VESALIUS COLLEGE

Fall 2018

POL411M

The Theory and Practice of International Relations

Number of ECTS credits: 6

Classes on Wednesdays, 18:00-20:00 (VeCo 1).

Contact Details – Professor Tongfi Kim
E-mail: tongfi.kim@vesalius.edu
Office hours: Wednesdays, 10:30-11:30 (please, schedule an appointment).

Course Description

This foundational course introduces students to the major theories and core concepts of the discipline of International Relations (IR) and their practical application to historical and contemporary policy issues. Students analyze the different theoretical schools as well as Western and non-Western traditions of IR thinking and make the first connections on how the intellectual foundations of IR theories are related to the theoretical and conceptual assumptions behind peace studies, security studies and strategic studies as well as studies of diplomacy and global governance. The course will examine the influence of state actors and non-state actors on global affairs and will challenge students to reflect on the possibilities and constraints related to reforming the current practice of International Relations.
Major Learning Objectives, Teaching Methods, Testing and Feedback Questionnaire (MA GPSSS)

**Course code and course name:** Theory and Practice of International Relations  
**Instructor:** Tongfi Kim

**Summary:**  
Number of assignments used in this course: 3  
Number of Feedback occasions in this course (either written or oral): 3  
Number and Types of Teaching Methods: 3  
Does your course require graded student oral presentations?: Yes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Learning Objectives (see Categories A-F) – please write down each required Learning Objective</th>
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<th>Methods used to Teach Course Objectives</th>
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<th>Type, Timing and Numbers of Feedback given to Student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| A.1 Major Theories & Core Concepts of IR & their practical application to historical and contemporary policy issues | To learn the core theories of international relations (realism, liberalism and constructivism) and other influential theories in the discipline. To learn how to apply theoretical and conceptual tools to historical and contemporary policy issues. | Lecture, discussion, student presentation | Essay on applying theories of IR to a concrete policy issue (4,000 words) 60% (10% for the research proposal+50% for the final paper). Written Final Exam 40% | Oral feedback to the research question  
Written feedback to the proposal  
Written feedback to student presentations  
Informal feedback throughout the course during the seminar |
| A.4 Core actors, organizations and players at the national, regional and global level – both in the state-centric and non-state actor realm-capable of influencing major issues of peace, security and strategy (including the role of the individual and transnational networks) | To learn the levels of analysis and core actors in international relations. To learn how to theoretically analyze the roles of different actors. | Lecture, discussion, student presentation | Essay on applying theories of IR to a concrete policy issue (4,000 words) 60% (10% for the research proposal+50% for the final paper). Written Final Exam 40% | Oral feedback to the research question  
Written feedback to the proposal  
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<tr>
<td>A.5 Major processes, developments &amp; dynamics related to conflicts &amp; conflict resolution, from both a historical and contemporary perspective;</td>
<td>To learn different perspectives on what causes conflict and under what conditions cooperation is more likely.</td>
<td>Lectures will cover key concepts and issues, and readings will provide specific examples.</td>
<td>Essay on applying theories of IR to a concrete policy issue (4,000 words) 60% (10% for the research proposal+50% for the final paper). Written Final Exam 40%</td>
<td>Oral feedback to the research question Written feedback to the proposal Informal feedback throughout the course during the seminar</td>
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<td>A.8 Theoretical, conceptual and policy-oriented debates related to the major tools, policies and approaches related to the promotion of peace and security and the tackling of ‘classical’ and ‘emerging’ security threats</td>
<td>To learn the gap between academia and the policy world. To learn major academic and policy debates. To learn how to process complex information through theoretical frameworks.</td>
<td>Lectures will cover key concepts and issues, and readings will provide specific examples.</td>
<td>Essay on applying theories of IR to a concrete policy issue (4,000 words) 60% (10% for the research proposal+50% for the final paper). Written Final Exam 40%</td>
<td>Oral feedback to the research question Written feedback to the proposal Informal feedback throughout the course during the seminar</td>
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<td>A.10 Develop ideas and arguments emanating from the knowledge aspects as a basis for original research across the three sub-fields of this degree</td>
<td>To develop an argument based on alternative and conflicting theoretical approaches.</td>
<td>Discussion, consultation with the instructor, student presentation, research proposal, and the final essay.</td>
<td>Essay on applying theories of IR to a concrete policy issue (4,000 words) 60% (10% for the research proposal+50% for the final paper). Written Final Exam 40%</td>
<td>Oral feedback to the research question Written feedback to the proposal Written feedback to student presentations Informal feedback throughout the course during the seminar</td>
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<td>B.1 apply their multidisciplinary knowledge &amp; understanding to concrete challenges and issues of policy-making in the areas of global peace, security and strategy</td>
<td>To apply theoretical concepts to concrete policy issues.</td>
<td>Lecture, discussion, student presentation</td>
<td>Essay on applying theories of IR to a concrete policy issue (4,000 words) 60% (10% for the research proposal+50% for the final paper). Written Final Exam 40%</td>
<td>Oral feedback to the research question Written feedback to the proposal Written feedback to student presentations Informal feedback throughout the course during the seminar</td>
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<td><strong>B.3</strong> confidently understand and apply the value of theory, concepts and paradigms for formulating policy-relevant recommendations and analyses and use empirical policy examples and case studies for informing, reviewing and refining theoretical debates</td>
<td>To learn that we all have theoretical frameworks in our mind, and it is important to be conscious of the frameworks. To learn how to evaluate arguments based on empirical evidence.</td>
<td>Lecture, discussion, student presentation</td>
<td>Essay on applying theories of IR to a concrete policy issue (4,000 words) 60% (10% for the research proposal+50% for the final paper). Written Final Exam 40%</td>
<td>Oral feedback to the research question Written feedback to the proposal Written feedback to student presentations Informal feedback throughout the course during the seminar</td>
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<td><strong>C.1</strong> Developing and applying critical thinking skills and a critical mindset to the synthesis, comparing and contrasting and evaluation of competing theories of peace, security and strategic studies in a global context</td>
<td>To learn how to compare and evaluate different perspectives in a critical manner.</td>
<td>Lecture, discussion, student presentation</td>
<td>Essay on applying theories of IR to a concrete policy issue (4,000 words) 60% (10% for the research proposal+50% for the final paper). Written Final Exam 40%</td>
<td>Oral feedback to the research question Written feedback to the proposal Written feedback to student presentations Informal feedback throughout the course during the seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D.1</strong> Demonstrate and develop the ability to communicate arguments, recommendations and research results in a confident, convincing, precise, effective and engaging manner in written form</td>
<td>To learn how to carry out independent research. To write clearly and effectively.</td>
<td>Research proposal and the final essay.</td>
<td>Essay on applying theories of IR to a concrete policy issue (4,000 words) 60% (10% for the research proposal+50% for the final paper). Written Final Exam 40%</td>
<td>Oral feedback to the research question Written feedback to the proposal Written feedback to student presentations Informal feedback throughout the course during the seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D.4</strong> Demonstrate and develop the ability to communicate to the academic and scholarly community, embedded in concept-driven and</td>
<td>To communicate more clearly, fluently and accurately, in oral and written forms.</td>
<td>Discussion, student presentations</td>
<td>Essay on applying theories of IR to a concrete policy issue (4,000 words) 60% (10% for the research proposal+50% for the final paper).</td>
<td>Informal feedback throughout the course during the seminar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Major Learning Objectives
(see Categories A-F) – please write down each required Learning Objective

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</thead>
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<td><strong>E.1</strong> Develop the ability to critically reflect on one’s strengths and weaknesses with a view to continuously improve and enhance one’s knowledge, skills and capacities; To critically reflect on one’s own assumptions about international relations.</td>
<td>Lecture, discussion, student presentation</td>
<td>Essay on applying theories of IR to a concrete policy issue (4,000 words) 60% (10% for the research proposal+50% for the final paper). Written Final Exam 40%</td>
<td>Oral feedback to the research question Written feedback to the proposal Written feedback to student presentations Informal feedback throughout the course during the seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>E.2</strong> Develop independence of thought and an autonomous approach to studying, research as well as the acquisition and enhancement of new knowledge and skills in unfamiliar environments To learn how to carry out independent research. To be exposed to unfamiliar perspectives.</td>
<td>Discussion, student presentation, writing the research proposal and the final essay</td>
<td>Essay on applying theories of IR to a concrete policy issue (4,000 words) 60% (10% for the research proposal+50% for the final paper). Written Final Exam 40%</td>
<td>Oral feedback to the research question Written feedback to the proposal Written feedback to student presentations Informal feedback throughout the course during the seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>F.5</strong> Develop and demonstrate an attitude of open-mindedness, academic integrity, critical and self-critical reflection with a view to contribute to rigorous analysis and diverse academic debates To differentiate between empirical and normative statements. To have an open-minded attitude toward different perspectives.</td>
<td>Lecture, discussion, student presentation</td>
<td>Essay on applying theories of IR to a concrete policy issue (4,000 words) 60% (10% for the research proposal+50% for the final paper). Written Final Exam 40%</td>
<td>Oral feedback to the research question Written feedback to the proposal Written feedback to student presentations Informal feedback throughout the course during the seminar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course Assessment: Assignments Overview

The students will be evaluated on the basis of their performance in the following assignments:

- Student presentations: 10%
- Essay proposal: 10%
- Final Essay: 40%
- Final examination: 40%

TOTAL: 100%

Deadlines:
- Contact the instructor about the topic for the essay by 12 September.
- Proposal for the final essay by 16:00, 3 October.
- Final essay by 16:00 on 21 November. To be submitted on Canvas, which uses Turnitin to detect plagiarism.

Work Load Calculation for this Course:

This course counts for 6 ECTS, which translates into 150 – 180 hours for the entire semester for this course. This means that you are expected to spend roughly 10 hours per week on this course. This includes 2 hours of lectures or seminars per week and 8 hours ‘out of class’ time spent on preparatory readings, studying time for exams as well as time spent on preparing your assignments. Please see below the estimated breakdown of your work-load for this course.

Time spent in class: 2 hours per week / 28 hours per semester
Time allocated for course readings: 7 hours per week / 84 hours per semester
Time allocated for preparing for seminar brief and seminar leading: 7 hours
Time allocated for preparing for the final essay and proposal: 25 hours
Time allocated preparing/revising for written Final Exam: 7 hours

Total hours for this Course: 151 hours

Grading Scale of Vesalius College

Vesalius College grading policy, in line with the Flemish Educational norms, is now as stated follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Scale of 20</th>
<th>Scale of 100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>17.0-20.0</td>
<td>85-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>16.1-16.9</td>
<td>81-84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>15.3-16.0</td>
<td>77-80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>14.5-15.2</td>
<td>73-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>13.7-14.4</td>
<td>69-72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>13.1-13.6</td>
<td>66-68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>12.3-13.0</td>
<td>62-65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>11.5-12.2</td>
<td>58-61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Description of assessment activities, grading criteria and deadlines:

Student presentations (10%)

The in-class oral assignment consists of a short presentation of the seminar readings. Each week, some students will summarize the weekly readings and steer discussions in the class. The presentation a) introduces the main points that the article raises; b) raises up to 4 questions raised in the process of reading the article; c) steers discussions in class about the reading. Although the details can change according to the number of students enrolled, the presentation should last between 10 and 15 minutes, followed by another 15 minutes of discussions and Q&A. The number of presentations each student makes will be adjusted according to the number of students enrolled, and the grades will be averaged.

Each student will complement his/her presentation with a reading brief. The reading brief should present a brief abstract (no more than 150 words) of the article; put forward 4 questions to discuss in class (what are the main points raised in the article? Is the theoretical framework coherent? Does the theoretical framework fit the selected case well? How does this theoretical explanation compare and contrast to other IR theories? And so forth). The reading brief should be no longer than 1 page.

Students need to send me the electronic version of the reading brief by e-mail (tongfi.kim@vesalius.edu – with “Reading Brief: in the Heading) by 9pm the day before class and to hand in a hard copy in class. Your performance as the presenter will be assessed through the following criteria: presentation skills (30%), leading of discussion (15%), engagement with the audience (15%), and reading brief (40%). Although you are not required to use visual aid, such tools as Powerpoint slides are helpful.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptor</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Unsatisfactory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presentation skills (30 points)</td>
<td>Very well structured; focused and clear presentation Good use of visual aid (where provided)</td>
<td>Well-structured, mostly focused presentation. Appropriate visual aid (where provided)</td>
<td>Disorganized and unclear presentation. Visual aid is not used or organized at best (where provided).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leading discussion (15 points)</td>
<td>Very good leading questions; shows authority and easiness in steering debates</td>
<td>Overall engaging leading questions; confidence in steering debates</td>
<td>Uncertainty and discomfort in leading debates; the leading questions fail to intercept the audience’s interest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement with the audience (15 points)</td>
<td>Relevant follow-up questions; ability to steer the debates and to keep the audience engaged</td>
<td>Overall good ability to steer discussions and to invoke some discussions</td>
<td>Inability to steer the debates and to engage with the audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading brief/Abstract (40 points)</td>
<td>The brief identifies the core argument of the paper in a succinct and clear manner. It offers a good platform for discussions and connects it to the class contents</td>
<td>The abstract aptly summarizes the core argument of the paper. Information could be better selected. Overall good platform for discussion and good attempt to relate to the class contents</td>
<td>The abstract is not structured at best. Selected information is not necessarily the most relevant and does not adequately inform discussion. Scanty reflection on the meaning of the reading for the class contents.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total
Essay proposal (10%)

By by 16:00, 3 October, you need to submit an essay proposal. The proposal is the first step towards the final essay. Please consult with the instructor about your topic by 12 September and get approval before starting to work on your paper. A sample proposal will be distributed by the instructor. The proposal should be a short (about 400-800 words) document which establishes a working plan and defines the provisional structure of your written work. You may change research plans and strategies along the way. The research proposal ensures that you start engaging with your topic in due time; it helps you develop planning and time-management skills; and ensures you get acquainted with the literature in due time. Start collecting information on your selected topic; start reading main texts/articles; take your research interest seriously and start planning your research in a systematic manner. The proposal should include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A clear research question (30%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>The questions should be as clear and simple as reasonably possible. The research question may be a mere empirical or factual question, it may be theoretically inspired, above all it should be clear and straightforward. <em>Often research questions change throughout the research in the light of new additional empirical/theoretical information.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A paper outline (40%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Briefly explain how theories you selected are relevant to your research question. The paper outline should provide an indication of how you are going to investigate the research question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A tentative layout (10%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>The tentative structure and headings that are likely to appear in the final essay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preliminary bibliography (20%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>A bibliography directly related to the research question or research topic. List at least 5 academic works that you plan to refer to.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total (100%)</td>
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Final Essay (40%, by 16:00 on 21 November)

You will write an essay that applies two theoretical perspectives taught in the course to contemporary and persistent political problems and issues. If students wish to adopt an alternative theoretical approach (e.g. the English School, Critical Realism, Post-structuralism and so forth), they need to consult the instructor for additional readings.

Please communicate with the instructor about your topic and get approval before starting to work on your paper. This should be done via email by week 3 at the latest (12 September). Your essay is due by 16:00 on 21 November on Canvas, which uses Turnitin. A hard copy should be submitted in class as well. When submitting to Canvas, use an informative file name, including your surname and the issue covered (for example “Smith_Cuban Missile Crisis”). Make sure you submit your paper in Word format (NO PDF). **NOTE: Late submission reduces the score 10 percentage points per day (if you are late for 1 minute, your maximum point becomes 90%. It becomes 80% between 24 hours and 48 hours late, and**
so on). To avoid problems with the computer or the Canvas website, you are strongly encouraged to submit the paper a few days before the deadline. The essay should be submitted in Times New Roman font, 12 points type, 1.5 spaced. It should be between 3200 and 4000 words, **INCLUDING** every part of the paper (e.g., the cover page, footnotes, and the bibliography). Papers that deviate from the word range will be penalized.

Papers should be structured in 4 sections, distinguishable by clear headings and subtitles (see the table below for more details). Please note that the title of each section is your compass to navigate both your topic and your selected theories. Make sure that each section is coherent and that the argument draws on and follows the selected subtitle. The paper should be structured as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Description and checklist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
<td>This section clearly identifies the research topic and two theories you selected. It identifies a clear research question and outlines the structure of the research. <strong>Checklist:</strong> Introduce key factual information to understand your case study; Highlight the most problematic/worth-exploring aspects of your selected topic; Outline briefly the structure of the paper and your main argument.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part two – A first theoretical explanation</strong></td>
<td>The second part offers a first theoretical explanation (<em>why?</em>) for the selected issue/event/decision/foreign policy behavior. It summarizes the core assumptions of the selected theoretical approach and adequately justifies the relevance of the selection of this theory for the proposed analysis. It offers a coherent explanation of the selected topic through the lens of this theoretical approach. <strong>Checklist:</strong> Identify a relevant theory to address your research question; Sum up the core assumptions of the theory under enquiry and review critically the core arguments of most representative scholars; Explain how and to what extent this theory is relevant for your case study; proceed to the analysis of your case through the lens of this theoretical approach; Draw on facts, empirical examples and data to analyze your topic; use and synthesize sources and reference to support your key arguments and address the research question; apply the core assumptions of the theory to your analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part three – a second theoretical explanation</strong></td>
<td>The third part presents an alternative theoretical explanation. It summarizes the core assumptions of the selected theoretical approach and offers a coherent explanation of the selected topic through the lens of this theoretical approach. <strong>Checklist:</strong> Identify another relevant theory to address your research question; Sum up the core assumptions of the theory under enquiry and review critically the core arguments of most representative scholars; Explain how and to what extent this theory is relevant for your case study; proceed to the analysis of your case through the lens of this theoretical approach; Draw on facts, empirical examples and data to analyze your topic; use and synthesize sources and references to support your key arguments and address the research question; apply the core assumptions of the theory to your analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conclusion</strong></td>
<td>The last part compares the two selected theoretical explanations (<em>if they are inconsistent, compatible; which one is more convincing etc.</em>) and presents the main concluding remarks. <strong>Checklist:</strong> Compare, contrast and synthesize the main arguments; Critically assess your analysis and identify its limits. Why did one theory work better for your case than the other theory? Discuss other cases to which your argument might apply. Do your findings offer policy implications? What needs to be done, based on your findings?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
System of bibliographic referencing

Please use APA, MLA, Chicago, or Harvard style for your referencing.

For general guidance on “Acknowledging, Paraphrasing, and Quoting Sources”, please consult this overview developed by the writing center at University of Wisconsin-Madison and available at: http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/Acknowledging_Sources.pdf.

Please, also consult the following short guide for “Acknowledging, Paraphrasing, and Quoting Sources”, available at: writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/Acknowledging_Sources.pdf

For direct quotes, page number, when available, should be cited in the text of your work.

Harvard style of referencing - Examples:

In-text citation:
Both unities of discourses and objects are formed “by means of a group controlled decisions” (Foucault, 2011:32).

Habermas acknowledges the crucial function of language as a “medium of domination and social force” (1974:17, in Forchtner, 2011:9).

In your reference list:

How to quote books:

How to quote chapters in edited books:

How to quote articles:

How to quote electronic sources:

Grading Form for the final essay (40%)

The following criteria will be applied in assessing your written work: Selection of a clearly focused topic, a logical, well-structured and well-organized analysis; Ability to select and summarize core theoretical tools; Critical understanding of the concepts and theories studied in the course; Ability to proceed to a theoretically grounded analysis of the selected topic. (see below for more details).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fail</th>
<th>Pass</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
<td>The research question is irrelevant or not well identified; the topic is not adequately contextualized; the outline is absent or flawed.</td>
<td>The introduction gives sufficient information on the research question, the topic and the outline. A combination of flaws hinders the author’s argument.</td>
<td>Good ability to identify a research question and to pose a relevant research question. Some redundancies. The outline is overall good and background information is relevant.</td>
<td>Clear and concise research question / Succinct outline of structure of the paper and main argument.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research Question/ Statement / (20)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reviewing, understanding</strong></td>
<td>Theories are simply mentioned. Weak</td>
<td>Sufficient engagement with theoretical</td>
<td>Overall, the literature review is well conceived.</td>
<td>Clear identification of academic arguments and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
and applying theories (25)

engagement with the course material. Severe conceptual or theoretical oversimplification.

arguments; not all information provided is relevant to the analysis or the research question. The literature review shows basic critical engagement.

Some minor imprecision in the selection of the literature and the conceptual choice; Some flaws in the selection of the theoretical toolkit; fairly good critical abilities.

debates; Good ability to compare and contrast key arguments; good justification and critical assessment of theoretical frameworks.

Analysis / Discussion (25)

The analysis shows major pitfalls; Inability to apply theoretical frameworks to empirical cases. Information provided is insufficient; the analysis is superficial.

Sufficient ability to review relevant facts for the analysis. Core statements are not always supported by reference or evidence; not all information is relevant. Basic critical engagement.

Good critical analysis, supported by good information and data; some flaws in the use of data and reference in support of one’s argument; Minor flaws in the argumentative line and the application of theories.

Excellent use of evidence and references; Clear application of theoretical frameworks; Critical evaluation of core assumptions of other authors.

Structure (10)

Loose structure; failure to provide most relevant information. Serious mismatch between theory and analysis.

Some flaws in the structure of the paper; not all information is relevant; mismatch between theoretical and analytical frameworks.

Overall, the paper is well-structured. Some minor flaws in the organization hinder the strength of the argument.

Coherent and logical structure; clear argument, linking theories and empirical examples back to answering the main research question.

Conclusion (10)

The conclusions mainly repeat previous sections; no critical evaluation or reflection on main findings

The conclusions show some attempts to critically review the main findings

The conclusions show a good ability to engage critically with the topic and assess the main findings.

Succinct summary of key findings and answer to the research question; Critical and open-minded evaluation of core arguments and results. Offers policy implications.

Formal Aspects (10)

Incorrect expression/referencing system; Insufficient readings (less than 5)

Some flaws in the expression and the referencing systems; Sufficient number of sources (at least 5).

Overall correct use of language and referencing system; adequate number of sources (5-9 references).

Correct use of language and referencing system; Appropriate Number of Sources (10 or more references).

TOTAL

Final exam (40%)
The final exam (40%) will be held at the end of the course (location and time will be announced once the final exam schedule is posted). Questions for the final exam can address any topic covered in this semester. More details about the exam will be discussed in class.

Review for the final exam

In reviewing different theories, students are invited to focus and reflect on:

- The key propositions of each theory;
- The way in which each theory defines the structure and nature of the international system and main actors;
- The identification of the major units of analysis;
- The definition of the main logics of interactions;
- Key concepts of each theory
- The definition of power and instruments of international politics;
- Definition of the main analytical and research strategies;
- The scope of application of the theories;
- A general assessment of each theory;
- Examples of each theory’s application to reality

**Final exam grading criteria**

Close-ended questions are “right or wrong” questions. Open-ended questions will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure and completeness of the answer</th>
<th>Fail (0-1.6)</th>
<th>Pass (1.7 – 2.8)</th>
<th>Good (2.9 – 3.9)</th>
<th>Excellent (4-5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The answer is loosely structured and fails to provide most relevant information.</td>
<td>The answer provides only most relevant information and it is not structured at best.</td>
<td>The answer is well structured, although with some flaws. Information provided is pertinent and overall exhaustive.</td>
<td>The answer addresses the question in a structured, succinct and analytical manner.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expression</td>
<td>Expression is poor and technical vocabulary is not developed.</td>
<td>Expression is occasionally defective. Several imprecisions in the use of technical vocabulary.</td>
<td>Overall good capacity to express complex concepts and correct language. Some minor flaws</td>
<td>Excellent capacity to express and discuss complex concepts. Command of technical language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge and understanding of theoretical frameworks</td>
<td>Theories are simply mentioned. Weak engagement with the course material. Severe conceptual or theoretical oversimplification.</td>
<td>Sufficient engagement with theories; not all information provided is relevant or well explained. Sufficient understanding of theoretical frameworks.</td>
<td>Overall, theories are well presented and reviewed. Some minor imprecision in the review of theories and concepts; fairly good critical ability to assess theoretical frameworks.</td>
<td>Excellent understanding of arguments and debates; good critical assessment of theoretical frameworks; good ability to compare and contrast key arguments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to apply theoretical frameworks</td>
<td>The examinee fails to apply theoretical frameworks to empirical cases.</td>
<td>Sufficient attempt to relate theoretical frameworks to concrete cases although with some mistakes. Some ability to critically engage with the theories and topics under enquiry.</td>
<td>Overall, the examinee manages to relate theoretical and conceptual frameworks to concrete examples and cases. Some imprecisions and mistakes.</td>
<td>Excellent ability to apply theories to concrete cases. The answer reveals a critical understanding of both theoretical frameworks and topics under enquiry.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Vesalius College Attendance Policy**

As the College is committed to providing students with high-quality classes and ample opportunity for teacher-student interaction, it is imperative that students regularly attend class. As such, Vesalius College has a strict attendance policy. Participation in class meetings is mandatory, except in case of a medical emergency (e.g. sickness). Students will need to provide evidence for missing class (doctor’s note). If evidence is provided, the missed class is considered as an excused class. If no evidence is provided immediately before or after the class, the missed class is counted as an absence.

Participation implies that students are on time: as a general rule, the College advises that students should be punctual in this regard, but it is up to the professor to decide whether to count late arrivals as absences, or not.
Additional Course Policies

Late paper policy
The College considers late submissions as disruptive and disrespectful practices and strongly recommends students to work on their time management. Late papers will be assessed as follow:

- Late submission reduces the score 10 percentage points per day (if you are late for 1 second, your maximum point becomes 90%, until 24 hours after the deadline. The maximum point becomes 80% between 24 hours and 48 hours after the deadline, and so on).
- Students are strongly encouraged to submit papers at least an hour before the deadline. Problems with internet, printer, etc. will not excuse late submission.

In the event of exceptional circumstances which impede the delivery of assignments, a student may request prior to the assigned due date an extension without penalty. Students must accompany this request with a medical certificate or other proof of the extreme circumstance that impeded the fulfilment of the task. **In this case, the student should still submit the draft she/he has produced so far.**

Professors will examine the request and decide whether an extreme circumstance exists or does not exist. ‘Extreme circumstances’ must be significant, unpredictable and serious. These include medical treatment or distress for a family crisis or loss. These do not include time management problems, technical problems with the computer, inability to find sources, attending a wedding.

Academic Honesty
Academic dishonesty is **NOT** tolerated in this course. Academic honesty is not only an ethical issue but also the foundation of scholarship. Cheating and plagiarism (including self-plagiarism) are therefore serious breaches of academic integrity.

Following the College policy, cheating and plagiarism cases will be communicated in writing to the Student Conduct Committee for disciplinary action. Appropriate references and citations must be provided to any work, including your own previous writing. Grammar, spelling and punctuation count, so use the tools necessary to correct before handing in assignments.

Course Schedule

*Some changes may be made to the following schedule, and I reserve the right to revise the syllabus accordingly.

*In addition to the readings listed below, students will be sometimes required to read short news articles. Students are not required (but are encouraged) to read the suggested readings.

<p>| Part 1: Introduction to International Relations (IR) |
|----------------|----------------|
| W1            | 29 August      |
|               | Introduction to the course |
|               | Why do we study theories? How does theory help the |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W2</td>
<td>5 September</td>
<td>Core Paradigms: Realism, Liberalism and Constructivism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| W3   | 12 September| Realism  
*Cite the instructor about the topic for the research paper by 12 September!* |
| W4   | 19 September| Liberalism                                                              |
| W5   | 26 September| Constructivism                                                            |
| W6   | 3 October  | Realism, Liberalism, and Constructivism applied to U.S. alliances  
*Paper proposal due by 16:00* |
| W7   | 10 October | Revise your plan for the research paper based on written feedback from the instructor |
| W8   | 17 October | Rationalist theory                                                        |
| W9   | 24 October | Post-colonialism/Non-Western IR theory                                |
| Fall Recess | 31 October | Academic Holiday (no class)                                            |
| W10  | 7 November | Marxism/Critical Theory                                                 |
| W11  | 14 November| Feminism and Gender in IR/(anti)Racism                                 |
| W12  | 21 November| Green Theories  
**Final Essay due by 16:00 on 21 November** |
| W13  | 28 November| The Future of the Theory and Practice of International Relations          |
| W14  | 5 December | Review Week                                                                |
| W15  | 10 – 14 December | **FINAL EXAM**                                                                 |

**Readings:**

*In addition to the readings listed below, students will be often required to read short news articles. Students are not required (but are encouraged) to read the suggested readings.*

**Week 1: Introduction to the Academic Subject of International Relations, and the Theory-Practice Nexus**

Student Survey to be collected at the end of the class. Assignment of articles for student presentations.

**Required Readings:**


**Suggested Readings:**


**Week 2: Core Paradigms: Realism, Liberalism and Constructivism**

**Required Readings:**


15
Suggested Readings

In Weeks 3-5, you will see realism, liberalism, and constructivism applied to the rise of China, and in Week 6 to U.S. alliances.

Week 3: Realism

Required Readings:

Application

Suggested Readings:

Week 4: Liberalism
Required Readings:


Application


Suggested Readings:


Week 5: Constructivism

Required Readings


Application


Suggested Readings:


**Week 6: Realism, Liberalism, and Constructivism applied to U.S. alliances**

**Required readings:**

**Application**


**Suggested Readings:**


**Week 7: Revise your plan for the research paper based on written feedback from the instructor**

**Week 8: Rationalist Theory**

**Required readings:**


Suggested readings:

Week 9: Post-colonialism/Non-Western IR theory

Required readings:

Suggested readings:

**FALL RECESS (No class on October 31)**

**Week 10: Marxism and Critical Theory**

**Required Readings**


**Suggested Readings**


**Week 11: Feminism and Gender in IR/ (anti-)Racism**

**Required Readings**


**Suggested Readings**


**Week 12: Green Theories**

**Required Readings:**


**Suggested Readings:**


**Week 13: The Future of the Theory and Practice of International Relations**

**Required Readings:**


**Suggested Readings:**


### Weeks 14: Review Week

### Week 15: Final Exam

#### Periodical References (Academic journals)

#### Current affairs (newspapers)
For current affairs awareness, you are required to keep yourself up to date through outlets such as *the Economist, Financial Times* and *International Herald Tribune* websites. For a more in-depth coverage, access the electronic version of *Foreign Affairs* through your electronic account.

#### Useful websites

*Foreign Policy* (foreignpolicy.com)  
*Foreign Affairs* (https://www.foreignaffairs.com/)  
*The Diplomat* (http://thediplomat.com/) provides “analysis and commentary on events occurring in Asia and around the world.”  
*JSTOR* (http://www.jstor.org/) offers electronic files of numerous academic journals.  
*Google Scholar* (scholar.google.com/) “provides a simple way to broadly search for scholarly literature.”  

➤ **Think tanks:**

Further readings:

Introduction to the Course and to the Nature and Study of International Relations


Kaplan, Morton (1957, 2005), System and Process in International Politics, Colchester: ECPR Classics.


Diversity and Core Paradigms of International Relations Theory: Realism, Liberalism and Constructivism


**Classical, Neo-classical and Structural Realism**


Stephen Walt (2015), 'What should we do if the Islamic State Win? Leave with it'. *Foreign Policy*, 10 June.


**Liberalism and Neoliberalism**


Constructivism


**Realism / Liberalism / Constructivism**


**Post-colonialism/Non-Western IR theory**


**Marxism and Critical Theories**


Arlene B. Tickner (2013), 'Core, periphery and (neo)imperialist International Relations', *European Journal of International Relations*, 19: 627-646.


**Feminism**


**Green theories and environmental Issues**


**Theories, Philosophy of Science and Metatheoretical Debates.**


On International and Global Politics:


On doing (and writing) IR research:


