
Theories of International Relations

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Syllabus

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Course Description and Objectives

This course is an introduction to the major theories of international relations. It will not only present and evaluate the major theories of international politics, but also examine the highly contested issue of what the proper subject matter of IR theory is and the relationship between the history of IR theory and the history of international politics. While it is clearly intended that you should learn a good deal of both international history and IR theory this semester, the course's objectives go beyond this: during the course, students will also confront basic questions which face the whole range of social science disciplines. Why is war so common? Are there alternatives to "states"? Why do persons perceive international relations as they do? To what extent is "international relations" a gendered concept? These are all questions that are explored in various theories of international relations. There are, concurrently, many purposes that might be served by theory. The objectives of this course include helping students to interpret and describe international relations, to study a variety of explanations for various events and non-events, and to consider various prescriptions or solutions to different kinds of problems. At a more prosaic level, it is hoped that you will become a more intelligent 'consumer' of news about international issues. As you become familiar with the various approaches to the study of IR, and with their particular strengths and weaknesses, you will be able more readily to identify the options available to international actors and the constraints within which they operate.

At the end of the semester students should:

- be familiar with the main theories and models applied in the study of international relations, their ambitions, achievements and limitations;
- have substantive knowledge of the cases covered by the course;
- have developed a critical approach to current debates and issues in world politics and the discipline of international relations; and
- have developed transferable skills, including critical evaluation, analytical investigation, written presentation and communication.

1) A **Mid-Term Take Home Exam** during Week 6. The exam should be no longer than 1200-1500 words. You will have to answer one question among four presented.

2) A **Final Take-Home Exam** during the last week of class. The exam should be no longer than 1200-1500 words. You will have to answer one question among four presented.

Part I – Introduction

Week 1: Introduction: Theories and International Relations

Reading: MINGST, Karen (2004) *Essentials of International Relations*, 3rd Edition, New York, W.W. Norton, 55-82

Week 2: Evolution of Theories: Great Debates

Reading: HOFFMANN, Stanley (1977) "An American Social Science: International Relations", *Daedalus*, Vol. 106, No. 3, Pp. 41-60.

Part II – Classical General Theories

Week 3: Realism, Neorealism & Structural Realism

Reading: SHIMKO, Keith L. (1992) "Realism, Neorealism, and American Liberalism", *The Review of Politics*, Vol. 54, No. 2, Pp. 281-301.

Week 4: Idealism, Liberalism & Neoliberalism

Reading: WYATT-WALTER, Andrew (1996) "Adam Smith and the Liberal Tradition in International Relations", *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 1, Pp. 5-28.

Week 5: Marxism, Socialism & Critical Theories

Reading: COX, Robert W. (1981) "Social Forces, States and World Orders: Beyond International Relations Theories", *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 2, Pp. 126-155.

Part III – Recent General Theories

Week 6: Constructivism

Reading: RUGGIE, John Gerard (1998) "What Makes the World Hang Together? Neo-Utilitarianism and the Social Constructivist Challenge", *International Organization*, Vol. 52, No. 4, Pp. 855-885.

Week 7: Feminism

Reading: TICKNER, J. Ann (2005) "What Is Your Research Program? Some Feminist Answers to International Relations Methodological Questions", *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 49, No. 1, Pp. 1-21.

WEEK 8: Green Theories

Reading: HOMER-DIXON, Thomas F. (1991) "On the Threshold: Environmental Changes as Causes of Acute Conflict", *International Security*, Vol. 16, No. 2, pp. 76-116.

Part IV – Applied Theories

WEEK 9: Foreign Policy Theories

Reading: HILL, Christopher (2003) "What Is to Be Done? Foreign Policy as a Site for Political Action", *International Affairs*, Vol. 79, No. 2, Pp. 233-255.

WEEK 10: Theories of Security

Reading: BALDWIN, David A. (1997) "The Concept of Security", *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 1, Pp. 5-26.

Week 11: Theories of War

Reading: DAWSON, Doyne (1996) "The Origins of War: Biological and Anthropological Theories", *History and Theory*, Vol. 35, No. 1, Pp. 1-28.

Week 12: Conclusion : Theory and Practice

Lecture : JENTLESON, Bruce W. (2002) "The Need for Praxis: Bringing Policy Relevance Back In", *International Security*, Vol. 26, No. 4, Pp. 169-183.

Selected Bibliography

Handbooks and Basic Texts

ARON, Raymond (1967) « Qu'est-ce qu'une théorie des relations internationales? », *Revue Française de Sciences Politique*, Vol. 17, Pp. 309-318.

ARON, Raymond (1963) « Une sociologie des relations internationales », *Revue française de sociologie*, Vol. 4, No. 3, Pp. 307-320.

BADIE, Bertrand (2001) « Les grands débats théoriques de la décennie », *La Revue Internationale et Stratégique*, Vol. 41, Pp. 47-54.

BALDWIN, David A. (1993) "Neoliberalism, Neorealism, and World Politics" in BALDWIN, David A. (Ed.), *Neorealism and Neoliberalism. The Contemporary Debate*, New York, Columbia University Press, Pp. 4-25.

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BOOTH, Ken & SMITH, Steve (Ed.) (1995) *International Relations Theory Today*, University Park, The Pennsylvania State University Press.

BURCHILL, Scott et alii. (2001) *Theories of International Relations*, 2^{ème} édition, Basingstoke, Palgrave.

BUZAN, Barry (1995) "The Level of Analysis Problem in International Relations Revisited" in BOOTH, Ken & SMITH, Steve (dir.), *International Relations Theory Today*, University Park, The Pennsylvania State University Press, Pp. 198-216.

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DOUGHERTY, James E. & Robert L. PFALTZGRAFF, JR. (2001) *Contending Theories of International Relations. A Comprehensive Survey*, 5th Edition, New York, Addison, Wesley, Longman.

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FONTAINE, André (2001) « Les paradigmes artificiels », *La Revue Internationale et Stratégique*, Vol. 41, Pp. 55-62.

FRANK, Robert (2003) « Penser historiquement les relations internationales », *Annuaire français des relations internationales*, Vol. 4, Pp. 42-65.

GADDIS, John Lewis (1993) "International Relations Theory and the End of the Cold War" in S.M. LYNN-JONES et S.E. MILLER (dir.), *The Cold War and After: Prospects for Peace*, Cambridge Mass., MIT Press, Pp. 323-388. (Également disponible dans *International Security*, Vol. 17, No. 3, 1992-93).

JACKSON, Robert (1996) "Is There a Classical International Theory?" in SMITH, S., BOOTH, K. & ZALEWSKI, M. (dir.), *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, Pp. 203-218.

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LEBOW, R.N. et T. RISSE-KAPPEN (1995) "Introduction" in R.N. LEBOW et T. RISSE-KAPPEN (dir.), *International Relations and the End of the Cold War*, New York, Columbia University Press, Pp. 1-21.

MABEE, Bryan (2007) "Levels and Agents, States and People: Micro-Historical Sociological Analysis and International Relations", *International Politics*, Vol. 44, Pp. 431-449.

MUSITELLI, Jean (2001) « Les paradigmes déchus? 1991-2001 : permanences et changements », *La Revue Internationale et Stratégique*, Vol. 41, Pp. 37-45.

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DOYLE, Michael W. (1995) "Liberalism and the End of the Cold War" in R.N. LEBOW et T. RISSE-KAPPEN (dir.), *International Relations and the End of the Cold War*, New York, Columbia University Press, Pp. 85-108.

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ADLER, Emanuel (1997) « Seizing the Middle Ground : Constructivism in World Politics », *European Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 3, No. 3, pp. 319-363.

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Green Theories

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Foreign Policy

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Security

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War & Collective Violence

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Methodology

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Selected IR Journals

Alternatives

American Journal of International Law

American Political Science Review

Annuaire Français des Relations Internationales ([français](#))

Critique Internationale ([français](#))

Cultures & Conflits ([français](#))

Défense Nationale ([français](#))

Ethics & International Affairs

Etudes Internationales ([français](#))

European Journal of International Relations

Foreign Affairs
Foreign Policy
Global Governance
Human Rights Quarterly
International Affairs
International Journal
International Organization
International Peacekeeping
International Security
International Studies Quarterly
International Studies Review
Journal of Conflict Resolution
Millennium
Orbis
Politique Etrangère (français)
Review of International Political Economy
Review of International Studies
Revue Internationale et Stratégique (français)
Security Dialogue
Security Studies
Survival
Washington Quarterly
World Policy Journal
World Politics