

INR 3603: Theories of International Relations

Summer A 2025| M, T, W, R, F | 3:30 PM – 4.45 PM

AND 0101 (Anderson Hall)

Instructor: Yunizar Adiputera, PhD Candidate, International Relations

Email: yadiputera@ufl.edu

Office hours: Tuesdays, 1pm to 3pm; 305 Anderson Hall

Description

This course introduces the principal theoretical approaches to the study of international relations (IR). These theories serve as lenses through which we interpret the complex and often chaotic world of international politics. They help us organize information in ways that enable coherent analysis and explanation. Depending on the theoretical lens we use, we may arrive at different interpretations of the same events. Each perspective presents a version of reality—not by inventing it, but by emphasizing different aspects and framing them in distinct ways. While it is possible to read international politics without theory, doing so limits our understanding and can lead to contradictions or incoherence. In this course, we read theory not as an abstract exercise, but as a practical tool for making sense of international politics.

As we study these theories, we will pay close attention to the claims and propositions they make, the assumptions they rest on, the historical and intellectual contexts in which they emerged, and for whom and what purpose they were intended. While some theories may share certain features, many differ significantly in their foundations and implications. We will engage these theories through close readings of six books authored by major scholars of International Relations. To avoid placing undue burden on students and to allow for deeper engagement, not all theories are discussed in this course. The selected theories have been deliberately chosen based on their prominence and influence within the discipline.

Objectives

At the end of the semester, students are expected to be able to:

1. Understand what theory is and explain its roles in the study of International Relations.
2. Describe, compare, and critically evaluate major theoretical approaches in International Relations.
3. Engage thoughtfully and critically with key texts in the IR canon.

4. Analyze contemporary issues in global politics using multiple theoretical frameworks.

Textbook

This course uses the following textbooks:

- Kenneth Waltz, *Man, the State, and War*. [Any edition]
- John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. [Updated edition, published in 2014]
- Robert Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy*. [Any edition]
- Bruce Russett, *Grasping the Democratic Peace*, [Edition: 1994]
- Martha Finnemore, *National Interests in International Society*.
- J. Ann Tickner, *Gender in International Relations: Feminist Perspectives on Achieving Global Security*.

Requirements

Grades will be based on attendance, thought essays, and two exams.

- **Class Attendance:** Attendance and participation in lectures are required and will be monitored. Students are expected to attend regularly, complete the assigned readings on time, and contribute meaningfully to class discussions.
- **Thought essays.** Students will complete two take-home essays of approximately 700–1,000 words each. These assignments are an opportunity to demonstrate understanding of the theories and their implications. Prompts may vary but will typically ask students to analyze specific international political events and compare how different theories interpret them. Late submissions will be penalized.
- **Exams.** There will be two exams covering the course material. Each exam will include a combination of multiple-choice, true/false, and short-answer questions based on the assigned readings and lecture content.

| Assignments | Percent of grade | Important dates |
|-----------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Attendance | 10% | Throughout the course |
| Thought essay 1 | 20% | May 23 rd |
| Thought essay 2 | 20% | June 13 th |
| Exam 1 | 25% | June 2 nd |

| | | |
|--------|------|-----------------------|
| Exam 2 | 25% | June 20 th |
| Total | 100% | |

Grading scale

| Score | Grade | Score | Grade |
|--------|-------|-------|-------|
| 94-100 | A | 77-79 | C+ |
| 90-93 | A- | 74-76 | C |
| 87-89 | B+ | 70-73 | C- |
| 84-86 | B | 67-69 | D+ |
| 80-83 | B- | 64-66 | D |
| | | 60-63 | D- |

Make-up policy

Requirements for make-up exams and assignments in this course are consistent with [university policies](#), which include health reasons (with documentation), religious holidays, official university activities, court-imposed legal obligations, or important conferences. Except for sudden health-related reasons, make-up exams or assignments require prior approval requested at least one week in advance.

Students Requiring Accommodations

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the [Disability Resource Center](#). It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by the Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible

sanctions. Click [here](#) to read the Conduct Code. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor in this class.

Recording lectures/discussion

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. In such a proceeding, the recording may be used as evidence either in support of or against the interests of the person making the recording. All other purposes are prohibited. Recording other students during discussion is prohibited. Students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available [here](#). Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluer.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>

Schedule

| Date | Topic | Required | Recommended |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------|
| <i>Week 1</i> | | | |
| May 12 | Introduction | | |
| May 13 | Realism: introduction and the first image | Waltz, chaps. 1-2 | Waltz, chap. 3 |
| May 14 | Realism: the second image | Waltz, chap. 4 | Waltz, chap. 5 |
| May 15 | Realism: the third image | Waltz, chap. 6 | Waltz, chap. 7 |
| May 16 | Realism: anarchy and the struggle for power Thought essay assignment #1 posted on Canvas at 11.59pm | Mearsheimer, chapters 1-2 | |

| Week 2 | | | |
|---------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| May 19 | Realism: power | Mearsheimer, chap. 3-4 | |
| May 20 | Realism: great power strategies | Mearsheimer, chap. 5 | Mearsheimer, chap. 8 |
| May 21 | Realism: the rise of China | Mearsheimer, chap. 9 | Mearsheimer, chap. 10 |
| May 22 | Liberalism: concepts | Keohane, chapters 1-3 | |
| May 23 | Liberalism: cooperation, international regimes, rational choice Thought essay #1 due at 11.59pm | Keohane, chapters 4-5 | |
| Week 3 | | | |
| May 26 | No class | | |
| May 27 | Liberalism: functional theory, bounded rationality | Keohane, chapters 6-7 | |
| May 28 | Liberalism: hegemonic cooperation in the post war era | Keohane, chapter 8 | |
| May 29 | Liberalism: the incomplete decline of hegemonic regimes | Keohane, chap. 9 | Keohane, chap. 10 |
| May 30 | Liberalism: the value of institutions | Keohane, chapter 11 | |
| Week 4 | | | |
| June 2 | Exam 1 | | |
| June 3 | Democratic Peace 1 | Russett, chapters 1-2 | |
| June 4 | Democratic Peace 2 | Russett, chapters 4 & 6 | |
| June 5 | Constructivism: defining state interests | Finnemore, chapter 1 (1-33) | |
| June 6 | Constructivism: norms and state structure Thought essay assignment #2 posted on Canvas at 11.59pm | Finnemore, chapter 2 (34-68) | |
| Week 5 | | | |
| June 9 | Constructivism: norms and war | Finnemore, chapter 3 (69-88) | |

| | | |
|----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| June 10 | Constructivism: norms and development | Finnemore, chapter 4 (89-127) |
| June 11 | Constructivism: politics in international society | Finnemore, chapter 5 (128-149) |
| June 12 | Feminist perspective: engendered insecurities | Tickner, chapter 1 |
| June 13 | Feminist perspective: gendered perspective on national security Thought essay #2 due at 11.59pm | Tickner, chapter 2 |
| Week 6 | | |
| June 16 | Feminist perspective: gendered perspective on economic security | Tickner, chapter 3 |
| June 17 | Feminist perspective: gendered perspective on ecological security | Tickner, chapter 4 |
| June 18 | Feminist perspective: toward a nongendered perspective on global security | Tickner, chapter 5 |
| June 19 | No class | |
| June 20 | Exam 2 | |