

# **INR 2001 Introduction to International Relations - Class Syllabus**

Spring 2024

Instructor: Long Xiao

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Class Time: Tuesdays 10:40 am – 11:30 am; Thursdays 10:40 am – 12:35 pm

Class Location: Anderson Hall 034

Office Hours: Anderson Hall 301; Thursdays 2:30 pm – 5:30 pm (or by appointment on Zoom)

## **Course Description**

The world after the Second World War has seen an ever-changing landscape, and such changes are accelerated by crucial political, economic, and cultural factors that all intertwine with each other. International Relations is a subfield of the academic discipline of Political Science that studies world politics and international affairs from theoretical and systematic perspectives. In this course, students will be introduced to the core concepts and approaches in the study of international relations as well as the relevant cases to which they can be applied.

A primary objective of international relations scholars is to explore and explain the many phenomena in human society by studying the effects of national and transnational actors in the outcomes or developments of international events. These effects are then facilitated and enhanced by actions such as fighting 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 to many world events.

## **Learning Objectives**

By the end of this course, given sufficient efforts, you will:

- Understand the basic structure of international politics;
- Be familiar with some of the major theories and perspectives of international relations as lenses that we can use to learn about our world and conduct our roles in it;
- Be able to apply critically the said theories and approaches to both historical and current issues;
- Be able to identify major actors and factors in international politics as well as their roles;

## Required Readings

Textbook - Karen Mingst and Heather Elko McKibben. *Essentials of International Relations*. 9th Edition. ISBN: 978-0-393-87217-0. <https://wwnorton.com/books/9780393872187#!/about-the-book/product-details>

*Note: An older edition of this book (8<sup>th</sup> 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 this version of the book.*

Reading – Besides the required textbook, articles, book chapters, and online materials will be used in this class. All the readings are mandatory, and they are supposed to complement the lectures and the textbook. While some of them will be uploaded directly to the Canvas Files, others are freely available online.

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

Unannounced Quizzes: 40%

- 8 unannounced quizzes will be distributed to students across the entire semester. Each quiz will consist of short-answer questions and multiple choices. A quiz can be finished within 15 minutes. They will be based on both class lectures and readings.
- The lowest quiz grade will be dropped. The remaining 7 quiz grades will be used to calculate the weighted grade. Each quiz will have 6 points.

Exams: 40%

- 2 written exams. Both exams have equal weights: 20% of your final grade.
- Each exam will have three sections: multiple choice questions, short-answer questions and long-answer questions.
- More explanation will be given for this as we approach the first exam.

Weekly Online Discussion Posts: 10%

- 12 weekly posts (excluding the 2 exam weeks and one week on-leave).
- I will assign discussion board posts every Thursday before 5 pm. Each discussion board post is due 48 hours after its commencement.

- The discussion posts are designed to encourage you to think critically and constructively about the material you learned that week. You will be challenged to apply the knowledge that you possess and provide concise answers.
- Each discussion post should take you no more than 1 hour to complete. Each will be worth 2 points.
- A successful discussion answer should be at least 250 words.

Participation and Class Presentation: 10%

- 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.
- Half of the participation grade (5% of the overall grade) will be dependent on your successful completion of the group presentation of the weekly readings. Below are the details:
  1. Students will be divided into 9 groups of 5 (or other sizes based on the final enrollment number).
  2. Each group will prepare a 20-minute presentation with visual aid to discuss **ALL** non-textbook readings of their assigned week, followed by a brief Q&A. These presentations will be scheduled on Thursdays.
  3. As an opportunity to help the class better understand the weekly readings, presenters must show a comprehensive understanding of all of the readings in their assigned weeks. A successful presentation should cover (a) the background information of the material, (b) the main analytical points/arguments as presented in **ALL** of the non-textbook material, (c) the relevance of the readings to the textbook chapter and current events in international politics, and (d) an overall evaluation of the dialogues being reflected by the readings (how do they speak to each other if anything?).
  4. The presentation will be graded on the following criteria: depth of analysis (you should do more than just summarizing), structure/logical flow, preparedness, thought-provoking insights, audience engagement.
  5. All students must participate in peer evaluations of themselves and their teammates. The template peer evaluation form is on Canvas Files. Students' final grades on the group presentations will be the function of their peer evaluation scores and the grade given by me.

Assignment	Total Score	Weight
Announced Quizzes	$6 * 7 = 42$	40%
Exams I & II	$100 * 2 = 200$	40%
Weekly Discussion Posts	$2 * 13 = 26$	10%
In-class Group Presentation	10	5%
Participation		5%

## **Attendance and Submission Policies**

Although I will not be taking attendance for this class, attendance and active participation is mandatory for students. Excused absences must be consistent with university policies and require appropriate documentation. Additional information can be found [here](#). Make-up opportunities for exams and quizzes will be given to excused absences, provided the affected students have proper documentation.

To account for unforeseen circumstances, online assignments (in this class's case, only the weekly discussion posts) will be given a 1-hour grace period for submission. Although your assignment will be marked as late, there will not be any penalty. No assignments will be accepted after the passing of that period.

## **Grading Policy**

All quizzes, exams, and group presentations will be hosted in-class. Late submissions will not be accepted, except in the case of documented illness, legal, or civic/university duty situations. 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 cutoffs will be used for grades:

A 94–100%    A- 90–93%  
B+ 87–89%    B 84–86%    B- 80–83%  
C+ 77–79%    C 74–76%    C- 70–73%  
D+ 67–69%    D 64–66%    D- 60–63%  
E < 60%

## **Course Evaluations**

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/>. I take this feedback seriously and use your constructive feedback to improve the course for future offerings. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester; you will be notified when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at the link provided above.

## **Resources**

## Accommodations

Students with disabilities requesting accommodation should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, you will receive an accommodation letter to share with me. If you need accommodation, please follow this procedure 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](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu), 352-392-1575, [umatter.ufl.edu](http://umatter.ufl.edu))
- • RESPECT – UF Division of Student Affairs ([respect.ufsa.ufl.edu](http://respect.ufsa.ufl.edu))
- • Counseling and Wellness Center – available 24/7 (352-392-1575, [counseling.ufl.edu](http://counseling.ufl.edu))
- • Student Health Care Center (352-392-1161, [shcc.ufl.edu](http://shcc.ufl.edu))
- • Multicultural & Diversity Affairs (352-392-1217, [multicultural.ufl.edu](http://multicultural.ufl.edu))
- • UFPD Office of Victim Services (352-392-1111, [police.ufl.edu](http://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 <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/procedures/honestybrochure.php>. Most obviously, this means cheating on exams and plagiarism on papers is unacceptable. Examples of plagiarism include but are not limited to: submitting entire papers written by others, submitting portions of papers written by others, copying text without quotations and proper citation, or paraphrasing text without proper attribution in a footnote. In addition to harming your professional career, academic dishonesty will destroy your ability to learn from this class.

## **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: Introduction; What is IR?; How to study it?

Jan. 9: Course Introduction

Jan. 11: World Politics and How to Study it.

- Textbook, Chapter 1 (14 pages); Chapter 3: p. 66-68 (2 pages)

Theme 2: Historical Contexts and the Emergence of Modern States

Jan. 16: International Politics in Pre-modern Eras

- Textbook, Chapter 2: p.18-32 (14 pages)
- Thucydides, “The Melian Dialogue,” in *The History of the Peloponnesian War*. (on Canvas)
- BBC, “The Thirty Years War”, *In Our Time*. ([Access here](#))

Jan. 18: International Politics in the Modern Era

- Textbook, Chapter 2: p.32-52; p.56-63 (27 pages)

Theme 3: Theories and Approaches in International Relations

Jan. 23: Realism and Liberalism

- Textbook, Chapter 3: p. 69-82 (13 pages)
- Paul Formosa, “Guide to the classics: Immanuel Kant’s Toward Perpetual Peace and its relevance to the war in Ukraine,” *The Conversations*. ([Access here](#))
- Walter Russell Mead, “The Jacksonian Revolt,” *Foreign Affairs*. ([Access here](#))

Jan. 25: Constructivism and Other Theories (Group Presentation 1)

- Textbook, Chapter 3: p. 82-100 (18 pages)
- Marcos Farias Ferreira, “Introducing Critical Theory in International Relations,” *E-International Relations*. (On Canvas)

Jan. 30: Three Levels of Analysis in International Relations

- Textbook, Chapter 4: p. 105-138 (33 pages)

Feb. 1: How to Navigate this Dangerous World? (Group Presentation 2)

- Yan Xuetong, “Why a Bipolar World Is More Likely than a Unipolar or Multipolar One,” *The HuffPost*. ([Access here](#))
- Jamie Miscik, “Intelligence and the Presidency,” *Foreign Affairs*. ([Access here](#))
- David Singer, “International Conflict: Three Levels of Analysis,” *World Politics*. (On Canvas)

Theme 4: Power and the State

Feb. 6: What is Power?

- Textbook, Chapter 5: p. 140-148 (8 pages)

- John Benedict, “Global Power Distribution and Warfighting in the 21st Century,” *Joint Force Quarterly* 83. (On Canvas)

Feb. 8: State Power and Foreign Policymaking (Group Presentation 3)

- Textbook, Chapter 5: p. 149-174 (25 pages)
- Chia-Chien Chang and Alan H. Yang, “Weaponized Interdependence: China’s Economic Statecraft and Social Penetration against Taiwan,” Foreign Policy Research Institute. (On Canvas)
- John Mearsheimer, “America Unhinged,” *National Interest*. ([Access here](#))
- Stephen Wertheim, “The Price of Primacy: Why America Shouldn’t Dominate the World,” *Foreign Affairs*. ([Access here](#))

#### Theme 5: War and Peace

Feb. 13: What are Wars?

- Textbook, Chapter 6: p. 176-193; 196-201 (22 pages)
- John J. Mearsheimer, “Sister Camilla and the Anarchic Schoolyard,” (On Canvas)
- Bruce Russett, “Democratic Norms and Culture?” in *Grasping the Democratic Peace* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993): p. 30-42. (On Canvas)

Feb. 15: How to Prevent Wars and Make Peace? (Group Presentation 4)

- Textbook, Chapter 6: p. 201-215; 218 (14 pages)
- Brett Ashley Leeds, “Do Alliances Deter Aggression? The Influence of Military Alliances on the Initiation of Militarized Interstate Disputes.” *American Journal of Political Science* 47(3): 427–439. (On Canvas)
- Woodrow Wilson, The Fourteen Points. (A quick summary [here](#))

#### Theme 6: International Institutions

Feb. 20: Why and How to Cooperate?

- Textbook, Chapter 7: p. 220-255 (35 pages)

Feb. 22: Organizations in World Politics I

- Textbook, Chapter 9: p. 306-342 (36 pages)

Feb. 27: Organizations in World Politics II

- Textbook, Chapter 9: p. 343-350 (7 pages)
- Exam Review & Q&A

#### **Feb. 29: Exam I**

#### Theme 7: International Political Economy

Mar. 5: Entities and Processes in International Economy.

- Textbook, Chapter 8: p. 256-271 (15 pages)
- Aaditya Mattoo and Arvind Subramanian, “From Doha to the New Bretton Woods,” *Foreign Affairs*. (Access [here](#))
- “Global Trade After the Failure of the Doha Round,” *New York Times*. (Access [here](#))
- Brad McDonald, “International Trade: Commerce among Nations,” *IMF*. (On Canvas)
- Jim Tankersley, “How Tariffs Work, and Why China Won’t See a Bill,” *New York Times*. ([Access here](#))

Mar. 7: Global Finance and Its Politics (Group Presentation 5)

- Textbook, Chapter 8: p. 271-303 (31 pages)
- Miles Kahler and David Lake, “Governance in a Global Economy: Political Authority in Transition,” *Political Science & Politics*. (On Canvas)

**Mar. 12 & 14: Spring Break!!!!!!**

Theme 8: Human Rights

Mar. 19: Human Rights and Human Wrongs

- Textbook, Chapter 10: p. 352-367 (15 pages)
- Thomas Franck, “Are Human Rights Universal?” *Foreign Affairs*. ([Access here](#))

Mar. 21: The Global Politics of Human Rights (Group Presentation 6)

- Textbook, Chapter 10: p. 368-388 (19 pages)
- Elliott Abrams, “Reorganizing U.S. Promotion of Democracy and Human Rights,” *Council on Foreign Relations*. ([Access here](#))
- Ethan Kapstein, “The New Global Slave Trade,” *Foreign Affairs*. ([Access here](#))
- “Why Has the Syrian War Lasted 11 Years?” *BBC*. ([Access here](#))
- Ahmed, Kaamil. 2022. “Whoever Says Syria's Safe Is a Liar': Country's Tourist Drive at Odds with Human Rights Record.” *The Guardian*. ([Access here](#))

Theme 9: Global Environmental Politics

Mar. 26: Climate Change in the Context of IR

- Textbook, Chapter 11: p. 391-406 (15 pages)
- Henry Shue, “Global Environment and International Inequality,” *International Affairs*. (On Canvas)
- Joshua Busby, “As the Stakes Rise, Climate Action Loses Momentum,” *Current History*. (On Canvas)
- John Broome, “The Ethics of Climate Change,” *Scientific American*. ([Access here](#))

Mar. 28: Natural Resources and the Commons Problem (Group Presentation 7)

- Textbook, Chapter 11: p. 406-422 (16 pages)
- Garrett Hardin, “The Tragedy of the Commons,” *Science*. (On Canvas)



## Theme 10: Human Security and Global Health

### Apr. 2: Human Security and Migration

- Textbook, Chapter 12: p. 425-440 (15 pages)
- Sadako Ogata, “Striving for Human Security,” United Nations. ([Access here](#))
- Garrett Hardin, “Lifeboat Ethics: The Case Against Helping the Poor,” *Psychology Today* 8. (On Canvas)

### Apr. 4: No Class (Instructor will be traveling)

### Apr. 9: Global Health (Group Presentation 8)

- Textbook, Chapter 12: p. 442-458 (16 pages)
- David Fidler, “The World Health Organization and Pandemic Politics,” *Think Global Health*. ([Access here](#))
- “Covid-19 and Food Security: What You Need to Know,” *Center for Strategic and International Studies*. ([Access here](#))

## Theme 11: Pressing Topics in Today’s World

### Apr. 11: Pressing Topic: The Cyber World and Cybersecurity

- Textbook, p. 193-5; 216-7 (4 pages)
- Josh Gold, “Toward Norms in Cyberspace: Recent Progress and Challenges,” *Canadian International Council*. ([Access here](#))
- Adam Segal, “When China Rules the Web,” *Foreign Affairs*. ([Access here](#))
- Alan Beattie, “Technology: How the US, EU and China compete to set industry standards,” *Financial Times*. ([Access here](#))
- Gabriela Žáková. “Cyberspace: Global Public Goods?” *Acta Oeconomica Pragensia* 26(2): 68-82. (On Canvas)
- Rand Corporation, “AI and Geopolitics: How Might AI Affect the Rise and Fall of Nations?”. ([Access here](#))

### Apr. 16: Pressing Topic: China’s Rise?

- Bart Fisher, “Let China in the WTO,” *Washington Post*. ([Access here](#))
- Oriana Skylar Mastro, “The Stealth Superpower: How China Hid its Global Ambitions,” *Foreign Affairs*. ([Access here](#))
- David M. Edelstein, “A more assertive Beijing raises new questions for U.S.-China relations,” *The Monkey Cage*. ([Access here](#))
- Elizabeth Economy, “China’s New Revolution: The Reign of Xi Jinping,” *Foreign Affairs*. ([Access here](#))
- Michael Beckley, “Stop Obsessing About China: Why Beijing Will Not Imperil U.S. Hegemony,” *Foreign Affairs*. ([Access here](#))
- Lindsay Maizland, “Hong Kong’s Freedoms: What China Promised and How It’s Cracking Down,” *Council on Foreign Relations*. ([Access here](#))

Apr. 18: Exam Review and Q&A Session. (Group Presentation 9)

**Apr. 23: Exam II**