

Approaches to International Relations

PSI 2204

(TCs 2018)

Course Description

This course introduces the defining issues of the contemporary global system of international relations as well as the principal concepts and theories of its possible analysis. The intended scope of the course will offer an overview of the structures, processes and tools of international relations such as international organizations, foreign policy and diplomacy. It also provides an insight into the underlying political conditions (war and peace), the agenda of collective action (conflicts and international responses, transnational challenges), the normative and institutional structures (international regimes and organizations) and the economic dimension (international political economy) of the practice of international relations.

The goal is to make the most controversial and complex world issues easier to understand and equip students with the knowledge and tools they need to apply theoretical and analytical tools to international affairs.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students will have:

- Learned about the history and foundations of the modern international system.
- Acquired key knowledge about the primary theories and analytical approaches in international relations.
- Obtained an ability to critically appraise real world events using theoretical frameworks and analytical tools.
- Developed an awareness of the core aspects and issues in contemporary international relations.
- Shown an ability to consider, present, and debate competing viewpoints about central topics in international affairs.
- Gained knowledge and inspiration about potential career paths that involve international relations.

The structure of the course

1. The evolution of the international society: from ancient empires to globalized international society
2. Historical context of contemporary international relations: Cold War

3. Historical context of contemporary international relations: Post-Cold War transformations
4. Principal theoretical approaches I: Realism and Liberalism,
5. Principal theoretical approaches I: World-System theory and Constructivism
6. War and peace: causes and conditions, means and normative contours, current rules for the use of force
7. Global and international security: risks, threats, responses
8. International conflict management: interventions, peacekeeping and state-building
9. Globalization and international political economy
10. International regimes and organizations
11. Foreign policy and diplomacy
12. Transnational challenges: environmental issues, organized crime, world health

Resources

Selected chapters from

- John Baylis, Steve Smith and Patricia Owens (Eds.): *The Globalization of World Politics - An Introduction to International Relations* (7th Edition), 2017
- Karen A. Mingst - Ivan M. Arreguín-Toft: *Essentials of International Relations* (7th Edition), 2016