

SYLLABUS

THEORIES OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

University year 2026-2027

1. Programme-related data

1.1. Higher Education Institution	Babeş-Bolyai University
1.2. Faculty	History and Philosophy
1.3. Department	International Studies and Contemporary History
1.4. Field	Security Studies
1.5. Level of study	Bachelor's
1.6. Degree programme / Qualification	Security Studies (in English)
1.7. Form of education	Full-time

2. Course-related data

2.1. Course title	Theories of International Relations			Course code	HLE3208
2.2. Course coordinator	Lecturer Dacian Duna, PhD				
2.3. Seminar coordinator	Raluca Fărcaș, PhD				
2.4. Year of study	I	2.5. Semester	II	2.6. Type of assessment	Exam
2.7. Course status	Compulsory			2.8. Course type	Specialisation subject

3. Total estimated time (hours per semester of teaching activities)

3.1. Number of hours per week	4	of which: 3.2. course	2	3.3. seminar/ laboratory/ project	2
3.4. Total of hours in the curriculum	56	of which: 3.5. course	28	3.6. seminar/ laboratory	28
Time allocation for individual study (IS) and self-taught activities (ST)					hours
Learning from textbooks, course materials, bibliography, and notes (IS)					30
Additional research in the library, on subject-specific electronic platforms, and on-site					28
Preparing seminars/ laboratories/ projects, assignments, reports, portfolios, and essays					28
Tutoring (professional guidance)					2
Examinations					6
Other activities					
3.7. Total hours of individual study (IS) and self-taught activities (ST)				94	
3.8. Total hours per semester				150	
3.9. Number of credits				6	

Other activities:		
3.7. Total individual study hours	94	
3.8. Total hours per semester	150	
3.9. Number of ECTS credits	6	

4. Prerequisites (where applicable)

4.1. curriculum-related	-
4.2. skills-related	-

5. Specific conditions (where applicable)

5.1. course-related	-
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5.2. seminar/laboratory-related	-
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6.1. Competencies resulting from the completion of the degree programme (as referred to in the curriculum)

Professional competencies	
Competency code	Competency
PC1	Analysis of the national and international security environment
PC7	Ability to analyse conflict dynamics, escalation/de-escalation processes and their impact on regional and international stability.
PC9	Research methods in security studies
PC10	Analysis of international cooperation and inter-institutional relations
Transversal competencies	
Competency code	Competency
TC1	Critical thinking and reflective analysis
TC2	Professional communication and analytical reporting
TC4	Professional ethics and accountability
TC6	Adaptability and lifelong learning competency
TC7	Intercultural competence and contextual awareness

6.2. Learning outcomes relevant to the degree programme (as referred to in the curriculum)

Learning outcomes targeted by the subject		
Competency code	Knowledge and comprehension	Specific academic skills
PC1	C9: The student/graduate identifies, interprets and analyses political and economic factors in the analysis of modern societies, focusing on factors such as production and trade and their relations with law and authorities. C10: The student/graduate identifies, interprets and analyses the origins of conflicts, actions within conflicts and their termination.	A2: The student/graduate applies scientific methods and techniques to investigate phenomena, acquiring new knowledge or correcting and integrating prior knowledge.
PC7	C10: The student/graduate identifies, interprets and analyses the origins of conflicts, actions within conflicts and their termination.	The student integrates different cultural perspectives into international situation analysis.

PC9	C1: The student/graduate uses the theoretical methodology of scientific research, including conducting background research, building a hypothesis, testing it, analysing data and substantiating results. C2: The student/graduate recognises, selects and uses research methods and techniques to carry out a study.	A1: The student/graduate engages in designing or creating new knowledge by formulating research questions; researching, improving or developing concepts, theories, models, techniques, tools, software or operational methods; and using scientific methods and techniques. A2: The student/graduate applies scientific methods and techniques to investigate phenomena, acquiring new knowledge or correcting and integrating prior knowledge. A3: The student/graduate applies fundamental ethical principles and legislation in scientific research, including research integrity aspects. They conduct, review or report research while avoiding misconduct such as fabrication, falsification and plagiarism. A6: The student/graduate prepares research documents or delivers presentations to report the results of a research and analysis project, indicating the analysis procedures and methods that led to those results, as well as possible interpretations.
PC10	C4: The student/graduate recognises, analyses and explains systems of governance; methodologies for analysing political activity and behaviour; and the theory and practice of influencing people and acquiring governance. C8: The student/graduate recognises, analyses and explains procedures related to the implementation of government policies at all levels of public administration.	A6: The student/graduate prepares research documents or delivers presentations to report the results of a research and analysis project, indicating the analysis procedures and methods that led to those results, as well as possible interpretations
TC1	C1: The student/graduate uses the theoretical methodology of scientific research, including conducting background research, building a hypothesis, testing it, analysing data and substantiating results.	A2: The student/graduate applies scientific methods and techniques to investigate phenomena, acquiring new knowledge or correcting and integrating prior knowledge.
TC2	-	A6: The student/graduate prepares research documents or delivers presentations to report the results of a research and analysis project, indicating the analysis procedures and methods that led to those results, as well as possible interpretations.
TC4	-	A3: The student/graduate applies fundamental ethical principles and legislation in scientific research, including research integrity aspects. They conduct, review or report research while avoiding misconduct such as fabrication, falsification and plagiarism. A5: The student/graduate develops and demonstrates indepth knowledge and complex understanding of a specific research field, including responsible research, ethical and scientific integrity principles, respect for privacy and GDPR requirements related to research activities in a given discipline.

TC6	-	A1: The student/graduate engages in designing or creating new knowledge by formulating research questions; researching, improving or developing concepts, theories, models, techniques, tools, software or operational methods; and using scientific methods and techniques.
TC7	C5: The student/graduate recognises, analyses and explains methods and processes of influencing people and gaining control over a community or society, as well as the distribution of power within a community and between societies.	A2: The student/graduate applies scientific methods and techniques to investigate phenomena, acquiring new knowledge or correcting and integrating prior knowledge.

7. Subject-specific learning outcomes

Knowledge and comprehension – Students will be able to:
1. Identify and define the fundamental concepts of international relations (state, power, international system, security, anarchy, interdependence)
2. Describe and compare the main theoretical paradigms (realism, liberalism, constructivism, the English school, critical theories).
3. Explain contemporary international phenomena by applying the theoretical frameworks studied.
4. Ability to explain or interpret political processes and phenomena evolving within human society.
5. Critically analyze the limits and relevance of theories in relation to the current dynamics of the international security environment.
Specific academic skills
1. Develop critical thinking, argumentation, and academic writing skills.
2. Develop written and oral arguments using the terminology specific to the field.
3. Work effectively in a team to carry out thematic analyses or case studies.
4. Respect the norms of academic ethics in the development of papers and the use of bibliographical sources.

8. Content

8.1. Course	Teaching and learning methods	Remarks
1. Introductory course (I)	Interactive Lecture (Problem-Based Exposition)	Teaching methods adapted to the study group; Occasional use of multimedia materials.
2. Introductory course (II)	Interactive Lecture (Problem-Based Exposition)	Teaching methods adapted to the study group; Occasional use of multimedia materials.
3. Classical Realism	Interactive Lecture (Problem-Based Exposition), Structured academic debate, Problem-based learning	Teaching methods adapted to the study group; Occasional use of multimedia materials.
4. Structural Realism	Interactive Lecture (Problem-Based Exposition), Structured academic debate, Problem-based learning	Teaching methods adapted to the study group; Occasional use of multimedia materials.
5. Liberalism and Neoliberalism	Interactive Lecture (Problem-Based Exposition), Structured academic debate, Problem-based learning	Teaching methods adapted to the study group; Occasional use of multimedia materials.
6. The English School	Interactive Lecture (Problem-Based Exposition), Structured	Teaching methods adapted to the study group; Occasional use of multimedia materials.

	academic debate, Problem-based learning	
7. Constructivism	Interactive Lecture (Problem-Based Exposition), Structured academic debate, Problem-based learning	Teaching methods adapted to the study group; Occasional use of multimedia materials.
8. Marxism and World System Theory	Interactive Lecture (Problem-Based Exposition), Structured academic debate, Problem-based learning	Teaching methods adapted to the study group; Occasional use of multimedia materials.
9. Critical Theory	Interactive Lecture (Problem-Based Exposition), Structured academic debate, Problem-based learning	Teaching methods adapted to the study group; Occasional use of multimedia materials.
10. Feminist Theories of International Relations	Interactive Lecture (Problem-Based Exposition), Structured academic debate, Problem-based learning	Teaching methods adapted to the study group; Occasional use of multimedia materials.
11. Poststructuralism	Interactive Lecture (Problem-Based Exposition), Structured academic debate, Problem-based learning	Teaching methods adapted to the study group; Occasional use of multimedia materials.
12. Postcolonialism	Interactive Lecture (Problem-Based Exposition), Structured academic debate, Problem-based learning	Teaching methods adapted to the study group; Occasional use of multimedia materials.
13. Foreign Policy Analysis. International Political Economy – frameworks of contemporary international relations	Interactive Lecture (Problem-Based Exposition), Structured academic debate, Problem-based learning	Teaching methods adapted to the study group; Occasional use of multimedia materials.
14. Contemporary theories and theoretical debates (ecology, migration, global power transition, AI revolution, etc.) and the future of international relations	Interactive Lecture (Problem-Based Exposition), Structured academic debate, Problem-based learning	Teaching methods adapted to the study group; Occasional use of multimedia materials.

Bibliography

1. ACHARYA, Amitav, BUZAN, Barry, *The Making of Global International Relations: Origins and Evolution of IR at its Centenary*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, New York, 2019.
2. BAYLIS, J., SMITH, S., OWENS, P., *The Globalization of International Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*, 6th ed., Oxford University Press, 2014.
3. BURCHILL, Scott, LINKLATER, Andrew et al, *Theories of International Relations*, 3rd edition, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.
4. DOUGHERTY, J.E., PFALTZGRAFF, R.L., *Contending Theories of International Relations: A Comprehensive Survey*, Longman, 2001.
5. DUNA, Dacian, *Theories of International Relations*, Lecture Notes, UBB, Cluj-Napoca, 2026.
6. GOLDSTEIN, Joshua S., PEVEHOUSE, Jon C., *International Relations*, 10th edition, Pearson, 2014.

8.2. Seminar/ laboratory	Teaching and learning methods	Remarks
1. Introductory Seminar: Presentation of the seminar objectives, forms and norms for evaluating the seminar activity	Lecture / Q&A Session	• What is theoretical analysis? • Explanation of essay requirements.
2. TRI as a discipline: Theory and How do we build a theoretical argument?	Interactive problem-based lecture and guided mini-debate	• Structure of academic argument. • Viewing and discussing video material
3. Classical realism	Case study analysis (power dynamics), analysis of foundational texts, and team-based thematic mini-projects.	Details in seminar's syllabus.

4. Structural realism	Case study analysis (power dynamics), analysis of foundational texts, and team-based thematic mini-projects.	Details in seminar's syllabus.
5. Liberalism	Case study analysis (power dynamics), analysis of foundational texts, and team-based thematic mini-projects.	Details in seminar's syllabus.
6. Neoliberal institutionalism - Globalization	Case study analysis (power dynamics), analysis of foundational texts, and team-based thematic mini-projects.	Details in seminar's syllabus.
7. English School	Case study analysis (power dynamics), analysis of foundational texts, and team-based thematic mini-projects.	Details in seminar's syllabus.
8. Constructivism	Case study analysis (power dynamics), analysis of foundational texts, and team-based thematic mini-projects.	Details in seminar's syllabus.
9. International Political Economy	Case study analysis (power dynamics), analysis of foundational texts, and team-based thematic mini-projects.	Details in seminar's syllabus.
10. Marxism	Case study analysis (power dynamics), analysis of foundational texts, and team-based thematic mini-projects.	Details in seminar's syllabus.
11. Critical Theory	Case study analysis (power dynamics), analysis of foundational texts, and team-based thematic mini-projects.	Details in seminar's syllabus.
12. Feminism/Postcolonialism	Case study analysis (power dynamics), analysis of foundational texts, and team-based thematic mini-projects.	Details in seminar's syllabus.
13. Ecological Theory +Workshop on Argumentative Essay and Academic Writing	Discussions on structure and argumentation, as well as norms of academic ethics and integrity	Details in seminar's syllabus.
14. Seminar Essay Evaluation, Completion and Submission of Scores	Asynchronous learning activity	

Bibliography¹

- ALLISON, Graham T., *Destined for War: Can America and China escape Thucydides' Trap*, ed. Scribe Publications, 2018.
- ALLISON, Graham T., *Essence of Decision*, Little Brown and Company, 1971.
- BAYLIS, J., SMITH, S., OWENS, P., *The Globalization of International Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*, 6th ed., Oxford University Press, 2014.
- BOOTH, KEN, ed. *Realism and World Politics*, Routledge, London, 2011.
- BROWN Chris, NARDIN, Terry, RENGGER, N.J., *International Relations in Political Thought*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2002.
- BROWN, Chris, AINLEY, Kirsten, *Understanding International Relations*, 4th edition, Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2009.
- BURCHILL, Scott, LINKLATER, Andrew et al, *Theories of International Relations*, 3rd edition, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.
- CARR, E. H., *The Twenty Years Crisis 1919-1939*, ed. a 2-a, The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1946.
- DOUGHERTY, J.E., PFALTZGRAFF, R.L., *Contending Theories of International Relations: A Comprehensive Survey*, 5th edition, Longman, 2001.

¹ This list is orientative as most materials will be provided to students on the MS Teams class. Students must not copy or distribute the materials to persons outside BBU.

- DOYLE, Michael, "Liberalism and World Politics", *American Political Science Review*, 80, 1986.
- DUNNE, Tim, KURKI Milja, SMITH, Steve (eds.) *International Relations Theories: Discipline and Diversity*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, New York, 2013.
- GOLDSTEIN, Joshua S., PEVEHOUSE, Jon C., *International Relations*, 10th edition, Pearson, 2014.
- HOLSTI, K.J., *International Politics. A Framework For Analysis*, Prentice Hall International, 1995.
- KEOHANE, Robert O., NYE, Joseph S., *Power and Interdependence*, 4th edition, Longman, 2012.
- LEBOW, Richard Ned, *The Tragic Vision of Politics: Ethics, Interests, and Order*, Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- MEARSHEIMER, John J., *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, W.W. Norton & Company, 2015.
- MEARSHEIMER, John J., "The False Promise of International Institutions", *International Security*, 19 (1994/5).
- NYE, Joseph S., *Understanding International Conflicts: An introduction to theory and history*, 6th edition, Pearson Longman, 2007.
- WALTZ, Kenneth N., *Man, the State and War: A Theoretical Analysis*, revised edition, Columbia University Press, New York, 2001.
- WALTZ, Kenneth N., *Theory of International Politics*, 1st edition, Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1979.
- WENDT, Alexander, *Social Theory of International Politics*, Cambridge University Press, 2003.

9. Evaluation

Activity type	9.1 Evaluation criteria	9.2 Evaluation methods	9.3 Percentage in final grade
9.4 Course	Ability to understand basic concepts;	Written exam in the form of a knowledge assessment questionnaire	50% + 1 point ex officio
	knowledge of main theories and theoretical debates Understanding and correct interpretation of basic concepts		
9.5 Seminar/laboratory	Active attendance at seminar activities;	1. Clarity and quality of argumentation of the ideas presented (details in the seminar syllabus)	10%
	• Understanding and critical analysis of texts. • Ability to analyze and synthesize. • Correct use of bibliography.	2. Writing an argumentative scientific essay (details in the seminar syllabus)	20%
	Capacity to convey information / persuasive communication	3. Presentation of an analysis report at the seminar (details in the seminar syllabus)	10%
9.6 Minimum standard of performance			
• recognition of the main assumptions of contemporary international relations theories; • recognition of the most important theorists; • attendance and activity at a minimum of 75% of the seminars			

10. SDG labels (Sustainable Development Goals)²

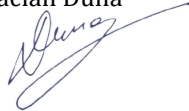
² Select a single label which, according to the [Implementation of SDG labels in the academic process](#), best matches the subject. If the subject addresses sustainable development in a generic manner (i.e. by presenting/introducing the general framework of sustainable development, etc.), then the Sustainable Development generic label may be applied. If none of the labels describe the subject, select the last option: "No label applies."

		Sustainable Development Generic Label						
								
								
								No label applies
								

Date of entry:
12.05.2026

Signature of course coordinator

Dacian Duna



Signature of seminar coordinator

Raluca Fărcaș



Date of approval in the department:

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Signature of the head of department

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