

<b>Identification</b>	<b>Subject</b>	PSIR 300 Theory of International Relations -3KU /6 ECTS
	<b>Department</b>	Political Science and Philosophy
	<b>Program</b>	Undergraduate
	<b>Term</b>	Fall, 2025
	<b>Instructor</b>	Ayaz Rzayev
	<b>E-mail:</b>	<a href="mailto:ayaz.rzayev@khazar.org">ayaz.rzayev@khazar.org</a>
	<b>Phone:</b>	
	<b>Classroom/hours</b>	11 Mehseti str. (Neftchilar campus), Wednesday, 11:50-15:10
	<b>Office hours</b>	By appointment
<b>Prerequisites</b>	Consent of instructor	
<b>Language</b>	English	
<b>Compulsory/Elective</b>	Required	
<b>Required textbooks and course materials</b>	<p><b>Core Textbook:</b></p> <p>Jackson, Robert, Georg Sørensen, and Jørgen Møller. Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches. 8th edition. Oxford University Press, 2022.</p> <p><b>Course materials:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Art, R. J., Crawford, T. W., &amp; Jervis, R. International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues. Rowman &amp; Littlefield, 2017</li> <li>• Freedman, Lawrence. Strategy: A History. Oxford University Press, 2013</li> <li>• Fry, Douglas. War, Peace and Human Nature, Oxford University Press, 2013</li> <li>• Klein, Matthew and Michael Pettis. Trade Wars are Class Wars. Yale University Press, 2020</li> <li>• Miller, Chris. Chip War. Scribner, 2022.</li> <li>• Murray, Williamson and Macgregor Knox. <i>The Dynamics of Military Revolution</i>. Cambridge University Press, 2001</li> <li>• Slobodian, Quinn. <i>Globalists: The End of Empire and the Birth of Neoliberalism</i>. Harvard University Press, 2018.</li> <li>• Jervis, Robert. "System Effects Revisited." Critical Review 24, no. 3 (2012): 393-415.</li> <li>• Mayshar, Joram, Omer Moav, and Luigi Pascali. "The Origin of the State: Land Productivity or Appropriability?" Journal of Political Economy 130, no. 4 (2022): 1091-1144.</li> <li>• Froman, Michael. "After the Trade War." Foreign Affairs, August 11, 2025. <a href="https://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/after-trade-war-michael-froman">www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/after-trade-war-michael-froman</a>.</li> <li>• Rodrik, Dani. "Rescuing Economics from Neoliberalism." Boston Review, November 6, 2017. <a href="https://www.bostonreview.net/articles/dani-rodrik-rescuing-economics-neoliberalism/">https://www.bostonreview.net/articles/dani-rodrik-rescuing-economics-neoliberalism/</a></li> <li>• Berlin, Isaiah. The Hedgehog and the Fox. 1953.</li> </ul>	
<b>Course outline</b>	This course is designed for undergraduate students and provides a comprehensive introduction to major theories of international relations. The course examines foundational theoretical approaches including realism, liberalism, constructivism, the English School, post-positivist approaches. Students will explore how these theories explain key aspects of international politics.	
<b>Course objectives</b>	<p><b>Objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This course provides students with comprehensive knowledge and analytical tools for understanding the diversity of theoretical approaches in IR. Beginning with foundational concepts, the course progressively examines how different theories explain contemporary global challenges, from traditional security issues to emerging technological and environmental concerns.</li> </ul> <p><b>Generic Objective of the Course</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To meet curriculum requirements of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences.</li> </ul>	

	<b>Specific Objectives of the Course</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To develop students' analytical and critical thinking skills in IR theory</li> <li>To encourage active participation and scholarly discussion</li> <li>To enhance students' ability to articulate, defend, and critique theoretical arguments</li> <li>To provide foundational knowledge for advanced study in IR</li> <li>To connect theoretical frameworks with contemporary global issues and policy challenges</li> </ul>		
<b>Learning outcomes</b>	<b>By the end of the course the students should be able:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To connect theoretical frameworks with contemporary global issues and policy challenges</li> <li>Apply theoretical frameworks to explain current global events and challenges</li> <li>Evaluate competing explanations of international phenomena using evidence-based reasoning</li> <li>Critically assess the strengths and limitations of different theoretical approaches</li> <li>Synthesize multiple perspectives to develop nuanced understanding of complex global issues</li> <li>Conduct independent research and produce well-structured analytical essays</li> </ul>		
<b>Teaching methods</b>	<b>Lecture</b>		x
	<b>Group discussion</b>		x
	<b>Simulation</b>		x
	<b>Case analysis</b>		x
	<b>Course paper</b>		x
<b>Evaluation</b>	<b>Methods</b>	<b>Date/deadlines</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
	<b>Midterm Exam</b>		30
	<b>Class Participation</b>		5
	<b>Project (Essay)</b>		15
	<b>Presentation/Group Discussion</b>		10
	<b>Final Exam</b>		40
	<b>Total</b>		100
<b>Policy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Preparation for class</b> The structure of this course makes your individual study and preparation outside the class extremely important. The lecture material will focus on the major points introduced in the text. Reading the assigned chapters and having some familiarity with them before class will greatly assist your understanding of the lecture. After the lecture, you should study your notes and work relevant problems from the end of the chapter and sample exam questions.</li> <li><b>Withdrawal (pass/fail)</b> This course strictly follows grading policy of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences. Thus, a student is normally expected to achieve a mark of at least 60% to pass. In case of failure, he/she will be required to repeat the course the following term or year.</li> <li><b>Cheating/plagiarism</b> Cheating or other plagiarism during the Quizzes, Mid-term and Final Examinations will lead to paper cancellation. In this case, the student will automatically get zero (0), without any considerations.</li> </ul> <b>Essay</b>		

	<p>We appreciate an ability of students to prepare a good essay. The essay should be</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An original research of the students.</li> <li>• Written according to the international standards with introduction, internal parts, conclusion, and used special literature.</li> <li>• Limited in size (10 -12 pages/Times New Roman - 12).</li> <li>• Printed in computer, and has a cover page.</li> </ul> <p><b>Students have to make presentation on the essay topic. This activity will be evaluated on the basis of two components: the written copy and presentation.</b></p> <p>As soon as it is possible, we will offer you a list of themes for essays. Every student can choose for the essay a theme with the consent of instructor.</p> <p>Essay requirements/standards are available in DPSIR.</p> <p>▪ <b>Professional behavior guidelines</b></p> <p>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.</p>
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Tentative Schedule			
Week	Date/Day (tentative)	Topics	Readings & Tasks
1	18.09. 2025	<p><b><i>Course Introduction &amp; Foundations</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What Matters</li> <li>• Thinking Critically</li> <li>• Methods at a Glance</li> <li>• Syllabus Overview</li> <li>• Q&amp;A</li> </ul>	<p>Robert Jackson &amp; Georg Sørensen, Ch. I (pp. 3-33)</p> <p>Isaiah Berlin, The Hedgehog and the Fox, 1953</p>
2	25.09.2025	<p><b><i>Human Nature, the State, and the System</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human nature: conflict or cooperation?</li> <li>• Perspectives on violence and reciprocity</li> <li>• Theories of state formation: coercion, contracts, and alternatives</li> <li>• War and the rise of state capacity</li> <li>• The international system: anarchy, order, or complexity</li> <li>• The three images: individual, state, and system</li> </ul>	<p>Douglas Fry, War, Peace and Human Nature, Ch. 1, pp. 1-23</p> <p>Joram Mayshar, Omer Moav, &amp; Luigi Pascali, The Origin of the State: Land Productivity or Appropriability? Journal of Political Economy, 2022, 130:4, pp. 1091-1144</p> <p>Robert Jervis, System Effects Revisited, Critical Review 24:3, pp. 393-415.</p>

3	02.10.2025	<p><b>Realism: Power, Order, and the Tragic Vision</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Realism's foundations: fear, honor, interest</li> <li>Classical realism: human nature and the tragic vision</li> <li>Structural realism: power distribution and anarchy</li> <li>Critiques and reinterpretations: historical realism and intellectual genealogy</li> <li>Realism in practice: 20th and 21st century cases</li> </ul>	Robert Jackson & Georg Sørensen, Ch. 3 (pp. 65-103)
4	09.10.2025	<p><b><i>Liberalism: Cooperation and Institutions</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Liberal assumptions about human nature: reason, progress, cooperation</li> <li>Democratic peace tradition</li> <li>Institutional liberalism: regimes, interdependence, absolute vs. relative gains</li> <li>Neoliberal institutionalism and the limits of anarchy</li> <li>Blind spots of liberalism: inequality, exclusion, and realist critiques</li> </ul>	Robert Jackson & Georg Sørensen, Ch. 4, pp. 103-137
5	16.10.2025	<p><b><i>International Society and the Craft of Order</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English School foundations</li> <li>Institutions of international society</li> <li>Statespeople and diplomacy</li> <li>Civilizations and plural orders</li> <li>Contemporary critiques</li> </ul>	Robert Jackson & Georg Sørensen, Ch. 5 pp. 137-170
6	23.10.2025	<p><b><i>Constructivism: Norms, Ideas, and Identity</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Norms and social construction of interests</li> <li>Identity and security communities</li> <li>Critiques and limits</li> </ul>	Robert Jackson & Georg Sørensen, Ch. 7, pp. 191-220
7	30.10.2025	<p><b><i>Post-positivist assumptions</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowledge and power in IR</li> <li>Empire and hierarchy in IR</li> <li>Gender in IR</li> <li>Critical theory and emancipation in IR</li> </ul>	Robert Jackson & Georg Sørensen, Ch. 8, pp. 220-247
8	06.11.2025	<p><b><i>International Political Economy (IPE)</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mercantilism</li> <li>Economic Liberalism</li> <li>Marxism</li> </ul>	Robert Jackson & Georg Sørensen, Ch. 6, pp. 170-191
9	13.11.2025	<b>Midterm Exam</b>	
10	20.11.2025	<p><b><i>The Contemporary Economic Order</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From Bretton Woods to globalization</li> <li>Institutions of the global economy</li> <li>Global value chains and financialization</li> </ul>	Robert Jackson & Georg Sørensen, Ch. 10, pp. 275-309  Art, R. J., Crawford, T. W., & Jervis, R, International politics:

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dollar dominance and the U.S.-led order</li> <li>• Varieties of capitalism in a globalized economy</li> </ul>	<p>Enduring concepts and contemporary issues, Rowman &amp; Littlefield, 2017, pp. 282-368</p> <p>Matthew Klein &amp; Michael Pettis, Trade Wars are Class Wars, 2020 Yale University Press, pp. 1-39</p>
11	27.11.2025	<p><i>Critiques of the Global Economic Order</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neoliberalism and its discontents</li> <li>• Global inequality and austerity</li> <li>• Oligarchy and financial capture</li> <li>• Post-neoliberal visions and alternatives</li> <li>• The future of globalization</li> </ul>	<p>Matthew Klein &amp; Michael Pettis, Trade Wars are Class Wars, Yale University Press, pp. 40-220</p> <p>Dani Rodrik, “Rescuing Economics from Neoliberalism,” Boston Review, November 6, 2017,  <a href="https://www.bostonreview.net/articles/dani-rodrik-rescuing-economics-neoliberalism/">https://www.bostonreview.net/articles/dani-rodrik-rescuing-economics-neoliberalism/</a></p> <p>Michael Forman. “After the Trade War.” Foreign Affairs, 11 Aug. 2025,  <a href="http://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/after-trade-war-michael-forman">www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/after-trade-war-michael-forman</a>. Accessed 30 Aug. 2025.</p> <p>Quinn Slobodian, Globalists: The End of Empire and the Birth of Neoliberalism, Harvard University Press, 2018, pp. 1-26</p>
12	04.12.2025	<p><i>Military Strategy and Warfare</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evolution of strategic thought</li> <li>• Changing character of warfare</li> <li>• Technology's impact on military doctrine and IR theory</li> </ul>	<p>Art, R. J., Crawford, T. W., &amp; Jervis, R, International politics: Enduring concepts and contemporary issues, Rowman &amp; Littlefield, 2017, pp. 87-104, 166-178</p> <p>Williamson Murray &amp; Macgregor Knox, The Dynamics of Military Revolution,</p>

			<p>Cambridge University Press, 2001, pp. 1-14, 132-153, 154-174</p> <p>Freedman, Lawrence. <i>Strategy: A History</i>, Oxford University Press, 2013, pp. 22-53, 69-95, 108-122, 123-144</p>
13	11.12.2025	<p><b><i>Technology and International Relations</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Nuclear Revolution and International Stability</li> <li>• The Information Revolution and Globalization</li> <li>• Critical Technologies and Contemporary Competition</li> </ul>	<p>Freedman, Lawrence. <i>Strategy: A History</i>, Oxford University Press, 2013, pp. 145-177</p> <p>Chris Miller, <i>Chip War</i>, Scribner, 2022, Ch 49-54</p>
14	18.12.2025	<p><b>The Past, Present and the Future of International Order</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• U.S. decline and multipolarity</li> <li>• China's rise and alternative visions</li> <li>• Regionalism and pluriversal orders</li> <li>• Environmental change and international politics</li> </ul>	<p>Robert Jackson &amp; Georg Sørensen, Ch. 11 &amp; 12, pp. 309-374</p> <p>Art, R. J., Crawford, T. W., &amp; Jervis, R, <i>International politics: Enduring concepts and contemporary issues</i>, Rowman &amp; Littlefield, 2017, pp. 458-511</p>
15	25.12.2025	<p><b><i>Conclusion and Student Presentations</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reviewing paradigms of IR</li> <li>• What theories explain best? What do they miss?</li> <li>• Theory, practice, and policymaking</li> <li>• Student-led presentations and discussions</li> </ul>	<p><i>Student will present their projects</i></p>
	TBA	<b>Final Exam</b>	

**This syllabus is a guide for the course and any modifications to it will be announced in advance.**