POLI 15H: HONORS INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS/ WORLD POLITICS

Foothill College Course Outline of Record

Heading	Value
Effective Term:	Summer 2025
Units:	4
Hours:	4 lecture per week (48 total per quarter)
Advisory:	Demonstrated proficiency in English by placement via multiple measures OR through an equivalent placement process OR completion of ESLL 125 & ESLL 249; not open to students with credit in POLI 15.
Degree & Credit Status:	Degree-Applicable Credit Course
Foothill GE:	Area 4: Social & Behavioral Sciences
Transferable:	CSU/UC
Grade Type:	Letter Grade (Request for Pass/No Pass)
Repeatability:	Not Repeatable

Student Learning Outcomes

- A successful student will understand the role of NATO, the UN and national state leaders in decision-making on intervention.
- Critically analyze any of the contending theoretical formulations of International Relations - Liberalism/Neoliberalism institutionalism, Realism and Non-realism, the Radical Perspective, Constructivism, Hegemonic Stability Theory.
- Critically analyze the role of the United States in the International Political Economy.

Description

Analysis of the contending theoretical formulations of international relations, the international political economy, factors of sovereignty, nationalism, relations between the core, semi-periphery and peripheral countries, the role of the World Trade Organization in international trade relations, international terrorism, and global warming. The impact of international terrorism and international security on world politics are systematically analyzed in the context of an increasingly unipolar world as the struggle for hegemony ensues. The honors course is a full seminar with advanced teaching methods, focusing on major writing, reading, and research assignments, student class presentations, group discussions and interactions.

Course Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. Examine the impact of international institutions on contemporary issues in international relations.
2. Develop foreign policy recommendations for national, international, transnational, and/or subnational actors.
3. Apply any or a combination of contending theoretical formulations of international relations to a contemporary issue in international relations.

Course Content

1. Introduction to the intellectual foundations of international relations as an academic discipline
   a. Liberal institutionalism
   b. Hobbesian realism and its contemporary variant of neo-liberalism
   c. Marxist and neo-Marxist thinking
   d. Contribution of dependency theory to international relations theory
   e. Contribution of world systems theory to international relations theory
   f. Critical theory and contemporary criticisms of Eurocentric history of international relations scholarship
2. Liberal theories of international relations
   a. Origins of liberalism in reaction to mercantilism
   b. Contributions of Adam Smith and David Ricardo
   c. Assumptions of liberalism as rational, utility-maximizing actors
   d. Limitations of economic role of government
3. Marxist theory of international relations
   a. Origins of Marxist perspective as a reaction to liberalism
   b. Assumptions of Marxist perspective
   c. Classes as dominant actors in the political economy
   d. Classes acting in their material economic interests
   e. Exploitative nature of capitalism and the international division of labor
4. The realist theory of international relations
   a. Intellectual contributions of Hobbes, Machiavelli, Colbert, and List
   b. Emergence of realism in the 1930s
   c. Assumptions of realism
   d. Nation-states as dominant actors
   e. Nation-states as power-maximizers
   f. Nation-states as rational actors
   g. Theory of hegemonic stability
   h. Realism, political processes, and complex interdependence
   i. Roles of international organizations
5. Contribution of dependency theory to international relations theory
   a. Dependency as a socio-economic and political concept
   b. Structural dependency as a socio-economic and political concept
   c. The gap between rich and poor countries
   d. Domestic inequality
   e. Convergence and divergence
   f. The state, growth, and inequality
   g. Role of multilateral agencies in dependent underdeveloped states
   h. The World Trade Organization in international trade
6. World systems theory contribution to international relations theory
   a. Emergence of world capitalist system in 16th century Europe
   b. Role of agriculture in the development of world capitalist system in 16th century
   c. Incorporation of areas into world system
   d. Concept of core, semi-periphery, and periphery
   e. Contemporary function of world capitalist system

7. Role of non-government organizations (NGO) in the international political economy
    a. The role of the United Nations in international relations
    b. The role of specialized agencies of the UN in international relations
    c. The role of UNCHR in international conflict

Lab Content

Not applicable.

Special Facilities and/or Equipment

When taught as an online section, students and faculty need ongoing and continuous internet and email access.

Method(s) of Evaluation

Methods of Evaluation may include but are not limited to the following:

Consistent and systematic participation in seminar
Oral presentations (PowerPoint) of assigned topics
Development of research paper topic, thesis, outline, and analytical model utilizing the scientific method of analysis
Development of 20 page research paper demonstrating critical, analytical, research, and writing skills
Presentation of extract of research paper assignment to seminar

Method(s) of Instruction

Methods of Instruction may include but are not limited to the following:

Formal weekly lectures
Oral group presentations (PowerPoint) on assigned topics
In-class seminar-style discussions on assigned topics of critical importance to class material, with intensive and systematic participation from students
Small group discussions on current issues in international relations
Instructor meets in extra session with all seminar students in a series of individual and small group learning communities, out-of-class, to work together on students' research and presentation preparation

Representative Text(s) and Other Materials

Kaufman, J.. Introduction to International Relations: Theory and Practice, 3rd ed.. 2022.

McGlinchey, S.. Foundations of International Relations. 2022.

McGlinchey, S.. International Relations. 2016.

McGlinchey, S., R. Walters, and C. Scheinpflug (eds). International Relations Theory. 2017.

Although some texts are older than the suggested "5 years or newer" standard, they remain seminal pieces of scholarship (texts) in this area of study.

World Policy Journal articles.

Foreign Affairs journal.

Foreign Policy Journal.

Latin American Perspectives (print journal).

School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS), Johns Hopkins University. The SAIS Review (print journal).

Types and/or Examples of Required Reading, Writing, and Outside of Class Assignments

1. Weekly assigned readings from texts, of between 200-300 pages, on module for week
2. 5-6 pages of written outline of required weekly reading assignments
3. Development of research paper topic, thesis, outline, and analytic model
4. 20 page critical analytical research paper assignment utilizing the scientific method
5. Students work closely with instructor individually and in small groups on leading assigned seminar discussion topic, presentation, and research paper assignment

Discipline(s)

Political Science