

PSCI 4800A
Advanced International Relations Theory
Mondays 11:35-2:25
Online on Zoom

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Office Hours: On Zoom, Tuesdays 12:00-1:00pm or by appointment (<https://carleton-ca.zoom.us/my/prof.robinson?pwd=U0ISZnNVMUJ3ZkllM3cxNEVXTWNkZz09>)

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

While we often hear of a divide between ‘theory’ and ‘practice’, this course will challenge that familiar division. Instead of the usual ‘menu’ of ready-made settled ‘theories’ or approaches to IR from which scholars, policy-makers or leaders may choose (realism, liberalism, constructivism) this course is interested in the practice of ‘theorizing’ – the way in which we use concepts, values and assumptions to consider, evaluate and make sense of the world. In this sense, theorizing can be understood as an intensely ‘political’ activity, insofar as it involves making judgements not only about how to ‘solve problems’ or ‘make decisions’, but also about what gets to count as a problem in the first place. Thus, considering how theorizing works in IR involves considering assumptions or arguments about epistemology (how we can ‘know’, and the basis of our judgments), ontology (what ‘exists’ in the world, and in what form), and methodology (the ‘tools’ we use to study a problem or issue). Our lenses or ‘frames’ can bring things into focus, but they can also ‘filter out’ other things. In this sense, it could be argued that theory ‘makes’ or constitutes world politics.

This course is organized thematically to explore a range of theoretical thinking surrounding key concepts, important debates and approaches in contemporary IR theory. The focus is on ‘critical theory’ – theory that rejects the hard separation of theory and practice, and recognizes the fundamental connection between ‘knowledge’ and ‘power’. Rather than investigating a different theory every week, it approaches international relations theory thematically and comparatively.

The aim of this course is to expose students to key texts and cutting-edge work in critical International Relations theory. Students will develop critical thinking skills through their reading, interpretation, comparison and critical evaluation of these theories. Students should emerge from this course with a new appreciation of the centrality of theory, and the importance of critique, in world politics.

ASSESSMENT AT A GLANCE:

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Due Date</u>
Seminar Attendance and Participation	25%	ongoing

Quotes and Questions – Group Work	8% (2 x 4%)	twice during the term
Article Review Essay (1500-1800 words)	20%	February 5th
Research essay proposal (500-600 words)	10%	February 26th
Participation in Essay Workshop	2%	March 18th
Final Research Essay (3000-3500 words)	35%	April 8

ASSESSMENT IN DETAIL:

Attendance and Participation:

Attendance at weekly seminars is required. Your participation grade will be based on your attendance at these meetings throughout the term, as well as the quality and quantity of your participation in discussions. Students are expected to have completed the required reading, or as much as possible, before the seminar and to arrive prepared to discuss that week's material. If you have to miss a seminar for a legitimate reason, please inform me as soon as possible (preferably before the seminar). All students are required to show basic courtesy and respect for the instructor and the other students by listening attentively during the seminar.

The seminar will be structured around QUOTES and QUESTIONS. Each week, starting Week 2, students will choose a meaningful quotation (at least two sentences but no more than a single paragraph) from one of the readings that addresses a key idea, and which they find interesting, thought-provoking or which they feel is contentious or problematic. They should also prepare a discussion question RELATED TO THE QUOTATION (i.e., a question that arises from the quotation). The aim is to choose quotes and questions that will generate meaningful class discussion. Quotes and questions should be posted on the class Google Doc no later than 24 hours before class (i.e., by 11:30am on Sunday). *Your weekly completion of this task will be a component of your general participation grade.

Marking Criteria:

- Regular attendance in seminars
- Carefully chosen quotation and thoughtful question are prepared each week.
- Regular and informed contributions to full-class and small group discussions
- Demonstrated knowledge of readings
- Active/engaged listening to others and respectful engagement with others' comments.

Quotes and Questions: Group Work:

Each week, at the beginning of class, I will choose 5 students to read and speak to their quote and question in the seminar. Students should be prepared not simply to read their quote and question, but to share their thoughts on why they chose it and explain why it is significant or important in relation to the article itself, the topic that week, and International Theory more generally. These students will lead their groups in breakout discussions on their quotes and questions. Each student can be expected to be selected for this twice in the course of the term; each presentation/group lead will be worth 4% of your mark. *You will be graded on the quality of your quote and question, your discussion of its significance in class, and your ability to lead a small group discussion and report on this discussion to the whole class.*

Article Review (due January 29th at 11:59pm)

All students will write a critical review of ONE of the following articles: (available online through the library):

- Sharma, A. (2021). Decolonizing International Relations: Confronting erasures through indigenous knowledge systems. *International Studies*, 58(1), 25-40.
- Hutchings, K., & Owens, P. (2021). Women thinkers and the canon of international thought: Recovery, rejection, and reconstitution. *American Political Science Review*, 115(2), 347-359.
- Smith, N. R., & Dawson, G. (2022). Mearsheimer, Realism, and the Ukraine war. *Analyse & Kritik*, 44(2), 175-200.

Your review should assess critically the principal arguments made in the article, using some of the literature we will already have examined in the course, if appropriate, along with any other material that you may find useful. Your argument should focus on concepts and conceptualization, and/or theory and theories, including metatheory. Be sure to strike a balance between the descriptive elements of the review and the critical assessment; make sure your own 'voice' comes through. You should have a clear argument regarding your assessment of the contribution of the article and the persuasiveness of its analysis. Of course, all sources must be properly cited with a reference list at the end.

Essay Brainstorming Session: Part of our class on **February 12th** will be devoted to an **essay brainstorming session**. For this, simply bring your initial idea(s), and your early plans, for your research essay. Students will brainstorm possible topics with each other and the instructor. This is the time to have your idea for an essay approved.

Research Essay Proposal (due February 26th at 11:59pm)

All students will write a brief (500-600 words, not including bibliography) proposal for their final research papers. The proposals should include the following:

1. Working title
2. The **problem** guiding the inquiry (including context)
3. Research question
4. Brief statement of the (working) central argument or thesis
5. Theoretical/analytical framework or conceptual approach
6. Key sections for the analysis
7. Annotated Bibliography with at least 5 sources (at least 3 of which must not be course readings). Annotations should be 2-4 sentences each.

Essay Workshop (March 18th): All students will present their essay drafts during a special seminar. The class will be divided into groups based on topic; students will share their plan/draft with the other members of the group in advance of the workshop class. Each student will prepare a ten-minute presentation of their research to date; presentations must include all the components from the proposal (above), as well as any further research that has been completed. Students will receive 2 marks if they a) share their essay plan/draft with group members ahead of

the workshop; b) prepare and deliver a well-organized and informative presentation on their research to date; c) listen attentively to other presentations in their group, and offer constructive feedback to all group members.

Research Essay (due April 8th at 11:59pm) All students will write a final research paper on a topic of their choice related to IR theory. **Papers MUST engage in theoretical and/or conceptual analysis related to International Relations.** Papers can address a theoretical or meta-theoretical debate within the discipline, a new theoretical ‘turn’ and its existing or potential contribution to IR or compare two or more theoretical approaches to a particular issue or problem in international politics. In the latter case, make sure that your essay deals primarily with IR theory, and that the empirical issue serves only to illustrate your theoretical claims. Papers should be 3500-4000 words, typed, double-spaced, 12-point font, including notes but excluding bibliography and should be properly referenced (using an in-text parenthetical citation method, such as APA or Chicago author-date). You should aim to use at least six scholarly sources for your essay.

The essay will be marked according to the following criteria:

1. Strength and Clarity of Research Question and Thesis Statement/Argument
2. Evidence of understanding of IR theories and concepts
3. Ability to apply theories and engage in sophisticated analysis.
4. Organization, Structure, Writing Style
5. Evidence of Research, and Adequate, Correct and Complete referencing of sources.

Readings: All the readings are on reserve and are available through the library’s ARES reserve system.

Submission of Written Assignments: All assignments are due by 11:59pm on the due date and are to be submitted through the designated portal on Brightspace. Please submit only **Word documents (no PDFs please)**. If you cannot submit an assignment by the due date, or you have to miss a seminar, please email me in advance, wherever possible. If no prior arrangement is made, please see below.

Late Policy: There is a 24-hour grace period on all assignment submissions. After that, there will be a penalty of 3% per day including weekends for all written work handed in late, unless an extension is granted by the instructor.

Weekly Topics and Readings:

Week 1

January 8

Introduction to the Course

Richard Devetak and Jacqui True (2022) ‘Introduction’ in Richard Devetak and Jacqui True, eds., *Theories of International Relations*. 6th edition. London: Bloomsbury. (esp. pp. 1-24).

**(This book is a great basic reference text for this course. You may wish to refer to some of the other chapters for background on IR theories, as well as themes and problems in IR theory).

Week 2

January 15

Theory, Theorising, Practice, and Policy

Zalewski, M. (1996). Chapter 18, 'All these theories yet the bodies keep piling up': theory, theorists, theorising'. *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond*.

Jones, L. (2009). International relations scholarship and the tyranny of policy relevance. *Journal of Critical Globalization Studies*. Issue 1: 125-131.

Duvall, Raymond and Latha Varadarajan (2003). On the Practical Significance of Critical International Relations Theory, *Asian Journal of Political Science*, 11(2).

Week 3

January 22

Sovereignty and Anarchy

Loh, D. M., & Heiskanen, J. (2020). Liminal sovereignty practices: Rethinking the inside/outside dichotomy. *Cooperation and Conflict*, 55(3), 284-304.

Kyris, G. (2022). State recognition and dynamic sovereignty. *European journal of international relations*, 28(2), 287-311.

Hobson, J. M. (2014). The Twin Self-Delusions of IR: Why 'Hierarchy' and Not 'Anarchy' is the Core Concept of IR. *Millennium*, 42(3), 557-575.

Week 4

January 29

Power

Nye, J. S. (2021). Soft power: the evolution of a concept. *Journal of Political Power*, 14(1), 196-208.

Enloe, C. (1996). Margins, silences and bottom rungs: how to overcome the underestimation of power in the study of international relations. *International theory: Positivism and beyond*, 186-202.

Bieler, A., & Morton, A. D. (2004). A critical theory route to hegemony, world order and historical change: neo-Gramscian perspectives in International Relations. *Capital & Class*, 28(1), 85-113.

Week 5 (Article Review due today)

February 5

Race and Imperialism

Thompson, D. (2013). Through, against and beyond the racial state: the transnational stratum of race. *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 26(1), 133-151.

Hobson, J. M. (2022). Unmasking the racism of orthodox international relations/international political economy theory. *Security Dialogue*, 53(1), 3-20.

Barkawi, T., & Laffey, M. (2002). Retrieving the imperial: Empire and international relations. *Millennium*, 31(1), 109-127.

Week 6 (Essay Brainstorming Session in class today)

February 12

Gender

Akbari-Dibavar, A. (2018). Gender, race, and international relations. In *Race, Gender, and Culture in International Relations* (pp. 58-79). Routledge.

Hooper, C. (1998). Masculinist practices and gender politics: The operation of multiple masculinities in international relations. In Marisya Zalewski and Jane Parpart, eds., *The "Man" Question in International Relations*. London: Routledge.

Cockburn, C. (2010). Gender relations as causal in militarization and war: A feminist standpoint. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 12(2), 139-157.

****No class February 19th; Reading Week**

Week 7 (essay proposals due today)

February 26

Security

Mitzen J. (2006). Ontological Security in World Politics: State Identity and the Security Dilemma. *European Journal of International Relations*. 12(3):341-370.

Wæver, O. (1995). Securitization and Desecuritization, Ch. 3, in Ronnie Lipschutz, ed., *On Security*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Åhäll, L. (2016). The dance of militarisation: A feminist security studies take on 'the political'. *Critical Studies on Security*, 4(2), 154-168.

Week 8

March 4

Norms and Ethics

Björkdahl, A. (2002). Norms in international relations: Some conceptual and methodological reflections. *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 15(1), 9-23.

Pattison, J. (2011). The ethics of humanitarian intervention in Libya. *Ethics & International Affairs*, 25(3), 271-277.

Burke, A. (2022). Interspecies cosmopolitanism: Non-human power and the grounds of world order in the Anthropocene. *Review of International Studies*.

Week 9

March 11

Borders and Biopolitics

Doty, R. L. (2011). Bare life: Border-crossing deaths and spaces of moral alibi. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 29(4), 599-612.

Salter, M. B. (2006). The global visa regime and the political technologies of the international self: Borders, bodies, biopolitics. *Alternatives*, 31(2), 167-189.

Berman, J. (2010). Biopolitical management, economic calculation and “trafficked women”. *International Migration*, 48(4), 84-113.

Week 10

March 18

Essay Workshop

****No readings**** Students will prepare presentations on their essay research to date and receive feedback from their peers

Week 11

March 25

Settler Colonialism and Indigeneity

Beier, J. M. (2009). Forgetting, remembering, and finding indigenous peoples in international relations. In *Indigenous Diplomacies* (pp. 11-27). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Lightfoot S. (2021) Decolonizing Self-Determination: Haudenosaunee Passports and Negotiated Sovereignty. *European Journal of International Relations*, 27(4): 971-994.

Simpson, A. (2016). The state is a man: Theresa Spence, Loretta Saunders and the gender of settler sovereignty. *Theory & Event*, 19(4).

Week 12

April 1

Decolonizing International Relations?

Capan, Z. G. (2017). Decolonising International Relations? *Third World Quarterly*, 38(1), 1-15.

Pison Hindawi, C. (2021). Decolonizing the Responsibility to Protect: On pervasive Eurocentrism, Southern agency and struggles over universals. *Security Dialogue*, 53(1): 38-56.

Barkawi, T. (2016). Decolonising war. *European Journal of International Security*, 1(2), 199-214.

Week 13 (Final Research Essays due today)

April 8

No class; complete and submit essays

Appendix

Student Mental Health

As a university student, you may experience a range of mental health challenges that significantly impact your academic success and overall well-being. If you need help, please speak to someone. There are numerous resources available both on- and off-campus to support you. Here is a list that may be helpful:

Emergency Resources (on and off campus): <https://carleton.ca/health/emergencies-and-crisis/emergency-numbers/>

- **Carleton Resources:**

- Mental Health and Wellbeing: <https://carleton.ca/wellness/>
- Health & Counselling Services: <https://carleton.ca/health/>
- Paul Menton Centre: <https://carleton.ca/pmc/>
- Academic Advising Centre (AAC): <https://carleton.ca/academicadvising/>
- Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS): <https://carleton.ca/csas/>
- Equity & Inclusivity Communities: <https://carleton.ca/equity/>

- **Off Campus Resources:**

- Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region: (613) 238-3311 or TEXT: 343-306-5550, <https://www.dcottawa.on.ca/>
- Mental Health Crisis Service: (613) 722-6914, 1-866-996-0991, <http://www.crisisline.ca/>
- Empower Me: 1-844-741-6389, <https://students.carleton.ca/services/empower-me-counselling-services/>
- Good2Talk: 1-866-925-5454, <https://good2talk.ca/>
- The Walk-In Counselling Clinic: <https://walkincounselling.com>

Requests for Academic Accommodation

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request, the processes are as follows:

Academic consideration for medical or other extenuating circumstances: Please contact your instructor if you are experiencing circumstances that (a) are beyond your control, (b) have a significant impact your capacity to meet your academic obligations, and (c) could not have reasonably been prevented. Decisions on academic consideration are in your instructor's discretion; they will be guided by the course learning outcomes and the principle of good faith. Please see [here](#) for more details. For considerations relating to course work, your instructor may request that you complete the [Self-Declaration form](#). To apply for a deferral of your final exam, you must submit the Self-Declaration form to the Registrar's Office no later than three days after the scheduled examination or take-home due date.

Pregnancy accommodation: Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For accommodation regarding a formally-scheduled final exam, you must complete the Pregnancy Accommodation Form ([click here](#)).

Religious accommodation: Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details [click here](#).

Accommodations for students with disabilities: If you have a documented disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation, or contact your PMC coordinator to send your instructor your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term. You must also contact the PMC no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, reach out to your instructor as soon as possible to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. For more details, [click here](#).

Accommodation for student activities: Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and to the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom. Reasonable accommodation will be provided to students who engage in student activities at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more information, please [click here](#).

For more information on academic accommodation, please contact the departmental administrator or visit: students.carleton.ca/course-outline.

Sexual Violence Policy

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated. Survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is an essential element of a productive and successful career as a student. Carleton's [Academic Integrity Policy](#) addresses academic integrity violations, including plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, misrepresentation, impersonation,

withholding of records, obstruction/interference, disruption of instruction or examinations, improper access to and/or dissemination of information, or violation of test and examination rules. Students are required to familiarize themselves with the university's academic integrity rules.

Plagiarism

The Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.” This includes reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include, but are not limited to: books, articles, papers, websites, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, art works, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, material on the internet and/or conversations.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- Any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else;
- Using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- Using another’s data or research findings without appropriate acknowledgement;
- Submitting a computer program developed in whole or in part by someone else, with or without modifications, as one’s own; and
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s work and/or failing to use quotations marks.

Use of Artificial Intelligence

Unless explicitly permitted by the instructor in a particular course, any use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools to produce assessed content (e.g., text, code, equations, image, summary, video, etc.) is considered a violation of academic integrity standards.

Procedures in Cases of Suspected Violations

Violations of the Academic Integrity Policy are serious offences which cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. When an instructor suspects a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy, the Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student. Penalties are not trivial. They may include a mark of zero for the assignment/exam in question or a final grade of "F" for the

course. More information on the University's Academic Integrity Policy can be found at: <https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>.

Intellectual property

Student or professor materials created for this course (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the author(s). They are intended for personal use and may not be reproduced or redistributed without prior written consent of the author(s).

Submission and Return of Term Work

Papers must be submitted directly to the instructor according to the instructions in the course outline. The departmental office will not accept assignments submitted in hard copy.

Grading

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor, subject to the approval of the faculty Dean. Final standing in courses will be shown by alphabetical grades. The system of grades used, with corresponding grade points is:

Percentage	Letter grade	12-point scale	Percentage	Letter grade	12-point scale
90-100	A+	12	67-69	C+	6
85-89	A	11	63-66	C	5
80-84	A-	10	60-62	C-	4
77-79	B+	9	57-59	D+	3
73-76	B	8	53-56	D	2
70-72	B-	7	50-52	D-	1

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by an instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

Carleton E-mail Accounts

All email communication to students from the Department of Political Science will be via official Carleton University e-mail accounts and/or Brightspace. As important course and university information is distributed this way, it is the student's responsibility to monitor their Carleton University email accounts and Brightspace.

Carleton Political Science Society

The Carleton Political Science Society (CPSS) has made its mission to provide a social environment for politically inclined students and faculty. By hosting social events, including Model Parliament, debates, professional development sessions and more, CPSS aims to involve all political science students at Carleton University. Our mandate

is to arrange social and academic activities in order to instill a sense of belonging within the Department and the larger University community. Members can benefit through our networking opportunities, academic engagement initiatives and numerous events which aim to complement both academic and social life at Carleton University. To find out more, visit us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/CarletonPoliticalScienceSociety/>.

Official Course Outline

The course outline posted to the Political Science website is the official course outline.