

# **History 2705E**

## **The Western Tradition in International Relations Theory and Practice**

**2023-24**

Instructor: **Oleksa Drachewych**

Email: **odrachew@uwo.ca**

This is a **draft** syllabus. Please see the course site on OWL for a final version.

### **Course Description**

The course examines historical international relations theory critically and in context, not only the "canon" of Western thinkers but also international voices often marginalized in IR theory. In doing so, the course considers the role of race, gender, imperialism, religion, and more in the development of IR theory.

### **Course Syllabus**

What is the lineage of ideas that brings us to modern understandings of international relations (IR) today? Focusing on the "Western tradition," this course will examine the works of prominent influences on international relations theory from the ancient world to the present as philosophical texts, but also in context. In doing so, this course will explore the interplay of how certain events influence major works, but also consider how some thinkers influence others. The first half of the course will focus largely on the accepted Western canon of international relations. The second half will focus on international relations theories and thinkers that either have been marginalized or challenge this canon. Students will gain an understanding in several concepts such as just war theory, natural law, political realism, liberalism, and ideological IR theory. The course will also explore how globalization, anti-imperialism, race, gender, and the environment have led to new considerations in modern IR theory. In this course, students will also come to terms with the limits of the traditional Western "canon" of IR theory. What is gained when considering the ideas of figures often not included in the "canon?" What does placing "canonical" Western theorists and theories in context, highlighting the role of imperialism or racism, to name two examples, do to our understanding and the applicability of their theories?

By the end of this course, successful students will be able to:

- Understand the major concepts in the intellectual history of international relations as shown through major works by major thinkers in political and diplomatic thought
- Effectively read, critique, summarize and understand primary sources as major philosophical texts and as historical artifacts
- Gain an appreciation for the historiography of international relations scholarship along with an understanding of the context and lineage of certain philosophical concepts in international relations theory

- Communicate clearly and effectively an argument through class discussions and written assignments. As part of this course, there are a number of written assignments which will allow students to enhance their understanding of IR theories or help students write concisely, clearly, and purposefully.
- Consider concepts of race, gender, and class in why certain voices are prioritized and others marginalized in the “canon” of the “Western tradition” of IR theory
- Grapple with ways to think beyond the standard canon to develop a broader understanding of IR
- Through an interactive crisis simulation, students will work collaboratively with one another while understanding the challenges in the application of major IR theories.

### Methods of Evaluation

Overview Assignment: 15%

Short Response Assignment: 10%

International Relations Crisis Simulation: 35%

- In-class Participation/Group Collaboration: 15%
- Two Written Reports: 20% (10% each)

Final Take-Home Exam: 25%

Participation in Class Discussion: 15%

**For all assignments, further instructions will be included on OWL.**

*Overview Assignment:* Students will complete a **750 to 1000 word (not including footnotes or endnotes)** overview of a thinker or work discussed in History 2705E. This overview will cover the thinker, the context of the works/thinker relevant to the class, and offer some strengths and limitations of the work/thinker’s ideas as relates to international relations. Students will be assigned a thinker and work they will cover in their overview within the first weeks of class.

This assignment has two steps. The first step requires students to submit their assignment by **October 5**. Students can elect to submit a rough draft for initial feedback or a more polished draft to save time later. Feedback will be returned within two weeks. Students who submit the assignment at the first deadline, *on time*, will receive the opportunity to resubmit. The resubmission deadline is **October 26**. No late resubmissions will be accepted. Students who complete the entire process, including resubmission, will have the opportunity to publish their overviews on the History 2705E International Relations Thinker Database.

*Short Response Assignment:* Students will be required to write a **750-1000 word (not including footnotes or endnotes)** response to one of four questions regarding early course content. Responses will be marked on clarity of writing, content, strength of arguments, and use of sources and research. Questions will be posted on OWL at the start of the course and refer to course material covered before the Fall Reading Week. **Deadline for submissions is November 17.**

*International Relations Crisis Simulation:* The final assignment in this course will be a crisis simulation taking place over the final weeks of the course. The simulation will begin with an initial crisis and then students will negotiate and work with, or against, one another, as other crises will take place. The end goal will be to find common ground between the different schools of thought, resolving any crises and hopefully develop a balanced world system. The simulation will be similar to Model UN Crisis Committees.

One's mark will be determined by two items. The first will be based on the students' involvement in the live simulation taking place during class time. Students should be active in discussions, while also encouraging group collaboration and teamwork. Marks will be determined through a mix of self-evaluation, peer evaluation and the evaluation of the professor and any teaching assistants.

The second part of the mark will be determined by two 1000-1250 word (not including footnotes or endnotes) written reports. The first report will be due **February 14** and will use historical examples to inspire an analysis of how a student's assigned school of thought would respond to the initial crisis. The second report will be due on **March 27** and will be a reflection of some of the simulation's events and discuss the challenges of implementing a theory into practice. Though students will likely be influenced by their fellow classmates' positions and ideas throughout the simulation, students are responsible for their own written reports.

Information regarding the simulation will be posted on OWL in January.

*Exam:* There is a final take home exam in this course. It will be cumulative and take place in the final exam period. Students will have at least one full week to complete the take-home exam. It will be composed of two essay sections.

*Participation:* Scheduled class time will be used for class discussion. Some weeks, the class will be separated into hour-long sessions; other weeks will have class presentations or simulations. Participation will be determined by the quality of student contributions over the entire duration of the course. Students will be expected to be prepared to discuss course readings and lectures each week. More information regarding tutorials will be posted on OWL.

General Information about Submissions and Deadlines:

**All assignments should be submitted online via OWL at 11:59:59 pm ET on its due date. The timestamp on OWL will be considered final for any disputes regarding the punctuality of submissions.** All written assignments will require citations (endnotes/footnotes and bibliography) in the most recent version of Chicago Style. Hardcopies are not required nor will be accepted.

Make-up tests, midterms, and exams can only be approved by Academic Counselling. Please see [https://history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program\\_module\\_information/policies.html](https://history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program_module_information/policies.html) for department procedures and requirements involving make-up tests and exams.

***Absences and Late Assignments:*** For all late assignments, a late penalty of **2% per day (weekends will count as one day)** will be applied. Should you require accommodation due

to medical reasons or otherwise, please see the following section, contact Academic Counselling or consult the Undergraduate Policies and Statements on the History Department website.

**Obtaining a passing grade on the final assignment is a requirement for passing History 2705E.**

### **Course Materials**

Most materials will be linked via OWL, using ebooks or online sources. The following items will be made available for purchase at the UWO Bookstore:

Required:

Patricia Owens, Katharina Rietzler, Kimberly Hutchings & Sarah C. Dunstan, *Women's International Thought: Towards a New Canon* (Cambridge University Press, 2022).\*

\*Be aware there are two similarly titled textbooks that overlap. One is an edited collection of articles; the other is a collection of excerpts from women thinkers. We will be using the latter (Make sure you have the right subtitle if not purchasing from the bookstore!)

### **Course Schedule and Readings:** ***September 7: Course Introduction***

***September 14: The Western Canon: Roots of Political Realism***

***September 21: The Western Canon: Natural Law and Just War Theory***

***September 28: The Western Canon: The Role of the Leader during Early Modern Europe***

***October 5: The Western Canon: The Birth of "Modern" IR and International Law***

***OVERVIEW FIRST SUBMISSION DUE***

***October 12: The Western Canon: The Enlightenment and the Social Contract***

***October 19: The Western Canon: The Concert of Europe as a Concept***

***October 26: The Western Canon: Liberalism and Liberal Internationalism***

***OVERVIEW RESUBMISSION DUE***

***November 2: READING WEEK – No Classes***

***November 9: The Western Canon: Modern Political Realism***

***November 16: The Western Canon: The Neoliberal Order***

***SHORT ASSIGNMENT DUE***

***November 23: The Western Canon: Neorealism***

***November 30: Challenging the Western Canon: Methods to Challenge***

***December 7: Challenging the Western Canon: Pacifism and Positive Ideas of Peace***

***WINTER TERM:***

***January 11: Challenging the Western Canon: Marxist Approaches***

***January 18: Challenging the Western Canon: Fascism & Nazism***

***January 25: Challenging the Western Canon: Anti-Colonialism I***

***February 1: Challenging the Western Canon: Anti-Colonialism II***

***February 8: Challenging the Western Canon: TBA***

***February 15: Challenging the Western Canon: Environmentalism in IR***

***FIRST REPORT DUE***

***February 22: READING WEEK – No Classes***

***February 29: Challenging the Western Canon: Feminism and IR***

***March 7: Crisis Simulation – Week 1***

***March 14: Crisis Simulation – Week 2***

***March 21: Crisis Simulation – Week 3***

***March 28: Crisis Simulation – Week 4***

***SECOND REPORT DUE***

***April 4: Crisis Simulation – Week 5 + REVIEW***

**Additional Statements**

**Communication policies:** Students are welcome to come to the professor's office hours or to arrange another time to meet the professor at his office if they have questions or concerns about the course. Additionally, they may contact the professor via email. The professor will aim to respond to students within 24 hours on weekdays and within 48 hours on weekends. Please use your UWO email address for any correspondence.

**Use of electronic devices:** Students are welcome to use electronic devices for the purposes of writing notes, reviewing course materials, or, in the crisis simulation, perform tasks related to it. Recording tools are not allowed without written permission from the instructor.

**Use of generative AI tools:** Students must obtain permission from the professor before using generative AI tools like ChatGPT for any assignments in this course. Using these tools without his permission puts your academic integrity at risk.

Please review the Department of History's shared policies and statements for all undergraduate courses at: [https://history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program\\_module\\_information/policies.html](https://history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program_module_information/policies.html) for important information regarding accessibility options, make-up exams, medical accommodations, health and wellness, academic integrity, plagiarism, and more.

DRAFT