

INR 2001
Introduction to International Relations

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Class Time: Online Only

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The study of International Relations (IR) looks to understand politics at a global level. The questions that IR theorists and practitioners ask are broad-ranging and complex. How do states relate? Do non-state actors affect the ways that states relate? Where should we be looking to see the operation of global politics? Do people matter in international relations? What are the major issues between states? Is there a place in global politics for security? For political economy? For the environment? Does 'where you stand' (what you think of global politics) depend on 'where you sit' (the state you are a citizen of and/or your political inclinations)? Are different perspectives on a question as basic as how the world works valid? If so, are they valuable, or confusing?

To think about these questions, you need two major tools. First, you need a basic familiarity with 'the international' – the states in the world, the international organizations to which they belong, their geographies, their relationships, and current events in global politics. Second, you need to know the theories that IR scholars have come up with to manage this complexity, which serve as shortcuts and tools to help us understand, explain, and predict what happens in global politics.

This course is an introduction to the contemporary analysis of international relations, and, as such, introduces students to both of these types of tools. It does so in two sets of modules running simultaneously. The first set, "Knowing Global Politics," gives students a basic introduction to the international system, the ways that it operates, and the diverse set of states that it contains. The second set, "Theorizing Global Politics," allows students to become familiar with the key theoretical approaches that scholars use to understand IR. Learning through these modules simultaneously, students will be expected to gain familiarity with what the global political arena looks like as well as gain literacy in the approaches to theorizing it.

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, students will be expected to:

1. Give criteria on how to select between sources of news on global politics;
2. Identify the sources in the University of Florida library useful for researching and understanding global politics;
3. Locate the states in the international arena on a world map and demonstrate a basic familiarity with their demographic information, regions, and political situations;
4. Be familiar with contemporary problems in global politics as accessible in major news sources, and apply the dominant theories of international relations to those problems;
5. Know major concepts in global politics, including power, economy, states, borders, war, justice, gender, and globalization;
6. Analyze current events in global politics using some of the major theoretical tools in global politics, including realisms, liberalisms, and constructivisms;
7. Construct arguments about the relative advantages and disadvantages of particular theoretical approaches.

GRADING

The grade will be divided into three parts:

- 1) Comprehension Quizzes (1 per module, 20 modules): 40%
- 2) Midterm Exam (25%)
- 3) Final Exam (25%)
- 4) Project (10%)

The Grade Scale is: 94-100: A; 90-93: A-; 87-89: B+; 83-86: B; 80-82: B-; 77-79: C+; 73-76: C; 70-72: C-; 67-69: D+; 63-67: D; 60-62: D-

**We round scores in accordance with normal mathematical principles, i.e., a 93.5 is a 94, where a 93.4 is a 93.

The University of Florida assigns the following grade points:

A: 4.0, A-: 3.67, B+: 3.33, B: 3, B-: 2.67, C+: 2.33, C: 2.0; C-: 1.67, D+: 1.33, D: 1, D-: .67, E: 0, WF: 0, I: 0; NG: 0.

THE MECHANICS OF THIS ONLINE COURSE

This course never meets in a classroom. All modules for the course are online, in the course's e-learning site, as are all quizzes, tests, and examinations. You are expected to complete two modules per week over the course of the semester, taking a midterm examination and a final examination along the way. Due dates are on the "Due Date" sheet. Each module will have some lecture material, some supplementary material, outside links, and a comprehension quiz. Each module in the "Knowing Global Politics" series will be posted and proctored by Jonathon Whooley, while each module in the "Theorizing Global Politics" series will be posted and proctored by Dr. Sjoberg. Modules in "Theorizing Global Politics" will have expected reading which you should complete before you watch the lectures and complete the activities for that module. In addition to the overall learning objectives of the course, each module will contain learning objectives so that you know what you are expected to accomplish as you use each module.

Though the course is entirely online, you will have access to your instructors. We are both holding "office" hours on Skype (see page 1 for times), and are available by appointment should those hours not work for you. You can feel free to email us questions at any time (see emails on page 1), and to use the course message board to ask questions of your fellow students. You can feel free to review your quizzes, midterm, and final with the instructors to ask about improving your performance, strategies for learning information, or anything else that you would like to discuss.

The supplementary material in each module is just that, supplementary, though knowledge of some of that information will be useful for extra credit opportunities on quizzes, midterms, and finals.

MID-TERM EXAMINATION

There will be a mid-term examination in this class. Whenever you start the exam, you will have one hour and thirty minutes to submit the exam on e-learning. The exam will be multiple choice and short answer, and you will be asked to combine what you have learned in the "Knowing Global Politics" and "Theorizing Global Politics" modules. If you take the examination early in the week, you are honor-code bound not to share it with your classmates (see discussion of the honor code below).

FINAL EXAM

There will be a final exam in this class. Whenever you start the exam, you will have two hours and thirty minutes to submit the exam on e-learning. If you take the examination early in the week, you are honor-code bound not to share it with your classmates (see discussion of the honor code below).

HONOR SYSTEM

The Academic Honesty Guidelines at the University of Florida are designed to develop an engender a community of honor, trust, and respect. The academic community of students and faculty strives to develop, sustain, and protect an environment of honesty, trust, and respect. Students within the system receive the benefits of the academic pursuit of knowledge, free from the obstacles of lying, cheating, and sealing. In return, the University demands that students act with integrity in all endeavors. An academic honesty offense is an act of lying, cheating, or stealing academic information so that one gains academic advantage. As a UF student, you are expected to neither commit nor assist another in committing an academic honesty violation. Additionally, it is a student's duty to report observed violations. Violations include: 1) Cheating. The improper taking or tendering of information or material used to obtain credit, including copying homework, working together on take-home assignments or tests, looking at another student's paper during the exam, sharing exam questions, looking at or using notes during exams; 2) Plagiarism. Representing the work of another as your own; 3) Bribery. The offering, giving, receiving, or soliciting materials, items, or services to gain academic advantage; 4) Misrepresentation. Any attempt to deceive a teacher for academic advantage, including lying to the professor; 5) Conspiracy. Acting with other students to commit dishonesty; 6) Fabrication. Making up answers, results, etc.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

In 23 years of school, the most late I was on an assignment was 15 minutes. I expect assignments to be on time. The ELEARNING system will stop accepting assignments when they are late. Module quizzes are late if they are not completed by midnight on Sunday. Midterms and finals are late when the exam closes, or when your time to complete it after entering it has expired, whichever comes first.

DISABILITIES

Any student requiring adaptations or accommodations because of any kind of disability (learning disability, attention deficit disorder, psychological, and physical, etc.) should contact the Disability Resource Center for information about their rights and responsibilities. I would also appreciate it if students requiring accommodation came to talk to me at my office hours as soon as possible, so that we can take appropriate steps to implement those accommodations and maximize the student's learning. No accommodations will be applied retroactively, so let your instructors know *before* an assignment or test that we will need to plan to deal with your disability.

COUNSELING

The Counseling Center is located in P301 Peabody Hall. It is open Monday-Friday, 8:00AM-5:00PM. To schedule an appointment, stop by the Counseling Center, or call 352.392.1575. On evenings and weekends, services are available through the Alachua County Crisis Center by calling 352.264.6789. Students may also call the clinician on-call at Student Mental Health at 352.392.1171.

PROJECT

Create one of the following: 1) a short film (5 minutes or less), 2) a five minute pod-cast and accompanying powerpoint, 3) a ten-page explanatory and advocacy brochure, 4) a twenty-photo annotated photo journal, or 5) some other medium of intellectual/artistic expression approved by the professor. Whichever one you choose, choose a contemporary issue in international relations, and use the tools that you have learned in the class (theoretical approaches, demographic information, etc.) to explain, propose a solution to, and/or provide a deeper understanding of that particular contemporary issue. Documentation of both news and scholarly sources is expected. Both the Professor and the TA are willing to read proposals and drafts, as well as answer any questions that you may have about the project process at any time over the course of the semester.

REQUIRED READINGS

Students will be asked to have read a major news source on international politics at least once

Articles listed in the syllabus are available for download and printing on ELEARNING.

Students are also responsible for owning or borrowing:

International Relations Theories: Discipline and Diversity (third edition), edited by Tim Dunne, Milja Kurki, and Steve Smith. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

COURSE PLAN

The course will run with two sets of modules, one "Knowing Global Politics" and one "Theorizing Global Politics." There are ten modules in each set. You will be expected to complete two of each per week. The order in which you complete a week's work is entirely up to you, so long as you do the reading for the "Theorizing Global Politics" modules before watching the lectures. The "Knowing Global Politics" modules have an "A" designation, and the "Theorizing Global Politics" modules have a "B" designation.

Knowing Global Politics

Module A1 – Using the Library to Research Global Politics

Module B1 – Introduction: Studying International Relations

- Reading:
- 1) Steve Smith, “Introduction: Discipline and Diversity in International Relations Theory,” in Dunne, Kurki, and Smith
 - 2) Toni Erskine, “Normative International Relations Theory,” in Dunne, Kurki, and Smith

- Objectives:
- 1) Discuss the subject matter of International Relations;
 - 2) Be able to distinguish between normative and empirical theorizing of International Relations;
 - 3) Identify the key theoretical positions in International Relations as well as the key disagreements between IR theorists; and
 - 4) Differentiate between consequentialist and deontological approaches to ethics in the field.

Module A2 – Selecting News Sources for Global Politics

- Objectives:
- 1) Identify the criteria one might use to evaluate and distinguish between sources of information found commonly in print and on the web that focus on IR;
 - 2) Note the use of bias and opinion in the construction of information and the narratives employed by newsmakers; and
 - 3) To ‘read around a story’ to gain some insight between the lines of a text.

Module B2 – Realisms

- Reading:
- 1) Richard Ned Lebow, “Classical Realism,” in Dunne, Kurki, and Smith
 - 2) John J. Mearsheimer, “Structural Realism,” in Dunne, Kurki, and Smith

- Objectives:
- 1) Identify the major theorists of classical realism and the major questions their work addresses;
 - 2) Discuss the classical realist perspective on the Iraq War;
 - 3) Account for the assumptions that structural realism makes about the international system; and
 - 4) Discuss various structural realist positions on the “rise of China.”

Module A3 – The Global System and the State

- Objectives:
- 1) Contextualize and background the origins of the modern state system;
 - 2) Establish the motivations and consequences of modern politics implicit in the construction; and
 - 3) Note and identify the pitfalls and possibilities for the international system based on the sovereign state order.

Module B3 – Liberalisms

- Reading:
- 1) Bruce Russett, “Liberalism” in Dunne, Kurki, and Smith
 - 2) Jennifer Sterling-Folker, “Neoliberalism,” in Dunne, Kurki, and Smith

- Objectives:
- 1) Identify the similarities and differences between realisms and liberalisms;
 - 2) Discuss the role of regime type in relations between states;
 - 3) Relate the European Union, liberal theory, and neoliberal theory; and
 - 4) Identify the major factors in institutional design that theorists think affect institutions’ impacts.

Module A4 – The United Nations and International Organizations

- Objectives:
- 1) Evaluate the League of Nations as a predecessor and evaluate the problems with its system;
 - 2) Identify and understand how states interact within the international system’s major political framework; and
 - 3) Discuss the political structure of the United Nations

Module B4 – The English School

- Reading:
- 1) Tim Dunne, “The English School,” in Dunne, Kurki, and Smith
 - 2) Barry Buzan, “From International System to International Society: Structural Realism and Regime Theory Meet the English School,” *International Organization* 47(3) (1993):326-352 (on ELEARNING)

- Objectives:
- 1) Discuss why the English School matters in global politics;
 - 2) Identify and explain the concept of an “anarchical society”
 - 3) Apply English School theory to human rights in global politics; and
 - 4) Identify the similarities and differences between realisms, liberalisms, and the English School.

Module A5 – Europe in Global Politics

- Objectives:
- 1) Locate and identify the countries in Europe; and
 - 2) Contextualize how states interact nationally and supra-nationally within the European Union.

Module B5 – Constructivism

Reading: 1) Karin Fierke, "Constructivism," in Dunne, Kurki, and Smith
2) Latha Varadarajan, "Constructivism, Identity, and Neoliberal (In)security," *Review of International Studies* 30(3) (2004): 319-341 (on ELEARNING)

Objectives: 1) Discuss the history of constructivism in International Relations;
2) Discuss the shared assumptions of constructivism in International Relations;
3) Identify the differences between "positivist" and "postpositivist" epistemologies for constructivism; and
4) Discuss constructivist insights about the "war on terror."

Module A6 – Asia in Global Politics

Objectives: 1) Understand the international, political and demographic trends that currently affect Asia;
2) Gain a familiarity with the geography of the region and the dominant political themes and conflicts of the area; and
3) Identify and discuss differences in power within the countries and how this disparity matters for future outcomes.

Module B6 – Marxism and Critical Theory

Reading: 1) Mark Rupert, "Marxism," in Dunne, Kurki, and Smith
2) Steven Roach, "Critical Theory," in Dunne, Kurki, and Smith

Objectives: 1) Discuss the evolution of Marxist perspectives global politics;
2) Apply Marxist perspectives to evaluating US global power;
3) Identify the two phases of the rise of critical theory in International Relations; and
4) Discuss how critical theory can help to understand the "Arab Spring."

Module A7 – Latin America in Global Politics

Objectives: 1) Locate and identify the countries in Latin America;
2) Highlight issue areas within a few of the given countries and understand their international significance; and
3) Understand the process of colonial and financial domination, its aftermath and the current results of those behaviors.

Module B7 – Poststructuralism and Postcolonialism

Reading: 1) David Campbell, "Poststructuralism," in Dunne, Kurki, and Smith
2) Siba Grovogui, "Postcolonialism," in Dunne, Kurki, and Smith

Objectives: 1) Discuss the ways poststructuralism challenges empiricist epistemology;
2) Identify the utility of poststructuralist theory in understanding images of humanitarian crisis;
3) Gain a familiarity with postcolonial approaches to global politics; and
4) Discuss the three conclusions that can be gained from postcolonial theorizing about global politics, and their application to the Suez Canal case.

Module A8 – North and Central America in Global Politics

Objectives: 1) Gain a familiarity with the geography of the region;
2) Analyze Issues like immigration, development and security; and
3) Know the economic and political makeup of the nations and their importance on the international stage.

Module B8 – Feminism

Reading: 1) J. Ann Tickner and Laura Sjoberg, "Feminism," in Dunne, Kurki, and Smith
2) Carol Cohn, "Sex and Death in the Rational World of Defense Intellectuals," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 12(4) (1987): 617-718 (on ELEARNING)

Objectives: 1) Describe the role of sexualized language in war planning;
2) Identify the varieties of IR feminism and their tenets; and
3) Outline the argument that gender matters to analyses of global politics.

Module A9 – Africa in Global Politics

Objectives: 1) Become familiar with the international, political and demographic trends that currently affect Africa;
2) Locate nations in Africa and be familiar with some demographic trends;
3) Know the economic and political makeup of the nations and their importance on the international stage.

Module B9 – Thinking about Contemporary Global Politics

Reading: 1) Robin Eckersley, “Green Theory,” in Dunne, Kurki, and Smith
2) Colin Hay, “International Relations and Globalization,” In Dunne, Kurki, and Smith

Objectives: 1) Define “green theory” as relates to International Relations;
2) Outline the major tenets of green theory;
3) Discuss the impact of globalization on theorizing IR; and
4) Discuss definitions of globalization.

Module A10 – Contemporary Global Problems

Objectives: 1) Establish literacy in current events in the international arena; and
2) Leverage the theoretical work that you have done in the “Theorizing Global Politics” module to analyze those current events

Module B10 – Conclusion: Situating IR Theories

Reading: 1) Milja Kurki and Colin Wight, “International Relations and Social Science,” in Dunne, Kurki, and Smith
2) Ole Waever, “Still a Discipline After All These Debates,” in Dunne, Kurki, and Smith

Objectives: 1) Relate major concepts in global politics, including power, economy, states, borders, war, justice, gender, and globalization;
2) Synthesize the information presented in the course about various theoretical approaches to global politics;
3) Discuss the question of whether IR is a science or not; and
4) Discuss whether or not IR can coherently be identified as a discipline.

Final Exam Review

Read Steve Smith, “Singing our World Into Existence: International Relations Theory and September 11,” *International Studies Quarterly* 48(3) (2004):499-515 (on ELEARNING)

Projects Due

Final Exam