COURSE OVERVIEW

This course will provide students with an overview of the major analytic traditions within international relations (IR). We will assess dominant paradigms (liberalism, realism, constructivism) as well as their competitors (post-modern, feminist and critical theories). In addition to exploring the social- and meta-theoretic foundations of the different approaches, we will also assess their ability to explain and understand the world around us. Is their main focus and value added empirical? Theoretical? Methodological? Normative? Critical? What are the cutting-edge issues and challenges for the various theoretical schools?

Objectives

The course has three goals. First, it will stress the development of critical thinking abilities -- in particular, by helping students rigorously assess the arguments made by our authors. Second, it will survey the IR literature and will do so from multiple theoretical and disciplinary perspectives. Third, we will consider several cutting-edge challenges for students of international politics, including the possibility of linking different analytic approaches (so-called ‘bridge building’) and the domestic political bases of state behavior.

Specific course objectives include the following.

- Basic understanding of the relation among meta-theory, social theory, substantive theory, method and research
- Basic understanding of the main schools of thought in international relations - Their historical development and current applications
- Basic understanding of the central challenges for contemporary international studies
- Development of critical reading and thinking abilities
- Development of analytic writing skills

Teaching Schedule & Method

There will be 13 class sessions, each lasting 3 hours and 50 minutes. The first class is Tuesday, 8 September 2009, and the last is Thursday, 26 November 2009. This is primarily a lecture course. However, most weeks, we will set aside 20-30 minutes for discussion and debate centered on a particular assigned reading; students must come ready to participate.

Requirements

There are three requirements.

- In-Class Mid-Term Exam - Tuesday, 13 October. This will consist of both short answer and essay questions.
• Take-Home Final Exam – Distributed on Thursday, 26 November, and due one week later, Thursday, 3 December by 1600. It will be an essay exam, with an expected length of 12-15 pages.
• Participation - In discussion/debate sessions.

Final course grades will be calculated as follows: Participation – 10%; Mid-Term Exam – 30%; Take-Home Final Exam – 60%.

Reading

The following books (both paperback) should be purchased at the SFU Book Store.


All other required reading will be available via SFU’s Custom Courseware.

Course reading averages 105 pages per lecture. Students are expected to have done the reading for any given week prior to lecture.

Recommended Prerequisites

Undergraduate course work in political science, international relations or international studies is recommended. Prior upper division courses in IR theory or international studies would be a distinct plus.

**PLAN-OF-LECTURES/COURSE ORGANIZATION**

**Part I: What Kind of Theory and What Kind of Epistemology?**

*September 8 - Lecture*: Introduction; IR as Discipline – American, Global or European?; Theory – Which Kind(s) and to What Purpose(s)?

Required: Schmidt (2002); Wæver (1998); Waltz (1986); Cox (1986); George (1974)
Discussion: Cox
Recommended: Singer (1961); Smith (2000); Hurrell (2004)

*September 15 - Lecture*: Epistemologies – Positivist, Interpretative and Critical

Required: Jackson and Sørensen (2003; chapters 8-9); Marsh and Furlong (2002); Wight (2002); Van Evera (1997; chapters 1-2); Smith (1996)
Discussion: Wight
Recommended: Kratochwil and Ruggie (1986); Booth, Smith, Zalewski (1996); Monroe (2005); Johnson (2006)
Part II: Theoretical Schools and Traditions

**September 22 - Lecture: Rationalism (I) – Realism in its Various Guises**

Required: Snidal (2002); Mearsheimer (2001; chapter 2); Brooks (1997); Legro and Moravcsik (1999)

Discussion: Mearsheimer


**September 29 - Lecture: Rationalism (II) – Neoliberal Institutionalism**

Required: Keohane (1984; chapters 1, 6); Keohane and Martin (1995); Martin and Simmons (1998)

Discussion: Keohane and Martin

Recommended: Simmons (1993); Wallander (1999); Martin and Simmons (2002); Kelley (2004)

**October 6 - Lecture: Rationalism (III) – Liberalism**

Required: Doyle (1986); Matthew and Zacher (1995); Moravcsik (1997)

Discussion: Doyle

Recommended: Moravcsik (2000)

**October 13 - Mid-Term Exam**

**October 20 - Lecture: Constructivism (I) – Conventional and Modernist**

Required: Finnemore (1996; chapter 1); Adler (2002); Checkel (2007)

Discussion: Finnemore

Recommended: Keck and Sikkink (1998); Finnemore and Sikkink (1998); Adler and Barnett (1998); Moravcsik (1999); Burgos (2004); Klotz and Lynch (2007); Klotz (2008)

**October 27 - Lecture: Constructivism (II) – Interpretative and Discourse Theoretic**

Required: Bevir and Rhodes (2002); Neufield (1993); Guzzini (2000); Milliken (1999); Hopf (2002; chapter 1); Price (1995)

Discussion: Price

Recommended: Hopf (2002; chapter 2); “Symposium: Interpretivism” (2003); Callahan (2003); de Volo and Schatz (2004); “Symposium: Discourse and Content Analysis” (2004); Hansen (2006)

**November 3 - Lecture: Constructivism (III) – Critical, Feminist and Post-Modern**

Required: Price and Reus-Smit (1998); Tickner (2002); Doty (1993); Zehfuss (2002; chapters 1-2)

Discussion: Zehfuss

Recommended: Sylvester (1996); Laffey and Weldes (1997)
Part III: Cutting Edge Issues and Challenges

November 10 - Lecture: War, Gender and International Politics
Required: “Symposium: War and Gender” (2003); Forum (2003); Carpenter (2003)
Discussion: Symposium
Recommended: Goldstein (2001); Caprioli (2004)

November 17 - Lecture: Beyond ‘Isms’ in IR and Towards Bridge Building?
Required: Risse, Ropp, Sikkink (1999; chapter 1); Fearon and Wendt (2002); Caporaso, Checkel and Jupille (2003); Price (2008); Zehfuss (2002; chapter 6)
Discussion: Price
Recommended: March and Olsen (1998); Checkel and Moravcsik (2001); Shain and Barth (2003); Mueller (2004); Lewis (2005)

November 24 - Lecture: Taking ‘Domestic Politics’ Seriously
Required: Milner (1992); Gourevitch (2002); Hopf (2002; Chapter 6)
Discussion: Milner
Recommended: Cortell and Davis (1996); Milner (1998); Cortell and Davis (2000); Acharya and Johnston (2007)


READING

Required Reading – Book Chapters


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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Publisher and Edition</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>George, Alexander</td>
<td>“Theory for Policy in International Relations.”</td>
<td>In Alexander George.</td>
<td>26 pages</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Deterrence in American Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice.</em> NY: Columbia University Press - Appendix</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gourevitch, Peter</td>
<td>“Domestic Politics and International Relations.”</td>
<td>In Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse, Beth Simmons, Editors.</td>
<td>19 pages</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Handbook of International Relations.</em> London: Sage Publications - Chapter 16</td>
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<td>Chapter 16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keohane, Robert</td>
<td><em>After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy.</em> Princeton: Princeton University Press – Chapters 1, 6</td>
<td></td>
<td>37 pages</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marsh, David and Paul Furlong</td>
<td>“A Skin not a Sweater: Ontology and Epistemology in Political Science.”</td>
<td>In David Marsh and Gerry Stoker, Editors.</td>
<td>25 pages</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Theory and Methods in Political Science.</em> Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan – Pages 17-41</td>
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<tr>
<td>Matthew, Richard and Mark Zacher</td>
<td>“Liberal International Theory: Common Threads, Divergent Strands.”</td>
<td>In Charles Kegley, Editor.</td>
<td>43 pages</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Controversies in International Relations Theory: Realism and the Neoliberal Challenge.</em> NY: St. Martin’s Press – Chapter 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mearsheimer, John</td>
<td><em>The Tragedy of Great Power Politics.</em> NY: W.W. Norton – Chapter 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>26 pages</td>
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<tr>
<td>Schmidt, Brian.</td>
<td>“On the History and Historiography of International Relations.”</td>
<td>In Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse, Beth Simmons, Editors.</td>
<td>19 pages</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Handbook of International Relations.</em> London: Sage Publications - Chapter 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Smith, Steve.</td>
<td>“Positivism and Beyond.”</td>
<td>In Ken Booth, Steve Smith and Marysia Zalewski, Editors.</td>
<td>36 pages</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>International Theory: Positivism and Beyond.</em> Cambridge: Cambridge University Press – Chapter 1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Snidal, Duncan.</td>
<td>“Rational Choice and International Relations.”</td>
<td>In Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse, Beth Simmons, Editors.</td>
<td>22 pages</td>
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<td><em>Handbook of International Relations.</em> London: Sage Publications - Chapter 4</td>
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<td>Tickner, J. Ann.</td>
<td>“Feminist Perspectives on International Relations.”</td>
<td>In Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse, Beth Simmons, Editors.</td>
<td>16 pages</td>
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<td><em>Handbook of International Relations.</em> London: Sage Publications - Chapter 14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Waltz, Kenneth.</td>
<td>“Laws and Theories.”</td>
<td>In Robert Keohane, Editor.</td>
<td>19 pages</td>
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<td><em>Neorealism and Its Critics.</em> NY: Columbia University Press – Chapter 2</td>
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<td>Wight, Colin.</td>
<td>Philosophy of Science and International Relations.”</td>
<td>In Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse, Beth Simmons, Editors.</td>
<td>29 pages</td>
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<td><em>Handbook of International Relations.</em> London: Sage Publications - Chapter 2</td>
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Zehfuss, Maja. 2002. *Constructivism in International Relations: The Politics of Reality.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press – Chapters 1, 2, 6 75 pages

**Required Reading - Articles**


Guzzini, Stefano. 2000. “A Reconstruction of Constructivism in International Relations.” *European Journal of International Relations* 6 (June) 35 pages


**Recommended Reading - Books**


**Recommended Reading - Articles**


