

School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University
Problems of International Relations (IS 452N) Winter 2019

Instructor: Rajesh Rajagopalan, Room 218, SIS Building, Ph: 2670-4593
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Schedule: Mondays 2:00-2:55 pm; 3:00-3:55 pm
Thursdays 9:00-9:55 am; 10:00-10:55 am
Office Hours: Mondays 1:00-2:00 pm; Thursdays 11:00-11:45 am (or by appointment)

Course Description

This course follows the introductory course on international relations theory in the previous semester and is designed as a companion course. Now that you have learned the basics of IR theory, in this course, we will look at how IR theory is employed to understand international politics and foreign policy from different perspectives. So we will discuss some key contemporary debates in international politics from opposing theoretical perspectives. While some of these debates are general in nature, others are particularly relevant to Indian foreign policy and the Indian situation in global politics. We will start with the debates around polarity and hegemony in IR. We will then look at the debate about the future of the Liberal International Order and the emerging US-China competition (a new Cold War?). The subsequent section will consider the role of regions and whether regional powers matter in international politics. The last few sections will consider issues such as whether Asian international politics are or will be different from previous, European-dominated international politics and how we might understand Indian foreign policy from a theoretical perspective.

Course Assessment

The course assessment will be as follows: there will be a mid-term and a final exam. The mid-term will account for 40% of the total grade and the final 50%. The mid-term will be for 2 hours and the final for three hours. The mid-term will require you to answer two essays, while for the final, you will answer three (500-700 words each). There will be a number of in-class snap tests. These will account for the remaining 10% and there will be no make-up tests for the snap tests. Questions will be based on the class discussions and lectures as much as on the readings, so don't miss classes. There will be NO make-up exams (unless you are hospitalized and have a medical certificate from the JNU medical centre – or authenticated by the JNU medical centre – to prove it).

Course Readings

Is the US Still the Unipolar Power?

Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth, "The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers in the 21st Century: China's Rise and the Fate of America's Global Position," *International Security*, 40:3 (Winter 2015/16): 7-53; Michael Beckley, "China's Century? Why America's Edge Will Endure," *International Security* 36:3 (Winter 2011/12): 41-78; Joshua R. Itzkowitz Shiffrin, Michael Beckley, "Correspondence: Debating China's Rise and U.S. Decline," *International Security* 37:3 (Winter 2012/13): 172-81; Yan Xuetong, "The Age of Uneasy Peace: Chinese Power in a Divided World," *Foreign Affairs*, December 11, 2018; Barry Posen, "Command of the Commons: The Military Foundations of U.S. Hegemony," *International Security* 28:1 (Summer 2003): 5-46.

Recommended Additional Reading: Ashley Tellis *et al*, *Measuring National Power in the Postindustrial Age: An Analysts Handbook* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2000); Michael Beckley, “The Power of Nations: Measuring What Really Matters,” *International Security* 43:2 (Fall 2018): 7-44.

Does the US Want to be the Unipolar Power?

Michael C. Desch, “America’s Liberal Illiberalism: The Ideological Origins of Overreaction in U.S. Foreign Policy,” *International Security*, 32:3 (Winter 2007/08): 7-43; John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt, “The Case for Offshore Balancing,” *Foreign Affairs* (July/August 2016): 70-83; Stephen G. Brooks, G. John Ikenberry, and William C. Wohlforth, “Don’t Come Home America: The Case Against Retrenchment,” *International Security*, 37:3 (Winter 2012/13): 7-51; Patrick Porter, “Why America’s Grand Strategy Has Not Changed: Power, Habit, and the U.S. Foreign Policy Establishment,” *International Security* 42:4 (Spring 2018): 9-46.

Additional Recommended Readings: Stephen M. Walt, *The Hell of Good Intentions: America’s Foreign Policy Elite and the Decline of U.S. Primacy* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2018); Barry Posen, *Restraint: A New Foundation for U.S. Grand Strategy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014); Barry R. Posen, “The Rise of Illiberal Hegemony: Trump’s Surprising Grand Strategy,” *Foreign Affairs* (March/April 2018).

Understanding Unipolarity

Read: Birthe Hansen, *Unipolarity and World Politics: A Theory and Its Implications* (New York: Routledge, 2011), chapter 1; Nuno P. Monteiro, *Theory of Unipolar Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014): 1-27; Special Issue of *World Politics* 61:1 (January 2009), essays by Martha Finnemore, “Legitimacy, Hypocrisy and the Social Structure of Unipolarity: Why Being A Unipole Is’nt All that Its Cracked Up To Be”; Stephen Walt, “Alliances in a Unipolar World”; Robert Jervis, “Unipolarity: A Structural Perspective”.

Additional Recommended Readings: In special Issue of *World Politics* 61:1 (January 2009): John Ikenberry, Michael Mastanduno and William Wohlforth, “Introduction: Unipolarity, State Behavior and Systemic Consequences”; William Wohlforth, “Unipolarity, Status Competition and Great Power Competition”; Michael Mastanduno, “System Maker and Privilege Taker: US Power and the International Political Economy”; Jack Snyder, Robert Y. Shapiro and Yaeli Bloch-Elkon, “Free Hand Abroad, Divide and Rule at Home.” Also: Stephen J. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth, *World Out of Balance: International Relations and the Challenge of American Primacy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008); See also reviews and comments in *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 24:2 (June 2011).

Why Has There Been No Balancing Against the U.S?

T.V. Paul, “Soft Balancing in the Age of US Primacy” *International Security* 30:1 (summer 2005): 46-71; Kai He and Huiyun Feng, “If Not Soft-Balancing, Then What? Reconsidering Soft Balancing and US Policy towards China,” *Security Studies* 17:2 (2008): 363-95.

Additional Recommended Readings: Read also in *International Security* 30:1 (summer 2005): Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth, “Hard Times for Soft Balancing”; Robert A. Pape, “Soft Balancing Against the United States”; Kier A. Lieber and Gerard Alexander, “Waiting for Balancing: Why the World is Not Pushing Back”; and in *International Security* 30:3 (Winter 2005-2006): Robert J. Art, Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth, Kier A. Lieber and Gerard Alexander, “Correspondence: Striking the Balance”, pp. 177-96.

A New Great Power Competition?

Aaron L. Friedberg, "The Future of U.S.-China Relations: Is Conflict Inevitable?" *International Security* 30:2 (Fall 2005): 7-45; Graham Allison, "The Thucydides Trap", *Foreign Policy*, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/06/09/the-thucydides-trap/#>; <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2015/09/united-states-china-war-thucydides-trap/406756/>

The Liberal International Order Debate

Paul Staniland, "Misreading the 'Liberal Order': Why We Need New Thinking in American Foreign Policy," *lanfareblog*, July 29, 2018; Gideon Rose, "The Fourth Founding: The United States and the Liberal Order," *Foreign Affairs*, December 11, 2018; John J. Mearsheimer, *The Great Delusion: Liberal Dreams and International Realities* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018) chapter 1,5,6.

Regional Powers and Regional Security: Do They Matter?

Andrew Hurrell, "One World, Many Worlds? The Place of Regions in the Study of International Politics," *International Affairs* 83:1 (2007): 151-66; Barry Buzan and Ole Waever, *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003): 27-127.

Additional Recommended Readings: Andrew Hurrell, "Hegemony, Liberalism and Global Order: What Space for Would-Be Great Powers?" *International Affairs* 82:1 (2006): 1-19; Daniel Flemes, *Conceptualising Regional Powers in International Relations: Lessons from the South African Case*, GIGA Working Papers No. 53 (June 2007) at <http://www.giga-hamburg.de/dl/download.php?d=/content/publikationen/pdf/wp53_flemes.pdf>; Amitav Acharya, "The Emerging Regional Architecture of World Politics," *World Politics* 59 (July 2007): 629-52;

Asia Future – Europe's Past?

Amitav Acharya, "Will Asia's Past Be Its Future?" and David C. Kang, "Hierarchy, Balancing and Empirical Puzzles in Asian International Relations," *International Security* 28:3 (Winter 2003-2004): 149-80; Darren J. Lim and Zack Cooper, "Reassessing Hedging: The Logic of Alignment in East Asia," *Security Studies*, 24:4 (2015): 696-727; M. Taylor Fravel, "International Relations Theory and China's Rise: Assessing China's Potential for Territorial Expansion," *International Studies Review* 12 (2010): 505-32; Steve Chan, "An Odd Thing Happened on the Way to Balancing: East Asian States' Reaction to China's Rise," *International Studies Review* 12 (2010): 387-412; Robert S. Ross, "Balance of Power Politics and the Rise of China: Accommodation and Balancing in East Asia," *Security Studies* 15:3 (July-September 2006): 355-95; Adam P. Liff and G. John Ikenberry, "Racing Towards Tragedy?: China's Rise, Military Competition in the Asia-Pacific and the Security Dilemma," *International Security* 39:2 (Fall 2014): 52-91; Jeff M. Smith, "China's Rise and (Under?) Balancing in the Indo-Pacific: Putting Realist Theory to the Test," *WarOnTheRocks.com*, January 8, 2019.

Additional Recommended Readings: Aaron L. Friedberg, "Ripe for Rivalry: Prospects for Peace in a Multipolar Asia," *International Security* 18:3 (Winter 1993-1994): 5-33; David C. Kang, "Getting Asia Wrong: The Need for New Analytical Frameworks," *International Security* 27:4 (Spring 2003): 57-85; Peter J. Katzenstein and Nobuo Okawara, "Japan, Asian-Pacific Security and the Case for Analytical Eclecticism," *International Security* 26:3 (Winter 2001/2002): 153-85; Richard K. Betts, "Power, Wealth and Instability: East Asia and the United States after the Cold War," *International Security* 18:3 (Winter 1993-1994): 34-77; David Martin Jones and Michael L.R. Smith, "Making Process, Not Progress: ASEAN and the Evolving East Asian

Regional Order,” *International Security* 32:1 (Summer 2007): 148-84; David C. Kang, “Hierarchy and Stability in Asian International Relations,” in G. John Ikenberry and Michael Mastanduno eds., *International Relations Theory and the Asia-Pacific* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003): 163-90; Robert S. Ross, “Balance of Power Politics and the Rise of China: Accommodation and Balancing in East Asia,” *Security Studies* 15:3 (July-September 2006): 355-95 at <http://www.gwu.edu/~power/literature/dbase/ross1.pdf>

Understanding Indian Foreign Policy -- Is Theory Useful?

Pratap Bhanu Mehta, “Still Under Nehru’s Shadow: The Absence of Foreign Policy Frameworks in India,” *India Review* 8:3 (2009): 209-33; Vipin Narang and Paul Staniland, “Institutions and Worldviews in Indian Foreign Security Policy,” *India Review* 11:2 (2012): 76-94; Nabarun Roy, “The Anatomy of A Story Less Told: Nehru and the Balance of Power,” *Journal of Asian Security and International Affairs* 3:3 (2016): 337-358.

Additional Recommended Readings: C. Raja Mohan, “India and the Balance of Power,” *Foreign Affairs* 85:4 (July-Aug 2006), pp. 17-32; Sreeram S. Chaulia, “BJP, India’s Foreign Policy and the ‘Realist Alternative’ to the Nehruvian Tradition,” *International Politics* 39 (June 2002), pp. 215-34; Sumit Ganguly and Manjeet S. Pardesi, “Explaining Sixty Years of Indian Foreign Policy,” *India Review* 8:1 (2009): 4-19; Rahul Sagar, “State of Mind: What Kind of Power Will India Become?” *International Affairs* 85:4 (2009), pp. 801-16; Sunil Khilnani, “India As A Bridging Power,” in Prasenjit K. Basu *et al*, *India As A New Global Leader* (Foreign Policy Center); Kanti Bajpai, “Pakistan and India in Indian Strategic Thought,” *International Journal* (Autmn 2007): 805-22; Nabarun Roy, “Assuaging Cold War Anxieties: India and the Failure of SEATO,” *Diplomacy and Statecraft* 26:2 (2015): 322-40; Nabarun Roy, “In the Shadow of Great Power Politics: Why Nehru Supported PRC’s Admission to the Security Council,” *The International History Review* (2017); David Mitchell, “Determining Indian Foreign Policy: An Examination of Prime Ministerial Leadership Styles,” *India Review* 6:4 (2007): 251-87; Atul Mishra, “Emulated or National? Contemporary India’s ‘Great Power’ Discourse,” *Jadavpur Journal of International Relations* 17:1 (2013): 69-102.

Postcolonial Theory and Indian Foreign Policy

Sanjay Seth, “Postcolonial Theory and the Critique of International Relations” *Millennium* (August 2011), pp. 167-83; Priya Chacko, “The Search for a Scientific Temper: Nuclear Technology and the Ambivalence of India’s Postcolonial Modernity,” *Review of International Studies*; Itty Abraham, *The Making of the Indian Atomic Bomb: Science, Secrecy and the Postcolonial State* (London: Zed Books, 1998) chapter 1, pp. 6-33.

Additional Recommended Readings: Sankaran Krishna, *Postcolonial Insecurities: India, Sri Lanka and the Question of Nationhood*; Geeta Chowdry and Sheila Nair (eds), *Power, Postcolonialism, and International Relations: Reading Race, Gender and Class* (London: Routledge, 2002)

Asian International Relations Theory

All essays in the Special Issue of *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 7 (2007), “Why is There No Non-Western International Relations Theory?” editors Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan; Siddharth Mallavarapu, “Development of International Relations Theory in India: Traditions, Contemporary Perspectives and Trajectories,” *International Studies* 46 (January-April 2009): 165-83.