

IR 201 Fall 2023
International Relations Theory
Sabancı University

Instructor: Oya Yeğen

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Wednesday 9:40-11:30

Thursday 11:40-12:30

FENS L061 & FASS 1011

TA: Samet Apaydin

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Friday 14:40 – 15.30 2031

Office hours: Thursday 13:30-15:00 or by appointment

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. This will allow us to also study middle-range theories in IR. By the end of this course, students will be able to discuss and critique the mainstream IR theories, think analytically about the 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. 2018/2021. World Politics: Interests, Interactions, Institutions (Fourth/Fifth 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 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. You are highly encouraged to talk with me or the TA about your topic/question. 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 +.

UNSC Simulation (15%): We will be devoting two (one-hour) sessions to UNSC Simulations. These are going to be formal simulations on topics of contemporary international relations. Each one of you will work as country representative and work with your fellow representatives to 1. (Before the session) prepare the country position statement, 2. (during the UNSC meeting) present your position and debate, 3. (at the end) prepare a draft resolution.

- 5% country position statement

- 10% simulation performance

Final Exam (25%): 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.

Grading Scale:

A 93-100	B+ 87-89	B- 80-82	C 73-76	D+ 63-69	F <50
A- 90-92	B 83-86	C+ 77-79	C- 70-72	D 50-62	

Course Policies:

Attendance is mandatory and unless you have a valid excuse, absences will result in point deductions from participation grade.

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.

Discussion sessions are intended to advance students' ability to bring together international relations theory and contemporary developments in world affairs. Therefore it is mandatory that students attend the 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 and require participation during class hours, you can make up by engaging with the discussion online by responding to questions posted or by posing your own questions in the SUcourse+ course discussion forum. Excused absences for discussion hours must be communicated to our TA Samet Apaydin samet.apaydin@sabanciuniv.edu.

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. You can email me to set up a time at the designated office hours 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.

It is imperative that students follow the standards and provisions set by Sabancı 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.

Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify the main actors of international relations and understand their interests
- Discuss and critique the mainstream IR theories
- Evaluate how different actors interact and under what conditions they cooperate
- Discuss the explanatory power different grand theories and mid-level theories
- Think analytically about the important puzzles of world politics among different issue areas
- Apply theories to explain real world events

Course Schedule:

Week 1 – Course Introduction (October 4, October 5)

- Syllabus
- Ikenberry, John. 2020. “The Next Liberal Order”, *Foreign Affairs*, July/August. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2020-06-09/next-liberal-order>
- Acharya, Amitav. 2017. “After Liberal Hegemony: The Advent of a Multiplex World Order”. *Ethics & International Affairs*, Volume 31, Issue 3, pp. 271 - 285
- 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 – The evolution of the modern world system: key concepts, levels and actors. (October 11, October 12)

- 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.
- Buzan, Barry and Lawson, George. 2013 “The Global Transformation: The Nineteenth Century and the Making of Modern International Relations” *International Studies Quarterly* Vol. 57, pp. 620–634
- 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 3 – The evolution of the modern world system: key concepts, levels and actors. (October 18, October 19)

- 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 4 - What is theory? Is there a theory of international relations? Grand Theories of IR (October 25, October 26)

- Snyder, Jack. 2004. “One World, Rival Theories” *Foreign Policy*, no. 145, pp. 52-62. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2009/10/26/one-world-rival-theories/>

- 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/> and Paul Poast. 2022. "A World of Power and Fear: What Critics of Realism Get Wrong". *Foreign Affairs*. June 15. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/ukraine/2022-06-15/world-power-and-fear>

Week 5 – Grand Theories of IR, the Great Debates (November 1, November 2)

- 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. 2013. "Feminist Perspectives on International Relations", *The Sage Handbook of International Relations*.
- 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>
- 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/>

Week 6 – Understanding Interests, Interactions, and Institutions (November 8, November 9)

- "Evaluating Arguments about International Politics", in Bruce Bueno de Mesquita. 2013. *Principles of International Politics*.
- FLS, pp. 42-87.
- Lake, David A. 2013. "Theory is dead, long live theory: The end of the Great Debates and the rise of eclecticism in International Relations". *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 19, pp. 567-587.
- Discussion: Mitchell, Sara McLaughlin. 2018. "Could the new fighting between Russia and Ukraine escalate into all-out war?" *Washington Post*, December 5. and 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
- **Midterm Exam**

Week 7 – The Puzzle of War (November 15, November 16)

- FLS, pp. 88- 137

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

Week 8 – Domestic politics and War (November 22, November 23)

- FLS, pp. 138-183
- Tomz, Michael. 2007. “Domestic Audience Costs in International Relations: An Experimental Approach.” *International Organization* 61: 821–840
- Skim the following:
 - Gourevitch, Peter. 1978. “The second image reversed: the international sources of domestic politics” *International Organization* , Volume 32 , Issue 4 , pp. 881 – 912.
 - Putnam, Robert. 1988. “Diplomacy and domestic politics: the logic of two-level games”. *International Organization*, Volume 42 , Issue 3, pp. 427 - 460
- 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/>

Week 9 – International Institutions (November 29, November 30)

- FLS, pp. 184-233
- Bosco, David. 2014. “Assessing the UN Security Council: A Concert Perspective,” *Global Governance*, Vol. 20, No. 4, pp. 545-561
- Discussion: Patrick, S. et. al. 2023 “UN Security Council Reform: What the World Thinks”, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, June 28.
https://carnegieendowment.org/2023/06/28/un-security-council-reform-what-world-thinks-pub-90032?utm_source=substack&utm_medium=email

Week 10- International Trade (December 6, December 7)

- FLS, pp. 294- 339
- Rodrik, Dani. 2018. “What Do Trade Agreements Really Do?” *Journal of Economic Perspectives*. Vol.32, No. 2, pp. 73–90.
- Discussion: Mulder, Nicholas. 2022. “The Sanctions Weapon”, *IMF Finance and Development*, pp. 20-23.
<https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/fandd/issues/2022/06/the-sanctions-weapon-mulder> and 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 13, December 14)

- FLS, pp. 346-423
- Farrell, Henry and Abraham L. Newman. 2019. “Weaponized Interdependence: 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 16.

Week 12 – International Law and Norms (December 20, December 21)

- FLS, pp. 462-497
- **Simulation on Thursday**
- Discussion: Hathaway, Oona. 2022. International Law Goes to War in Ukraine: The Legal Pushback to Russia’s Invasion. *Foreign Affairs*. March 22 <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/ukraine/2022-03-15/international-law-goes-war-ukraine>

Week 13 – Human Rights (December 27 and December 28)

- FLS, pp. 498-539.
- Discussion: NYT Debate “Have Human Rights Treaties Failed” <https://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2014/12/28/have-human-rights-treaties-failed>
- **Simulation on Thursday**
- **Short Paper** due on December 30.

Week 14 - The Future of IR (January 3, January 4)

- FLS, pp. 584-635.
- Rodrik, Dani and Stephen Walt. May 2021. “How to Construct a New Global Order” Harvard Kennedy School of Government, Faculty Research Working Paper Series.
- Fazal, Tanisha. 2022. The Return of Conquest? Why the Future of Global Order Hinges on Ukraine. *Foreign Affairs*, May/Jun2022, Vol. 101, Issue 1. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/ukraine/2022-04-06/ukraine-russia-war-return-conquest>
- Discussion: Poast, Paul 2023. The Signs of the Multipolar World Are All Around Us, *World Politics Review*, May 23. <https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/multipolarity-us-vs-china-russia-superpower-hegemony/>