

International Politics: Key Debates, Cool Idea, Convolutd Concepts

Course content

This course provides an advanced overview of the field of international relations. It is structured thematically to tackle different facets of international politics. The course is designed to cut across different theoretical traditions and analyze the structures and agents of various issue-areas of world politics. In doing so, a deeper understanding of how international relations is grounded, ordered, and produced emerges. The course also connects practices of international relations to core questions of empirical social science and political theory by drawing on different epistemological foundations. Overall, this course provides an in-depth analysis of how core components of world politics are structured, who the key actors are in various interactions, and what can be gained from increased knowledge of how the world hangs together.

- 1 Anarchy and sovereignty (JK)
- 2 Preferences and Pressure (VHT)
- 3 Compliance and failures (JK)
- 5 Bargaining and conflict (MS)
- 4 Hegemons and 'others' (JK)
- 6 Alliances and contests (DYL)
- 7 Institutions and information (VHT)
- 10 Norms and Persuasion (JK)
- 8 Secretariats and public policy (YS)
- 9 Non-state actors and networks (JK)

Learning outcomes

Knowledge:

You will gain knowledge about recent developments in the following areas:

- Key theories of international relations (IR)
- Empirical knowledge of different issue-areas of world politics
- Major actors and institutions in IR
- Different regional patterns from Africa, Asia, the Americas, and Europe
- Contemporary events such as trade wars, climate change, and civil wars
- Epistemological foundations of IR theories

Skills:

You will learn

- How to understand and apply IR theories
- How to assess and evaluate the relative merits of these theories
- How to understand core concepts in IR
- How to assess world politics in qualitative and quantitative terms
- How to understand the deeper structures of world politics
- How to examine a wider range of actors than states including international organizations, networks, and non-state actors
- How to think about the relationship between causal understanding and policy prescription

General Competence:

You will

- Develop your analytical skills
- Develop your skills in assessing causal arguments and theories
- Develop the ability to use empirical methods and theories
- gain experience in writing academic texts

Exam:

You will complete

- A final term paper of 5000-7500 words (100%)

Teaching

Lectures (10 – as above))

Compulsory activities

- Participate in 8/10 lectures
- Present a reading in one lecture

Language of examination

The examination text is given in English, and you submit your response in English.

Grading scale

Grades are awarded on a scale from A to F, where A is the best grade and F is a fail. Read more about the grading system.

Examination

- Term paper

The term paper must:

- Have a limit of 7500 words
- Be on a topic related to the curriculum but selected by the student
- Meet the formal requirements for submission of written assignments

Grading

- You must pass the term paper
- The presentation is pass/fails
- The term paper counts as the total grade
- Appeals of the term paper follow normal procedures

Written examination

The written examination is conducted in the digital examination system Inspira. You will need to familiarize yourself with the digital examination arrangements in Inspira.

[Read more about written examinations using Inspira.](#)

Submit assignments in Inspera

You submit your assignment in the digital examination system Inspera. [Read more about how to submit assignments in Inspera.](#)

Use of sources and citation

You should familiarize yourself with the rules that apply to [the use of sources and citations](#). If you violate the rules, you may be suspected of [cheating/attempted cheating](#).

Language of examination

The examination text is given in English, and you submit your response in English.

Grading scale

Grades are awarded on a scale from A to F, where A is the best grade and F is a fail. Read more about [the grading system](#).

Explanations and appeals

- [Explanation of grades and appeals](#)
[Ask for an explanation](#)

Resit an examination

If you are sick or have another valid reason for not attending the regular exam, we offer a [postponed exam](#) later in the same semester.

See also our information about [resitting an exam](#).

If you have previously passed the mandatory activities, you do not have to repeat the activities in order to sit for the exam.

Withdrawal from an examination

It is possible to take the exam up to 3 times. If you [withdraw from the exam](#) after the deadline or during the exam, this will be counted as an examination attempt.

Special examination arrangements

Application form, deadline and requirements for [special examination arrangements](#).

Evaluation

The course is subject to continuous evaluation. At regular intervals we also ask students to participate in a more comprehensive evaluation.

1 Anarchy and sovereignty (JK)

- Theory debates and why we go thematic
- Epistemology behind them
- What is anarchy? Is it natural or constructed?

2 Preferences and Pressure (VHT)

- What are state preferences?
- Relationship to rat choice and constructivism

3 Compliance and failures (JK)

- Institutional design
- Historical institutionalism in IR

4 Hegemons and 'others' (JK)

- Empire
- Democratic peace

5 Bargaining and conflict (MS)

- Security dilemma
- Does peacekeeping work?

6 Alliances and contests (DYL)

- History of alliance patterns
- Security in Asia

7 Institutions and information (VHT)

- Bargaining and enforcement
- Delegation and agency

8 Secretariats and public policy (YS)

- International public policy
- Agency slack

9 Non-state actors and networks (JK)

- Rise of non-state actors and networks
- Democratic deficits

10 Norms and Persuasion (JK)

- Communicative action and design
- Norm changes