



INR 2001 Introduction to International Relations - Class Syllabus

Summer B 2025

Instructor: Long Xiao

Email: long.xiao@ufl.edu (or through Canvas messaging)

Class Time: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday @ Period 4 (12:30 – 1:45 pm)

Class Location: Anderson Hall 101

Office Locations & Hours: Anderson Hall 330; Thursdays 2:30 pm – 5:30 pm (or by appointment on Zoom)

General Education Subject Area: S (Social Science) and N (International); 3 Credit Hours

Course Description

This course is an introduction to concepts and analytical tools for studying interactions among international actors: states, international organizations, and transnational groups. Social and behavioral science principles are used to analyze concepts such as power and national interests as they relate to social, political, and economic issues.

A primary objective of international relations scholars is to explore and explain the many phenomena in world politics by studying the effects of national and transnational actors on the outcomes or developments of international events. These effects are then facilitated and enhanced by actions such as fighting in wars/conflicts, conducting trade, signing treaties/legislations, migrating, and more. Students will be embarking on a journey that will help them better understand the world that we currently live in, and they will be able to better equip themselves with the abilities to ask and answer the “why and how” questions about many world events.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, given sufficient effort, you will be able to:

1. Identify the actors of the international systems, including states, international organizations, and transnational groups.
2. Identify and differentiate major schools of thought in various fields related to international relations, such as global economics and peacebuilding.
3. Use basic social and behavioral science principles to examine important themes, concepts, and theories of international relations.
4. Analyze the role key historical events played in the development of the international system.

5. Discuss the interaction among international actors in relation to theories of foreign policy and international relations and as applied to social, political, and economic issues.

For the *General Education Subject Area Objectives*, you may find the information about this course by clicking here (<https://undergrad.aa.ufl.edu/general-education/gen-ed-program/subject-area-objectives/>). The designations of this course are S (Social Science) and N (International).

Materials and Supplies Fee

Textbook (UFAllAccess pricing: \$45.75) – Karen Mingst and Heather Elko McKibben.

Essentials of International Relations. 9th Edition. ISBN: 978-0-393-87217-0.

<https://wnorton.com/books/9780393872187#!/about-the-book/product-details>

Note: An older edition of this book (8th edition) is available for download online. It has roughly the same outline, but some of the case studies are outdated and it is one chapter short. Make sure to prepare for necessary adjustments if you decide to use that version of the book.

Reading (Free) – Please see the [Course Schedule](#) section for the other readings other than the textbook. All the readings are mandatory. You can find them in the “Files” section on Canvas.

You should read the assigned materials before the given day’s lecture. In other words, all readings that are listed **under** a certain date should be finished **before** that date. I will make all non-textbook readings freely available through Canvas or directly through links on the syllabus. It is imperative that you have a good comprehension of the material covered in both the readings and the lectures. To do this, always seek to get the basic arguments first. Then, as you read the text, you should annotate it, such as highlighting or circling essential messages. Take notes as you see fit. It is always better to get the basic arguments of every piece than to read every sentence.

Course Grades Distribution

Announced Quizzes: 20%

- 7 quizzes will be distributed to students throughout the entire semester. Each quiz will consist of short-answer questions, fill-in-the-blank questions, and multiple-choice questions. Each quiz can be finished within 15 minutes. They will be based on both class lectures and textbook reading.
- The lowest quiz grade will be dropped. The remaining 6 quiz grades will be used to calculate the weighted grade. Each quiz will have 6 points. **All quiz dates are listed on the class schedule.**

Exams: 60%

- 3 written exams. All exams have the same weight: 20% of your final grade.

- Each exam will have two sections: (1) multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, and true/false questions; (2) short answer questions.
- More explanation will be given for this as we approach the first exam. **All exam dates are listed on the class schedule.**

Online Discussion Posts: 10%

- There will be a total of 10 discussion posts, one for each theme of the class except the first one. Each discussion post will be made available at the beginning of a theme, and it will be due 24 hours after its closure.
- Students are **required to complete a total of 5 discussion posts of their choice.**
- Each discussion post should take you no more than 1.5 hours to complete. Each will be worth 2 points. Please see the [posts' grading rubric](#) at the bottom of the syllabus.
- A successful discussion answer should have at least 250 words. **All posts' due dates are listed on the class schedule.**

Roll Call Attendance: 5%

- Students are required to participate in the class actively and respectfully. You should contribute to the class by, among other things, showing up on time, answering/asking questions, taking appropriate notes, and participating in class dialogues.
- Throughout the entire duration of this summer course (6 weeks; 25 class periods), I will be taking sporadic roll call attendance to encourage in-person participation in the class. It is imperative that students attend class lectures on time so that they can follow along with the progression of class content.
- There will be a total of 10 roll calls taken throughout this course. No absences will be excused without proof of excused leave (see below for further information on the attendance policy).

Weekly Check-in Reflections: 5%

- As the instructor, I want to ensure that every student feels heard in the learning environment. Students are expected to submit a short weekly check-in via Canvas.
- In this assignment, you are free to share their thoughts and concerns about their performance in the course; they may also share feedback about the course itself. Even if you have nothing to share, you may still receive credit if you submit a quick statement.
- Each check-in reflection is worth 1 point. **It is due on Sundays @ 11:59 pm.**

Assignment	Total Score	Weight
Announced Quizzes	$6 * 6 = 36$	20%
Exams I & II & III	$3 * 100 = 300$	60%
Online Discussion Posts	$5 * 2 = 10$	10%
Roll Call Attendance	$10 * 1 = 10$	5%
Weekly Check-in Reflections	$5 * 1 = 5$	5%

Attendance and Submission Policies

Attendance and active participation are mandatory for students. Excused absences must be consistent with university policies and require appropriate documentation. Additional information can be found here (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>). Excused absences will be given make-up opportunities for exams and quizzes, provided the affected students have proper documentation.

To account for unforeseen circumstances, online assignments (in this class's case, only the discussion posts and weekly check-ins) will be given a 1-hour grace period for submission. During the grace period, although your assignment will be marked as late, there will not be any penalty.

Grading Policy

All quizzes and exams will be hosted in-class. Late submissions will not be accepted except for the excused cases, which are outlined in the [catalog](#). If you miss an assignment and have a valid excuse, please email me within the same week to discuss making up the work.

The following grade cutoffs will be applied (Note: your grade will be automatically rounded to the nearest second decimal place by the Canvas system):

A: 93–100%	A-: 90–92.99%	
B+: 87–89.99%	B: 83–86.99%	B-: 80–82.99%
C+: 77–79.99%	C: 73–76.99%	C-: 70–72.99%
D+: 67–69.99%	D: 63–66.99%	D-: 60–62.99%
E < 60%		

A minimum grade of C is required for general education credit. For more information on the UF policies for assigning grade points (and GPA calculations), please visit <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/#gradingpoliciestext>.

Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online. Students can complete evaluations in three ways: [1] The email they receive from GatorEvals; [2] Their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals; or [3] The central portal at <https://my-ufl.bluera.com>. Guidance on how to provide constructive feedback is available at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

Resources

Accommodations

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center. See “Get Started With the DRC” Disability Resource Center webpage (<https://disability.ufl.edu/get-started/>). It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

Health & Wellness Resources

If you or someone you know is struggling with any crisis including but not limited to gender, sexual, racial, or domestic violence, there are many community and University of Florida resources available. Some of these include:

- U Matter, We Care (umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, umatter.ufl.edu)
- Counseling and Wellness Center – available 24/7 (352-392-1575, counseling.ufl.edu)
- Student Health Care Center (352-392-1161, shcc.ufl.edu)
- Multicultural & Diversity Affairs (352-392-1217, multicultural.ufl.edu)
- UFPD Office of Victim Services (352-392-1111, police.ufl.edu)
- UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center (352-733-0111)

Academic Integrity

All students are required to abide by the University of Florida’s Academic Honesty Guidelines, which may be viewed at <https://policy.ufl.edu/regulation/4-040/>. Most obviously, this means cheating on exams and plagiarism on papers is unacceptable. Examples of plagiarism include but are not limited to: submitting entire works written by others, submitting portions of works written by others, copying text without quotations and proper citation, or paraphrasing text without proper citations. In addition to harming your professional career, academic dishonesty will destroy your ability to learn from this class.

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code.” On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. See the UF Conduct Code website (<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>) for more information. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor in this class.

Please note: The use of any generative A.I. (such as GPT-4 on ChatGPT) is strictly prohibited on written assignments. All suspected violations will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (SCCR) for adjudication to determine the sanctions to be imposed.

In-Class Recording

While students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures, the ways these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only purposes allowed are for personal educational use, in connection with a complaint to the university, or as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Students may not publish recorded lectures without the instructor's written consent.

Course Schedule

Theme 1: What is IR?

June 30: Syllabus Review; Introduction to International Relations

July 1: World Politics and How to Study It.

- Textbook, Chapter 1; Chapter 3: p. 66-68 (only the "Thinking Theoretically" section)

Theme 2: Historical Contexts and the Emergence of Modern States

July 2: From Ancient Times to the Cold War; **Online Discussion Post 1 due @ 11:59 pm**

- Textbook, Chapter 2: p. 19-39 (From the chapter's beginning until "The Cold War")
- Thucydides. 1954. *History of the Peloponnesian War*. Book V: 84–116. Translated by Rex Warner. London: Penguin Classics. (on Canvas)

July 3: International Politics in the Modern Era; **Quiz #1**

- Textbook, Chapter 2: p. 40-63 (From "The Cold War" to chapter's end)

July 4: Fourth of July Holiday. Enjoy!!!

Theme 3: Theories and Approaches in International Relations

July 7: Realism and Liberalism; **Online Discussion Post 2 due @ 11:59 pm**

- Textbook, Chapter 3: p. 69-89 (From "Components of International Relations Theories" until "Constructivism")

July 8: Constructivism and Other IR Theories

- Textbook, Chapter 3: p. 89-100 (From "Constructivism" to chapter's end)

Theme 4: Levels of Analysis in IR

July 9: Analyzing the International Systems; **Quiz #2; Online Discussion Post 3 due @ 11:59 pm**

- Textbook, Chapter 4: p. 102-118 (From the chapter's beginning until "The State")

July 10: Analyzing IR from the State and Individual Perspectives

- Textbook, Chapter 4: p. 119-139 (From "The State" to chapter's end)

July 11: Exam I; Online Discussion Post 4 due @ 11:59 pm

Theme 5: Power and the State

July 14: What is Power and How to Use it? (**Video Lecture**)

- Textbook, Chapter 5: p. 140-159 (From the chapter's beginning until "Models of Foreign Policy Decision Making")

July 15: Foreign Policymaking (**Video Lecture**)

- Textbook, Chapter 5: p. 160-175 (From "Models of Foreign Policy Decision Making" to chapter's end)

Theme 6: War and Peace

July 16: What is War?; **Quiz #3; Online Discussion Post 5 due @ 11:59 pm**

- Textbook, Chapter 6: p. 176-194 (From the chapter's beginning until "The Causes of War")
- Mearsheimer, John J. 2011. "Sister Camilla and the Anarchic Schoolyard." *Memo*, June 24. Unpublished manuscript: 0-1. (On Canvas)

July 17: How to Prevent Wars and Make Peace?

- Textbook, Chapter 6: p. 195-218 (From "The Causes of War" to chapter's end)

Theme 7: International Law and Institutions

July 18: Why and How to Cooperate?; **Online Discussion Post 6 due @ 11:59 pm**

- Textbook, Chapter 7: p. 220-233 (From the chapter's beginning until "International Law")

July 21: International Law; **Quiz #4**

- Textbook, Chapter 7: p. 234-255 (From "International Law" to chapter's end)

July 22: The UN as a Global Organization

- Textbook, Chapter 9: p. 306-330 (From the chapter's beginning until the section titled "The European Union – Organizing Regionally")

July 23: The EU and other Regional Organizations

- Textbook, Chapter 9: p. 330-342 (From the section titled “The European Union – Organizing Regionally” until “Nongovernmental Organizations”)

July 24: The Effects and Roles of NGOs; **Quiz #5**

- Textbook, Chapter 9: p. 342-351 (From “Nongovernmental Organizations” to chapter’s end)

July 25: Exam II; Online Discussion Post 7 due @ 11:59 pm

Theme 8: International Political Economy

July 28: Entities and Processes in the Global Economy

- Textbook, Chapter 8: p. 256-277 (From the chapter’s beginning until “How the Globalized Economy Works Today”)

July 29: Global Finance and Its Politics

- Textbook, Chapter 8: p. 278-294 (From “How the Globalized Economy Works Today” until “Economic Challenges in the Twenty-First Century”)

July 30: The Economic Challenges that We Face; **Quiz #6**

- Textbook, Chapter 7: p. 294-305 (From “Economic Challenges in the Twenty-First Century” to chapter’s end)

Theme 9: Human Rights

July 31: Human Rights and Human Wrongs; **Online Discussion Post 8 due @ 11:59 pm**

- Textbook, Chapter 10: p. 352-367 (From the chapter’s beginning until “The Role of the International Community – IGOs and NGOs”)
- Franck, Thomas M. 2001. “Are Human Rights Universal?” *Foreign Affairs* 80(1): 191–204. (On Canvas)

August 1: The Global Issues of Human Rights

- Textbook, Chapter 10: p. 368-388 (From “The Role of the International Community – IGOs and NGOs” to chapter’s end)

Theme 10: Global Environmental Politics

August 4: Climate Change in the Context of IR; **Online Discussion Post 9 due @ 11:59 pm**

- Textbook, Chapter 11: p. 391-406 (From the chapter’s beginning until “Natural Resource Issues”)

August 5: Natural Resources and the Commons Problem; **Quiz #7**

- Textbook, Chapter 11: p. 406-422 (From “Natural Resource Issues” to chapter’s end)

- Hardin, Garrett. 1968. “The Tragedy of the Commons.” *Science* 162(3859):1243–1248. (On Canvas)

Theme 11: Human Security and Global Health

August 6: Human Security and Migration; **Online Discussion Post 10 due @ 11:59 pm**

- Textbook, Chapter 12: p. 425-440 (From the chapter’s beginning until “Health-Protecting Individuals in the Global Commons”)

August 7: Global Health; Exam Review and Q&A Session

- Textbook, Chapter 12: p. 442-458 (From “Health-Protecting Individuals in the Global Commons” to chapter’s end)

August 8: Exam III

Appendix: Online Discussion Post Grading Rubric

<u>Level & Range</u>	<u>Word Count</u>	<u>Analysis & Relevance</u>	<u>Comprehensive Response</u>	<u>Writing Quality</u>
<u>Excellent</u> <u>2.00–1.50</u>	<u>≥ 250 words</u>	<u>Insightful; goes beyond summary; directly addresses prompt</u>	<u>Thoroughly answers all parts of the question; brings in multiple perspectives or examples</u>	<u>Clear, well-organized and well-written</u>
<u>Satisfactory</u> <u>1.49–1.00</u>	<u>200–250 words</u>	<u>Addresses prompt but depth or focus is uneven</u>	<u>Covers most parts of the question but misses some details or nuance</u>	<u>Generally clear; a few grammar/mechanics issues</u>
<u>Unsatisfactory</u> <u>0.99–0.00</u>	<u>< 200 words</u>	<u>Superficial or off-topic; fails to engage analytically</u>	<u>Omits key parts of the question or only briefly mentions them</u>	<u>Frequent errors; hard to follow</u>