

Descriptif d'enseignement / *Course descriptions*

2^{ème} année/ 2nd year

Semestre 2

Titre du cours - *Course title*

International Relations

Type de cours : Cours magistral du bloc électif

Langue du cours/Language of instruction : Anglais

Enseignant(s) – *Professor(s)*

Eric SANGAR, Lecturer in Political Science, Sciences Po Lille

Contact: eric.sangar@sciencespo-lille.eu

Résumé du cours – Objectifs - *Course description – Targets*

This course is recommended for students intending to apply for one of the International Relations Master programmes (SIGR, PHD, APeu).

Why is there not one theory but diverse theories of International Relations? And why should we care?

While the course has a clear focus on theoretical debates in IR, its overall purpose is to highlight how IR theories can help making sense of empirical phenomena by opening new perspectives, asking questions differently, and enabling people to think about international phenomena beyond 'conventional wisdom'. For that purpose, historical as well as contemporary examples will be developed during this course, including through audio-visual media.

The guiding hypothesis of this course is that contrary to other disciplines, theoretical debate, including the contestation of epistemological and ontological core assumptions, has always been at the very heart of the discipline of International Relations. If theoretical diversity and contestation therefore can be seen as the defining criteria of IR scholarship, multi-perspectivity and dissent need to be embraced rather than criticized. At the same time, how do we – as IR teachers, students, and researchers – find a way through these moving grounds, how can we articulate rich and innovative analysis that helps to interpret our complex contemporary world differently and, ideally, better?

This lecture builds on the obligatory elementary IR courses in which students have been introduced to classical authors, core concepts and key empirical phenomena of International Relations. As an optional course targeting students who wish to specialize in IR studies during their exchange year as well as in their MA programme, it aims at linking cutting-edge theoretical debates with more classical analytical frameworks.

Rather than presenting one theory after the other the course will deal in each session with a different key concept (such as gender, the state, emotions...) and how it can be analyzed using available theoretical perspectives that differ in their ontological or epistemological approach.

At the end of this class, students should be able to:

- Master some of principal theoretical debates in International Relations
- Discuss the main tenets and implications of the ongoing debate between rationalism and reflectivism
- Apply theoretical insights gained in the course to enhance and diversify the analysis of current issues of international politics and international economics

Evaluation - *Assessment*

The course evaluation will be based on a written exam.

Plan – Séances - *Course outline*

The course comprises 12 lectures of 2 hours each. The class language is English, and this applies to all personal communication between students and teachers.

The syllabus is organized in two main sections. The first section will introduce students to the main ontological debates of IR theory based on Waltz' distinction of the 'three images' of international politics. The second section focusses on what can be termed the fourth Great Debate, structured by the epistemological opposition between rationalism and reflectivism.

Bibliographie - *Bibliography* :

Students are highly recommended to prepare the accompanying readings indicated in the syllabus for each session. They are available via the shared OneDrive folder for this course.

Furthermore, the following manuals are useful to complete and deepen the core issues discussed in class:

- Dunne, T., Kurki, M., & Smith, S. (Eds.). (2016). *International relations theories: discipline and diversity* (4th ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Shepherd, L. J. (Ed.) (2013). *Critical approaches to security : an introduction to theories and methods*. London / New York: Routledge.