

**İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University**  
**Department of International Relations**  
**Fall 2019**

**IR101 (03) - Introduction to World Politics**

**Instructor:** Dr. Çağlar Kurç

**Email:** caglar.kurc@bilkent.edu.tr

**Office Hours:** Thursday 10:40-12:30 or by appointment

**Lecture Hours:** Monday 10:40-12:30, Thursday 9:40-10:30 @ FC-Z23D

**Lab Hours:** Friday 8:40-10:30 (for dates, see below) @ MA-Z06 & H-335

**Office:** A307

**Graduate Teaching Assistants:**

**Course Outline**

**Course Description:**

This course introduces students to world politics and central concepts and themes in International Relations (IR) such as power, globalization, nationalism, and ethnic conflict. Its goal is to acquaint students with the analytical, historical and foundational knowledge needed to study recurrent patterns and current global political issues and controversies. The knowledge acquired in this course will allow students to understand, explain and analyze IR issues in more advanced courses in our curriculum.

**Course Objectives:**

Beyond contributing to the general development of students' intellectual maturity and abilities, the more specific objectives of the course include developing students'

1. substantive knowledge of central aspects of world politics;
2. ability to understand and evaluate diverse perspectives and views regarding international phenomena;
3. ability to comprehend central concepts and employ key methods of social inquiry;
4. ability to apply the appropriate level of analysis to past and present world events.

### Course Organization:

The course consists of conventional lectures (Mondays and Thursdays), class discussions, and debates (Fridays). Student performance will be assessed on the basis of class participation, a mid-term examination, a final examination, and debates (see below).

### Course Requirements:

Students are expected to **do the required reading prior to class** and be prepared for the discussions during the lecture. The assessment will be based on class participation, debates, mid-term exam, **the final exam, which will cover all the topics since the beginning of the semester**, and overall improvement of the student throughout the course.

#### *Grading:*

Assignment	% of grade	Dates
Mid-term Exam	35	31 October 2019
Final Exam	35	TBD
Debate	18	See below
Participation & Attendance	6 + 6	Updated weekly

#### *Participation (6%):*

Students are expected to participate in the discussions (in-class and Moodle) throughout the semester. There are various ways to participate.

Before the lecture, students could post their questions about the reading materials and issues to be clarified during the lecture. You are encouraged to post your questions to the Moodle, so that other students could see. Please post your questions a day before the lecture (9:00 PM at latest). This would allow help shaping the lecture according to the needs of students.

During the lecture, students are encouraged to ask points of clarification and/or discuss debated issues. You are encouraged to speak your mind and ask questions. Please be polite to and respectful of the other students. Harassment and rude behavior will not be tolerated.

After the lecture, there will be discussion questions in the Moodle. You are encouraged to participate in the discussion forums for the relevant weeks. You will have a week to post your replies. Late replies would not be accepted.

You will earn points when you ask questions, make comments and/or take part in the Moodle discussions. Consistency is key. Students are expected to be active throughout the course in order to acquire full participation points.

### *Attendance (6%)*

While not an absolute course requirement, students should note that attendance is very important for both their obtainment of course-related knowledge/skills, and the assessment of class participation (see above). Students not attending classes do so fully at their own risk, and can be certain that it will negatively affect their performance in the course.

Although attendance is not a must, the half of the participation points (6%) will be given according to attendance levels. For example, a student whose attendance is between 100-90% will acquire full 6 points, where as a student, whose attendance is between 89-80% will acquire 5.5 pts.

### *Mid-term (35%) & Final (35%) examinations*

Both examinations will consist of 8 short answer questions. You will provide as complete and concise answers to all of them within the allotted time. The final examination will include all the topics covered throughout the semester. Students are encouraged to submit questions for the final exam. Questions that are high quality will be included in the final examination. You can submit your questions in Moodle.

### *Final examination visa:*

In order to qualify for the final examination, a student must **have taken the mid-term examination and attended to at least 4 out of 6 debates**. Students not qualifying for the final examination based on these requirements will receive an FZ grade when the classes are over. Note that the final examination visa requirements will be strictly observed for every single student.

It is your responsibility to check your attendance to the debates and follow your progress. If you participated in the debates, but did not sign the attendance, you will be accepted as absent.

### *Debates (18%)*

In the course of the semester, 6 small-group debates will be organized with the help of a graduate teaching assistant, and the debate topics will largely be based on the “points of view” sections of some of the chapters covered in the textbook. Students are expected to participate actively in the debates by expressing their views, presenting arguments related to the assigned readings, and listening attentively to what other students have to say. Student participation in each of the 6 debates will be graded on a 1-3 scale as follows: 3 points for active participation; 2 points for partial participation; and 1 point for attendance and listening

without actual participation. If a student cannot attend a debate in a particular week, the (s)he should notify the graduate teaching assistant in advance. However, there will be no make-up for the debates. TAs will provide three questions before the debates. Students are expected to come prepared for the debates. Not all questions might be covered during the debate.

**Compulsory course reading** (available in Meteksan bookshop and library's Reserve Desk)  
Grieco, Joseph, G. John Ikenberry, and Michael Mastanduno (2019), *Introduction to international Relations: Perspectives, Connections, and Enduring Questions*, 2nd ed. (London: Red Globe Press)

**Recommended course readings:**

Students are strongly encouraged to consult other introductory textbooks on International Relations in connection with the topics covered in the course.

E-International Relations, an open-access website for International Relations students and scholars, provides a good range of books (including International Relations Theory) and articles. (<http://www.e-ir.info/>)

**Weekly Schedule:**

**Week 1 (23 September):** Introduction

**Week 2 (30 September & 3 October):** History of the Global System of States (Ch. 2)

**Week 3 (7 & 10 October):** Theories of International Relations (Ch. 3)

We will use the spare hour on 10 October

**Week 4 (14 October):** Analysis of Foreign Policy (Ch. 4)

No class on 17 October: Lecturer will be at ISSS-IS Annual Conference 2019, Denver, CO

**Week 5 (21 & 24 October):** International Law and Organizations (Ch. 5)

**Week 6 (31 October):** Mid-Term Exam

No class on 28 October

**Week 7 (4 & 7 November):** War and Its Causes (Ch. 6)

**Week 8 (11 & 14 November):** Pathways to International Peace (ch.7)

**Week 9 (18 & 21 November):** Technology, Weapons and Warfare (ch.8)

**Week 10 (25 & 28 November):** Basics of International Economics (ch.9)

**Week 11 (2 & 5 December):** States and Markets in the World Economy (ch.10)

**Week 12 (9 & 12 December):** Economic Development (ch.11)

**Week 13 (16 & 19 December):** Non-State Actors and Challenges to Sovereignty (ch.12)

**Week 14 (23 & 26 December):** The Environment and International Relations (ch.13)

**Week 15 (30 December):** Course review

**Debate Schedule:**

Week 3 (11 Oct): Debate 1: IR Theories

Week 4 (18 Oct): Debate 2: Foreign Policy

Week 7 (8 Nov): Debate 3: War

Week 9 (22 Nov): Debate 4: Weapons Technology

Week 11 (6 Dec): Debate 5: States & Markets

Week 13 (20 Dec): Debate 6: Non-State Actors

**These dates can change. Any change in the dates will be announced by email. Please follow the updates.**

**General Rules:**

- I do not advise the use of electronic devices during the lecture. Looking at your phone, even if you are skimming through the relevant sources, will negatively affect your concentration and you would not be absorbing what I am saying. If you think that you can multitask, there is scientific evidence that discredits the practices of juggling intellectual engagement with related activities or attempting to perform two intellectual functions at once; studies have discovered measurable degradation of perception and performance when multitasking<sup>1</sup>. As John Horgan puts it (“So Many Links, So Little Time,” Wall Street Journal, June 4, 2010):

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<sup>1</sup> Eyal Ophir, Clifford Nass, and Anthony D. Wagner, "Cognitive Control in Multitaskers," Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, vol. 106, no. 3 (April 1, 2009), Ruth

“We skim web pages and skip quickly from one to another. We read in what is called an “F” pattern: After taking in the first two lines of a text, we zip right down the rest of the page. We lose the ability to transfer knowledge from short-term “working” memory to long-term memory.... Students who net-surf during class, even if their searches are related to the professor’s lecture, remember less than unconnected students.... Verbal SAT scores – which measure reading and writing aptitude – have dropped over the past decade as Internet usage has skyrocketed. What we gain from the Internet in breadth of knowledge – or rather, access to knowledge – we lose in depth.”

Therefore, to ingest and assimilate the material in this course sufficiently you must concentrate, and concentrate on one thing at a time.

- Beverages are allowed, however food is not.
- The inquiries will be answered within three business days. If not answered, please assume that your email has been marked as spam. In this case, please inform the lecturer after the class. Depending on the urgency, the response time could be shorter.
- **Please do not send any emails after 10:00 PM** and expect a quick answer. I will probably see your email in the morning.
- If you are late to the class less than or equal to 15 mins, please do not hesitate to enter. However, please be polite and try not to disturb the ones in the class.
- If you are late more than 15 mins, please wait until the break.
- If you would like to leave the class early, please wait until the break unless it is an urgent matter.
- If you have any problems or questions concerning the course, please do not hesitate to contact the lecturer.
- Make-ups will be arranged for students who are ill at the time of an examination. In order to get a make-up, students must provide a valid medical report for the day of the examination. The report must be approved by the Bilkent Health Centre, and submitted to the faculty in accordance with formal procedures. Note that make-ups will be given as soon as possible after the original examination.
- You are responsible for all the topics covered, even if you are absent in the lectures.

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Pennebaker, "The Mediocre Multitasker," New York Times Week in Review, August 30, 2009 (a journalist's more readable and humorous summary of the above academic study), Joshua S. Rubinstein, David E. Meyer, and Jeffrey Evans, "Executive Control of Cognitive Processes in Task Switching," Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Perception and Performance, vol. 27, no. 4 (2001), Christine Rosen, "The Myth of Multitasking," The New Atlantis (Spring 2008).

- Please read the required readings and be prepared for the discussion.
- It is your responsibility to **check emails** regularly. When course announcements are sent via email, I assume that you read it.
- You must bring **(a) pen(s)** to all exams.

**Evaluation criteria:**

*Mid-term and Final:*

I expect students to get the essence of the discussion and concepts that are mentioned in the textbook and during the lectures. While providing an answer, therefore, students are expected to refer to/provide the core arguments and concepts. The questions would require the explanation of the core reasoning behind a position (why or how). Consequently, a full point will be given to the answers that directly engage what we have discussed in the class and what is written in the book.

**FX grade rule:** If the student acquires visa for the final exam but chooses not to take it, FX grade will be given for those who are below 50%

**Grading System:**

Letter Grade	Quality-point equivalents	Number Grade Range
A / A+	4.00	95 - 100
A -	3.70	90 - 94
B +	3.30	85 - 89
B	3.00	80 - 84
B -	2.70	75 - 79
C +	2.30	70 - 74
C	2.00	65 - 69
C -	1.70	60 - 64
D +	1.30	55 - 59
D	1.00	50 - 54
F	0.00	0 - 49
FX	0.00	
FZ	0.00	