable. We've also very much enjoyed our new relationship with McGraw-Hill "central." Monica Eckman, Jim Strandberg, and Brett Coker bent over backward to work with us in preparing this edition and getting it to market on time.

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We owe them a debt of gratitude for their efforts on our behalf and look forward to continuing to work together on many editions to come.

Along those same lines and to close, we ask that you please let us know if you have any comments on what we have done in this volume. We hope that you will write to us with any insights you have on how we can make this volume more student-friendly and teacher-useful while continuing its lively mix of contemporary substance and scholarly research. We are in the business of teaching about world affairs, but we can do our job well only if we hear how we are doing from both teachers and students.

John T. Rourke Mark A. Boyer

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