This course offers a PhD-level introductory overview of the field of international relations. The primary purpose is to understand and evaluate the main theories, arguments, claims, and conjectures made by scholars in the field (plus learn a bit about how the field has evolved). What are the main ways in which scholars organize and assess knowledge in the field? In addition, the course is designed to assist in preparation for the Government Department’s general examinations in international relations. Enrollment is normally limited to Government Department PhD students. Auditing is not permitted. The use of ChatGPT or any other similar tools is also not permitted.

**Time and Place**

This seminar will meet on Tuesdays from 9:45 to 11:45 a.m. in CGIS K450

**Requirements and Grading**

1. Active and prepared participation in class discussions, and discussion leadership (twice in the term, paired with another student). Discussion questions should be e-mailed to Professors Chaudoin and Kertzer by 5:00 pm on the day before the assigned class. (40%)

2. A review essay of at least three recent books with implications for international relations theory. The review should revolve around some shared theme across the books and should provide a springboard for exploring a theoretical issue or empirical puzzle that interests you. Examples of review essays can be found in *Perspectives on Politics, International Organization*, and *World Politics*, among other journals in the field. More details about a review essay will be provided later in the semester. The review essay should be no more than 25-30 pages double-spaced and is due by email to both professors by November 1 (40%).

For each week there are two categories of readings.

1. Required readings. These are the specific subject of discussion in class, although there may be weeks in which we will prioritize specific readings in advance. All readings will be available on the course webpage: https://canvas.harvard.edu/courses/123824/

2. Recommended readings. These are a mix of both older and more recent readings on the topic for the week. Some contain the origins of various debates that are ongoing in the field. Others are more recent readings that delve more deeply into the topic, or provide more recent empirical data. You can consult these as you explore topics that interest you. If IR is your major area of interest you should eventually become familiar with these works.

3. While this course does not emphasize game theoretical approaches to IR, for those of you who have no background in game theory or formal modeling, you might useful to read over the next couple of weeks a primer written by Michael Hiscox for Gov 2710 “A Brief Introduction to Game Theoretic Analysis”. It can be found under “Files” on the course web page.

**Overview**

- **Week 1 Sep 5**  
  Introduction and development of the field
- **Week 2 Sep 12**  
  Structural theories of IR
- **Week 3 Sep 19**  
  Rationalist theories of IR (S)
- **Week 4 Sep 26**  
  Psychological and social theories of IR (J)
- **Week 5 Oct 3**  
  Gender and race in IR (J)
- **Week 6 Oct 10**  
  Regime type and conflict (J)
- **Week 7 Oct 17**  
  Leaders and decision-making (J)
- **Week 8 Oct 24**  
  Intrastate/civil conflict (S)
- **Week 9 Oct 31**  
  IPE I: Trade and Economic Interests (S)
- **Week 10 Nov 7**  
  IPE II: Money, Finance and Immigration (J)
- **Week 11 Nov 14**  
  International Institutions I: Cooperation (S)
- **Week 12 Nov 28**  
  International Institutions II: Design and Compliance (S)
- **Week 13 Dec 6**  
  Mock general exam
Week 1: Introduction and development of the field


Peter Marcus Kristensen, “Revisiting the “American Social Science” – Mapping the Geography of International Relations”, International Studies Perspectives 16:3 (2015), 246-269.


Recommended:


Randolph B Persaud, “Ideology, socialization and hegemony in Disciplinary International Relations”, International Affairs 98:1 (January 2022), pp. 105-123.


Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan "Why is there no Non-Western International Relations Theory? Ten years on" *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 17:3 (2017), 341-370.


Nicolas Guilhot (Ed.), *The Invention of International Relations Theory: Realism, the Rockefeller Foundation, and the 1954 Conference on Theory* (Columbia University Press, 2011)


Stanley Hoffmann, “An American Social Science: International Relations”, *Daedalus* 106:3 (1977) pp. 41-60


Frederick Dunn, “The Present Course of International Relations Research” *World Politics* 2:1 (October 1949) pp. 80-95


**Students should also be familiar with the major classics on interstate relations and strategy from a variety of historical times and spaces:**


Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* 1651 (New York: Penguin Classics 1977) chapters 13 through 17,


Week 2: Structural theories of IR


Recommended:


John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of World Politics* (Norton 2001)


Week 3: Rationalist theories of IR


Recommended:


John Vasquez The War Puzzle Revisited (Cambridge University Press, 2009) Chps 1-6, 9-11, skim Appendix I and II.


Andrew H. Kydd, Trust and Mistrust in International Relations (Princeton: Princeton
University Press, 2005).


Powell, Robert. *In the Shadow of Power*. (Princeton University Press, 1999). Chapters 3 (pp. 82-110) and 4.


Stephen Van Evera, *Causes of War: Power and the Roots of Conflict* (Cornell, 1999), Ch. 6. (pp. 117-192).


Week 4: Psychological and social theories of IR


**Recommended (Psychological):**


Richard K. Herrmann, “How Attachments to the Nation Shape Beliefs About the


John R. Hibbing, “Ten Misconceptions Concerning Neurobiology and Politics” *Perspectives on Politics* 11(2) (June 2013) pp. 475-489


**Recommended (Social):**


David M. McCourt, "Practice Theory and Relationalism as the New Constructivism", *International Studies Quarterly* 60:3 (2016), 475-485.


Ron Hassner, “To Halve and to Hold: Conflicts Over Sacred Space and the Problem of Indivisibility Security Studies 12, no. 4 (summer 2003): 1–33


Samuel P. Huntington The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order (Simon and Shuster, 2002)


**Week 5: Gender and Race in IR**


**Recommended**


**Conference Issue: Racialized Realities in World Politics** *Millennium* 45:3 (June 2017)


Valerie M. Hudson, Bonnie Ballif-Spanvill, Mary Caprioli, and Chad F. Emmett, *Sex and World Peace* (Columbia University Press 2014)


J. Ann Tickner, Laura Sjoberg eds., *Feminism and International Relations: Conversations about the Past, Present, and Future* (Routledge 2011).


Joshua S. Goldstein, *War and Gender: How Gender Shapes the War System and Vice Versa* (Cambridge University Press, 2001)


Rebecca Grant and Kathleen Newland, *Gender and International Relations* (Indiana University Press 1991)


Week 6: Regime Type and Conflict


Recommended:


Week 7: Leaders and Decision-Making


Recommended:


Jonathan W. Keller and Dennis M. Foster “Presidential Leadership Style and the Political Use of Force” Political Psychology, Vol. 33, No. 5, 2012


Stephen G. Walker and Mark Schaffer "The Operational Codes of Bill Clinton and Tony Blair" (Paper prepared for APSA conference, Washington DC, 2000)


James G. Richter, Khrushchev’s *Double Bind: International Pressures and Domestic Coalition Politics*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), chapter 1

Donald Sylvan et al, "Case-Based, Model-Based, and Explanation-Based Styles of Reasoning in Foreign Policy" *International Studies Quarterly* 38 (1994) pp.61-90

Yuen Foong Khong *Analyses at War*. (Princeton University Press 1992)


Week 8: Intrastate Conflict

James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin “Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War” *American Political Science Review* 97, 1 (February 2003): 75-90


**Recommended:**


Benjamin T. Jones and Eleonora Mattiacci, A Manifesto in 140 Characters or Fewer: Social Media as a Tool of Rebel Diplomacy”, *British Journal of Political Science*, Forthcoming.


Week 9: Trade and Economic Interests


**Recommended:**


Week 10: Money, Finance and Immigration


Recommended:

David Stasavage, "What We Can Learn From the Early History of Sovereign Debt," 59 Explorations in Economic History 1 (2016)


Quan Li and Adam Resnick, “Reversal of fortunes: Democratic institutions and foreign direct investment inflows to developing countries”, *International Organization* 75:1 (2003), p. 175-211.


Week 11: International Institutions I – the Origins and Effects of Institutionalized Cooperation


Recommended:


Xinyun Dai *International Institutions and National Policies* (Cambridge University Press, 2007)


Week 12: International Institutions II – Design and Compliance


*Recommended:*


Amitav Acharya and Alastair Iain Johnston eds., *Crafting Cooperation: Regional Institutions in Comparative Perspective* Cambridge University Press, 2007


Potential books for book review:


Amitav Acharya, *Constructing Global Order: Agency and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 2018)


Matthias Basedau, Jonathan Fox, and Ariel Zellman, *Religious Minorities at Risk* (Oxford University Press, 2023)


Austin Carson, *Secret Wars: Covert Conflict in International Politics* (Princeton University Press, 2018).


Christopher Clary, *The Difficult Politics of Peace: Rivalry in Modern South Asia* (Oxford University Press, 2022)


Adam Dean, *Opening Up by Cracking Down: Labor Repression and Trade Liberalization in Democratic Developing Countries* (Cambridge University Press, 2022)


Peter D. Feaver, *Thanks for your Service: The Causes and Consequences of Public Confidence in the US Military* (Oxford University Press, 2023)


Patrick James, *Realism and International Relations: A Graphic Turn Toward Scientific Progress* (Oxford University Press, 2023)


Jeffrey M. Kaplow, *Signing Away the Bomb: The Surprising Success of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Regime* (Cambridge University Press, 2022)


Jiyoung Ko, *Popular Nationalism and War* (Oxford University Press, 2023)


Adam Lerner, *From the Ashes of History: Collective Trauma and the Making of International Politics* (Oxford University Press, 2022).


Lindsey A. O’Rourke, *Covert Regime Change: America’s Secret Cold War* (Cornell University Press, 2021)


Swati Srivastava, *Hybrid Sovereignty in World Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 2022)


Brent J. Steele, *Restraint in International Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 2019).


Stefanie von Hlatky, *Deploying Feminism: The Role of Gender in NATO Military Operations* (Oxford University Press, 2022)


Rachel Elizabeth Whitlark, *All Options on the Table: Leaders, Preventive War, and Nuclear Proliferation* (Cornell University Press, 2021)


Thomas Zeitzoff, *Nasty Politics: The Logic of Insults, Threats, and Incitement* (Oxford University Press, 2023)