



Italian code: SPS/04 (old) – – GSPS-02/A (new)

Credits: 9

**Course: THEORIES AND MODELS OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS / TEORIE E MODELLI DELLE
RELAZIONI INTERNAZIONALI**

Main language of instruction: Italian

Other language of instruction: English

Head instructor

Professor Roberto De Rosa - roberto.derosa@unicusano.it

Objectives

The course provides students with the tools to understand the dynamics and scientific debates shaping international politics. It is divided into three parts:

- a) Foundations of IR: domestic and international spheres, institutions, legitimacy, actors, power structures, and historical patterns of competition and cooperation.
- b) Key Theories of International Relations: realism, liberalism, the English school, and constructivism,
- c) Contemporary Political Dynamics focusing on the liberal order, the goals of challengers to U.S. hegemony, and regional dynamics of the international system.

The course aims to introduce students to public debates on global political issues and prepares them for different international field.

Prerequisites for admission

Basic knowledge of political science and contemporary history is presumed.

Course structure

The course on Theories and Models of International Relations has the following learning objectives:

- To provide students with the terminology and basic concepts of International Relations, illustrating both theoretical and pragmatic aspects.
- To formulate, verify, and test research hypotheses related to international political phenomena, developing a non-ideographic study methodology.
- To enhance the understanding of international political dynamics.
- To foster the development of a critical awareness in students when faced with the complexity of international politics.
- To develop skills that enable students to participate in the public debate on international political issues, considering not only diplomatic and military dynamics but also energy-related dynamics.

Competencies

A. Knowledge and understanding:

The student must possess a solid understanding of the topics covered during the course and be able to consciously use the acquired tools. Specifically: to understand the theories and models applicable to International Relations, as well as the categories of actors and international institutions. Acquire an in-depth knowledge of the models and analytical categories of International Relations as well as apply conceptual and analytical tools to specific case studies, including from a comparative perspective.

B. Applying knowledge and understanding:

The student must demonstrate the ability to professionally apply the topics covered in the course with reference to International Relations. This includes identifying potential connections between theoretical aspects and practical outcomes in the analysis of concrete cases, thereby developing the skills characteristic of an International Relations analyst.

C. Making judgements:

The student must be able to apply the knowledge acquired to develop analyses that are as original as possible and process analytical data to define systemic or specific scenarios, contexts, or climates.

D. Communication skills:

The student must acquire an appropriate disciplinary vocabulary and be able to articulate it through various communication channels. They should be able to communicate clearly and thoroughly with specialists in the field while also effectively addressing non-specialists.

E. Learning skills:

The student must be able to apply the knowledge and skills acquired throughout the course in an integrated manner. They should complement these with knowledge from other courses in the program and develop methodological competencies that enable them to independently pursue new learning paths in the field of International Relations.

Syllabus

Subject 1 – SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ORDER: FROM THE MODERN STATE TO THE SYSTEM OF STATES

- Description of the discipline's scope and pragmatic aspects
- The notion of the international political system
- Characteristics of the interstate system
- Contemporaneity of international relations

Subject 2 – THEORIES AND PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS: THE BALANCE OF POWER

- The balance of power
- Realism and the balance of power theory
- The mechanism of the balance of power

Subject 3 – THEORIES AND PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS: HEGEMONY

- Basic definitions
- War and stability: theories and practices of system change
- Material and immaterial resources
- Critiques of hegemony theory and potential solutions

Subject 4 –GEOGRAPHY AND POLITICS IN THE INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL FRAMEWORK

- The importance of geography
- Classical theories and coercive instruments
- The fortunes and crises of geopolitics

Subject 5 – ACTORS IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS: REALIST THEORY

- Role, critiques, and strengths of international institutions
- Rationalist institutionalism
- Critiques of realism
- Constructivist institutionalism

Subject 6 – ECONOMIC ASPECTS: LIBERALISM AND INTERDEPENDENCE

- The theory of interdependence: origins and evolutions
- The liberalism approach
- Economic interdependence and domestic politics
- Analysis of consequences

Subject 7 – DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICS: THE THEORY OF PEACE

- Internal and external political contexts
- Domestic and international politics: expanding the decision-making arena
- The theory of democratic peace: war and political institutions

- Peace in the contemporary international system

Subject 8 – THE PROBLEM OF SECURITY: THE PARADIGM OF ANARCHY AND ITS OVERCOMING

- Security as a fundamental objective of political action
- The anarchic paradigm
- Cooperation and security
- The partial overcoming of the anarchic paradigm
- Security as a dilemma

Subject 9 – GLOBALIZATION AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

- Globalization
- National governance and global contexts
- International governance and globalization
- The end of the state?

Subject 10 – "THE CLASH OF CIVILIZATIONS": IDENTITY AND MULTICULTURALISM

- Multiculturalism: the meeting and clash of identities
- International relations and multiculturalism
- The contemporary international situation: interpretations
- Homogeneity and heterogeneity of international systems
- Historical, theoretical, and political issues

Evaluation system and criteria

The exam consists of an oral and/or written test aimed at assessing the ability to analyse and re-elaborate the concepts acquired, as well as a series of interactive activities carried out during the course.

Erasmus students are encouraged to contact the professor to agree on a customized syllabus.

Study materials (available in both Italian and English) will be provided directly by the professor if not available in the library. The oral exam can be taken in English.

The examination will be aimed at:

- ascertaining the knowledge and comprehension of the main IR theories and concepts;
- ascertaining the ability to apply that knowledge to current trends and events in international politics;
- ascertaining the mastery of the specific language concerning the IR vocabulary

Bibliography and resources

1. *Materials to consult*

Notes written by the instructor are available in Italian

2. *Recommended bibliography*

The student is required to select one (and only one) of the following recommended texts:

- A) - Italian version- Andreatta F., Clementi M., Colombo A., Koenig-Archibugi M., Parsi V. E., *Relazioni internazionali*, Il Mulino Bologna 2012.
- B) -English version- Robert Jackson, Georg Sørensen, and Jørgen Møller, *Introduction to International Relations. Theories and approaches*, Oxford, Oxford University Press (2022 - 8th edition). Only Part II (excluding chapter 6) and Part III:
- Part Two: "Classical Theories"
 - Chapter 3. Realism
 - Chapter 4: Liberalism
 - Chapter 5: International Society
 - Chapter 7: Social Constructivism
 - Chapter 8: Post-positivist Approaches: Post-structuralism, Postcolonialism, Feminism
 - Part Three: " Theory Meets the Real World: Policy and Issues"
 - Chapter 9: Foreign Policy
 - Chapter 10: Major Issues in IPE: Economic versus Political Power, Development, Globalization, How to Study the Real World
 - Chapter 11: Major Issues in IR: Climate Change, Terrorism, Religion, Power and Hegemony
 - Chapter 12: The Big Question: World Order or World Chaos?
- C) -English version- Dunne T. Kurki M, Smith S., *International Relation Theories: Discipline and Diversity*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2014.