

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Course code	<i>POL104</i>
Course name	<i>International Relations</i>
Type of the course	<i>Main</i>
Study Level	<i>1st</i>
Department	<i>Bachelor studies</i>
Year of study	<i>2nd</i>
Semester	<i>Fall</i>
ECTS credits	<i>6 credits: 24 hours lectures; 24 hours of seminars; 112 hours of individual work; 2 hours of consultation</i>
Study form	<i>Full-time</i>
Course prerequisites	<i>Introduction to Politics</i>
Language of Instruction	<i>English</i>
Coordinating lecturer	<i>Dr. Jonathan Boyd jonathan.boyd@faculty.ism.it</i>

Aim of the Course

The course will introduce students to the academic study of International Relations (IR), and give an overview of the major concepts, traditional theories and pressing issues in contemporary global politics. The primary aims of the course are to provide students with (i) a perspective of international relations as being predominately driven by individually-motivated strategies that shape war, peace, and world order; (ii) an understanding of the strategic calculations underlying the actions of the leaders of nations, international organisations and non-governmental interest groups; and (iii) the tools to understand empirical regularities by using strategic theory approaches.

Subject learning outcomes

Subject Learning Outcome		Study methods	Assessment methods
SLO1	Compare and contrast the primary concepts and traditional theoretical approaches to the study of international politics.	Lectures, seminars, individual study	Examinations, seminar presentations.
SLO2	Explain the the Strategic Perspective's response to traditional theories of IR.	Lectures, seminars, individual study	Examinations, seminar presentations.
SLO2	Analyse case studies of international relations and foreign policies according to the methods of strategic theory, selectorate theory, and game theory.	Lectures, seminars, individual study	Examinations, seminar presentations.
SLO3	Model causes of war, brinkmanship, the security dilemma, bargaining, deterrence and compellence processes.	Lectures, seminars, individual study	Examinations, seminar presentations.
SLO4	Explain the rationale behind the formation of alliances; apply the concept of alliance portfolio to the analysis of the preferences of national leaders.	Lectures, seminars, individual study	Examinations, seminar presentations.
SLO5	Analyse the logic of terrorism and attendant issues of credibility.	Lectures, seminars, individual study	Examinations, seminar presentations.
SLO6	Assess the empirical evidence supporting democratic peace theory.	Lectures, seminars, individual study	Examinations, seminar presentations.
SLO7	Explain the purposes and formations of several international organisations and assess the extent to which common problems constrain their effectiveness and level of cooperation.	Lectures, seminars, individual study	Examinations, seminar presentations.
SLO8	Analyse climate change agreements as collective action problems.	Lectures, seminars, individual study	Examinations, seminar presentations.

SLO9	Critically assess the constructivist and strategic approaches to the formation of international law, norms and human rights.	Lectures, seminars, individual study	Examinations, seminar presentations.
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Quality issues

The lecturer assures a variety of teaching methods as well as modes of self-assessment. The feedback from students will always be highly valued and appreciated.

Cheating issues

The teaching and testing methods are chosen taking into account the purpose of the minimisation of cheating opportunities. The ISM regulations on academic ethics are fully applied in the course.

Topics:

Week	Topic	Contact		Readings
		Lecture	Seminar	
1	Introduction to course and topics	2		
	The evolution of the state system		2	GWP: Part 2 (pp. 39-96)
	Part 1: IR Theories			
2	Realism	2	2	GWP: Chap 8
3	Liberalism	2	2	GWP: Chap 6
4	Constructivism	2	2	GWP: Chap 12
5	Strategic perspective I: What states want	2	2	Kydd (2015)
6	Strategic perspective 2: Strategic settings			Kydd (2015)
	Part 2: War and Conflict			
7	Nature and causes of war	2	2	GWP: Chap 14; Kydd (2015)
8	Terrorism	2	2	GWP: Chap 28; Kydd (2015)
9	Weapons of mass destruction	2	2	GWP: Chap 29; Kydd (2015)
	Part 3: Peace, Governance and World Order			
10	International law & organisations	2	2	GWP: Chaps 19 & 20; Kydd (2015)
11	Environmental issues	2	2	GWP: Chap 24; Kydd (2015)
12	International ethics & human rights	2	2	GWP: 13 & 31; Kydd (2015)
	Final Examination			

Individual work and assessment:

TYPE	TOPICS	TOTAL HOURS	EVALUATION %
Midterm Exam	1 -- 6	28	25
Final Exam	7 -- 12	34	30
Assignment 1	1 -- 12	15	15
Assignment 2	1 – 12	15	15
Assignment 3	1 – 12	20	15
TOTAL		112	100

Course assignments and evaluation:

1. Midterm exam

The midterm will be a closed-book test, including multiple choice questions, open questions, and problem solving. It will count towards 25% of the final grade. The midterm test will be based on topics 1-6.

2. Assignments

Details of the assignments will be provided during the first week of the course. The first two assignments (film assignment and flipped-classroom assignment) will be worth 15% each of the course grade; the 'strategic perspective' exercise will be worth 20% of the course grade.

3. Final exam

The final exam will count towards 30% of the final grade. It will be a closed-book test, including multiple choice questions, open questions and problem solving. It will test conceptual and analytical skills acquired in the course of the semester. The exam will be based on topics 5-12.

In the case of a negative final grade, students are allowed a retake exam. It will cover all course material. The weight of a retake is 55%. The assignments cannot be re-done, but their evaluations (if positive) will not be annulled.

Main readings:

TBA : In the course of the semester students will receive a packet of materials via e-Learning, containing both the required as well as the supplementary readings.