

PSIR 300: Theories of International Relations

(undergraduate level, mandatory)

Department of Political Science and Philosophy, Fall 2021

Khazar University

6 ECTS credits, 15 Weeks, 60 hours

Classroom / hours: 41 Mehseti str. (Neftchilar campus), Room 203 N

Tuesdays: 13:40-15:10 / 15:20-16:50

Instructor: Farid Guliyev, PhD

Office: 511 (old building)

fguliyev@khazar.org

Office Hours:

Tuesdays, 11:00-13:00 and by appointment

Course description

This course introduces students to the key theoretical debates in the field of International Relations (IR). It covers the following topics: development of scientific approaches to IR, classic realism and neorealism, debates between (neo)realists vs. (neo)liberals, institutional theories and the role of international organizations, the constructivist critique of classical approaches, and (neo)Marxist perspectives (dependency theory and World-Systems Analysis). We will also discuss major conceptual-analytical extensions of these theories and their contribution to the study of international relations and foreign policy analysis including concepts such as levels of analysis, anarchy, balance of power, the security dilemma, the international system, state-society relations and their influence on foreign policy preferences, the relevancy of institutional factors, and power asymmetries between the core and periphery in the international capitalist system.

Course objectives

- provide an overview of different approaches and essential concepts underlying key theoretical debates in the field of study;
- introduce a variety of theoretical debates from relevant scholarly literature;
- familiarize students with the ways in which various theories can be applied to analyze real-life processes and events such as wars, foreign military interventions, economic underdevelopment of Global South etc.

Learning outcomes:

After completing the course, students will be able to:

- gain a familiarity with a variety of perspectives to key debates in the field of Theories of International Relations;
- sharpen their understanding of different approaches to the major themes of the course;
- learn and be able to debate about some of the key analytical approaches advanced by IR scholars.

Course requirements

Students are expected to attend all lecture and seminar sessions, to do the assigned readings before class meetings, and to participate actively in class discussions. The final grade will be based on attendance (10%), midterm exam (30%), two one-question checks (10% each), and final exam (40%). Failure to take an exam without a duly authorized written medical excuse will result in 0 points for that exam/ assignment. You are required to inform the instructor about your absence or family emergency *at least 2 workdays in advance* (no excuse will be granted retrospectively). Participation in a conference or other similar event is not a valid excuse.

Two “one question checks” (30 min, in-class) will be used to assess whether the student acquired the intended knowledge and skills. Performance will be graded using the following evaluation scheme: “excellent” (A to A-), “good” (B+ to B-), or “needs work” (C+ to D).

Assignment	Due	% of grade
Attendance	--	10%
One question check I	October 26	10%
Midterm exam	November 16	30%
One question check II	December 14	10%
Final exam	January 5-7 (TBD)	40%

Attendance in class is mandatory, and you are required to sign the attendance sheet I will distribute in class. Unexcused absences will result in deductions of participation points on a progressive scale as shown below. If you miss 8 (eight) or more class meetings without valid excuse (health issue or family emergency), you will automatically get an "F" for this course.

Attendance grade is calculated based on the following criteria:

Number of absences	Grade (max.100)
1-2	100-97
3	90
4	85
5	80
6	75
7	60
8	0 (F)

Use of laptop computers or mobile devices is not permitted in class. Please turn off your laptops and other electronic devices during lectures and discussions.

Reading Material:

Readings are accessible through the shared Google Drive folder. Readings must be completed prior to class meetings.

Core readings:

- Kenneth N. Waltz. *Theory of International Politics*, Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1979.
- Hans Morgenthau. *Politics Among Nations*. McGraw Hill, 1997.
- Robert O. Keohane, ed., *Neorealism and its Critics*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1986.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Week 1. October 5

Introduction / Course overview

- Van Evera, Stephen. 1992. Chapter 1. Hypotheses, Laws, and Theories, pp. 6-21.
- Case Study: Water Shortages and Conflict
 - Sandy Milne, How water shortages are brewing wars, BBC Future, August 17, 2021, <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20210816-how-water-shortages-are-brewing-wars>
 - Levy BS, Sidel VW. Water rights and water fights: preventing and resolving conflicts before they boil over. *Am J Public Health*. 2011;101(5):778-780. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3076402/>

Week 2: October 12

Classical Realism

- Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, 1997, Chapters 1 and 3.

Week 3: October 19

Balance of Power

- Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, 1997, Chapters 11, 12, 13, 14.

Week 4: October 26

Levels of Analysis

- Waltz, Kenneth. 1988. "The Origins of War in Neorealist Theory." *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 18 (4): 615-628.
- Singer, David. 1961. "The Level-of-Analysis Problem in International Relations," *World Politics* 14: 77-92

Week 5: November 2

Neorealism: Key Premises

- Waltz, Kenneth N. 1979. *Theory of International Politics*. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1979), Chapters 4 and 6.
- Levy, Jack S. 1998. "The causes of war and the conditions of peace." *Annual Review of Political Science* 1(1): 139-165.

Week 6: November 9

Anarchy

- Mearsheimer, John. 2004. "Anarchy and the Struggle for Power." In *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, New York: Norton, pp. 29-54.
- Powell, Robert. 1994. "Anarchy in International Relations Theory: The Neorealist-Neoliberal Debate," *International Organization*, 48 (2): 313–44.

Week 7: November 16

Midterm Exam

Week 8: November 23

Threat, the security dilemma, and misperception

- Walt, Stephen M. 1985. "Alliance formation and the balance of world power." *International security* 9(4): 3-43.
- Glaser, Charles. 1997. "The Security Dilemma Revisited," *World Politics* 50: 171-201.
- Jervis, Robert. "War and Misperception." *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 18 (4): 675-700. <https://doi.org/10.2307/204820>

Week 9. November 30

Critique of Neorealism

- Keohane (1986): Chapter 1. *Realism, Neorealism and the Study of World Politics* (pp. 1-26) and Chapter 7 "Theory of World Politics" (pp. 158-203) in Robert O. Keohane, ed., *Neorealism and its Critics*.
- Waltz (1986): Chapter 11, *Reflection on Theory of International Politics: A Response to My Critics* (pp. 322-345) in Robert O. Keohane, ed., *Neorealism and its Critics*.

Week 10. December 7

Institutional Perspectives

- North, Douglass. 1990. *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*. Cambridge University Press. Part I (pp. 3-61), and Part II "Institutional Change" (pp. 73-104).

Week 11. December 14

Liberalism

- Gourevitch, Peter. 1978. "The Second Image Reversed: The International Sources of Domestic Politics," *International Organization* 32: 881-912;
- Moravcsik, Andrew. 1997. "Taking preferences seriously: A liberal theory of international politics." *International Organization* 51(4): 513-553.

Week 12. December 21

Debating the Role of Institutions

- Katzenstein, Peter J., Robert O. Keohane, and Stephen D. Krasner. 1998. "International Organization and the Study of World Politics," *International Organization* 52(4), 645–685.
- Mearsheimer, John J. 1994/95. "The False Promise of International Institutions," *International Security* 19(3), 5-49.

Week 13: December 28

Dependency Theory and World-Systems Analysis

- Dos Santos, Theotonio. 1970. The Structure of Dependence. *American Economic Review* 60(2): 231-236.
- Wallerstein, I. (2004) *World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. Ch. 2: The Modern World-System as a Capitalist World-Economy.

Week 14: January 4, 2022

Constructivism

- Wendt, Alexander. 1992. "Anarchy is What States Make of It", *International Organization* 46(2): 391-425.

Week 15: January 5-7 (TBD)

Final exam