Course Description:
This course provides students with an advanced introduction to theoretical approaches and contemporary issues within the study of International Relations. The first part of the course examines explanatory theories of IR and their application to foreign policy decisions as well as to the emergence and effectiveness of international agreements, norms and institutions. The second part of the course examines the ideological component of IR theories and how they serve as a guide to foreign policy. It also examines a variety of current foreign policy issues.

Course Structure:
The course meets weekly on Tuesday afternoons from 12:30-2:30 and will consist of 13 sessions of approximately 2 hours each. Seminars will be comprised of group and class discussions focused around the readings assigned for each week.

Required Readings:
Articles for this course are available from the course instructor.

Course Evaluation:
MA Students
Weekly Reading Analyses 30%
Attendance and Participation 10%
Research Essay 40% Due 13 February
Foreign Policy Analysis Paper 20% Due 27 March

PhD Students
Weekly Reading Analyses 30%
Attendance and Participation 10%
Theory Application Paper #1 15% Due 30 January
Theory Application Paper #2 15% Due 13 February
Theory Application Paper #3 15% Due 27 February
Theory Application Paper #4 15% Due 20 March
Weekly Reading Analyses
For every class, each student must prepare a hand-in with two points of analysis for each reading. The hand-in must be typed, single-spaced, in sentence format with your name at the top. You should have one short paragraph for each point of analysis. Points of analysis should address either: the main argument of the reading, key concepts/theories in the reading, or how the reading addresses the week’s initial question for discussion (these are listed week-by-week in the course schedule below). Points of analysis should be detailed and make specific reference to the readings through the use of quotes, page references, etc. More detail and thoughtfulness equals a higher grade.

Reading Analyses are due at the start of class with no exceptions. You must have separate notes to use for the class discussion. You must also save your weekly points of analysis and then, in the final week of the course, submit them electronically as a single document to turnitin.com through the course OWL site. Reading Analyses will be graded in 3 groups of 4 as follows:

Analyses 1-4 10%
Analyses 5-8 10%
Analyses 9-12 10%

Attendance and Participation
Attendance will be taken each week. Students may miss one class without special permission (reading analyses must be emailed to me on the day of the class). After that, students must obtain accommodation from academic counseling. Participation will be assessed by the instructor and through a peer review in the last class. Students will start with a default grade of 8/10 and will maintain it with perfect attendance and average participation. The grade will go up based on above average participation and down based on below average participation and/or missed classes.

Research Essay (MAs)
Each MA student will complete one research essay, with 10-12 typed double-spaced pages of text plus a title page and bibliography. The essay will be a standard, thesis-based research paper where students will construct an argument around their chosen topic. The introduction must include a one sentence thesis statement. Students may choose any topic that falls within the area of IR and which does not overlap with their foreign policy analysis paper. The intent is to get students working towards their MRPs and topics should ideally be directed towards these. All topics must be approved by the course instructor. Grading will be based on research, organization and presentation of the argument as well as on strong analysis and creativity of thought. Late papers will be penalized at a rate of 3% per day including weekends and papers longer than 12 pages will be penalized. Extensions will only be given for documented illnesses, emergencies, etc and will not be given for workload. All essays must also be submitted to turnitin.com through the course website as outlined in class.

Foreign Policy Analysis Paper (MAs)
MA students will complete one 8-10 page, typed, double-spaced paper that analyses the debate over a current foreign policy issue. Students should select a current foreign policy issue, in Canada or the United States, where there exists a strong left-right debate. Students must choose a topic that does
not overlap with their research essay. The paper should provide:

• some empirical background on the issue based on academic sources
• an outline of two approaches to foreign policy (e.g. realism, liberal internationalism, neoconservatism, populism, socialism) based on academic sources including the course readings
• an outline of each approach’s actual position on the issue as demonstrated through the views of key politicians, think tanks, NGOs and media using academic sources, think tank and NGO reports and media reports
• you must frame the paper as an argument in favour of one of the approaches
• the paper should be organized as follows: introduction with a clear thesis statement; outline of the approach you disagree with and its actual position on the issue; outline of the approach you are arguing for, its actual position on the issue and why this position is superior; conclusion

Late papers will be penalized at a rate of 3% per day including weekends and papers longer than 10 pages will be penalized. Extensions will only be given for documented illnesses, emergencies, etc and will not be given for workload. All papers must also be submitted to turnitin.com through the course website as outlined in class.

Theory Application Papers (PhDs)
PhD students will complete four theory application papers based on the topics listed below. Each paper will be 8-10 typed, double-spaced, pages in length (not including citations) with a title page and bibliography. Late papers will be penalized at a rate of 3% per day including weekends and papers longer than 10 pages will be penalized. Extensions will only be given for documented illnesses, emergencies, etc and will not be given for workload. All papers must also be submitted to turnitin.com through the course website as outlined in class.

Theory Application Paper #1
This paper will focus on how different explanatory theories of IR explain national preferences and foreign policy behaviour. The paper should be framed as an argument for which theory the student thinks best explains national preferences and foreign policy behaviour overall. In addition to the course readings on national preferences, the student must find articles that apply realism/neorealism, liberal-pluralism, class analysis and constructivism to the explanation of an individual state’s foreign policy decision. Ideally, the student would find articles on one or two foreign policy decisions that would allow for comparison between some of the theories. Individual articles can apply one or more theories. The student should find two examples of each theory being applied.

Theory Application Paper #2
This paper will focus on how different explanatory theories of IR explain the emergence and effectiveness of specific international agreements and/or institutions. The paper should be framed as an argument for which theory the student thinks best explains international agreements and institutions overall. In addition to the course readings, the student must find articles that apply realism/neorealism, liberal-pluralism, class analysis and constructivism/norms to explain the emergence and effectiveness of specific international agreements and/or institutions. Ideally, the
student would find articles on one or two agreements/institutions that would allow for comparison between some of the theories. Individual articles can apply one or more theories. The student should find two examples of each theory being applied.

Theory Application Paper #3
This paper will focus on the different philosophies of science/epistemologies that inform IR theories. The paper should outline the key components of, and epistemological and methodological differences between:
• rationalist/positivist approaches such as behaviouralism and rational choice
• interpretive approaches such as poststructuralism/postmodernism
• scientific realist approaches such as constructivism, Gramscian theory
The paper should also discuss which approach informs your own work and why. Use the readings listed below and, if desired, any from the course and IR comp reading list.

Theory Application Paper #4
This paper will focus on the application of different ideological approaches to foreign policy. The paper should be framed as an argument for which approach the student thinks offers the best guide to foreign policy. In addition to the course readings, the student must find articles that apply the realist, liberal internationalist, neoconservative, populist and socialist approaches to one or more specific foreign policy issues. Ideally, the student would find articles on one or two foreign policy issues that would allow for comparison between some of the theories. Individual articles can apply one or more theories. The student should find two examples of each theory being applied.

Graduate Health and Wellness:
As part of a successful graduate student experience at Western, we encourage students to make their health and wellness a priority. Western provides several on campus health-related services to help you achieve optimum health and engage in healthy living while pursuing your graduate degree. Information regarding health- and wellness-related services available to students may be found at http://www.health.uwo.ca/. Students seeking help regarding mental health concerns are advised to speak to someone they feel comfortable confiding in, such as their faculty supervisor, their program
director (graduate chair), or other relevant administrators in their unit. Campus mental health resources may be found at http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/resources.html.

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**COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS**

**Jan. 9**  **Introduction: Mapping IR Theories**
The first half of this class will be used to introduce the general subject matter of the course and to outline the course structure, readings and requirements. The second half of the class will include a discussion of the differences between theory and ideology and on how to categorize different IR theories. **Please bring a laptop computer.**

**Jan. 16**  **Explaining Foreign Policy: Realism, Liberalism, Class Theory**
This seminar examines realism, liberalism and class theory as explanatory theories and, in particular, how they explain national policy preferences and foreign policy decisions.

**Required Readings:**

**Discussion Question**
What factors - such as interest groups, political party ideology, electoral considerations and national interests - most affect the foreign policy decisions of governments?

**Jan. 23**  **Constructivism and Institutionalism**
This seminar examines constructivism and institutionalism as explanatory theories and how they can combine with realism, liberalism and class theory to form the various substrands of these approaches.

**Required Readings:**


**Discussion Question**
What is the ‘constitutive’ role of ideas and institutions; that is, what are the different ways that ideas and institutions can influence the policy preferences of individuals and groups?

**Jan. 30 Explaining International Agreements, Norms and Institutions**
This seminar examines how different IR theories explain the emergence and effectiveness of international agreements, norms, and institutions.

**Required Readings:**


**Discussion Question**
What is the ‘regulative’ role of norms and institutions; that is, how and to what extent can norms and institutions influence and constrain state behaviour?

**Feb. 6 Gender, Race and Poststructuralism**
This seminar examines gender and race as key units of analysis and how they can combine with constructivist, institutionalist and poststructuralist approaches.

**Required Readings:**


Jackson, Richard. 2007. “Constructing enemies:‘Islamic terrorism’ in political and academic...
Discussion Question
How do ideas, language, categories and images related to gender and race influence individual policy preferences and state behaviour?

Feb. 13  IPE Theories and the Free Trade Debate
The seminar examines the debate over economic policy and free trade between the free market approach (liberalism/neoliberal economics) and the interventionist approach (Keynesian-welfare economics).

Required Readings:

Discussion Question
What is the difference between classical liberals and neoliberals on free trade?

Feb. 20  Winter Reading Week - No Class

Feb. 27  Realist, Neoconservative and Populist Approaches to Foreign Policy
This seminar examines the normative (advocacy) aspects of realism, neoconservativism and populism as guides to foreign policy.

Required Readings:


Selected media articles on the Steve Bannon and Donald Trump populist worldview.

Discussion Question
What are the key differences between the foreign policy approaches of realists, neoconservatives and Trump-style populists?

Mar. 6 Regional Integration Theory and the Case of Brexit
This seminar examines IR and comparative theories of regional integration and applies them to the European case. It also examines competing explanations of British Euroscepticism and applies them to the case of Brexit.

Required Readings:


Discussion Question
How do different IR and comparative theories explain the changes in British policy towards the EU and which do you find most persuasive?

Mar. 13 Liberal and Socialist Approaches to Foreign Policy
This seminar examines the normative (advocacy) aspects of liberalism and critical theory as guides to foreign policy and global governance including key concepts such as human security, global public goods and soft power.

Required Readings:


policy, pp. 1-5.


Discussion Question

What are the key elements of liberal internationalism as an approach to foreign policy and how does it contrast with realism and neoconservatism?

Mar. 20 Foreign Policy Issues: Iran and North Korea

This seminar examines various foreign policy tools for managing rogue states as well as how different foreign policy approaches would deal with Russia and Iran.

Required Readings:


Media articles on the military options for North Korea, pp. 1-13.


Discussion Question

What are the similarities and differences between the realist, liberal internationalist and neoconservative approaches to Iran and North Korea and which do you think is the most effective?

Mar. 27 Foreign Policy Issues: Climate Change

This seminar examines the economic of climate change as well as some of the political strategies used by those seeking to address it.

Required Readings:


Discussion Question
Is the attempt to stigmatize fossil fuels an effective part of an overall strategy for climate action?

**Apl. 3 Ethnic Conflicts Across the Middle East**
This seminar examines key concepts, background and issues related to ethnic conflict in the contexts of Iraq/Syria; Saudi Arabia/Iran and the Israel/Palestine.

**Required Readings:**

**Discussion Question**
Who are the key actors and issues in each of these conflicts and what do the realist, liberal and neoconservative approaches advocate towards them?

**Apl. 10 Foreign Policy Issues: Russia, Information Operations and Hybrid War**
This seminar examines the recent foreign policy behaviour of Russia, including the use of information operations and hybrid war, and how the West might respond.

**Required Readings:**

**Discussion Question**
What are the main characteristics of hybrid war and information operations?