**Syllabus, DGS**

**GS34955: Current Issues in International Relations**

(3 credits, spring, 2023)

**Ⅰ. Instructor**

**Professor : Niv Farago**

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**Class Hour : Monday and Wednesday 16:30-17:45**

**Office Hour: Tues& Thurs 09:00-15:00 /Job Consultation: Fri 09:00-15:00**

**Language: English**

**Ⅱ. Course Description and Objective**

The purpose of this course is to introduce to the student basic concepts, ideas, and theories in the study of international relations so he/she could use them as a prism through which to examine current hot issues in the international system. In the first part of the course, we shall cover the development of a state system and of core international relations paradigms and theories—to include realism, liberalism, and constructivism. Each of these approaches interprets differently the relations between actors—state and non-state—in the international system. Thus, each of these approaches offers a different prism through which we can understand, examine, and explain developments, as well as the behavior of actors, in the international system. In the second part of the course, we will review a few of the more significant and recent developments in the international system, such as: the challenges posed by transnational forces (the Islamic State, for example) to the US-led state-centric system, the spread of nuclear weapons to ‘rogue’ states, and the rise of China as well as the possibility of a new Cold War erupting between the United States, on the one hand, and China and Russia, on the other hand. In this regard we shall also discuss the future of Taiwan and the War in Ukraine.

**Group work:** In the first part of the semester the students will be divided into groups. Each group will have to choose a hot issue that it has an interest in, research the topic, analyze it, and present it to fellow students during presentation week in the second part of the semester.

**Ⅲ. Prerequisites and Background**

No background in International Relations is required.

**Ⅳ. Textbook, References and Reading Assignment**

1. Robert Jackson and Georg Sørensen, *Introduction to international relations: theories and approaches*, 8th ed. (Oxford University Press, 2021).
2. Joseph S. Nye, Jr. and David A. Welch, *Understanding Global Conflict and Cooperation: An Introduction to Theory and History, 8th ed.* (New York: Pearson Longman, 2011).
3. Richard K. Betts, *Conflict After the Cold War: Arguments on Causes of War and Peace* (New York: Pearson Longman, 2008).
4. Richard Little, *The Balance of Power in International Relations: Metaphors, Myths and Models* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).
5. Scott D. Sagan and Kenneth N. Waltz, The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: A debate Renewed (New York: W.W. Norton & company, 2003).

Various articles are also assigned. Check each week on the course schedule for your weekly suggested reading list. **Each week, the professor will upload to the Plato system PowerPoint slides that summarize the readings**.

**Ⅴ. Grading Policy and Evaluation**

Grading Weights

Mid-term Exam 30%

Presentation week 20%

Final Exam 30%

Attendance and participation 20%

100%

**Ⅵ. Course Schedule**

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| **Week** | **Contents** | **Method** | **etc.** |
| 1 | Introduction |  |  |
| 2 | **Basic concepts and significant waypoints in the evolution of the international system**   1. Robert Jackson and Georg Sørensen, *Introduction to international relations: theories and approaches* (Oxford University Press, 2012), chapter one, pp.3-32. 2. Joseph S. Nye, Jr. and David A. Welch, *Understanding Global Conflict and Cooperation: An Introduction to Theory and History, 8th ed.* (New York: Pearson Longman, 2011), chapter one “what is international politics,” pp. 2-13, chapter two “Key Concepts,” pp. 33-45. | Professor’s lecture |  |
| 3 | **Introduction to the major theories and debates in International Relations**   1. Jackson and Sørensen, chapter two, pp. 33-64. 2. Nye, Jr. and Welch, chapter two “Key Concepts,” pp.55-64. 3. Walt, Stephen M. "International relations: one world, many theories." *Foreign policy* (1998): 29-46. | Professor’s lecture |  |
| 4 | **Classical and Strategic Realism**   1. Jackson and Sørensen, chapter three, pp. 65-81. 2. Nye, Jr. and Welch, “The Peloponnesian War,” pp. 13-21. 3. Thucydides, “The Melian Dialogue,” in Richard K. Betts, *Conflict After the Cold War: Arguments on Causes of War and Peace* (New York: Pearson Longman, 2008), pp. 56-60. 4. Niccolo Machiavelli, “Doing Evil in Order to Do Good,” in Richard K. Betts, *Conflict After the Cold War*, pp. 61-65. 5. Thomas Hobbes, “The State of Nature and the State of War,” in Richard K. Betts, *Conflict After the Cold War*, pp. 66-69. 6. “Hans J. Morgenthau’s *Politics Among Nations*,” in Richard Little, *The Balance of Power in International Relations: Metaphors, Myths and Models* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 91-128. | Professor’s lecture followed by discussion |  |
| 5 | **Neorealism and Neoclassical Realism**   1. Jackson and Sørensen, chapter three, pp. 82-102. 2. “Kenneth N. Waltz’s *Theory of International Politics*,” in Richard Little, *The Balance of Power in International Relations*, pp. 167-212. 3. Kenneth N. Waltz, “The Origins of War in Neorealist Theory,” in Richard K. Betts, *Conflict After the Cold War*, pp. 87-93. 4. “John J. Mearsheimer’s *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*,” in Richard Little, *The Balance of Power in International Relations*, pp. 213-248. | Professor’s lecture followed by discussion |  |
| 6 | **Liberalism and Neoliberalism**   1. Jackson and Sørensen, chapter four, pp. 103-136. 2. Immanuel Kant, “Perpetual Peace,” in Richard K. Betts, *Conflict After the Cold War*, pp. 122-128. 3. Woodrow Wilson, “Community of Power vs. Balance of Power,” in Richard K. Betts, *Conflict After the Cold War*, pp. 132-134. 4. Robert Jervis, “Realism, Neoliberalism and Cooperation: Understanding the Debate,” *International Security* 24:1 (Summer 1999), pp. 42-63. 5. Robert O. Keohane and Lisa L. Martin, “The Promise of Institutionalist Theory,” *International Security* 20:1 (Summer 1995), pp.39-51. | Professor’s lecture followed by discussion |  |
| 7 | **Hegemonic Stability Theory and Power Cycle Theory**   1. Jackson and Sørensen, chapter ten, pp. 278-284; and chapter eleven pp. 337-346. 2. Robert Gilpin, “Hegemonic War and International Change,” in Richard K. Betts, *Conflict After the Cold War*, pp. 94-105. 3. Christopher Layne, “The Unipolar Illusion: Why New Great Powers Will Rise,” International Security 17:4 (Spring 1993), pp. 5-51. | Professor’s lecture followed by discussion |  |
| 8 | **Mid-term exam** |  |  |
| 9 | **Constructivism**   1. Jackson and Sørensen, chapter seven, pp. 191-219. 2. Alexander Wendt, “Anarchy is What States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics,” International Organization 46:2 (1992), pp. 391-425. 3. Alexander Wendt, “Constructing International Politics,” International Security 20:1 (1995), pp. 71-81. | Professor’s lecture followed by discussion |  |
| 10 | **Transnational Forces in the International System: The clash of civilizations, religious conflict, and terror.**   1. Jackson and Sørensen, chapter eleven, pp. 325-336. 2. Nye, Jr. and Welch, “Transnational Terrorism and the ‘War on Terror,’” chapter 8, pp. 289-292. 3. Samuel P. Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations,” Foreign Affairs 72:3 (1993), pp. 22-49. | Professor’s lecture followed by discussion |  |
| 11 | **Presentation week:** Student groups present their research in class. |  |  |
| 12 | **The war in Ukraine: background, motive, and implications**  Reading material: TBA | Professor’s lecture followed by discussion |  |
| 13 | **The Rise of China**   1. Aaron L. Friedberg, “The Future of U.S.-China Relations: Is conflict Inevitable?” International Security 30:2 (2005), pp. 7-45. 2. John J. Ikenberry, “The Rise of China and the Future of the West,” Foreign Affairs 87:1 (2008), pp. 23-37. | Professor’s lecture followed by discussion |  |
| 14 | **‘Rouge’ states and nuclear weapons: discussing North Korea and Iran’s nuclear quests**   1. Scott D. Sagan and Kenneth N. Waltz, The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: A debate Renewed (New York: W.W. Norton & company, 2003), chapter one and two, pp. 3-87. | Professor’s lecture followed by discussion |  |
| 15 | Reading and review period | Revisiting difficult subjects and answering students’ questions |  |
| 16 | **Final Exam** |  |  |