

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS (INTR)

INTR 1001 Transnational Issues in Global Politics

This course is designed to provide students with an introduction to transnational issues and world politics and to acquaint them with some of the leading issues, theories, concepts and processes, and history that shape and define world events. It is suitable for students embarking on long-term study of international affairs as well as for students with other majors and intellectual interest who simply want to know more about how the world works and how the material covered in this class affects their lives. It is expected that students taking the course will gain an ability to analyze, understand objectively evaluate and appreciate the complex dynamics that affect "global politics" writ large, including issues relating to trade, diplomacy, people-to-people and business transactions, and shifts in demography, borders, international institutions and global governance. In addition to issues of diplomacy, statecraft, and security we will assess some of the major international issues of our time (i.e. climate change, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, genocide and human trafficking) and debate the prospects for bringing peace and prosperity to a world that is rife with conflict and poverty.

Fall or Spring

1 Course Unit

INTR 2500 Political Risk Analysis

This course teaches students to apply social science theories and concepts together with futures methodologies (e.g. Delphi method; country risk assessments used by ratings agencies) to the challenges of addressing international political risks to the continuity, effectiveness and operations of business, government and other organizations in their international transactions.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

INTR 2600 Counterintelligence: History, Theory, and Practice

This course will address the conceptual and practical issues of the practice of counterintelligence as it relates to the national defense, economic competitiveness, and foreign policy decision-making and the role of the intelligence community in thwarting intelligence gathering and espionage against the United States and the United Kingdom. Because the closer is to the contemporary world and the inherent secrecy the surrounds intelligence and counterintelligence activities, much of this class focuses on historical cases where long term public research and declassification of government documents have allowed us to look into the system and process of intelligence gathering, analysis, and recommendations for action. We will explore recurrent and prominent themes of intelligence failures, the trade-offs and calculations of a strong CI infrastructure as it relates to ethics, democracy and national power and prestige that shape our understanding of the subject and how it directly and indirectly impacts our lives and our society. Students will gain an appreciation of how the practice has been utilized by government, specifically: its structure, analytical processes, organizational culture, practice-related ethics, perception(s) by the public, guiding charter, and governmental oversight. This class covers the diverse array of counterintelligence applications - within the government as well as in the private sector and our individual lives. TO APPLY FOR THIS COURSE, EMAIL INSTRUCTION FOR APPLICATION FORM FPLANTAN@SAS.UPENN.EDU

Spring

1 Course Unit

INTR 2700 International Strategy: History, Theory, and Practice

International Strategy is designed to give students a comprehensive understanding of how states craft and implement strategies in pursuit of their national interests. Moving beyond security issues alone, the course explores how diplomatic, economic, military, and cultural tools are employed to advance broader strategic objectives within the global system. We will compare historical and contemporary examples—from classic theorists like Sun Tzu and Clausewitz to present-day debates on emerging technologies and climate policy—to understand how and why strategies succeed or fail. Students will examine a wide range of strategic concerns: deterrence and coercion, alliance-building, economic statecraft, and the influence of international institutions. We will study how domestic politics, leadership psychology, and international power dynamics shape a nation's choice of strategic approach. The course also spotlights current challenges such as cyber warfare, the proliferation of advanced military capabilities, shifting global alliances, and the rise of new powers, analyzing how these developments reshape the art of strategy. By linking core theoretical frameworks with real-world case studies, students will gain analytical tools for identifying the key factors that shape foreign policy decisions and for assessing the strengths and weaknesses of different strategic options. Whether you have a background in political science or simply a keen interest in understanding how and why countries act as they do, this course will equip you with the knowledge to critically evaluate global events and debates through a strategic lens. No prerequisites are required, though familiarity with international relations or modern history may be beneficial.

Spring

1 Course Unit

INTR 2900 Topics in International Relations

Topics in International Relations focuses on specialized issues, practical or applied approaches, policy and other topics of contemporary relevance in modern study of international relations. These are experimental or occasionally offered classes. Past topics of included US Foreign Policy and the Arab Spring, the Iraq Wars, Secret Intelligence & American Democracy, Counterintelligence, Homeland Security, the US & South Asia Cold War and New Alignments, and Think Tanks and Global Governance.

Fall or Spring

1 Course Unit

INTR 2910 Topics in Foreign Policy and Security

Topics in International Relations focuses on specialized issues, practical or applied approaches, policy and other topics of contemporary relevance in modern study of international relations. These are experimental or occasionally offered classes. Past topics of included US Foreign Policy and the Arab Spring, the Iraq Wars, Secret Intelligence & American Democracy, Counterintelligence, Homeland Security, the US & South Asia Cold War and New Alignments, and Think Tanks and Global Governance.

1 Course Unit

INTR 2911 Special Topics: Rivalry, Competition and International Security in Northeast Asia

The course will use the explore the problem of security in Northeast Asia. In the 20th century, the region was one of the most conflict-prone parts of the world. Today disputes over territory, maritime influence, and nuclear proliferation make the region potentially one of the most volatile. The region is unique in a number of ways: it is where the world's three largest economies meet, it is a region that is arguably the most integrated into the global economy, and the region has long been the manufacturing hub of the world. Intra-region trade is essential to each country, while technological development is at the root of national competitiveness. At the same time, the region is uniquely primed for volatility. It is where four nuclear powers operate in close proximity to each other, and the four largest and best-equipped navies of the world (US, China, Russia, and Japan) jockey for position. The course will provide the student with the theoretical tools to start to understand the various forces shaping the region, and explore the evolution of the region over the last 150 years in an effort to understand the historical and contemporary forces that have shaped it, and the legacies those forces leave behind. This is a Penn Global Seminar, and students must apply.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

INTR 2912 Special Topics: European Foreign and Security Policy in Times of Crisis

European integration has been one of the most decisive developments since the Second World War. Europe was destroyed and the main question was how to avoid a new war in Europe in the light of the Cold War. Since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 Europe has experienced a remarkable transformation with significant consequences for the region's most important intergovernmental organization, the European Union. Externally, the EU has slowly been emerging as a major player on the world scene, while internally the system attempts to strike a balance between continued enlargement and further political integration. A plethora of external security challenges and shifting foreign policy dynamics confronts Europe today: migration, the Russo-Ukrainian war, disinformation and cybersecurity issues, energy security, and climate change. The course aims to provide students with the opportunity to engage in debates and scholarship on the foreign policy and security decisions facing Europe in the 21st century. Accordingly, the course will systematically look at the processes behind EU institutions and national governments in consolidating a common response to international challenges: peacekeeping missions, migrant coordination mechanisms, promotion of democracy and human rights protection, cooperation on climate change and energy security, EU-NATO relations, strategic partnerships with China and India.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

INTR 2920 Topics in International Political Economy

Topics in International Relations focuses on specialized issues, practical or applied approaches, policy and other topics of contemporary relevance in modern study of international relations. These are experimental or occasionally offered classes. Past topics of included US Foreign Policy and the Arab Spring, the Iraq Wars, Secret Intelligence & American Democracy, Counterintelligence, Homeland Security, the US & South Asia Cold War and New Alignments, and Think Tanks and Global Governance.

1 Course Unit

INTR 2999 Independent Study

Independent study for IR majors.

Fall or Spring

1 Course Unit

INTR 3500 Research Methods/Practice in IR

International Relations is concerned with both theory and practice so we employ a range of analytical tools to examine actors and events in world politics. The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the various research methods utilized by students and scholars in the field of IR including: case studies, historical - comparative and archival research, survey research, interviewing techniques, simulations, quantitative and statistical analysis.

Fall or Spring

Prerequisite: PSCI 0400

1 Course Unit

INTR 4197 Senior Seminar for Thesis Research I

Seminar in International Relations. A two semester sequence including review of advanced International Relations theory and research methods for the preparation of the senior thesis.

Fall

Prerequisite: INTR 3500 AND PSCI 0400

1 Course Unit

INTR 4198 Independent Study for Thesis Research

Independent study for international relations majors completing senior thesis research.

Fall or Spring

1 Course Unit

INTR 4297 Senior Seminar For Thesis Research II

Seminar in international relations. Second semester of a two semester sequence including review of advanced international relations theory and research methods for the preparation of the senior thesis.

Spring

Prerequisite: INTR 4197

1 Course Unit

INTR 4597 Senior Project I

This seminar will prepare students to plan, implement, and present their senior research project. Students will draw on the experience and insight they have gained in the course of their fieldwork or internship to develop defensible policy recommendations for their target audience. As such, the seminar will introduce students to the policy formation process as they develop the practical skills needed to formulate and produce actionable policy recommendations. Students will produce a formal report and will present their findings to relevant stakeholders at the conclusion of the Seminar. This class will ensure that students develop the skills necessary to undertake a substantive research project.

Not Offered Every Year

Prerequisite: INTR 3500 AND PSCI 0400

1 Course Unit

INTR 4697 Senior Project II

This course is a continuation of INTR-395, culminating with the production of a policy research paper and presentation.

Spring

Prerequisite: INTR 4597

1 Course Unit