

**IR 201 Fall 2021**  
**International Relations Theory**  
**Sabancı University**

Instructor: Oya Yeğen

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W 9:40 - 10:30

F 9:40 - 11.30 FASS 1089

<https://sabanciuniv.zoom.us/j/94138381044>

Office hours: T& R 17.00-18.00

<https://calendly.com/oyayegen/officehours>

TA: Samet Apaydin

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F 13:40 – 14.30

**Course Description:** This course is an introduction to the concepts, theories, and puzzles in international relations. The goal of this course is to equip students with the tools to understand and critically think about international politics. First part of the course aims to provide the historical and theoretical foundations to analyze and understand international events. Next we will move on to the main puzzles in IR and study the analytic concepts that international relations scholars use to evaluate the working of international politics and to understand how states and other actors behave and interact in world politics. By the end of this course, students will be able to explain the mainstream IR theories and important puzzles of world politics, familiarize themselves with seminal works, and apply the IR toolbox to current developments and issues in international politics. Friday discussion sessions will serve as an opportunity to bring together international relations theory and contemporary events.

**Course Requirements:**

There is one required textbook and other readings are available on SuCourse+.

- Frieden, Jeffrey A., David A. Lake, and Kenneth A. Schultz. 2018. *World Politics: Interests, Interactions, Institutions (Fourth Edition)*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

Available for purchase: <https://digital.wwnorton.com/worldpol4>

For discussion sessions, additional short readings and videos may be shared via Sucourse+ and e-mail. Students are responsible for all assigned readings and must complete them before class each week.

This is an introductory level course; therefore no prior background in international relations is assumed or required. However students are expected to follow developments in the international arena. Please maintain an awareness of current events so we can discuss them in class as examples of the subjects we are covering (we will not be making judgments but use current events to apply the IR toolkit). For these purposes, please follow reputable newspapers such as

those of the New York Times, The Guardian, Washington Post or news agencies such as BBC News, CNN, Al-Jazeera, Reuters and etc.

You may also keep yourself updated by following international relations related blogs and magazines, including Foreign Policy (<https://foreignpolicy.com>), Foreign Affairs (<https://www.foreignaffairs.com>), War on the Rocks (<https://warontherocks.com>), Lawfare Blog (<https://www.lawfareblog.com>), The Duck of Minerva (<http://duckofminerva.com/>) The Monkey Cage (<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage>) and Political Violence at a Glance (<http://politicalviolenceataglance.org/>). I encourage you to share what you have read, with your comments on Sucourse+.

### **Course Assessment:**

Attendance and Participation (20%): 10% of this grade will come from your participation in Wednesday (lectures/simulation) and Friday lectures and 10% from your participation in Friday discussion sessions. You will be evaluated on contributions to class discussions, both in terms of quality and quantity. See course policies for further details.

Midterm Exam (20%): There will be an in-class midterm exam. The midterm will include multiple choice, identification, and short essay questions.

Short Paper (20%): You will be writing a short analytical paper on a (recent) development in international politics or an on-going issue of significance using the IR toolkit we have covered in class. This means that your paper should be informed by the readings and class lectures and use the insights and concepts you have learned during the course. To encourage feedback as you prepare your paper, 5% of this grade will be based on your working-outline and proposal due two weeks before your paper submission date. Further guidelines and possible topics will be shared on SuCourse +.

Simulation Reflection Papers (10%): We will be devoting some of the Wednesday sessions to playing simulation games based on the book “International Relations in Action: A World Politics Simulation” by Brock F. Tesson (2006). You will be writing two reflection papers (max. 2 pages) based on the question provided after the simulation exercise. Dates are to be announced.

Final Exam (30%): The final exam will also be an in-class exam, similar to the format of the midterm. The date will be announced later in the semester.

### **Course Policies:**

For the Fall 2021 semester, the teaching mode will be in-class & online (Hybrid). These will be recorded and shared with all students. Attendance is mandatory and unless you have a valid excuse, absences will result in point deductions from participation grade. Having said that, if you have a foreseeable valid reason for absences, you should tell me at the beginning of the semester so that we can find alternative ways to make up for it.

Discussion sessions are intended to advance students’ ability to bring together international relations theory and contemporary developments in world affairs. Therefore it is important that students attend and use synchronous Zoom discussion hour on Friday to prepare for their analytical papers and exams in order to practice how to apply IR theory to international events and processes. While we prefer participation either in class or online during class hours, when students are unable to log on to Friday sessions because of health or internet connection issue, you can make up by responding to discussion questions posted for that week or by posing your

own questions in the course forum. Excused absences for discussion hours must be communicated to our TA Samet Apaydin [samet.apaydin@sabanciuniv.edu](mailto:samet.apaydin@sabanciuniv.edu).

There is not going to be an extension or make up unless truly extenuating circumstances prevent the student from completing the work on time. In case you do encounter problems, please let me know as early as you can.

Please always feel free to e-mail me at any time. I will do my best to respond to your emails within 24 hours. If you have a matter that requires extended discussion, please meet me during office hours (over Zoom). You can email me to set up a time at the designated office hours (**Tuesdays and Thursdays between 5.00-6.00**) or another convenient time that works for both of us.

I will keep you updated about the course, including additional short readings through e-mail and communicate any changes to the syllabus or deadlines through Sucourse+ announcement board.

Please be respectful of your instructors (including our TA) and your fellow classmates during class discussions. Please be mindful of zoom etiquette, meaning mute yourself if you are not speaking and do not interrupt one another when speaking.

Electronic recordings of course materials are for personal use only, do not share them outside of the class.

It is imperative that students follow the standards and provisions set by Sabanci University. Students' cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences will not be tolerated. Cases of academic misconduct will be reported. Cheating and plagiarism will also result in failing that exam/assessment. If you have any questions about what constitutes an academic offense, you can ask the instructor or TA in advance.

## **Course Schedule:**

### **Week 1 – Course Introduction (September 29, October 1)**

- Syllabus
- Snyder, Jack. 2004. "One World, Rival Theories" *Foreign Policy*, no. 145, pp. 52-62. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2009/10/26/one-world-rival-theories/>
- Ikenberry, John. 2020. "The Next Liberal Order", *Foreign Affairs*, July/August. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2020-06-09/next-liberal-order>
- Discussion: Amelia Hoover Green, "How to Read Political Science: A Guide in Four Steps", 2013 <https://www.ameliahoovergreen.com/uploads/9/3/0/9/93091546/howtoread.pdf>

### **Week 2 – Introduction to IR: concepts, levels and actors. (October 6, October 8)**

- Nye Jr., Joseph S. and David Welch. 2017. *Understanding Global Conflict and Cooperation*, "Key Concepts" and "Levels of Analysis", pp. 40-65.
- Caporaso, James. 2000. "Changes in the Westphalian order: Territory, Public authority and Sovereignty" *International Studies Review*, Vol.2, no. 2, pp. 1-28, focus on pp. 1-15.
- Discussion: Stephen Walt "How to Get a B.A. in International Relations in 5 Minutes", *Foreign Policy* May 19, 2014 and Laura Sjoberg "'Mansplaining' International Relations?:"

What Walt Misses” May 21, 2014.

### **Week 3 – The evolution of the modern world system (October 13, October 15)**

- FLS, pp. 2-41.
- Carvalho et al. 2011. “The Big Bangs of IR: The Myths That Your Teachers Still Tell You about 1648 and 1919” *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, Vol. 39 issue 3, pp. 735–758.
- Discussion: Musgrave, Paul. 2019. “IR Theory and ‘Game of Thrones’ Are Both Fantasies” *Foreign Policy*, May 23. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/05/23/ir-theory-and-game-of-thrones-are-both-fantasies/>

### **Week 4 - Science of International relations: What is a theory? Is there a theory of international relations? Grand Theories of IR (October 20, October 22)**

- “Evaluating Arguments about International Politics”, in Bruce Bueno de Mesquita. 2013. *Principles of International Politics*.
- Drezner, Daniel W.. 2015. *Theories of International Politics and Zombies*, Princeton University Press, pp. 23-50.
- Mearsheimer, John. 2013. “Structural Realism”, in Dunne et. al. *International Relations Theories: Discipline and Diversity*, pp. 77-93.
- Discussion: Graham Allison. 2017. “The Thucydides Trap”, *Foreign Policy*, June 9. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2017/06/09/the-thucydides-trap/>

### **Week 5 – Grand Theories of IR and the Great Debates (October 27)**

- Sterling Folker, Jennifer. 2013. “Neoliberalism”, in Dunne et. al. *International Relations Theories: Discipline and Diversity*, pp. 114-131.
- Hopf, Ted. 1998. “The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory,” *International Security*, Vol. 23, No. 1, pp. 171-181.
- Sjoberg, Laura and J. Ann Tickner “Feminist Perspectives on International Relations”, *The Sage Handbook of International Relations*, 2013.
- Discussion: Beauchamp, Zack. 2018. “What Black Panther can teach us about international relations”, *Vox*, February 27, <https://www.vox.com/culture/2018/2/27/17029730/black-panther-marvel-killmonger-ir>

### **Week 6 – Understanding Interests, Interactions, and Institutions (November 3, November 5)**

- FLS, pp. 42-87.
- Discussion: Fazal, Tanisha and Paul Poast. 2019. “War is Not Over, What the Optimists Get Wrong About Conflict”, *Foreign Affairs*, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2019-10-15/war-not-over>

### **Week 7 – The Puzzle of War (November 10, November 12)**

- FLS, pp. 88- 137
- Fearon, James D. “Rationalist Explanations for War.” *International Organization* 49 (Summer 1995): 379–414.
- Discussion: Lake, David A. “Two Cheers for Bargaining Theory: Assessing Rationalist Explanations of the Iraq War” *International Security*, Vol. 35, No. 3 (Winter 2010/11), pp. 7–52.

### **Week 8 – Domestic politics and War (November 17, November 19)**

- FLS, pp. 138-183
- Tomz, Michael. 2007. “Domestic Audience Costs in International Relations: An Experimental Approach.” *International Organization* 61: 821–840.
- Discussion: Boris Barkanov. 2014. “How Putin’s domestic audience explains Russia’s behavior,” *Washington Post* March 13. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2014/03/13/how-putins-domestic-audience-explains-russias-behavior/>
- Midterm Exam on November 19.

### **Week 9 – International Institutions (November 24, November 26)**

- FLS, pp. 184-233
- Lundgren, Magnus. 2016. “Conflict management capabilities of peace-brokering international organizations, 1945–2010: A new dataset”. *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, Vol. 33(2) 198–223
- Discussion: Mearsheimer, John J. 2014. “Why the Ukraine Crisis Is the West's Fault: The Liberal Delusions That Provoked Putin” *Foreign Affairs* , Vol. 93, No. 5 pp. 77-89

### **Week 10- International Trade (December 1, December 3)**

- FLS, pp. 294- 339
- Listen: “Is the WTO making it harder to end the pandemic?” *Trade Talks*, February 25, 2021.
- Discussion: Rodrik, Dani. 2019. “Globalization’s Wrong Turn and How it Hurt America,” *Foreign Affairs*, July/August. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2019-06-11/globalizations-wrong-turn>

### **Week 11 - International Financial and Monetary Relations (December 8, December 10)**

- FLS, pp. 346-423
- Farrell, Henry and Abraham L. Newman. 2019. “Weaponized Interdependence Henry Farrell and Abraham L. Newman How Global Economic Networks Shape State Coercion” *International Security*, Vol. 44, No. 1, pp. 42–79,

- Discussion: Tooze, Adam. 2021. “The Rise and Fall and Rise (and Fall) of the U.S. Financial Empire The dollar is dead. Long live the dollar.” Foreign Affairs. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/01/15/rise-fall-united-states-financial-empire-dollar-global-currency/>
- **Short paper outline and proposals** are due on December 10.

### **Week 12 – International Law and Norms (December 15, December 17)**

- FLS, pp. 462-497
- Hathaway, Oona and Alasdair Phillips-Robins “COVID-19 and International Law Series: WHO’s Pandemic Response and the International Health Regulations”. <https://www.justsecurity.org/73753/covid-19-and-international-law-series-whos-pandemic-response-and-the-international-health-regulations/>
- Discussion: Wheeler, Tarah. 2018. “In Cyberwar, There are No Rules Why the world desperately needs digital Geneva Conventions,” <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/09/12/in-cyberwar-there-are-no-rules-cybersecurity-war-defense/>

### **Week 13 – Human Rights (December 22 and December 24)**

- FLS, pp. 498-539.
- Molu, Benan. 2020. The “EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime” and Turkey”. Heinrich Böll Stiftung <https://tr.boell.org/en/node/21533>
- Discussion: NYT Debate “Have Human Rights Treaties Failed” <https://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2014/12/28/have-human-rights-treaties-failed>
- **Short Paper** due on December 24.

### **Week 14 -- The Future of IR (December 29)**

- Dani Rodrik and Stephen Walt. May 2021. “How to Construct a New Global Order” Harvard Kennedy School of Government, Faculty Research Working Paper Series
- No discussion but Recommended Reading: Bhambdra et. al. 2020. “Why Is Mainstream International Relations Blind to Racism?,” Foreign Policy, July 3. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/07/03/why-is-mainstream-international-relations-ir-blind-to-racism-colonialism/>