

## **Downing - Keio Summer School 2017**

### **Strand C: International Relations Course Outline**

This course provides an introduction to the academic subject of International Relations, which studies the factors affecting the interaction of states with each other and with a range of other actors. International Relations has existed as a separate but multidisciplinary academic field of study for about a century. It draws in particular from the fields of political science, economics, history, anthropology, geography, sociology and law. Its relevance to current affairs on the international scene is obvious and the course should help students better to understand world events in the news.

Theoretical analysis in the academic field is very much influenced by the philosophical assumptions and even the political inclination of those doing the analyzing. The theory, if taken in isolation, can therefore be very confusing. For this reason, the course introduces theoretical concepts like realism and liberalism as they arise in the contexts of statehood, global issues, war and peace. Thus International Relations theory as a whole is not explicitly addressed until the tenth lecture.

Students will learn most effectively through exploring International Relations concepts in discussion. The ten lecture sessions, and in particular the associated seminars, will therefore be interactive. Accordingly, the level of students' participation in these sessions and their contribution to student presentations will form the most significant element of the course assessment. Students will be required to write a short essay in English on a relevant subject, but the two presentations in which they will participate are particularly significant. The second of these presentations will allow them, helped by a keynote lecture by an expert on Japan, to apply International Relations concepts to Japan's role in the world.

The course starts by briefly considering how the current international system has developed during the past 600 years, leading to an understanding of the entities that make up the current global system. A key concept to be discussed is the sovereignty of states and the factors that influence or constrain it. The role of actors and issues both above and below the state level is a significant factor in this. Considering factors that affect all states to a greater or lesser extent, like globalisation and climate change, leads naturally into discussion of global inequality, poverty and development. Against this background, one of the keys to understanding how states interact with each other is to study the domestic and international factors that influence how foreign policies are developed. Particularly since 1945, these factors have led states to cooperate in international institutions like the United Nations. However, such cooperation has not always been sufficient to prevent violent conflict, so the course will consider different viewpoints on what causes war, on why and how states intervene in the affairs of other states and on how peace may be built and sustained.

By briefly considering all of the above issues, the first nine lectures will have helped students to build a better understanding of the context in which International Relations theories can be discussed in the tenth lecture. The lectures cover the following subject areas:

#### **Lecture 1: Introduction - Development of the International System**

After exploring what students expect to gain from the course, this lecture will discuss the development of the modern international state system, often thought to have originated in 1648



with the Peace of Westphalia. The lecture will focus on the concepts of sovereignty and Eurocentrism.

### **Lecture 2: States and other Actors**

This lecture will expand on the over-simplified view taken in Lecture 1 by considering the range of actors above and below the state 'level of analysis'. These will include international organisations, regions within states, non-governmental organisations, international companies and transnational networks. The concept of state sovereignty will again be central, not least as a context for considering national self-determination and state fragility.

### **Lecture 3: Global Issues**

This lecture considers some of the global issues with which both states and other international actors have to engage. Against the overall background of globalisation, issues like global warming, migration, international public health, religious difference and international terrorism are considered.

### **Lecture 4: Wealth, Poverty and Development**

Differences in wealth both within individual states and between different states are a major cause of controversy and form the trigger for development assistance to alleviate poverty. In this lecture, the causes of these wealth disparities and the responses by richer states and international organisations are considered. In addition, motivations for these responses are unpacked.

### **Lecture 5: Foreign Policy**

Taking the origins of foreign policy beyond simple decision-making by leaders to protect national interest, this lecture focuses on the sub-field of Foreign Policy Analysis. It considers domestic and external influences on policy development, taking into account electoral politics, public opinion and bureaucracy in the domestic arena and – internationally - diplomatic relations, treaty obligations and non-state influences.

### **Lecture 6: International Institutions**

Developing the themes of Lectures 2 and 5, this lecture looks in more detail at the institutions through which states engage peacefully and cooperatively with each other. These include the United Nations and lesser-known global regimes in specialised areas like atomic energy, trade, civil aviation and whaling. At the regional level, too, institutions vary significantly in their purpose and the depth of commitment, though most focus on security and economic cooperation.

### **Lecture 7: War ...**

When cooperation breaks down, international relations may deteriorate into violent conflict, causing death, destruction and displacement. This lecture will examine some possible explanations for the outbreak of war, as well as the significance of nuclear weapons. Since 1945, inter-state war has for various reasons been rare, but war within states is more common. The potential causes of intra-state conflict will therefore be considered, together with the impact of such conflict on those outside the state in question through regional instability and international terrorism.

### **Lecture 8: Intervention**

In this lecture, the reasons why states choose to intervene in the internal affairs of other states, whether to 'stabilise' the situation, to 'build peace' or to protect their own interests, will be



examined. Yet intervention is not only a state activity; the lecture will also consider intervention by inter-governmental organisations and others.

#### **Lecture 9: ... and Peace**

Building on Lectures 7 and 8, this lecture will consider what constitutes peace, how a comprehensive 'peace process' can best be understood, and whether those outside a conflict-affected society can make any meaningful contribution to conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict consolidation.

#### **Lecture 10: The Relevance of International Relations Theory**

Theoretical concepts will have been mentioned in the previous nine lectures. This lecture will survey some of the main schools of thought that have dominated the post-1945 International Relations academic discipline. A particular focus will be on the so-called 'structure-agency debate' and theoretical viewpoints will be considered against the background of current issues like Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria.

#### **Keynote Lecture: Japan in the World**

This lecture by an expert in Japanese history and culture will give a personal perspective on factors affecting Japan's relations with the rest of the world.

#### **Readings**

Extracts from book chapters, journal articles and news reports will be provided as readings before each lecture. However, students may also wish to familiarise themselves in advance with the following texts:

Baylis, John, Smith, Steve, Owens, Patricia (2016), *The globalization of world politics: an introduction to international relations*. Seventh Edition. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Jones, C. (2014), *International Relations: A beginner's guide*. London, Oneworld.



# International Relations



**Dr. Peter Dixon**

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After seven years of part-time research in the University of Cambridge's Department of Politics and International Studies, Peter completed his PhD on 'Barriers to Cooperation in Post-Cold War Conflict Interventions' in October 2015. He holds an MBA from the Open University and completed the MSt in International Relations at Cambridge in 2007. Alongside his PhD research, Peter led the British NGO Concordis International for eleven years, establishing it as an independent conflict resolution charity and managing the development of its strategic peacebuilding, predominantly on Sudan and Kenya but also on other conflict situations including Ivory Coast, Bahrain, Afghanistan and Israeli-Palestinian issues. His book 'Peacemakers: Building stability in a complex world' was published in October 2009. Before joining Concordis, Peter served as a Royal Air Force pilot, both in air transport throughout the world and in a training role. He taught undergraduate-level military doctrine at the US Air Force Academy, managed training in international relations in London for high-level government officials from 40 nations and worked on regional arms control and confidence-building in the German Defence Ministry in Berlin. Peter has also worked on a voluntary basis on short-term development projects in Nepal, Peru and Nicaragua and managed multi-national conferences in Central and Eastern Europe. He and his wife Ingrid have two adult children.