

COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT

NOTE: ANY CHANGES TO A CSD MUST GO THROUGH ALL OF THE RELEVANT APPROVAL PROCESSES, INCLUDING LTTPC.

Academic School/Department: Communications, Arts and Social Sciences

Programme: International Relations

FHEQ Level: 6

Course Title: International Relations Theory

Course Code: INR 6200

Course Leader: Dr Michael F. Keating

Student Engagement Hours: 120

Lectures: 22.5

Seminar / Tutorials: 22.5

Independent / Guided Learning : 75

Semester: FALL and/or SPRING and/or SUMMER

Credits: 12 UK CATS credits
6 ECTS credits
3 US credits

Course Description:

The theories of international relations are best introduced through a study of the classic texts and debates in the discipline. This course examines most of the theories and approaches to international politics, as well as their historic foundations. It begins with some philosophical debates regarding the purpose of theorising, the importance of understanding ontological and epistemological assumptions and the difference between 'understanding' and 'explaining' in international relations theory. The course then critically evaluates the grand and middle range theories of IR, followed by a multitude of multidisciplinary approaches to conceptualising global politics and the post-positivist critiques. The course provides students with a set of conceptual and analytical tools in order to acquire a deeper and more nuanced understanding of international relations and global politics.

Pre-requisites: INR 5200 or INR 5205 or PLT 5200

Aims and Objectives:

- To provide a detailed overview of some of the primary perspectives and analytical approaches for studying international relations
- To advance a critical understanding of the differences in conceptualising global politics
- To encourage abstract and theoretical thinking
- To enable students to assess the contributions and shortcomings of both mainstream and critical IR theories

Programme Outcomes:

At the end of this course, the students will have achieved the following programme outcomes.

6A(i); 6A(iii); 6A(iv); 6C(i); 6C(iii); 6C(iv); 6D(ii); 6D(iii); 6D(iv)

A detailed list of the programme outcomes are found in the Programme Specification. This is located at the Departmental/Schools page of the portal.

Learning Outcomes:

At the end of this course, the students will have achieved the following learning outcomes.

- Demonstrates a systematic understanding of the major thinkers and intellectual paradigms in international relations
- Demonstrates a systematic understanding of key concepts - power and influence, order and justice, agents and structures, understanding and explaining as they are theorized in international relations
- Demonstrates a systematic understanding of key texts and debates in the IR theory, and ability to critically engage with these
- Takes responsibility for their own learning, and completes assigned work with a degree of clarity, contextualisation, critical thinking, and reflexive normative understanding appropriate for a 6000-level course
- Demonstrates flexible writing and analytical skills that translate directly into the workplace in, including the ability to adapt work to different contexts, audiences, and levels of complexity

Indicative Content:

- Theory and method in the social sciences
- Agency and structure in IR
- Classical and modern key texts and thinkers in IR theory
- Understanding the core assumptions of the theories and approaches to IR
- Critical evaluation of the classical theories, critical theories and approaches to IR
- Understanding of the central role of IR theory in the discipline of International Relations

Assessment:

This course conforms to the Richmond University Standard Assessment Norms approved at Academic Council on June 28, 2012.

Teaching Methodology:

This course will be taught through a combination of lectures and seminar-type activities, including group work, sub-group activities, classroom discussion, and the showing of documentaries. The general approach to classes is informal, and discussion is viewed as an essential part of an interactive and participatory learning program. Audio-visual aids, study materials and electronic learning resources will be used as appropriate.

