

# INRL 20040: Theories and Concepts in International Relations

**Instructor: Joshua Alley**

**Office:** Newman Building G316

**Office Hours:** Tu 1-3:00pm and by appointment ([sign up with this link](#))

**Tuesday Course Meeting:** Q043 (Quinn School of Business)

**Thursday Course Meeting:** L023-SUTH (Sutherland Law School)

**Head TA: Dino Wildi**

**Other TAs:**

1. Smruti Sarangi
2. Diana Nagle
3. Jennifer O'Keefe
4. Thomas Gavois

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## Course Description

Why do countries fight? Why do countries trade? Does the United Nations matter? Can countries work together to protect the environment? How do gender and race shape international politics?

This course explores all these questions and more. We will do so by looking carefully at different theories and concepts scholars have used to understand and explain international relations. We will do so by learning about different ways in which scholars have explained the way countries interact: does power matter? Or ideas? What about economic ties? You'll learn about big paradigms like realism, liberalism and constructivism, as well as more focused concepts like deterrence, comparative advantage, and the tragedy of the commons.

## What I hope you will learn.

By the end of the course, you will...

- Identify multiple ways of analyzing international politics and contrast their respective strengths and weaknesses.
- Understand common motivations, interests and problems in international relations.

- Practice using different concepts and skills to explain and understand international relations.
- Be better positioned to assess international relations policies and the behavior of state and non-state actors.

## **Course Resources**

All course readings (detailed below) are available on Brightspace. Please complete all assigned readings *before the class meeting marked on the syllabus*.

Please note that in class lectures will build and expand on the readings. Taking the time to read is therefore critical to your success in this course. Reading loads also shift somewhat from class to class, so plan your reading ahead of time.

You may find some of the readings challenging or dense, and that is perfectly acceptable. Taking the time to wrestle with these ideas will be rewarding, and wrestling is not always easy.

## **Assessment**

### **Class Participation**

Because course content extends beyond the readings, class participation is essential. 15% of this grade covers participation in class, where I will regularly ask you to answer questions and engage with the course material using PollEverywhere.

I will provide a link to join the poll in class, along with more detailed instructions. To check in, please enter your UCD student number in the "Name" field.

I will grade your participation by dividing your total number of responses by the total number of questions posed throughout the term. You can miss up to 3 classes without penalty.

The other 15% of this grade covers participation in tutorial sessions, where you will discuss concepts and reinforce your learning in smaller groups.

**Value:** 30%

### **Tutorial Exercise**

The tutorial exercise is a critical analysis of a global issue using theories and concepts from the class. During the tutorial meeting in week 10, you will analyze a case using course materials and write down your analysis in three paragraphs. You will do this in small groups of four students.

I will provide guidelines for the case study on the day of class.

**Value:** 20%

### **Midterm Exam**

This 40 minute exam in Week 6 will cover all course content through Week 5, specifically the introductory concepts and security. It will be a closed book exam. This will be a multiple choice exam.

Value: **25%**

### **Final Exam**

This will be a 2-hour cumulative exam. It will cover all the course content. As with the midterm, this will be a closed book exam with a series of multiple choice questions.

**Value:** 25%

### **Grading Scheme**

See

<https://www.ucd.ie/students/exams/gradingandremediation/understandinggrades/>

## Attendance Policy

Attending class in person is critical to your success and learning. We will go beyond the assigned readings with extensive discussion, lectures on related issues, and activities to help you think about the course content in different ways.

You need to provide an excuse for your absence if you are absent more than 3 times from course lectures in the term and want to avoid any loss of participation points. For tutorials, you can miss two without penalty, except for the tutorial activity in week 10.

If for the fourth time in the semester you cannot attend class, *do not email me or your TA*. Instead, fill out this form: <https://forms.gle/6jg4yGEwUm6tTnLt7>. If you want to have missed class participation excused, you will need to provide a reason and when possible, documentation of such (doctor's note, etc). Illness and family emergencies are excused absences.

Unfortunately, there will not be an online option for this module. I understand that this is burdensome and difficult for some, but I cannot make exceptions.

Please make sure your cell phones are on silent mode and refrain from using them during class time unless we are taking a poll.

## Course Calendar

| Theme                     | Class Meeting | Topics          | Readings and Activities | Notes |
|---------------------------|---------------|-----------------|-------------------------|-------|
| Introduction and Overview | 1             | Course Overview | Read the Syllabus       |       |

|          |   |  |  |  |
|----------|---|--|--|--|
|          | 2 | What is a theory? How Should we assess theories? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Van Evera extract (pg 17-48 on Brightspace)</li> <li>• Stephen M. Walt, "International Relations: One World, Many Theories," <i>Foreign Policy</i> no. 110 (1998): 29-46.</li> </ul>                            |  |
|          | 3 | Key IR Concepts                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gebhard 2017: <a href="http://www.e-ir.info/2016/12/28/one-world-many-actors/">http://www.e-ir.info/2016/12/28/one-world-many-actors/</a></li> </ul>  |  |
| Security | 4 | Classical Realism and Origins                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thucydides, Hobbes (Extracts on Brightspace)</li> </ul>   |  |
|          | 5 | Anarchy and the Security Dilemma                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jervis, Robert. 1978 "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma" <i>World Politics</i> 30(2): 167-214.</li> </ul>  |  |
|          | 6 | War and Commitment Problems                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jervis, Robert. 1988. "War and Misperception" <i>The Journal of Interdisciplinary History</i> 18(4): 675-700.</li> </ul>  |  |
|          | 7 | Deterrence and Nuclear Weapons                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wohlstetter, Albert. 1959. "The Delicate Balance of Terror" <i>Foreign Affairs</i> 37(2): 211-234.</li> <li>• John Lewis Gaddis. 1986. "The Long Peace" <i>International Security</i> 10(4): 99-142.</li> </ul> |  |
|          | 8 | Coercion   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schelling, Thomas. 1966 <i>Arms and Influence</i>. (Extract on Brightspace)</li> <li>• Alexander George et. al, "The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy" (Extract on Brightspace)</li> </ul>                          |  |

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|-------------|----|---------------------------------|--|--|
| Cooperation | 9  | Liberalism Overview             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wilson "The Fourteen Points":<br/><a href="https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/january-8-1918-wilsons-fourteen-points">https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/january-8-1918-wilsons-fourteen-points</a></li> <li>Kenneth A. Oye. 1985. "Explaining Cooperation under Anarchy: Hypotheses and Strategies," <i>World Politics</i> 38(1): 1-24.</li> </ul> |  |
|             | 10 | Perspectives on Cooperation     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Robert Keohane. 1982. "The Demand for International Regimes" <i>International Organization</i> 36(2): 325-355.</li> <li>Robert Axelrod, <i>The Evolution of Cooperation</i> Chapter 9 (On Brightspace)</li> </ul>   | (Will not be included on midterm exam) |
|             | 11 |                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Midterm Exam</li> </ul>   |  |
|             | 12 | International Political Economy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frieden, JA, &amp; Lake, DA 1999, <i>International Political Economy : Perspectives on Global Power and Wealth</i>. Introduction (UCD eBook)</li> </ul>   |  |
|             | 13 | Trade                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dani Rodrik <i>The Globalization Paradox</i> Chapter 3 (on Brightspace)</li> </ul>  |  |
|             | 14 | International Institutions      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Michael Barnett and Martha Finnemore. 1999. "The Politics, Power and Pathologies of</li> </ul>  |  |

|  |    |   |   |  |
|--|----|---|---|--|
|  |    |   | International Organizations”<br><i>International Organization</i> 53(4): 699-732.   |  |
|  | 15 | Finance                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frieden, JA, &amp; Lake, DA 1999, <i>International Political Economy : Perspectives on Global Power and Wealth.</i> Chapter 18: The Obsolescence of Capital Controls? Economic Management in an Age of Global Markets (UCD ebook)</li> </ul> | Reading Week: No Lecture & Readings Optional |
|  | 16 | Security Cooperation: Balancing and Alliances | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Snyder, Glenn. <i>Alliance Politics</i> (Extract on Brightspace)</li> <li>Morrow, James. 1993. “Arms versus allies: trade-offs in the search for security” <i>International Organization</i> 47(2): 207-233. (Read pages 207-223)</li> </ul> | Reading Week: No Lecture & Readings Optional |
|  | 17 | Democratic Peace                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Michael Doyle. 1986. “Liberalism and World Politics” <i>The American Political Science Review</i> 80(4): 1151-1169.</li> </ul>   |  |
|  | 18 | International Law                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>William Coplin. 1965. “International Law and Assumptions about the State System” <i>World Politics</i> 17(4): 615-634.</li> </ul>  |  |
|  | 19 | NGOs  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Marchetti “Global Civil Society”: <a href="http://www.e-ir.info/2016/12/28/global-civil-society/">http://www.e-ir.info/2016/12/28/global-civil-society/</a></li> </ul>   |  |

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|          | 20 | The Environment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Garrett Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons," <i>Science</i> 162, no. 3859 (1968): 1243-1248.</li> </ul>  |  |
| Identity | 21 | Constructivism  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wendt, Alexander. 1992. "Anarchy is what states make of it" <i>International Organization</i> 46(2): 391-425.</li> </ul>  |  |
|          | 22 | Gender          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schramm, Madison, and Alexandra Stark. 2020. "Peacemakers or iron ladies? A cross-national study of gender and international conflict." <i>Security Studies</i> 29(3): 515-548.</li> <li>Barnheart et al. 2020. "The Suffragist Peace" <i>International Organization</i> 74(3): 633-670. (Read Pages 633 to 643)</li> </ul> |  |
|          | 23 | Race            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Zvobgo, Kelebogile, and Meredith Loken. 2020. "Why race matters in international relations." <i>Foreign Policy</i></li> </ul>   |  |
| Wrap-Up  | 24 | Course Review   |  |  |
|          |    | Final Exam      |  |  |



## **Honor/Academic Integrity Policy**

Working independently is a crucial skill, but so is collaboration. I will provide guidelines for collaboration with each assignment to ensure that you know when you can rely on your peers and other resources, and when you cannot. Exams are independent work, while you will tackle the tutorial assignment in small groups.

## **Late Work Policy**

Turning in work on time is important, as it helps you receive timely feedback. Therefore, per UCD policy, penalties for late submission are minus 1 grade point for 1 week late (up to 5 working days after submission) and minus 2 grade points for 2 weeks late (up to 5 working days after submission).

Assignments more than two weeks late cannot be graded unless Extenuating Circumstances have been granted.

## **Communication**

The best place to ask questions is in the classroom. Some questions may need to wait until after class, but I strongly encourage you to ask any question you might have about the course, related issues in the news, politics, or professional life. I also encourage you to visit my office hours to discuss these matters or any difficulties with the readings.

My email address is: [joshua.alley@ucd.ie](mailto:joshua.alley@ucd.ie)

*Please read this syllabus before emailing me or your TA- many common questions are answered here.* You can also consult a list of frequently asked questions I will post on Brightspace, which will contain answers to common questions and guidance on who to contact. If you need to email me, I will attempt to respond within 48 hours. I will not reply to emails on the weekend.