

INTL 3800: INTRODUCTION TO HISTORICAL INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Spring 2026

Instructor:	Joowon Yi	Time:	Tue/Thu 9:55–11:15
Email:	joowon.yi@uga.edu	Place:	Sanford Hall 109

1. Class Guidelines

Course Pages:

- <https://uga.view.usg.edu/d2l/home/3249881>

Office Hours: Rm 303, 202 Herty Dr. Thurs 11:30–1:30, or by appointment. Virtual Office Hours: <https://zoom.us/j/3990837355>.

Course Description: This course introduces core concepts and debates in International Relations (IR) while emphasizing how **historical context** shapes international politics. We will study major IR theories and apply them to important historical and contemporary cases: war and peace, alliances, international organizations, colonialism and decolonization, nationalism, and foreign policy decision-making. The goal is to help students build a strong foundation in IR while learning to think clearly about how past events and longer-term historical processes influence world politics today.

Objectives: After taking this class, students will be able to:

- explain major theories of IR (realism, liberalism, constructivism, and related perspectives) and what they predict about international politics;
- identify key actors in international politics (states, international organizations, leaders, and publics);
- summarize and evaluate scholarship that uses historical evidence to explain contemporary international patterns (e.g., development, institutions, state formation);
- interpret international events using historical context (how and why a case unfolded, and what constraints actors faced);
- produce a structured foreign policy analysis that evaluates policy options and tradeoffs for a contemporary issue.

Reading & Discussion Expectations: Come prepared to (i) summarize the central claim of each reading, (ii) identify the author’s main assumptions, and (iii) contribute at least one question or critique grounded in the text. Readings marked “posted on course site” will be available on the course page.

Course Learning Environment: Every student should feel comfortable speaking in this class. We will value the opinions and ideas of our colleagues and foster an environment that respects cultural, experiential, and intellectual diversity.

AI Policy: Students may use generative AI tools for **limited support** such as:

- brainstorming a list of possible paper topics or policy options (as a starting point);
- checking grammar and clarity **after** you have written your draft;
- generating study aids (practice questions, flashcards, outlines) for exam preparation.

Students may **not** use AI to write substantive parts of assignments that they submit as their own (including full paragraphs/pages), or to replace completing the reading. AI use is also prohibited during in-class exams unless explicitly authorized. If you use AI for an assignment, include a short disclosure note (1–2 sentences) describing how you used it (e.g., tool used + purpose). You are responsible for verifying accuracy and citing any real sources you rely on.

Grading Policy:

1. **Class Activity Reports (20% total; 5% each × 4):** Students will submit four one-page reports connected to in-class activities. Each report includes:
 - *Activity Summary* (2%): What we did and what you learned.
 - *Reading Connection* (2%): Connect the activity to the reading(s).
 - *Real-World Connection* (1%): Connect to a real-world event, actor, or policy debate.
2. **Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) Final Policy Memo (30%):** A 5–7 page policy memo recommending a course of action on a contemporary foreign policy problem, justified with course concepts and evidence.
 - **Due: Tue, Apr 28 at 11:59 PM** (submit on the course site).
3. **Workshop Participation and Peer Feedback (10%):** Students are expected to participate actively in the two in-class FPA workshops (Weeks 14 and 15), including providing constructive peer feedback.
 - **Week 14 submission:** 1-page outline for workshop participation.
 - **Week 15 submission:** 1–2 page policy options sheet (not a full draft).
4. **Midterm Exam (20%):** In-class exam with short-answer questions on key concepts, theories, and cases.
5. **Participation and Attendance (20% total):**
 - *Attendance* (10%): Full credit with up to three absences without justification; after three, 1 point deducted per additional unexcused absence.
 - *Participation* (10%): Prepared contributions, engagement in activities, and constructive discussion throughout the semester.
6. **Grade Scale:**
 - A ≥ 94; A- ≥ 90 and < 94
 - B+ ≥ 87 and < 90; B ≥ 84 and < 87; B- ≥ 80 and < 84
 - C+ ≥ 77 and < 80; C ≥ 74 and < 77; C- ≥ 70 and < 74
 - D ≥ 60 and < 70; F < 60

Grading Disputes: If a student wishes to dispute a graded assignment, the student may send the instructor a one-page memo within one week of receiving the grade.

Late Work Policy: Assignments submitted within 24 hours after the deadline are considered late and receive a 10% deduction. Submissions more than 24 hours late are not accepted unless there is documented justification and prior communication.

Attendance Policy: Students are expected to attend class and complete all assignments. To be considered for an excused absence, notify the instructor in writing prior to the day of absence when possible.

2. University Policies

The following class policy statements are provided by the Center for Teaching and Learning, University of Georgia, and revised by the instructor as deemed appropriate.

Academic honesty: Please see the UGA Honor Code and procedures at www.uga.edu/ovpi. Students are expected to follow the Student Honor Code. Unauthorized assistance (including unauthorized AI use) on any assignment or exam constitutes academic dishonesty.

Disclaimer: The syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary and will be announced.

Accommodations due to disability: If you plan to request accommodations for a disability, please register with the Disability Resource Center: <http://drc.uga.edu>.

Mental Health and Wellness Resources:

- Student Care and Outreach: <https://sco.uga.edu/>
- BeWellUGA: <https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga>
- Emergencies: <https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies>

FERPA Notice: See <https://reg.uga.edu/general-information/ferpa>.

3. Course Outline

Week 1: Introduction

- 1/13: Syllabus review, no reading.
- 1/15: Neustadt, Richard E. *Thinking in Time: The Uses of History for Decision Makers*. Simon & Schuster, 2011. Ch. 1 (posted on course site).

Week 2: IR Theories: Realism

- 1/20: Walt, Stephen M. "International Relations: One World, Many Theories." *Foreign Policy* 110 (1998): 29–46.
- 1/22: Walt, Stephen M. "A Practical Guide to Perpetual Peace." *Foreign Policy* (blog), 2023. (link on course site)
- (Optional/current): Walt, Stephen M. "Why Realists Oppose the War in Gaza." *Foreign Policy* (blog), 2024. (link on course site)

- Discussion Question: Do we need IR (grand) theories to understand and explain international politics?

Week 3: IR Theories: Liberalism (Institutions Debate)

- 1/27: Mearsheimer, John J. "The False Promise of International Institutions." *International Security* 19(3) (1994): 5–49.
- 1/29: Keohane, Robert O., and Lisa L. Martin. "The Promise of Institutional Theory." *International Security* 20(1) (1995): 39–51.
- Discussion Question: Which argument do you find more persuasive, Mearsheimer or Keohane and Martin?

Week 4: IR Theories: Constructivism

- 2/3: Wendt, Alexander. 1992. "Anarchy Is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics." *International Organization* 46(2): 391–425.
- 2/5: Finnemore, Martha, and Kathryn Sikkink. 1998. "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change." *International Organization* 52(4): 887–917.

Week 5: IR Actors: States and Preferences

- 2/10: Adebajo, Adekeye. 2023. "Post-Colonial Global Governance 1." In *International Organization and Global Governance*, 3rd ed. Routledge. (posted excerpt)
- 2/12: Class Activity I: Strategies for Cooperation (**Class Activity Report #1 due: 2/17 before the beginning of class**)

Week 6: IR Actors: International Organizations

- 2/17: Reading statistical analysis & Chelotti, Nicola, Niheer Dasandi, and Slava Jankin Mikhaylov. 2022. "Do Intergovernmental Organizations Have a Socialization Effect on Member State Preferences? Evidence from the UN General Debate." *International Studies Quarterly* 66(1).
- 2/19: Class Activity II: Can we know state preferences? (**Class Activity Report #2 due: 2/26 before the beginning of class**)

Week 7: IR Actors: Leaders and Advisors

- 2/24: Horowitz, Michael C., and Matthew Fuhrmann. 2018. "Studying Leaders and Military Conflict: Conceptual Framework and Research Agenda." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. (posted excerpt)
- 2/26: Saunders, Elizabeth N. 2018. "Leaders, Advisers, and the Political Origins of Elite Support for War." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. (introduction + one case study; posted excerpt)
- Discussion Question: How much do leaders and advisers shape the foreign policies of states?

Week 8: Midterm

- 3/3: **Midterm Review.**

- 3/5: **Midterm in class.**

■ Week 9: Spring Break (No Classes: 3/10 and 3/12)

■ Week 10: Historical IR I — Colonial Legacies and Persistence

- 3/17: Abad, Leticia Arroyo, and Noel Maurer. 2021. “History Never Really Says Good-bye.” *Journal of Historical Political Economy* 1(1): 31–68. (posted on course site)
- 3/19: Acemoglu, Daron, Simon Johnson, and James A. Robinson. 2001. “The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development.” *American Economic Review* 91(5): 1369–1401.

■ Week 11: Historical IR II — War, State Formation, and Institutions

- 3/24: Tilly, Charles. “War Making and State Making as Organized Crime.” In *Collective Violence, Contentious Politics, and Social Change*. Routledge, 121–139. (posted excerpt)
- 3/26: Blaydes, Lisa, and Anna Grzymala-Busse. 2025. “Historical State Formation within and beyond Europe.” *World Politics* 77(1, suppl.): 205–222. (posted on course site)

■ Week 12: Level of Analysis and Accountability Problems

- 3/31: Singer, J. David. 1961. “The Level-of-Analysis Problem in International Relations.” *World Politics* 14(1): 77–92. (posted excerpt)
- 4/2: Class Activity III: Principal–Agent Problem (**Class Activity Report #3 due: 4/2 before the beginning of class**)

■ Week 13: Security and Conflict

- 4/7: Fearon, James D. 1995. “Rationalist Explanations for War.” *International Organization* 49(3): 379–414.
- 4/9: Class Activity IV: War Game (**Class Activity Report #4 due: 4/9 before the beginning of class**)
- Discussion Question: Why do wars start, and what helps (or fails) to prevent them?

■ Week 14: Foreign Policy Analysis Workshop I — Learning from Cases

- 4/14: Fortna, Virginia Page. 2004. “Does Peacekeeping Keep Peace? International Intervention and the Duration of Peace After Civil War.” *International Studies Quarterly* 48: 269–292.
- 4/16: FPA workshop: linking your policy question to relevant historical or comparative cases.

■ Week 15: Foreign Policy Analysis Workshop II — Writing and Briefing

- 4/21: Wimmer, Andreas. 2018. “Nation Building: Why Some Countries Come Together While Others Fall Apart.” *Survival* 60(4): 151–164.
- 4/23: FPA workshop: generate policy options and recommendation (peer review + briefings).

Final FPA Policy Memo Due: Tuesday, April 28 at 11:59 PM (submit on the course site).