

<b>Identification</b>	<b>Subject (code, title, credits)</b>	PSIR351, Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy 6 ECTS/15 weeks
	<b>Department</b>	Political Science and Philosophy
	<b>Level</b>	Undergraduate
	<b>Term</b>	Spring 2026
	<b>Instructor</b>	Aygül İsmayılova
	<b>E-mail</b>	<a href="mailto:aygul.ismayilova@khazar.org">aygul.ismayilova@khazar.org</a>
	<b>Phone:</b>	Email only
	<b>Classroom/hours</b>	41 Mehseti str. (Neftchilar campus)
	<b>Office hours</b>	By appointment
<b>Prerequisites</b>	English Language Skills	
<b>Language</b>	English	
<b>Compulsory/Elective</b>	Compulsory	
<b>Required textbooks and course materials</b>	<p><b>Core readings:</b>  Georg Sørensen, Jørgen Møller, Robert Jackson, Introduction to International Relations. Theories and Approaches, Oxford University Press (2022)  Svante E. Cornell. Azerbaijan Since Independence, 2011  Azərbaycan Respublikasının Xarici Siyasətinin Əsas İstiqamətləri 1991-2016, Strateji Araşdırmalar Mərkəzi, 2017  Svante E. Cornell, Azerbaijan since Independence (New York: M.E.Sharpe, 2011) Alexandros Peterson,  Azerbaijan in Global Politics: Grafting Foreign Policy. Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy, 2009. Steve Smith, Amelia Hadfield and Tim Dunne (eds.),  Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases (3rd ed). New York: Oxford University Press, 2017.</p>	
<b>Course outline</b>	This course examines the foundations, evolution, and strategic priorities of the Republic of Azerbaijan's foreign policy since its independence in 1991. It covers Azerbaijan's relations with major powers, neighboring states, and international organizations, with a specific focus on energy diplomacy, the restoration of territorial integrity, and the post-conflict realities in the South Caucasus.	
<b>Course objectives</b>	The primary objective of this course is to provide students with a deep, theoretical, and practical understanding of Azerbaijan's foreign policy evolution. Specifically, the course aims to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Theoretical Mastery:</b> Familiarize students with the evolution of International Relations (IR) theories as a response to historical events, enabling them to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of different analytical frameworks.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Analytical Application:</b> Equip students with the tools to analyze international political, economic, social, and environmental occurrences from competing perspectives.</li> <li>• <b>Policy Evaluation:</b> Examine the foundations and strategic priorities of Azerbaijan's foreign policy since 1991, with a focus on how national interests and sovereignty are maintained in a "Multi-vector" framework.</li> <li>• <b>Thematic Specialization:</b> Analyze specific pillars of national strategy, including energy diplomacy ("Contract of the Century"), territorial integrity (the 44-day war), and relations with global power centers.</li> <li>• <b>Critical Understanding of Regionalism:</b> Evaluate the role of relations with neighborhood countries and Great Powers</li> </ul>		
<b>Learning outcomes</b>	Upon successful completion of the course students will be able to have knowledge about those theories and will be able to independently use those frameworks to have better understanding of international relations.		
<b>Evaluation</b>	<b>Methods</b>	<b>Date/deadlines</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
	<b>Midterm evaluation</b>	To be determined by the Dean's Office	30
	<b>Class attendance</b>		5
	<b>Active participation at the seminars</b>	Every week we will have oral quiz on the week's topic with random students. So, everyone should be prepared.	10
	<b>Essay and Presentation</b>		15
	<b>Final exam</b>	To be determined by the Dean's Office	40
	<b>Total</b>		100
<b>Policy</b>	<p><b>You are expected to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- attend classes on a regular basis as the classes are conducted in a combined lecture/seminar format where students should <u>play an active part</u>.</li> <li>- read the assigned and suggested readings before you come to class</li> <li>- engage actively in classroom discussions</li> <li>- offer thoughtful and informed classroom presentations and written work</li> <li>- submit all your assignments on time</li> <li>- follow assignments closely and carefully.</li> </ul> <p><b>Class attendance:</b></p> <p>Students are required to comply with the attendance policy of Khazar University. Full-time students are expected to attend all classes unless they are sick or have the permission of the instructor (<i>approved absence</i>). A student must submit an absence request in anticipation of an absence from the course. In case he/she fails to do so, his absence will be considered unapproved. Specifically, to be eligible for taking exams, students must not</p>		

miss more than 20% of class hours (*unapproved absences*). Otherwise, the student can take the exam only with the approval of the School Dean. Continuing unapproved absences or lack of participation may lead to withdrawal from the course.

**Academic misconduct**

Academic honesty plays an essential part in maintaining the integrity of Khazar University. Students are expected to recognize and uphold high standards of intellectual and academic integrity. The following acts are examples of academic dishonesty, therefore are strictly forbidden and will, if proven, be penalized:

- plagiarism,
- cheating,
- unauthorized collaboration,
- falsification,
- multiple submissions.

*On plagiarism:*

Plagiarism is unethical and an offence under the University regulations. Please familiarize yourself with the regulations relating to plagiarism and cheating in examinations.

Plagiarism is copying other people's work without proper attribution. The students committing plagiarism and the students providing materials for plagiarizing will automatically receive a zero (0) for the assignment. Students must always indicate that they used someone else's words and ideas if they have done so, by using quotation marks and mentioning the source in the text or a footnote. A bibliography must also follow after the end of your essays.

**Rules of Professional Conduct**

The students shall behave in the way to create favorable academic and professional environment during the class hours. Unauthorized discussions and unethical behavior are strictly prohibited. Classroom behavior that seriously interferes with either (a) the instructor's ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to benefit from the course program will not be tolerated. When a student's behavior in a class is so seriously disruptive as to compel immediate action, the instructor has the authority to remove a student from the class on an interim basis, pending an informal hearing on the behavior.

**Tentative Schedule**

<b>Date/Day</b> (subject to change if necessary, on holidays)	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Readings</b>
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<b>Week 1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	No reading material assigned but <b><u>get familiar with the Syllabus.</u></b>
<b>Week 2</b>	<b>Foreign Policy: A Concept</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Robert Jackson, Georg Sørensen, Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches [7 ed.] Oxford University Press (2019), Chapter 10: Foreign Policy Recommended</li> <li>• Stephen M. Walt, “Theory and Policy in International Relations: Some Personal Reflections,” Yale Journal of International Affairs 7 (2012).</li> <li>• Valerie M. Hudson, ‘The History and Evolution of Foreign Policy Analysis’ in Smith, Hadfield and Dunne (eds.), Foreign Policy</li> </ul>
<b>Week 3</b>	<b>National interests, sovereignty, and the "Multi-vector" doctrine</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Woodrow Wilson, “The Fourteen Points”,</li> <li>• Diplomacy of Central Asian and South Caucasus States in Summer–Autumn 2025: Multivector Foreign Policy in Action ( <a href="#">Diplomacy of Central Asian and South Caucasus States in Summer–Autumn 2025: Multivector Foreign Policy in Action</a>)</li> <li>• Azerbaijan’s multi-vector foreign policy as a key pillar of sovereignty, stability and strategic development (<a href="https://aircenter.az/en/single/azerbajjans-multi-vector-foreign-policy-as-a-key-pillar-of-sovereignty-stability-and-strategic-development-1767">https://aircenter.az/en/single/azerbajjans-multi-vector-foreign-policy-as-a-key-pillar-of-sovereignty-stability-and-strategic-development-1767</a>)</li> </ul>

<p><b>Week 4</b></p>	<p><b>Historical Foundations: Foreign policy of the ADR (1918-20) and the early 1990s restoration</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Svante E. Cornell, Azerbaijan Before Soviet Rule, in. Svante E. Cornell. Azerbaijan Since Independence, 2011</li> <li>• Nəşib Nəşibzadə, AZƏRBAYCANIN XARICI SIYASƏTI (1918-1920), 1996</li> </ul>
<p><b>Week 5</b></p>	<p><b>Azerbaijan within the Soviet Union</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Svante E. Cornell, Soviet Azerbaijan, in. Svante E. Cornell. Azerbaijan Since Independence, 2011</li> <li>• Alex, Marshall (2009). The Caucasus Under Soviet Rule (Volume 12 of Routledge Studies in the History of Russia and Eastern Europe ed.). Taylor &amp; Francis. P. 89. ISBN 9780415410120.</li> <li>• Sara Brinegar, “The Oil Deal: Nariman Narimanov and the Sovietization of Azerbaijan”, Slavic Review, Vol. 76, No. 2, 2017, pp. 372-394</li> </ul>
<p><b>Week 6</b></p>	<p><b>Key actors, structures and perceptions in Azerbaijan’s foreign policy</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walter Carlsnaes, ‘Actors, Structures, and Foreign Policy Analysis’, in Smith, Hadfield and Dunne (eds.), Foreign Policy, pp. 85-100</li> <li>• Tadeusz Swietochowski, ‘Azerbaijan: A Borderland at the Crossroads of History’, in Frederick Starr (ed.), The Legacy of History in Russia and the New States of Eurasia (New York, 1994)</li> <li>• Alexandros Petersen, Fariz Ismailzade (eds.), ‘Foreign Policy Azerbaijan's Bilateral and Multilateral Diplomacy’, in Azerbaijan in Global Politics: Crafting Foreign Policy</li> </ul>

Week 7	<b>The primacy of national security in Azerbaijan’s foreign policy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brian C. Schmidt, ‘Primacy of National Security’, in Smith, Hadfield and Dunne (eds.), Foreign Policy, pp. 155-170</li> <li>• National Security Concept of the Republic of Azerbaijan 2007</li> </ul>
Week 8	<b>Oil Diplomacy &amp; The "Contract of the Century"</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Documentary/Video:</b> <i>The Contract of the Century</i> (Official BP or SOCAR archives).</li> <li>• Svante Cornell, ‘Azerbaijan’s Economy: The Primacy of Oil’, in Azerbaijan since Independence, Chapter 9, pp. 199-253</li> <li>• Alexandros Petersen, Fariz Ismailzade (eds.), ‘Energy and Economy as Part of Foreign Policy’, in Azerbaijan in Global Politics: Crafting Foreign Policy</li> <li>• <a href="https://www.socar.com.tr/history-1900">https://www.socar.com.tr/history-1900</a></li> </ul>
Week 9	<b>Midterm Exam</b>	
Week 10	<b>Territorial integrity and Azerbaijan’s foreign policy: History of the Karabakh conflict, OSCE Minsk Group, and UN resolutions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Svante Cornell, ‘The Shadow over Azerbaijan: Karabakh’, in Azerbaijan since Independence</li> <li>• Alexandros Petersen, Fariz Ismailzade (eds.), ‘Armenia-Azerbaijan Conflict’, in Azerbaijan in Global Politics: Crafting Foreign Policy, pp.257-295</li> <li>• Svante E. Cornell, <i>The International Politics of the Armenian-Azerbaijani Conflict: The Original “Frozen Conflict” and European Security</i> (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017)</li> </ul>
Week 11	<b>Azerbaijan’s Foreign Policy Priority: Second Karabakh War</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ayaz Rzayev, No, Kosovo Is Not a Precedent for Nagorno-</li> </ul>

		<p>Karabakh, The National Interest, 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hakan Yavuz, Vasif Huseynov, The Second Karabakh War: Russia vs. Turkey? Middle East Policy, 2021</li> </ul>
<b>Week 12</b>	<b>Relations with Russia: Strategic partnership vs. regional competition; security dynamics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Svante E. Cornell, Russia, the Resurgent Imperialist, in. Svante E. Cornell. Azerbaijan Since Independence, 2011, pp. 126-162.</li> <li>• Svante E. Cornell, ‘Russia, the Resurgent Imperialist’, in Azerbaijan since Independence</li> <li>• <a href="#">Azerbaijan’s Calculated Confrontation with Russia: From Tension to Advantage</a> (APRI, 2025):</li> <li>• <a href="#">Russia–Azerbaijan Relations In 2025: A New Strategic Fault Line</a> (Eurasia Review, 2025):</li> </ul>
<b>Week 13</b>	<b>Azerbaijan – Turkey Relations: The "One Nation, Two States"</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Svante E. Cornell Turkey, Best Neighbor or Big Brother? in. Svante E. Cornell. Azerbaijan Since Independence, 2011</li> <li>• Svante E. Cornell, Turkey’s Role: Balancing the Armenia-Azerbaijan Conflict and Turkish-Armenian Relations, in The International Politics of the Armenian-Azerbaijani Conflict</li> <li>• Shusha Declaration.</li> </ul> <p><a href="https://president.az/en/articles/view/52115">https://president.az/en/articles/view/52115</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reconfiguring the South Caucasus: The 44-Day War and the Strategic Consolidation of Azerbaijan–Turkey Relations (<a href="#">5248996</a>)</li> </ul>

<p><b>Week 14</b></p>	<p><b>Azerbaijan – Iran Relations</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Svante E. Cornell, Iran and the “Other” Azerbaijan, in. Svante E. Cornell. <i>Azerbaijan Since Independence</i>, 2011</li> <li>• Svante E. Cornell, ‘The Islamic Republic of Iran’s Policy Toward the Nagorno Karabakh Conflict’, in <i>The International Politics of the Armenian-Azerbaijani Conflict</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Week 15</b></p>	<p><b>Azerbaijan – USA Relations: Counter-terrorism, security, and energy cooperation</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fuad Çıraqov, “Azərbaycan–Amerika Birləşmiş Ştatları münasibətləri: 1991-2016”, <i>Azərbaycan Respublikasının Xarici Siyasətinin Əsas İstiqamətləri 1991-2016</i>, Strateji Araşdırmalar Mərkəzi, 2017, səh. 355-398</li> <li>• Fuad Çıraqov, Tramp dövründə ABŞ-Azərbaycan münasibətləri, <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DHP44qzIBmQ">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DHP44qzIBmQ</a></li> <li>• Svante E. Cornell, “Azerbaijan and the West”, in. Svante E. Cornell. <i>Azerbaijan Since Independence</i>, 2011</li> <li>• Thomas Goltz, Section 907 of Freedom Support Act Article, 1996</li> <li>• <a href="#">US-Azerbaijan relations in the context of new geopolitical realities</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Repeal of Section 907 - H.R. 6534 (Congress.gov)</a>:</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Final exam</b></p>	

Additional readings and assignments will be provided by the instructor for this course. *If necessary, some minor modifications may be made to this syllabus by the instructor.*