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<b>Course title:</b>	International Relations: Theories and Application
<b>Track:</b>	B-Track
<b>Language of instruction:</b>	English
<b>Contact hours:</b>	48 (6 per day)
<b>ECTS-Credits:</b>	4

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### **Course description**

This course introduces the field of International Relations (IR). It is designed for students interested in understanding global issues and actors in a time of fast-moving political and social change. The focus will be on theories of IR and their application in international politics.

The field of IR studies the functioning of the international system and deals with the nature of the changing relations between states and with non-state actors. This course starts with discussing the classical theories of IR from Realism to contemporary attempts of theoretical bridge-building. Next, the course will deal with contemporary debates in IR against the backdrop of the changing international system. Among others, topics to discuss include multilateralism, globalization, and power transitions. The course continues with examining the role of non-state actors and key issues in contemporary IR such as terrorism or the environment; the goal is to discuss IR theories in the current political context. Finally, the course concludes with a round table discussion on the prospects for politics and IR.

In this course, students will learn political concepts and theories through lectures. To compare international political phenomena, each student has to introduce a current issue or actor in a short oral presentation. The students are expected to discuss theoretical questions about the political world in working groups making use of the current news on international politics. In addition, students will learn and practice how to voice their opinion and persuade their audience in an academic essay. Finally, the students will gain insight into daily international politics and IR research through field trips and meetings with IR scholars and international policy experts.

### **Student profile**

The course is designed for students with different academic backgrounds and a general interest in international politics.

### **Prerequisites**

There are no specific prerequisites for this course.

### **Course requirements**

All students are expected to attend and participate actively in class discussions of all readings and daily news. This means students should be prepared to a) summarize, evaluate and assess critically the significance of the readings, and b) provide information and discuss current topics of international politics.

Each student has to sign up for a short oral presentation. Presentation topics will be distributed at the first day of class.

In a final exam, students have to write a short essay in which they discuss a current issue of international politics applying a theory of IR. We will practice how to write an essay in class.

**Grading**

Participation: 40%

Oral presentation: 30%

Final Exam (essay): 30%

**Reading**

A course reader will be provided.

**Course schedule**

Date	Program*
Tuesday, July 24, 2018	<p><b>Introduction: Getting started</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introducing the field of IR</li> <li>• Current trends in international politics</li> <li>• Opening discussion on “Why study IR?” with PhD candidates from the Berlin Graduate School for Transnational Studies (BTS), a joint program by Freie Universität Berlin, Hertie School of Governance, and WZB Berlin Social Science Center</li> </ul>
Friday, July 27, 2018	<p><b>Classical Theories I: Modern classics of IR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Realism and the balance of power</li> <li>• Liberalism and world order</li> <li>• Constructivism and ideas and beliefs</li> </ul>
Tuesday, July 31, 2018	<p><b>Classical Theories II: Contemporary theories in IR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other approaches: Marxism, non-Western IR theories and more</li> <li>• Theoretical bridge-building</li> <li>• Academic essay writing: How to voice your opinion</li> </ul>
Friday, August 3, 2018	<p><b>Contemporary Debates in IR I: Preferences &amp; multilateralism</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International institutions</li> <li>• Domestic politics</li> <li>• Field trip: Discussion with a government representative or someone from an international organization</li> </ul>
Tuesday, August 7, 2018	<p><b>Contemporary Debates in IR II: Power transitions &amp; polarity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The emergence of the BRICS</li> <li>• Regionalism vs. globalization</li> <li>• Field trip: Discussion with someone from the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP)</li> </ul>
Friday, August 10, 2018	<p><b>IR Theories in Context I: The role of non-state actors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multinational enterprises (MNEs)</li> <li>• NGOs and society</li> <li>• Field trip: Discussion with someone from the grassroots think tank Polis 180</li> </ul>

Tuesday, August 14, 2018	<b>IR Theories in Context II: Key issues in contemporary IR</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• International terrorism</li><li>• The environment</li><li>• Social rights in international politics</li></ul>
Friday, August 17, 2018	<b>Reflection: Review and Prospects</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Final exam: Essay</li><li>• Final round table discussion with guest speakers</li></ul>

\*Field trips are subject to change depending on the availability of appointments and speakers. On field trip days, class hours may be adjusted.