

**University of Economics, Prague
CESP**

IP_334 INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

INSTRUCTOR: Tomáš Doležal (Mr.)
OFFICE: NB 265 (New Building)
CLASS HOURS: Monday 9:15 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
OFFICE HOURS: Monday 1 p.m. – 2 p.m.
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course focuses on discussing and interpreting current hot issues of international relations in order to practice analytical skills and to present key dimensions of world affairs in general. IR is introduced as a dimension of social reality and as a field of research and academic discipline. Main IR theoretical traditions of thought including realist, liberal, constructivist and critical approaches are applied directly or indirectly to contrast various interpretations of international relations. Role of the state and non-state actors of international affairs is discussed as well as their future. The course also presents topics of foreign policy, diplomacy, soft power and as well as the substantive issues of security cooperation, violent conflicts, international economic relations, regional integration projects, human rights, international law and intercultural affairs. The seminar discussions reflect alternative political, economic, security or cultural explanations of the selected international relations phenomena including the most topical events.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The course provides students with an introduction to international relations as well as to the International Relations (IR) discipline. The main goal is to help students to understand better the nowadays international affairs, get familiarized with the variety of analytical perspectives and discuss essential questions and topical issues of the world politics. While following mainly the Western and particularly European perspectives when referring to the academic reflection of the IR, the course pays special attention also to the diverse interpretations of the world affairs and processes arising from diversity of media, national, cultural or disciplinary perspectives.

COURSE MATERIAL

Readings and other obligatory sources: at the CESP web page or presented in class

Relevant on-line sources: at the CESP web page or presented in class

Supplementary books: in the VSE library or library study room

Carlsnaes, W.; Risse, T.; Simmons B.A.: Handbook of International Relations, Sage Publications Ltd. 2002, ISBN 0761963049 (VSE library)

Hill, C.; Smith, M.: International Relations and the EU, Oxford University Press, 2005, ISBN 0199273480 (VSE library - study room only)

Shaw, M.: Global Society and International Relations (selected chapters), <http://www.martinshaw.org/global.htm>

Goldstein, J.S., Pevehouse, J. C.: International Relations Eighth Edition, 2008-2009 Update (or any of previous editions), Pearson Longman, NY, ISBN 0321464508 (VSE library: 7th edition)

Supplementary readings and discussion issues: at the CESP web page

COURSE FORMAT

The course will be conducted in the form of lectures (2 hours per week) and seminars (2 hours per week). The course also includes students' presentations of selected case studies and following discussions in class.

CLASS PARTICIPATION

Class participation is an important element in the learning process. Active participation is expected and besides, all the students are strongly encouraged to prepare on weekly basis following the home work instructions at the CESP website. The final test is based on the home works and other materials available at the CESP web page. The presentations and working papers of each student focus individually on the topics approved by the lecturer. Students are graded according to their attendance and contribution to class discussions (34 points out of 100), their presentations in class (33 points out of 100) and the test results (33 points out of 100).

PRESENTATIONS

Students are expected to contribute actively to the seminars. Each student prepares a presentation on a selected question relevant to international relations (discussed and pre-arranged with the lecturer).

ATTENDANCE

Attendance of students is expected. Unexcused repeated absences will adversely affect one's course grade.

STUDENT EVALUATION

Course grade will be determined on the basis of the following: class attendance and active discussion (34%), presentation (33%), test (33%).

COURSE SCHEDULE and CONTENT

WEEK 1: Introduction into international relations and IR

- Goals and requirements of the course
- Introduction. Definition of international relations and IR
- Introduction to World political geography

WEEK 2: Geography, history, and international relations.

- Characteristics of world macro-regions, political and cultural geography
- Importance of history and geography in IR
- Human rights in world affairs: One World festival in Prague

WEEK 3: Diverse analytical perspectives and interpretation. Plurality of sources and media interpretation

- Development of the discipline. Essential questions and conceptual tools
- Levels of analysis, diverse sources of information
- Variety in analytical and disciplinary perspectives on world politics.

WEEK 4: Actors, Power(s), System of the international relations in history and today.

- Typology of the actors: the State and the non-state actors
- Various power hierarchies: What is power? Material and hard power, soft power, role of role recognition and perceptions
- Historical systems of the international relations

WEEK 5: Nationalisms. Nation-building and National identities

- Nationalisms and national identities in conflict
- Historical development of the State as a key actor. The role of the State today
- Role of perceptions and identities
- The case of North Korea. Team presentation of a relevant student project.

WEEK 6: Foreign policy and diplomacy: Interests, Ideologies, Concepts, Values

- Foreign policy making and analysis
- Traditional diplomacy in history and today. Bilateral and multilateral, negotiations.
- The case of contemporary foreign policies of Russian Federation. Team presentation of a relevant student project.

WEEK 7: Public and cultural diplomacy. Perceptions, stereotypes, and soft power.

- Public and cultural diplomacy, the power of images, identities, and discourses.
- Cases of the best practice and failures; asymmetric informational wars
- Team presentation of a relevant student project: A case study and discussions

WEEK 8: Economic factor in world politics, political perspectives on World economy.

- Economics as a key factor of international relations. Contrasting Liberal lens and Neo-Marxism theories of imperialism and interdependence.
- Material roots of conflicts
- Political context of dropping prices of oil. Team presentation of a relevant student project.

WEEK 9: The role of cooperation, international organizations and institutions

- Idealist and liberal tradition: the role of cooperation, idea of perpetual peace from Kant to the European Union
- Human rights agenda, international institutions and law
- Team presentation of a relevant student project: A case study and discussions

WEEK 10: Conflicts and security.

- Typology of non-violent and violent conflicts
- Defining or explaining? International, intra-state, civil, ethnic, or religious conflicts, insurrections, national liberation movements vs. terrorism
- Application and examples. Team presentation of a relevant student projects: case study and discussions

WEEK 11: Global governance

- Inter-governmental and transnational politics and institutions. Concept of international society.
- UN structure. Security Council and other activities of the UN organizations and of the UN specialized agencies
- Political aspects of globalization. Global governance
- Team presentation of a relevant student project: A case study and discussions

WEEK 12: Religion, culture and identities in World politics

- The role of religion in international affairs. Culture as explanation
- Power of identity: diverse types of identities involved in international affairs, identity politics, and social psychology
- Religion and world politics. Variety of religious phenomena and their politicization
- Daesh. Team presentation of a relevant student project.

WEEK 13: Final test. Discussion on current international topics