

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY

School of International Studies

Theory of International Relations (IS-402N)

Monsoon Semester 2026

Course Teachers:	Professors Rajesh Rajagopalan & Jayati Srivastava	
Class Hours:	Mondays, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. & Thursdays, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.	
Classroom:	Room 229, SIS-2 Building	
Office:	Prof. Rajesh Rajagopalan Room 218, SIS-I Email: rajesh.sis.jnu@gmail.com	Prof. Jayati Srivastava Room 316, SIS-II Email: jayatis@jnu.ac.in
Office Hours:	Prof. Rajesh Rajagopalan Mondays, 11 am to 12 pm, Thursdays 1-2 pm (or by appointment)	
	Prof. Jayati Srivastava Mondays, 11 am to 1 pm (or by appointment)	

Course Description

This course is intended to introduce postgraduate students to theoretical approaches in the discipline of International Relations. The objective is to deal with the main theoretical orientations in the discipline and to give students an appreciation of the major intellectual tools available to them in analysing world affairs. Students are expected to go through the assigned reading before coming to class. Although this is an introductory course, it is at the postgraduate level. For this reason, almost all the assigned readings are original theoretical contributions, not textbooks.

Examinations and Grading

There will be one **mid-semester examination** (40% of grade) and a **final examination** (40% of grade). There will also be in-class quizzes which will constitute another 20% of your grade.

Students need to complete both the end and mid semester evaluation requirements, failing which they would be marked as absent. Dates for the mid-term and final will be announced in class.

Students must maintain a high degree of academic integrity, which includes but is not limited to cheating and copying in examination. Students must not take recourse to plagiarism or use of ChatGPT and similar AI tools for any mode of evaluation including written examination.

Attendance is mandatory.

Course Outline and Reading List

WEEK 1

What is IR Theory?

Kenneth N. Waltz, "Laws and Theories" in his *Theory of International Politics*; J. David Singer, "The Level-of-Analysis Problem in International Relations," *World Politics*, 14 (1), October 1961, pp. 77-92; Kenneth N. Waltz, "Reductionist and Systemic Theories" in his *Theory of International Politics*.

WEEK 2

Classics of Realism

Kautilya, *The Arthashastra*, pp. 541-579; Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, pp. 72-99; Thucydides, "The Melian Dialogue," *History of the Peloponnesian War*; Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, pp. 50-59.

WEEK 3

Realism to Neorealism

Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, pp. 3-17; Kenneth N. Waltz, "Political Structures", from *Theory of International Politics*, pp. 79-101; Kenneth N. Waltz, "Realist Thought and Neorealist Theory," *Journal of International Affairs* 44 (1) (Spring-Summer 1990), pp. 21-37.

WEEK 4

Defensive, Offensive, Neoclassical and Hegemonic Realism

Fareed Zakaria, "Realism and Domestic Politics," *International Security*, 17 (1) Summer 1992, pp. 177-98; John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, chapters 1 & 2; Gideon Rose, "Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy," *World Politics*, 51 (1), 1998, pp. 144-72; Robert Gilpin, "The Theory of Hegemonic War," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 18:4 (Spring 1988), pp. 591-613.

WEEK 5

Liberal Theory in IR: Managing International Conflict

Kenneth Oye, "Explaining Cooperation Under Anarchy: Hypotheses and Strategies," *World Politics* 38:1 (October 1985), pp. 1-24; Michael W. Doyle, "Liberalism and World Politics," *The American Political Science Review* 80:4 (December 1986), pp. 1151-69.

WEEK 6

Liberal Theory: Interdependence

Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, *Power and Interdependence*, pp. 3-31; Dale C. Copeland, *Economic Interdependence and War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015), pp. 17-23; John R. Oneal and Bruce Russett, "The Kantian Peace: The Pacific Benefits of Democracy, Interdependence and International Organizations, 1885-1992," *World Politics*, 52:1 (October 1999), pp. 1-37.

WEEK 7

Great Debates in IR

Morton Kaplan, "The New Great Debate: Traditionalism vs. Science in International Relations," *World Politics*, 19 (1), October 1966, pp. 1-20; Ole Wæver, "The Rise and the Fall of Inter-Paradigm Debate," in Steve Smith, Ken Booth and Marysia Zalewski, eds., *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 149-185; David A. Lake, "Theory is Dead, Long Live Theory: The End of the Great Debates and the Rise of Eclecticism in International Relations," *European Journal of International Relations* 19 (3), 2013, pp. 567-587.

WEEK 8: REVIEW & MID-TERM EXAM

WEEK 9

Constructivism

Ian Hurd, "Constructivism," Christian Reus-Smit and Duncan Snidal, eds., *Oxford Handbook of International Relations*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 298-316; Ted Hopf, "The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory," *International Security*, 23 (1), Summer, 1998, pp. 171-200; Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization* 46 (2), Spring 1992, pp. 391-425; Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, pp. 246-312.

WEEK 10

International Society/English School

Andrew Linklater, "English School," Scott Burchill, Andrew Linklater, et al, eds., *Theories of International Relations*, (Hampshire: Palgrave, 2005), third edition, pp. 84-109; Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics*, third edition, (Hampshire: Palgrave, 2002), pp. 3-21; Hedley Bull, "The Emergence of a Universal International Society" & "The Revolt Against the West," Hedley Bull and Adam Watson, eds., *The Expansion of International Society*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), pp. 117-126 & 217-228.

WEEK 11

Critical Theory

Richard Shapcott, "Critical Theory," *Oxford Handbook of International Relations*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 327-345; Andrew Linklater, "Achievements of Critical Theory," Steve Smith, Ken Booth and Marysia Zalewski, eds., *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 279-298; Richard Devetak, "Critical Theory", Scott Burchill and Andrew Linklater, eds., *Theories of International Relations* (London: Macmillan Press, 1996), pp. 145-178; Faruk Yalvaç, "Critical Theory: International Relations' Engagement with the Frankfurt School and Marxism," *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies*, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190846626.013.109>

WEEK 12

Post-Modernism

Richard Devetak, "Post-Modernism" in Scott Burchill, Andrew Linklater, et al, eds., *Theories of International Relations*, (Hampshire: Palgrave, 2005), third edition, pp. 161-187; Richard Ashley, "Untying the Sovereign State: A Double Reading of the Anarchy Problematique," *Millennium - Journal of International Studies*, 17 (2), 1988, pp. 227-262; R.B.J. Walker, "State Sovereignty and the Articulation of Political Space/Time," *Millennium - Journal of International Studies*, 20 (3), March 1991, pp. 445-461.

WEEK 13

Marxist and Gramscian IR

Andrew Linklater, "Marxism," in Scott Burchill, Andrew Linklater, et al, eds., *Theories of International Relations*, Hampshire: Palgrave, 2005, second edition, pp. 129-154; Lenin, V I, "Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism" in *Lenin's Selected Works*, vol. 1, Moscow: Progress, 1963, pp 667-766; Andre Gunder Frank, "The Development of Underdevelopment," *Monthly Review*, 18, September 1966, pp. 17-31; Robert W. Cox, "Gramsci, Hegemony and International Relations: An Essay in Method," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 12, 1983, pp. 162-75; Robert W. Cox, "Social Forces, States and World Orders: Beyond International Relations Theory," *Millennium Journal of International Studies*, 10 (2), June 1981, pp. 126-155.

WEEK 14

Feminist IR

Adam Jones, "Does 'Gender' Make the World Go Round? Feminist Critiques of International Relations," *Review of International Relations*, 22 (4), Oct. 1996, pp. 405-429; J. Ann Tickner, "Hans Morgenthau's Principles of Political Realism: A Feminist Reformulation," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 17 (3), 1988, pp. 429-440; V. Spike Peterson, "A Gendered Global Hierarchy," Grey Fry and Jacinta O' Hagan, eds., *Contending Images of World Politics*, (London: Macmillan Press, 2000), pp. 199-213; Cynthia Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches and Bases*, second edition (London: University of California Press, 2000), pp. 1-18; Cynthia Weber, "Why is There No Queer International Theory," *European Journal of International Relations*, 21(1), 2015 pp. 27-51.

WEEK 15

Post-Colonialism

Sankaran Krishna, "Race, Amnesia, and the Education of International Relations," *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*, 26 (4), 2001, pp. 40-424; Phillip Darby, A. J. Paolini, "Bridging International Relations and Postcolonialism," *Alternatives*, 19 (3), 1994, pp. 371-397; Edward Said, *Orientalism*, (New York: Vintage Books, Random House, 1979) pp. 1-28.

WEEK 16

Non-Western IR: Chinese, Indian, Islamic

Yan Xuetong, "A Comparative Study of Pre-Qin Interstate Political Philosophy," Yan Xuetong [Daniel A. Bell and Sun Zhe, eds., Edmund Ryden, trans.], *Ancient Chinese Thought, Modern Chinese Power* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011), pp. 21-69; Deepshikha Shahi and Gennaro Ascione, "Rethinking the Absence of Post-Western International Relations Theory in India: 'Advaitic Monism' as an Alternative Epistemological Resource," *European Journal of International Relations*, 2015, pp. 1-22; Shahrbanou Tadjbakhsh, "International Relations Theory and the Islamic Worldview," Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan, eds., *Non-*

Western International Relations Theory: Perspectives on and Beyond Asia, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2010), pp. 174-196.

WEEK 17

Theorizing Non-Alignment

A.P. Rana, "The Intellectual Dimensions of India's Nonalignment," *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (February 1969), pp. 299-312; A. Appadorai, "Non-Alignment: Some Important Issues," *International Studies*, 20 (1-2), 1981, pp. 3-11; Amitav Acharya, "Studying the Bandung Conference from a Global IR Perspective," *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 70 (4), pp. 342-357; Sunil Khilnani, Rajiv Kumar, Pratap Bhanu Mehta, et al, *NonAlignment 2.0: A Foreign and Strategic Policy for India in the 21st Century*, (New Delhi: Penguin, 2014), pp. 7-11.

WEEK 18: FINAL REVIEW