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


Week 2: Evolution of Theories: Great Debates


Part II – Classical General Theories

Week 3: Realism, Neorealism & Structural Realism


Week 4:Idealism, Liberalism & Neoliberalism


Week 5: Marxism, Socialism & Critical Theories


Part III – Recent General Theories

Week 6: Constructivism


Week 7: Feminism

WEEK 8: Green Theories


Part IV – Applied Theories

WEEK 9: Foreign Policy Theories


WEEK 10: Theories of Security


Week 11: Theories of War


Week 12: Conclusion : Theory and Practice


Selected Bibliography

Handbooks and Basic Texts


Realism/Neorealism


**Liberalisme and Variants**


**Marxism, Critical Theories & Postmodernism**


**Constructivism**


**Feminism**


**Green Theories**


Foreign Policy


International Political Economy


Security


War & Collective Violence


Methodology


**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