Program: CET Shanghai
Course Code / Title: (SH/INTR 100) Introduction to International Relations
Total Hours: 45
Recommended Credits: 3
Primary Discipline / Suggested Cross Listings: International Relations / Political Science, History, Area Studies, Global Studies
Language of Instruction: English
Prerequisites/Requirements: None

Description
This course introduces students to the prominent themes and analytical frameworks that guide the study of modern international relations. It examines the basic concepts and theories that are useful for making sense of the world’s contemporary challenges and debates, such as the canonical theories of realism, liberalism, and Marxism and the relatively new and increasingly influential theory of constructivism. Major topics surveyed include international cooperation, security and conflict, trade, international law, and human rights. Students achieve a basis from which to appreciate the major issue areas in international affairs and a strong foundation for further study in international politics, history, economics, business, or culture.

Objectives
At the end of this course, students will be able to:

• understand the diverse range of available concepts and explanations for states’ international behaviors and the evolution of the international system.
• grasp and evaluate the assumptions, logical structure, and empirical implications of various theoretical positions and basic empirical evidence for and against key theories.
• apply essential concepts and theories to analyze contemporary global issues and engage in debates about world politics.

Course Requirements
Students are required to complete all assigned reading materials before each class. This is vital as students are expected to actively participate in class discussion. Attendance requirements are outlined in the CET Attendance Policy. There are three assignments required for this course.

• Two response papers that briefly summarize an assigned reading (one from class sessions 3-7, one from sessions 8-11) and discuss how the ideas in the text relate to other readings and class discussions. The response papers should be around 600 words and include only a brief summary of the readings while focusing on critical analysis. These papers must be completed 36 hours before the seminar meeting and sent to the instructor and classmates. All students are required to read the response papers of other students before the seminar meets.
• A midterm examination answering three essay questions using course content and their own analysis.
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• A final group project applying key concepts and theories to analyze significant issues in contemporary world politics. Examples of topics are China’s rise and its strategic competition with the United States, the Covid-19 pandemic and the future of the international order, or management of global warming and climate change, etc. The project consists of submission of a preliminary outline (before week 8, including bibliography), a class presentation, and a final paper (3,000-3,500 words if written individually or 6,000–7,000 words if written as a team).

Grading
The final grade is determined as follows:
• Response papers: 10% (2 at 5% each)
• In-class preparation and discussion: 20%
• Midterm examination: 30%
• Group project: 40% (preliminary outline and bibliography 10%, presentation 10%, and paper 20%)

Readings


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Outline of Course Content

Part I: An Overview
Topic 1 – Understanding International Relations; Historical Introduction and Basic Concepts
Topic 2 – Building Blocks for the Study of International Relations: Levels of Analysis, Strategic Interactions Framework, and Research Methods

Part II: Theories of International Relations
Topic 3 – Realism
Topic 4 – Liberalism
Topic 5 – Constructivism and the English School
Topic 6 – Marxism and Critical Theories
Topic 7 – Foreign Policy Decision Making

Part III: Major Topics in International Relations
Topic 8 – International Security: Causes of Wars and Pathways to Peace
Topic 10 – International Political Economy: Trade, Finance, and Development

Part IV: Looking Ahead
Topic 12 – The Future of International Relations