

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS THEORY

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As two famous academics once noted, “it is sheer craziness to dare to understand world affairs”. There is simply too much complexity out there, and “world affairs are pervaded with endless details – far more than one can hope to comprehend in their entirety”.

They suggest two related solutions to this predicament. One is adopting “a sense of humility”, acknowledging that we will never be able to explain or understand fully the way the world works. Such sense of humility, however, should be accompanied by a self-conscious use of theory, because it only “through theorizing that we can hope to tease meaningful patterns out of the endless details and inordinate complexities that sustain world politics”.

The main goal of this course is to use international relations theory as a means for uncovering some “meaningful patterns” in international politics and reflect on their relevance and implications. A number of theoretical approaches will be introduced, discussed critically and “self-consciously,” and then applied to a variety of case studies. Traditional paradigms or “ontologies” of the international will be supplemented with more recent, “reflexivist” approaches, allowing us to think not just about how the world is structured, but also about how theories and knowledge come into being and what forces (political, economical, cultural, etc.) play a role in these processes.

The course, in its present form, is taught using the “flipped classroom” technique. The theories and approaches mentioned in the course schedule below are first presented through recorded online lectures that students are expected to “attend” at home. The class time will be devoted entirely to seminar activities, focused on reviewing critically the theories themselves and on applying them to case studies drawn from contemporary international affairs.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of the course, you will:

- 1) be familiar with some important meta-theoretical and methodological issues in IR theory, such as the so-called “four debates” in the development of the discipline or the concept of “levels of analysis”;
- 2) know and be able to assess critically at least five “rationalist” IR traditions, and be able to compare and contrast their worldviews and predictions;
- 3) know and be able to assess critically at least five “reflexivist” IR traditions, and be able to compare and contrast their explanations for the origins of theories, knowledge and norms;
- 4) be able to apply IR theories to explain specific phenomena in world politics, and assess their strengths and limitations in this;
- 5) be able to articulate clearly and rigorously complex arguments on these themes, both orally and in writing.
- 6) be able plan and lead seminar activities on these themes.

ASSESSMENT

Important note: *Students are expected to check at least weekly the Blackboard site of the course, where any important announcement – especially on assessment and class scheduling - will be posted.*

Components:

Participation	5%
Student-led class	10%
Two reflection papers	30% (15% each)
Research paper	35% (30% paper + 5% outline)
Final exam	20%

Participation: students are expected to come to class being familiar with the introductory lecture on the module (available online via Panopto) and having done the essential reading. They are also expected to take part in class activities and discussions, showing knowledge of – and engagement with – the lecture and essential reading. Students who are physically present in class but are unable or unwilling to contribute to the class discussions, or are busy in other activities (for instance by making repeated use of their mobile devices during the session), will lose 10% of the participation mark (per session).

Student-led class: three classes in the course will be run by student teams. These are modules 5 (“The neo-neo debate”), 7 (“Non-Western IR traditions”) and 12 (“Post-colonial theory”).

These modules are structured like the other modules (i.e. they have their background lecture and reading list) with the difference that the entire seminar in class will be run by a group of students, who will therefore be expected to prepare a series of activities in advance to be presented to their colleagues. Students are free to structure the seminar in any way they like, provided that it includes at least one activity focused on the theories themselves and one focused on case studies. They can ask for help and advice from the instructor.

The modules will be assigned by week 3; by then students are encouraged to coordinate among each other, form their groups and present them to the instructor.

These sessions will be assessed by the instructor on the basis of the 1) engagement with the readings and material; 2) clarity and effectiveness of the activities presented in class; 3) originality of the class structure.

Reflection papers: students are expected to submit two reflection papers, whose length should be between 1,000 and 1,500-words each. In these papers they should explain what are, in their view, the two main similarities and the two main differences between two IR theories. In each of these papers they are required to use and reference at least 4 recommended readings.

The first reflection paper is due on 15 March and should focus on any two “ontologies” among those presented in modules 3 to 6.

The second reflection paper is due on 3 May and should focus on any two theories among those presented in modules 7 to 12.

Final exam: a final exam will take place in the exam session at the end of the term. It will cover the entire course. The exact format of the exam will be confirmed by the instructor in due course.

Research paper: you will be required to submit a research paper on Tuesday 24 April. The paper must focus on a specific issue in world politics and approach it with reference to at least three IR traditions. These may include not more than two among the theories/traditions that you chose in your reflection papers or seminar-led class.

The paper must be between 2,500 and 3,000-words long.

You are invited to discuss your theme and ideas with the instructor in advance. You will also be required to deliver a very short presentation on your theme and research question in class in week

9 (provisionally Wednesday 28 March). Throughout the writing process you can ask for help and advice from the instructor.

Also, you **MUST** submit by 31 March an **outline** of your paper which should briefly introduce: a) the theme/topic of the paper; b) its main research question; c) an indication of the IR traditions that will be used, and the reasons for this choice; d) a provisional bibliography. The outline must be between 500- and 1000-words long. These outlines will count towards the final mark (5%), and the instructor will provide some brief feedback.

The references must include at least 9 academic references (journal articles, chapters in edited books, academic books, etc., including any “recommended reading” listed below). Readings listed as “essential” in the reading list below can be cited and used, but do not count towards the 9 references.

The penalty for the late submission of the paper is 5 per cent per day, including weekends. Late outlines will not be accepted (i.e. students will lose the all the marks assigned for the outline) unless the student provides a valid and written justification for the delay.

The first page of each paper must include the student’s name and ID number, and the essay body must be 12-point font, double-spaced and include page numbers.

The essay must also include a bibliography and acknowledge sources appropriately. Any academic referencing style is acceptable provided that it is used consistently throughout the paper. Useful information on some widely used referencing styles can be found at:

<http://libweb.anglia.ac.uk/referencing/harvard.htm>

<http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org>

Grade scale:

<i>Letter grade</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Letter grade</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
A	93+	B-	80-82
A-	90-92	C+	77-79
B+	87-89	C	70-76
B	83-86	F	Below 70

ATTENDANCE POLICY AND BEHAVIOR IN CLASS

No attendance mark is assigned in this course. However, the following policies will be **STRICTLY** adhered to:

- Students are expected to attend the seminars (including rescheduled ones and/or those taking place in days other than Sundays) **AND** take part regularly in class discussions, showing knowledge of – and engagement with – the essential readings. Students who are physically present in class but are unable or unwilling to contribute to the class discussions, or are busy in other activities (for instance by making repeated use of their mobile devices during the session), will be considered as absent.
- Students who, without a valid justification, arrive to class more than 10’ late, leave more than 10’ early or leave the teaching room repeatedly during the session will be considered as absent.
- Students unable to attend class for justifiable reasons should contact the instructor ideally before class, and in any case no later than seven days after the missed class. Only serious and documented family or health emergencies and documented participation in formal AUC activities will be accepted as valid justifications. The procedure for correct documentation of such absences is outlined in the university-wide attendance policy.
- Unexcused absence in at least **THREE** sessions, and absence with or without valid justification in at least **FIVE** sessions, will result in an automatic “F” grade.
- Based on the current university-wide attendance policy, if the five-session limit is reached because of absences caused by serious family and health emergencies or participation in formal AUC activities, the student may petition to drop their course after the formal deadline to drop courses and before the deadline for withdrawal from the university, or may petition to continue the course.

- If an attendance sheet is circulated in class, each student is expected to sign only for him-/herself. Falsifying signatures is considered by AUC as a breach of academic integrity and the students involved in this practice will be immediately referred to the AUC Academic Integrity Committee.

BLENDED LEARNING

You must register as soon as possible on the **Blackboard portal** of the course, in which you will find:

- A pdf copy of this syllabus
- Access to the online lectures (via Panopto) and their slides in pdf
- Access to the course readings

Blackboard will also be used to deliver any urgent or non-urgent notice to the class. Even if these notices are normally also forwarded to your email address, it is possible that you do not receive some of these (for instance if they go to your “spam” folder) so **you must check the Blackboard portal at least weekly to keep yourself updated.**

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Teaching is based on a relation of mutual trust between the teacher and the students. As a teacher I take my academic responsibilities very seriously and I expect all my students to do the same. I expect all students to be familiar with the AUC code of practice on academic integrity which is available at:

<http://in.aucegypt.edu/auc-academics/academic-integrity/academic-integrity-students>

Please pay particular attention to the regulations on plagiarism, collaborative work and falsification of signatures.

All papers will be checked through **Turnitin**; course code and password will be made available to attending students in due course. Students will be allowed to self-check for plagiarism early drafts of their work and only the final submission will be checked by the instructor.

All breaches of the code of practice will be acted upon promptly and firmly, resulting at least in zero marks for the relevant piece of assessment and possibly in further action being taken by the instructor, depending on the severity of the offense.

If in doubt as to what constitutes plagiarism, do not hesitate to contact the instructor.

ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND INTELLECTUAL INTERACTION

In this course you will deal with a number of topics that are often controversial. You are free to offer the class any disagreement you may have with the readings or lecture. You will **NOT** be penalised for disagreeing with other students, the readings or the instructor, but your perspective must be based on documentable evidence from the course or other readings. Freedom of speech and ideas is a basic principle of academic life (and of universal human rights) and every student will have a chance to express her/his opinion as long as it is voiced in a respectful manner. However, varied points of view must be expressed in a manner that is sensitive to differences in abilities, ethnicity, religion, gender and lifestyle, and should not be expressed so as to be perceived as a personal attack. In short, respect for others' differences is one of the most important prerequisites for us working together in this course.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you believe that you have a disability that impacts on your study, or have a documented disability that requires modified instructional procedures, please contact the instructor as soon as possible. The instructor is happy to hear from you even if you do not have a formal proof of your disability;

however, you may be asked to provide a note from the AUC Disability Services (<http://in.aucegypt.edu/student-life/student-well-being/disability-services>) when your condition requires substantial adjustments (e.g. to the structure of the exams etc.).

COURSE SCHEDULE

1. Introduction
2. Terminology and the four debates
3. Classical realism
4. Classical liberalism
5. Structures matter: the “neo-neo debate” (**student-led class no. 1**)
6. Economic structuralism
7. Non-Western IR traditions (**student-led class no. 2**)
8. Critical theory
9. *Student paper presentations*
10. Social constructivism
11. Post-structuralism
12. Post-colonial theory (**student-led class no. 3**)
13. Gender
14. Conclusion

COURSE READINGS

For each module you find:

- *one essential reading that introduces the theory, issue or approach dealt with in the module, normally drawn from an IR manual. EVERYBODY MUST do this reading before the relevant seminar, ideally after having “attended” the online lecture. Students who, during a seminar, do not show familiarity with the essential reading will lose marks in the participation component of their assessment.*
- *at least four recommended readings, normally academic papers or chapters from academic books written by scholars that belong to a specific tradition. These are not compulsory readings but are required if you choose a topic for the reflection paper, and are a good place to start for your research essay.*

Manual chapters used in the course are drawn from the following books:

Viotti, P. – Kauppi, M. (2012) *International Relations Theory* (Pearson, 5th International Edition) –
VK in the list below

- Dunne, T. – Kurki, M. – Smith, S. (2010) *International Relations Theories: Discipline and Diversity* (Oxford University Press, 2nd Edition) – **DKS** in the list below
- Baylis, J. – Smith, S. – Owens, P. (2011) *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations* (Oxford University Press, 5th Edition) – **BSO** in the list below
- Burchill, S. – Linklater, A. and others (2005) *Theories of International Relations* (Palgrave Macmillan, 3rd edition) – **BL** in the list below.

Students who wish to own an IR theory manual should consider purchasing one of these four books. The editions mentioned above refer to the edition from which the readings below have been selected; if you plan to purchase other editions or already own one, consider that different editions often have different page numbers for the same material but rarely introduce radical changes in the way the material itself is presented.

1 – Introduction

No essential reading

Recommended readings

- Wight, M. (1966) “Why Is There No International Theory?,” in H. Butterfield and M. Wight (eds.) *Diplomatic Investigations* (London: George Allen & Unwin), pp. 17-34. Republished in J. Der Derian (ed.) *International Theory: Critical Investigations* (NY: New York University Press, 1995), pp. 15-35.
- Rosenau, J.N. – Durfee, M. (1995) *Thinking Theory Thoroughly: Coherent Approaches to an Incoherent World* (Boulder: Westview Press), chapter 1 “The Need for Theory” (pp. 1-8) and chapter 8 “Toward Thinking Theory Thoroughly” (pp. 177-190).

2 – Terminology and the four debates

Essential reading

- Kurki, M – Wight, C. (2010) “International Relations and Social Science,” DKS, pp. 14-25.
- Viotti, P. – Kauppi, M. (2012) “Thinking About IR Theory,” section on “Levels of Analysis,” VK, pp. 8-12.

Recommended readings

- Carr, E.H. (1939) *The Twenty Years’ Crisis* (any edition), chapter 5 “The Realist Critique.”
- Lapid, Y. (1989) “The Third Debate” On the Prospects of International Theory in a Post-Positivist Era.” *International Studies Quarterly*, 33(3), 235-253.
- Neufeld, M.A. (1995) *The Restructuring of International Relations Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), chapter 3 “Reflexivity and International Relations theory” (pp. 39-69).
- Lake, D.A. (2013) “Theory is dead, long live theory: The End of the Great Debates and the Rise of Eclecticism in International Relations,” *European Journal of International Relations*, 19(3), 567-587.

3 – Classical realism

Essential reading

- Guzzini, S. (1998) *Realism in International Relations and International Political Economy: The continuing story of a death foretold* (London and NY: Routledge), chapter 2 “Classical Realism: Carr, Morgenthau and the Crisis of Collective Security” (pp. 15-31).

Recommended readings

- Carr, E.H. (1939) *The Twenty Years' Crisis* (any edition), chapter 5 "The Realist Critique." [see module 2]
- Niebuhr, R. (1959) *Nations and Empires: Recurring Patterns in the Political Order* (London: Faber and Faber), chapter 11 "The Vague Universalism of Liberal Democracy" (pp. 182-200).
- Morgenthau, H.J. (1960) *Politics Among Nations* (NY: Alfred Knopf), chapter 1 "A Realist Theory of International Politics" (pp. 3-15).
- Rosenberg, J. (1990) "What's the Matter with Realism?," *Review of International Studies*, 16(4), 285-303.

4 – Classical liberalism

Essential reading

- Russett, B. (2010) "Liberalism," DKS, pp. 95-115.

Recommended readings

- Doyle, M. (1983) "Kant, Liberal Legacies, and Foreign Affairs," *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, 12(3), 205-235.
- Maoz, Z. – Russett, B. (1993) "Normative and Structural Causes of Democratic Peace, 1946-1986," *The American Political Science Review*, 87(3), 624-638.
- Moravcsik, A. (1997) "Taking Preferences Seriously: A Liberal Theory of International Politics," *International Organization*, 51(4), 513-553.
- Slaughter, A-M. – Alvarez, J.E. (2000) "A Liberal Theory of International Law," *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the American Society of International Law*, pp. 240-253.

5 – Structures matter: the "neo-neo debate"

Essential reading

- Lamy, S.L. (2011) "Contemporary Mainstream Approaches: Neo-Realism and Neo-Liberalism," BSO, pp. 114-129.

Recommended readings

- Waltz, K.N. (1979) *Theory of International Politics* (any edition), chapter 6 "Anarchic Orders and Balance of Power" (pp. 102-128).
- Keohane, R.O. (1986) "Theory of World Politics: Structural Realism and Beyond," in R.O. Keohane (ed.), *Neorealism And Its Critics* (NY: Columbia University Press), pp. 158-203.
- Mearsheimer, J.J. (1994-5) "The False Promise of International Institutions," *International Security*, 19(3), 5-49.
- Deudney, D. – Ikenberry, G.J. (1999) "The Nature and Sources of Liberal International Order," *Review of International Studies*, 25(2), 179-196.
- Waltz, K.N. (2000) "Structural Realism after the Cold War," *International Security*, 25(1), 5-41.

6 – Economic structuralism

Essential reading

- Viotti, P. – Kauppi, M. (2012) "Economic Structuralism: Global Capitalism and Postcolonialism," [excluding the sections on "Postcolonialism" and "Economic Structuralists and Their Critics"] VK, pp. 187-207.

Recommended readings

- Berki, R.N. (1971) "On Marxian Thought and the Problem of International Relations," *World Politics*, 24(1), 80-105.

- Wallerstein, I. (1974) "The Rise and Future Demise of the World Capitalist System: Concepts for Comparative Analysis," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 16(4), 387-415.
- Wallerstein, I. (2002) "The Itinerary of World-Systems Analysis: or, How to Resist Becoming a Theory," in J. Berger and M. Zelditch (eds.) *New Directions in Contemporary Sociological Theory* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield), pp. 358-376.
- Callinicos, A. (2004) "Marxism and the International," *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 6(3), 426-433.

7 – Non-Western IR traditions

Essential reading

- Acharya, A. – Buzan, B. (2010) "Why Is There No Non-Western International Relations Theory? An Introduction," in A. Acharya – B. Buzan (eds.) *Non-Western International Relations Theory: Perspectives on and beyond Asia* (Abingdon: Routledge), pp. 2-25.

Recommended readings

- Kumar Sarkar, B. (1919) "Hindu Theory of International Relations," *The American Political Science Review*, 13(3), 400-414.
- Jarvis, D.S.L. (2001) "International Relations: An International Discipline?," in R.M.A. Crawford and D.S.L. Jarvis (eds.) *International Relations – Still an American Social Science? Toward Diversity in International Thought* (NY: SUNY Press), pp. 369-380.
- Sabet, A.G.E. (2008) *Islam and the Political: Theory, Governance and International Relations* (London: Pluto Press), chapter 4 "The Islamic Paradigm of Nations: Toward a Neoclassical Approach" (pp. 125-151).
- Acharya, A. – Buzan, B. (eds.) (2010) *Non-Western International Relations Theory: Perspectives on and beyond Asia* (Abingdon: Routledge), any chapter.

8 – Critical theory

Essential reading

- Devetak, R. (2005) "Critical Theory," BL, pp. 155-180.

Other recommended readings

- Cox, R. (1981) "Social Forces, States and World Orders: Beyond International Relations Theory," *Millennium*, 10(2), 126-155.
- Cox, R. (1983) "Gramsci, Hegemony and International Relations: An Essay in Method," *Millennium*, 12(2), 162-175. Republished in S. Jill (ed.) *Gramsci, Historical Materialism and International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 49-66.
- Bieler, A. – Morton, A.D. (2004) "A Critical Theory Route to Hegemony, World Order and Historical Change: Neo-Gramscian Perspectives in International Relations," *Capital & Class*, 28(1), 85-113.
- Roach, S.C. (2010) *Critical Theory of International Politics: Complementarity, Justice, and Governance* (London and NY: Routledge), chapter 3 "The Frankfurt School: The Rise of Radical Immanence and Communicative Action Theory" (pp. 44-70).

9 – Student presentations of research questions and themes for the research paper

No readings

10 – Social constructivism

Essential reading

Viotti, P. – Kauppi, M. (2012) “Constructivist Understandings,” VK, pp. 313-337.

Recommended readings

- Wendt, A. (1992) “Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics,” *International Organization*, 46(2), 391-425.
- Hopf, T. (1998) “The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory,” *International Security*, 23(1), 171-200.
- Guzzini, S. (2000) “A Reconstruction of Constructivism in International Relations,” *European Journal of International Relations*, 6(2), 147-182.
- Finnemore, M. – Sikkink, K. (2001) “Taking Stock: The Constructivist Research Program in International Relations and Comparative Politics,” *Annual Review of Political Science*, 4, 391-416.

11 – Post-structuralism

Essential reading

Hansen, L. (2011) “Poststructuralism,” BSO, pp. 166-180.

Recommended readings

- Der Derian, J. (1990) “The (S)pace of International Relations: Simulation, Surveillance, and Speed,” *International Studies Quarterly*, 34, 295-310.
- De Goede, M. (2006) “Introduction: International Political Economy and the Promises of Poststructuralism,” in M. De Goede (ed.) *International Political Economy and Poststructural Politics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan), pp. 1-20.
- Dillon, M. – Neal, A.W. (2008) “Introduction,” in M. Dillon and A.W. Neal (eds.) *Foucault on Politics, Security and War* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan), pp. 1-18.
- Hershinger, E. (2012) “‘Hell Is the Other’: Conceptualising Hegemony and Identity through Discourse Theory,” *Millennium*, 41(1), 65-90.

12 – Post-colonialism

Essential reading

Grovogui, S.N. (2010) “Postcolonialism,” DKS, pp. 238-256.

Recommended readings

- Persaud, R.B. (1997) “Frantz Fanon, Race and World Order,” in S. Gill – J.H. Mittelman (eds.) *Innovation and Transformation in International Studies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 170-184.
- Puchala, D.J. (1998) “Third World Thinking and Contemporary International Relations,” in S.G. Neuman (ed.) *International Relations Theory and the Third World* (NY: St. Martin’s Press), pp. 133-157.
- Kiely, R. (2005) *Empire in the Age of Globalisation: US Hegemony and Neoliberal Disorder* (London: Pluto Press), chapter 7 “Conclusions: US Imperialism, Actually Existing Globalisation, and the Question of Alternatives” (pp. 154-180).
- Barkawi, T. – Laffey, M. (2006) “The Postcolonial Moment in Security Studies,” *Review of International Studies*, 32, 329-352.
- Hobson, J.M. (2007) “Is Critical Theory Always for the White West and for Western Imperialism? Beyond Westphalian towards a Post-Racist Critical IR,” *Review of International Studies*, 33, 91-116.

13 – Gender

Essential reading

Tickner, J.A. (1997) “You Just Don’t Understand: Troubled Engagements between Feminists and IR Theorists,” *International Studies Quarterly*, 41(4), 611-632.

Recommended readings

Peterson, V.S. (1992) “Transgressing Boundaries: Theories of Knowledge, Gender and International Relations,” *Millennium*, 21(2), 183-206.

Murphy, C.N. (1996) “Seeing Women, Recognizing Gender, Recasting International Relations,” *International Organization*, 50(3), 513-538.

Youngs, G. (2004) “Feminist International Relations: A Contradiction in Terms? Or: Why Women and Gender are Essential to Understanding the World ‘We’ Live in,” *International Affairs*, 80(1), 75-87.

Enloe, C. (2014) *Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics* (London: University of California Press), chapter 1 “Gender Makes the World Go Round: Where Are the Women?” (pp. 1-36).

14 – Conclusion

No readings

OTHER RESOURCES

The main scholarly journals in the field of international relations theory include the *Review of International Studies*, *Millennium*, *International Studies Quarterly*, *International Organization*, and the *European Journal of International Relations*.

Students are encouraged to become familiar with these journals especially to understand the characteristics of a “good” academic paper in this discipline, but should by all means extend their bibliographic search to other academic journals listed in the AUC e-journal search engine on the basis of their own personal interests. Feel free to contact the course instructor if you require personalized guidance.