

International Relations Theory

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Course Description and Objectives

What is the international? Where is it located? Who gets to claim it? This course addresses the politics of theorizing and practicing the international. We investigate how the ways that academics, politicians, and ordinary people have shaped the category of the international as a realm of possibility have generated and sidelined different political projects. With contributions from philosophy, economics, social theory, feminism, cultural studies, political theory, religious studies, and postcolonial studies, we will scrutinize: a) key works that have inspired and articulated theorizations of the international; b) historical contexts and academic debates inscribed in international relations theory; and c) the relationship between theoretical approaches and political practices. Students will be encouraged to explore and develop their own perspectives through participation in class discussions, and written assignments (response papers and final paper, no exam).

- Understand the historical context and academic debates that have shaped international relations theory.
- Appraise possibilities and limits of different theoretical approaches to international politics within the international relations field.
- Demonstrate the relationship between theorizations of the international and political practices as depicted in the news, state policies, and case studies.
- Develop their own voice in relationship with others.

Course Schedule

WEEK 1 - International Relations Theory and political practice

Introduction

Weber, C. (2001). *International relations theory : A critical introduction*. London ; New York: Routledge. Chapter 1. Introduction: culture, ideology and the myth function in IR theory.

Zehfuss, M & Edkins, J (ed.) 2014, *Conclusion: What can we do to change the world?* in *Global Politics: A New Introduction*. 2nd edn, Routledge, Abingdon, pp. 610-628.

What is theory?

Zalewski, M. "All these theories and the bodies keep piling up: theories, theorists, theorizing". in *International theory: Positivism and beyond*, K. B. M. Z. Steve Smith, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, pp.340-353, 1996.

Steve Smith, "The Self-Images of a Discipline: A Genealogy of International Relations Theory," pp. 1-37, in: Ken Booth and Steve Smith (eds) *International Relations Theory Today* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995)

WEEK 2 - Realism

Weber, C. (2001). *International relations theory : A critical introduction*. London ; New York: Routledge. Chapter 2. Realism: is international anarchy the permissive cause of war?

Morgenthau, H. (1948). *Politics among nations; the struggle for power and peace*. (1st ed.]. ed.). New York: A. A. Knopf. Chapter 1. A Realist Theory of International Politics: Six principles of political realism

Waltz, K. (1979). *Theory of international politics* (1st ed.). Boston, Mass.: McGraw-Hill. Chapter 1 and 5.

The Kenneth Waltz–Scott Sagan debate: The spread of nuclear weapons: Good or bad? (1995). *Security Studies*, 4, 693-810.

WEEK 3 - Liberalism

Weber, C. (2001). *International relations theory : A critical introduction*. London ; New York: Routledge. Chapter 3. Idealism: is there an international society?

Immanuel Kant. 1795. *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch*. Access at: <https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/kant/kant1.htm>

Robert Axelrod and Robert Keohane (1985) 'Achieving Cooperation under Anarchy: Strategies and Institutions', *World Politics* 38: 226-254.

G. John Ikenberry 'The Future of the Liberal World Order: Internationalism after America', *Foreign Affairs*, 90(3) (2011): 56-68.

Beate Jahn (2010) 'Liberal Internationalism: From Ideology to Empirical Theory – And Back Again', *International Theory* 1(3) 409-438.

WEEK 4 - Constructivism

Weber, C. (2001). *International relations theory : A critical introduction*. London ; New York: Routledge. Chapter 4. Constructivism: is anarchy what states make of it?

Onuf, N. (1998). "Constructivism: A User's Manual". In: Kubáľková, V.; Onuf, N.; Kowert, Paul. (Eds). *International Relations in a Constructed World*. New York: M.E. Sharpe, 58–78.

Finnemore, Martha. "Constructing Norms of Humanitarian Intervention". In: *The Culture of National Security*. New York: Columbia University Press, pp.153-185.

Tannenwald, Nina, *The Nuclear Taboo: The United States and the non-use of nuclear weapons since 1945* (2007), Introduction, Chapters 1 and 2.

WEEK 5 - Critical Theory and Empire

Cox, Robert (1981). "Social Forces, States and World Orders: beyond International Relations Theory". *Millennium*, v.10, n.2.

Linklater, Andrew (2007). "The achievements of critical theory". In: Linklater, A. *Critical Theory and World Politics*. London: Palgrave, pp.45-59.

B.S. Chimni, "International Institutions Today: An Imperial Global State in the Making," *European Journal of International Law* 15(1), 2004.

Hobson, John (2014) 'Why Hierarchy and not Anarchy is the Core Concept of IR', *Millennium* 42(3): 557-575.

WEEK 6 - Feminism

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

Cohn, Carol (1988) *Sex and Death in the rational world of defense intellectuals*. *Signs*, v.12

Ackerly, Brooke, and Jacqui True (2008) 'Power and Ethics in Feminist Research on International Relations', *International Studies Review* 10(4): 693-707.

Carpenter, Charli (2002) 'Gender Theory in World Politics: Contributions of a Nonfeminist Standpoint', *International Studies Review* 4(3): 152-165.

Enloe, Cynthia. (2010). "Eight women, one war", Chapter 1 in "Nimo's War, Emma's War: Making Feminist Sense of the Iraq War", 1-16.

Karin Aggestam and Annika Bergman-Rosamond, "Swedish Feminist Foreign Policy in the Making: Ethics, Politics, and Gender," *Ethics and International Affairs*, 2016.

WEEK 7 - Postmodernism

Ashley, Richard and RBJ Walker, "Speaking the Language of Exile: Dissident Thought in International Studies", *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 34 (1990)

Campbell, David (1992). *Writing Security: US Foreign Policy and the politics of identity*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. Introduction.

Walker, R. (2010). *After the globe, before the world (Global horizons)*. London ; New York: Routledge. Chapter 2. Political, international, theoretical

Jef Huysmans, "International Politics of Insecurity: Normativity, Inwardness and the Exception," *Security Dialogue* 37, #1 (March 2006): 11-29, at: <http://sdi.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/37/1/11>

Bigo, D. (2016). *Rethinking Security at the Crossroad of International Relations and Criminology*. *British Journal Of Criminology*, 56(6), 1068-1086.

WEEK 8 - Postcolonialism and race

Inayatullah, Naeem and David Blaney (2004) *International Relations and the Problem of Difference* (London: Routledge). Chapter 1. Difference in the constitution of IR.

Vitalis, R. (2015). *White world order, black power politics : The birth of American international relations*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. Introduction : a mongrel-American social science.

Siba Grovogui, "Regimes of Sovereignty: Rethinking International Morality and the African Condition," *European Journal of International Relations*, 2002, 8(3): 315-338.

Debra Thompson, "Through, Against and Beyond the Racial State: The Transnational Stratum of Race," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 26(1), 2013.

WEEK 9 - Religion

Kathleen M. Sands, "Tracking Religion: Religion through the Lens of Critical and Cultural Studies," *Bulletin of the Council of Societies for the Study of Religion*, Vol. 31, no. 3 (September 2002): 68-74.

Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, *Beyond Religious Freedom: The New Global Politics of Religion*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017. Chapter 1 and 2.

Steven K. Green, *Inventing a Christian America: The Myth of the Religious Founding*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015, Chapter 1.

Nadia Marzouki, *Islam: An American Religion*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2017, Chapter 1.

WEEK 10 - Cultural studies, theory and methods

Bleiker, R. (2001). The Aesthetic Turn in International Political Theory. *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 30(3), 509-533.

Weber, Cynthia (2008). Popular visual language as global communication: the remediation of United Airlines Flight 93. *Review of International Studies* v.34, pp. 137-153.

Bleiker, Roland and Brigg, Morgan (2010) 'Autoethnography and International Relations', *Review of International Studies* 36(3): 777-818.

Rutazibwa, Olivia Umurerwa. 2016. "From the Everyday to IR: In Defence of the Strategic Use of the R-word." *Postcolonial Studies*, 19:2, 191-200.

Seminar Requirements

Entry-paper (500 words max) due first week, 5% of the grade

Choose one of these questions to answer:

What do you expect to learn from this class?

How does the international affect you, your friends, and family?

How do your experiences inform your choice to take this course?

Three (3) Response Papers (500-1,000 words) 10% of the grade each = 30%

Discussion Set-Up Leader, 10% of the grade: For this assignment, students are expected to identify a piece of news or case study to contribute to the discussions about applications of the theoretical approaches. Students should check with the instructor via email or in person during office hours to discuss their plan.

Regular Attendance and Participation in seminar discussion, 20% of the grade

Final Paper (1,500 to 3,000 words), 30% of the grade

Answer to this prompt: How do the ways we theorize the international have different political implications? Should one topic (e.g. global warming, nuclear proliferation, human trafficking, refugee crises) and discuss how two different theoretical approaches problematize it. Discuss the potentialities and limits of the solutions offered as well as what they include and what is sidelined.

Exit paper (due last class), 5% of the grade

How participating in this course changed the way you perceive the international?

How can you interpret the international in your daily life?

How did your understanding on international relations theory change during the course of this class?