PO 4700
Contemporary International Relations
Maxwell Theater (MT)
ARTS 2039 (HT)

Contact Information

**Michaelmas Term**
Prof. Thomas Chadefaux
3 College Green, 4.02
Office Hours: Friday 1–3PM
thomas.chadefaux@tcd.ie
Ph.: 01 896 3484

**Hilary Term**
Prof. Constantine Boussalis
3 College Green, 4.07
Office Hours: Thursday 2–4PM
boussalc@tcd.ie
Ph.: 01 896 3482

Description

The objective of this undergraduate module is to help students critically evaluate current world affairs using concepts and theories from contemporary international relations research. The international system is a complex environment. Multiple actors, interests and institutions interact to produce outcomes that we read and hear about in the media every day. Students will acquire the necessary theoretical tools which will allow for a clearer understanding of the international system and will facilitate critical and informed evaluation of global events. the causes and consequences of conflicts between nations, as well as theories of international security. Existing empirical results will also be emphasized and particular attention will be paid to the relevance of the concepts introduced to contemporary geopolitical issues and conflicts.

The first segment of the course will review the many dimensions of international conflict, ranging from interstate warfare to transnational terrorism. Following the “blood”, we will next shift our focus to the “money” where central themes and theories related to international political economy will be reviewed. Lastly, important new topics of international relations that are especially relevant to understanding the international system of the 21st century, such as transnational networks and issues dealing with environmental policy cooperation, will be studied in the last part of the module.
Requirements and grading

Your grade for the entire course will be calculated as follows:

Final Examination (60 %)

The final examination will cover the entire year. Material presented either in the lecture, in the readings or in the tutorials may form the subject of a question. The examination will consist of three questions. Each answer will count toward 1/3 of your examination’s grade (i.e., 20% of your total grade for each answer).

Debates (10%)

Format: These debates are based on the traditional Oxford-style format, with one side proposing and the other side opposing a ‘motion’. You will be required to participate in 4 debates throughout the year (2 in each semester). These debates will take place during the tutorials (3-4PM for tutorial 1, 4-5PM for tutorial 2). By Monday, 12 October, you will be randomly assigned a motion and a position (yes/no)—please go to Blackboard (‘files’) to find the 4 debates in which you will take part (e.g., MT3 means that you will join debate 3 in the Michaelmas term). For example, a motion may be: “The United Nations is Obsolete”. A group of students will be on the “yes” team, and another group on the “no” team.

The debates follow a strict structure:

1. Opening statements. Alternating between panels, each debater gives a 2 minute opening statement (time limit strictly enforced). Written notes may be used for reference.

2. Inter-panel challenges. After the opening statements, the debaters address each other directly.

3. Questions. The floor is then opened to questions from the audience (the other students in the tutorial).

4. Closing statements. Each debater in turn presents his 1 minute closing statement—the last chance to sway the audience.

Your oral participation in each debate will be worth 2.5% of your final grade. Your grade for the oral participation will depend on the following criteria:

1. Familiarity with the rules of the debate
2. Demonstrated knowledge of the issue
3. Conveyed well-researched arguments, supported with evidence
4. Demonstrated awareness of the opposition’s arguments
5. Ability to convey complex ideas simply and concisely

Students who are not part of that week’s debate team are still expected to come prepared and contribute to the discussion. For examples of debates with a similar format, please see: http://intelligencesquaredus.org/debates/past-debates

Essays (30%)

You will be required to submit two essays (1 per semester). Each essay is due on the Friday of the last teaching week. Each essay should be double-spaced, 12pt font, and approximately 2,500 words in length. You are also required to begin the essay with a concise abstract (no more than 150 words [not included in total word count]) that summarizes the paper. You may choose your topic from the following list:

- Michaelmas Term:
  1. Information is now more detailed and readily available than ever before. How might this affect the propensity of states to go to war?
  2. Time after time, policy-makers seem to mispredict the consequences of their actions and fail to recognize dangerous situations for what they are. Can the risks of war be correctly estimated, or do we really only learn from history that we do not learn from it?
  3. Wars typically involve a large economic cost. How would you estimate that cost, and what challenges do you expect to face in your task?

- Hilary Term:
  1. Why does a political system offer trade protection to some groups and not to others? Pick a major economy and discuss which competing trade groups receive protection and which ones do not.
  2. Europe is currently experiencing an unprecedented in recent memory influx of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. What is wrong with current EU immigration policy in adequately addressing this challenge? Explain with evidence and offer a discussion on potential solutions.
3. There is staunch debate over the working conditions in manufacturing facilities in the developing world. Should there be stronger “sweatshop” regulation or would this be counterproductive? Explain in detail.

**Students enrolled in PO4701**

Students who are enrolled in PO4701 and therefore are taking 10 ECTS for the module, will be required to complete one (1) debate and one (1) essay over the full year. You may choose to submit your essay in either term. However, the essay must be related to the content covered in that term.

**Turnitin**

Please submit all your written work, including response papers, through Turnitin: (turnitin.com).\(^1\)

Class ID: 10775619 (Michaelmas); 10754149 (Hilary)

Password: contir2015

**Academic & Professional Ethics**

Please do not plagiarize. Academic dishonesty is a serious matter, with serious consequences that can result in receiving no credit for an assignment, a failing grade for the module, and even expulsion from the programme. It is never permissible to turn in any work that contains others’ ideas without proper acknowledgment. It is your responsibility to make sure that your work meets the standard of academic honesty set forth in the College Calendar (see [http://tcd-ie.libguides.com/plagiarism/calendar](http://tcd-ie.libguides.com/plagiarism/calendar)). Useful information is available at [http://tcd-ie.libguides.com/plagiarism](http://tcd-ie.libguides.com/plagiarism). If you are paraphrasing, cite the source. If you are quoting, use quotation marks and appropriate citation. Remember that academic integrity is a reflection of one’s character. In addition, we strongly recommend that you visit [http://www.plagiarism.org/](http://www.plagiarism.org/) for more information on what is and is not plagiarism. Lastly, students are required to only submit “new work” in each module, which means work that has not been submitted previously in any other university module. Students who wish to use previously submitted work as part of a new project will need the approval of the lecturer.

\(^1\)For more information on Turnitin and academic integrity, please visit: [http://www.tcd.ie/CAPSL/students/integrity-plagarism/](http://www.tcd.ie/CAPSL/students/integrity-plagarism/) and [http://www.tcd.ie/CAPSL/readysteadywrite/](http://www.tcd.ie/CAPSL/readysteadywrite/)
Syllabus Modification Rights

We reserve the right to reasonably alter the elements of the syllabus at any time. More often than not this will mean adjusting the reading list to keep pace with the course schedule, although we may add reading assignments as well.

Readings

Main readings:


Weekly readings are also required and are listed below.
Course Outline

MICHAELMAS TERM (Prof. Chadefaux)

Week 1. Introductory Session
Week 2. Is War in Our Genes?
Week 3. Anarchy, the Balance of Power and Polarity
Week 4. Arms Races and Alliances
Week 5. Bargaining and Conflict
Week 6. Domestic Politics and War
Week 7. Reading Week
Week 8. Economic Interdependence and Conflict
Week 9. Conflict Outcomes
Week 10. Terrorism
Week 11. Civil Wars: Origins
Week 12. Civil Wars: Course, Termination and Aftermath

HILARY TERM (Prof. Boussalis)

Week 1. International Trade Theory
Week 2. Politics of International Trade
Week 3. International Investment
Week 4. Political Economy of Multinational Corporations
Week 5. Politics of International Migration
Week 6. International Monetary Relations
Week 7. Study Week
Week 8. International Development: Domestic Perspective
Week 9. International Development: International Perspective
Week 10. Environment and International Politics
Week 11. International Law & Norms
Week 12. Human Rights
Schedule: Michaelmas Term (Prof. Chadeauf)

Week 1. Introductory Session

Required Readings:

- No readings this week

Motion:
No debate this week

Week 2. Is War in Our Genes?

Required Readings:


Motion:
No debate this week

Week 3. Anarchy, the Balance of Power and Polarity

Required Readings:


Motion:
No debate this week
Week 4. Arms Races and Alliances

Required Readings:

- *FLS* pp. 172–187

Motion:
*Motion MT-1*: “NATO is outdated.”

Week 5. Bargaining and Conflict

Required Readings:

- *FLS* pp. 80–123

Motion:
*Motion MT-2*: “The sanctions against Russia are inefficient.”

Week 6. Domestic Politics and War

Required Readings:

- *FLS* pp. 124–167

Motion:
*Motion MT-3*: “Democratization will stabilize the Middle East.”

Week 7. Reading Week

Week 8. Economic Interdependence and Conflict

Required Readings:


**Motion:**
*Motion MT-4: “A US-China war is inevitable.”*

**Week 9. Conflict Outcomes**

**Required Readings:**


**Motion:**
*Motion MT-5: “The US intervention in Iraq has caused more harm than good.”*

**Week 10. Terrorism**

**Required Readings:**

• *FLS* pp. 242–263


**Motion:**
*Motion MT-6: “The US has won the ‘war on terror’.”*

**Week 11. Civil Wars: Origins**

**Required Readings:**

• Fearon, James. “Iraq: Democracy or Civil War?” Testimony to the U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Government Reform, Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats, and International Relations. September 15,
2006.
http://cisac.fsi.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/Fearon-testimony-9.15.06.pdf
• FLS pp. 219–242

Motion:
Motion MT-7: “The international community should send forces to Syria.”

Week 12. Civil Wars: Course, Termination and Aftermath

Required Readings:
• Daniel Byman. Why Drones Work. Foreign Affairs. 11 June 2013.
• Audrey K Cronin. Why Drones Fail. Foreign Affairs. 11 June 2013.

Motion:
Motion MT-8: “Territorial partition would solve Iraq’s problems.”
Schedule: Hilary Term (Prof. Boussalis)

Week 1. International Trade Theory

Required Readings:

- *FLS* pp. 264-273, 306-311
- *Oatley* pp. 21-68.

Simulation:

*International Trade Game*

Week 2. Politics of International Trade

Required Readings:

- *Oatley* pp. 69-110

Motion:

*Motion HT-1*: “Global free trade does more harm than good.”

Week 3. International Investment

Required Readings:

- *FLS* pp. 312-338

Motion:

*Motion HT-2*: “The benefits of foreign investment in the developing world outweigh the drawbacks.”
Week 4. Political Economy of Multinational Corporations

Required Readings:

- Oatley pp. 158-201

Motion:
Motion HT-3: “Multinational corporations should be regulated more.”

Week 5. Politics of International Migration

Required Readings:

- FLS pp. 344-347

Motion:
Motion HT-4: “The EU should impose more restrictions on immigration.”

Week 6. International Monetary Relations

Required Readings:

- FLS pp. 350-385
Motion:
Motion HT-5: “The Euro should be abolished.”

Week 7. Study Week. No meeting.

Week 8. International Development: Domestic Perspective
Required Readings:
- *FLS* pp. 386-400
- *If the World were 100 People*, http://www.100people.org/statistics_100stats.php?section=statistics

Motion:
Motion HT-6: “Democracy is necessary for the development of poor societies.”

Week 9. International Development: International Perspective
Required Readings:
- *FLS* pp. 400-406, 413-418
- *Oatley* pp. 111-157

Motion:
Motion HT-7: “Foreign aid works.”

Week 10. Environment and International Politics
Required Readings:
- *FLS* pp. 492-533
- *Oatley* pp. 358-367

Simulation:
*Climate Change Game*

**Week 11. International Law & Norms**

**Required Readings:**


**Motion:**
*Motion HT-7: “International law threatens democracy.”*

**Week 12. Human Rights**

**Required Readings:**

- *FLS* pp. 452-491.

**Motion:**
*Motion HT-8: “Human rights should take into account cultural differences.”*