

**17.918**

**New Global Agenda:  
Exploring 21st Century Challenges through  
Innovations in Information Technologies**

**ASSIGNMENTS**

Students are responsible for two assignments and one final project. Each is described below.

**ASSIGNMENT 1: INTERNET SHOW-AND-TELL**

Bring 3 Web sites or new technologies that are changing the nature of political systems to share with the class. Write a short paragraph about the Web sites/technologies and email it to the teaching assistants.

**ASSIGNMENT 2: ANTICIPATING THE FUTURE**

Come to class prepared to present the debate on a policy issue related to technology and international relations. We will brainstorm ideas in the previous class. This topic can flow into the final project.

**FINAL PROJECT: "HOTSPOT"**

Final Project - Creating a lesson in International Relations from a scenario involving a current information technology and how it may affect the future. Approx. 5-10 pages, in addition to diagrams, maps, or illustrations (which are welcomed).

Due on Lec #8

Imagine you are the President of the United States, or another country, and you are presented with a policy issue related to technology. What are the ramifications of that policy, how do you see it evolving over the next 10 years, 20 years, etc. Which policies are better? Which are worse? What would a winning strategy be? What would a losing strategy be?

The final project will involve choosing a policy issue that involves a current technology and breaking down how the possible decisions made on that issue might affect the future. We are interested in looking at systemic issues related to the problem, rather than purely linear

relationships. You will be given a game storyline template and asked to understand the conflict in this manner. Try to capture the tradeoffs of following different policy options.

The larger idea of this project is to understand how small or confined conflicts and decisions affect local and global environments in the world over time. This effort will draw upon the student's creativity in constructing alternate paths through history, and realistically representing these paths through creating a scenario that could be used to teach others the important lessons that can be taken from the particular issue chosen.

Clear and thoughtfully done projects will have the opportunity to be used as a source for one of the scenarios being developed in our *Global Agenda!* IR Game project. (Further interest in working on the game is welcomed - please speak to one of the instructors.)

### **Key Deliverables**

1. Hotspot Title
2. Background and Significance of issue at hand
3. A set of barometers that are useful indicators for understanding the dynamics of the situation. Discuss the importance of such barometers, how to measure them in the real world, and what biases may be created by them.
4. Discussion of what conditions may be necessary for such an issue or conflict to occur
5. List of various policy actions that could be taken, and how they might affect the world
6. List of 5 potential states of the 'world' that could result from various policy actions
7. Overall advice for the issue at hand, presented from at least 3 perspectives (not for each decision, but for the entire Hot Spot)
8. Sources! Please list your sources

Please run your topic by us before beginning. You can use the same topic as Assignment 2, if you wish, but are able to change and pick something new, subject to approval.