

UNDERSTANDING INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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This course is a general survey of the main theories and concepts of the discipline of IR, as well as a brief outline of the history of world politics since World War One. It proposes an intellectual history of the academic discipline of IR as situated in the evolution of the world political context.

The objective pursued is to empower undergraduate students to think, to give them the tools permitting them to form their own rigorous analyses about how world politics works and why it works the way it works. To put it bluntly, the aim of this course is to emancipate students in the Kantian meaning of *sapere aude* = dare to know (for yourself), that is, to incite them to go beyond common sense comments and normatively biased or ideologically oriented assessments of world politics typical of politicians' speeches and media coverage.

Syllabus

1. Introductory Remarks: The Significance of International Relations
2. WWI and the Interwar Period: Idealism
3. From WWII to the Cold War: Classical Realism
4. The Cuban Missile Crisis: Foreign Policy Analysis
5. Enter the Third World: Neo-Marxism
6. "*Trente Glorieuses*": Transnationalism & International Political Economy
7. "Détente, Entente, & Cooperation": The English School
8. The "Little Cold War": Neorealism and the Neo-Neo Debate
9. The End of the CW: Post-Positivisms to Social Constructivism
10. The 1990's Post-Cold War: Liberalism's Triumph – Democratic Peace and New Liberalism
11. Since 9/11: Realism Renewed – Neoclassical Realism and Power Cycle Theory
12. Conclusive Reflexions: What Have We Learned?

NB.

No book perfectly corresponds to the contents of the course.

Details about theories of IR can be found in my – French – textbook '*Théories des relations internationales*', Paris: Presses de Sciences Po, 5th edition, 2015.

Baylis (John), Smith (Steve) & Owens (Patricia), (eds.), *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*, Oxford: Oxford UP, 7th edition, 2016, outlines both the main points of past and contemporary history and of major IR theories in chapters 1 to 9; it also includes a glossary of core concepts.