

**School of International Studies
Jawaharlal Nehru University**

Problems of International Relations (IS 452N)

Course:	M.A.
Course No:	(IS 452N)
Course Title:	Problems of International Relations
Course Type:	Core
Semester:	Winter 2024
Course Teacher & Contact Details:	<p><i>Name: Sandip Kumar Singh</i> <i>Room No.: #318, SIS-II</i> <i>Email: sandipksingh@mail.jnu.ac.in</i> <i>Tel. No.: (O): 26704349</i></p> <p>Prasanta Sahoo <i>Room No.: #309, SIS-II</i> <i>Email: prasantasahoo@mail.jnu.ac.in</i> <i>Tel. No.: (O): 26704349</i></p>
Credits:	4
Contact Hours:	4 hours/week
Class Schedule & Room Number	Room No. 229
Tutorial (for difficulties & discussion)	

Course Description & Objectives

This course follows the introductory course on international relations theory in the previous semester and is designed as a companion course. Now that you have learned the basics of IR theory, in this course, we will look at how IR theory is employed to understand international politics and foreign policy from different perspectives. So, we will discuss some key contemporary debates in international politics from opposing theoretical perspectives. While some of these debates are general in nature, others are particularly relevant to Indian foreign policy and the Indian situation in global politics. We will start with the debates around the changing global power structure. We will then look at the debate about the future of the Liberal International Order and the emerging US-China competition (a new Cold War?). The subsequent section will consider the role of regions and whether regional powers matter in international politics. The last few sections will consider issues such as whether Asian international politics are or will be different from previous, European-dominated international politics and how we might understand Indian foreign policy from a theoretical perspective.

Evaluation Methods

The course assessment will be as follows: There will be a mid-term exam and an end-semester exam. The mid-term will account for 50% of the total grade and the end-sem 50%.

- **Mid-semester evaluation (50%)**

- **End-Semester Evaluation (50%)**

--End-Semester Examination (50%)

- *The SIS Research Manual should be used as a guide for written assignments. Available at: https://www.jnu.ac.in/sites/default/files/SIS_Research_Manual_0.pdf.*
- *Students must maintain a high degree of academic integrity, which includes but is not limited to abstaining from copying and plagiarism. For details on plagiarism and research ethics, refer to the SIS Research Manual.*

Course Content & Readings

I. The Global Structural Context: Measuring the Power Balance

- **Essential Readings**

Barry Posen, “Command of the Commons: The Military Foundations of U.S. Hegemony,” *International Security* 28:1 (Summer 2003): 5-46; Michael Beckley, “The Power of Nations: Measuring What Really Matters,” *International Security* 43:2 (Fall 2018): 7-44; Joshua R. Itzkowitz Shiffrin, Michael Beckley, “Correspondence: Debating China’s Rise and U.S. Decline,” *International Security* 37:3 (Winter 2012/13): 172- 81.

Recommended Additional Reading: Ashley Tellis *et al*, *Measuring National Power in the Postindustrial Age: An Analysts Handbook* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2000); Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth, “The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers in the 21st Century: China’s Rise and the Fate of America’s Global Position,” *International Security*, 40:3 (Winter 2015/16): 7-53; Michael Beckley, “China’s Century? Why America’s Edge Will Endure,” *International Security* 36:3 (Winter 2011/12): 41-78;

II. A New Great Power Competition?

- **Essential Readings**

Aaron L. Friedberg, “The Future of U.S.-China Relations: Is Conflict Inevitable?” *International Security* 30:2 (Fall 2005): 7-45; Barry R. Posen, “Emerging Multipolarity: Why Should We Care?” *Current History*, November 2009, 347-52; Graham Allison, “The Thucydides Trap”, *Foreign Policy*, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/06/09/the-thucydides-trap/#>; <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2015/09/united-states-china-war-thucydides-trap/406756/>

Recommended Additional Reading: Daniel H. Nexon, “Against Great Power Competition,” *Foreign Affairs*, February 2021; Joshua Shiffrin, “The rise of China, balance of power theory and US national security: Reasons for optimism?” *Journal of Strategic Studies*, (2018), <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402390.2018.1558056>; Carla Norrlof, “The Dollar Still Dominates: American Financial Power in the Age of Great Power Competition,” *Foreign Affairs*, February 21, 2023, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/dollar-still-dominates>.

III. What Does the US and China Want?

- **Essential Readings**

Patrick Porter, “Why America’s Grand Strategy Has Not Changed: Power, Habit, and the U.S. Foreign Policy Establishment,” *International Security* 42:4 (Spring 2018): 9-46; John J.

Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt, “The Case for Offshore Balancing,” *Foreign Affairs* (July/August 2016): 70-83; Yan Xuetong, “Becoming Strong: The New Chinese Foreign Policy,” *Foreign Affairs*, 100:4 (July-August 2021): 40-47; Barry R. Posen, “The Rise of Illiberal Hegemony: Trump’s Surprising Grand Strategy,” *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 97, No. 2 (March/April 2018), pp. 20-27.

Recommended Additional Readings: Josef Joffe, “‘Bismarck’ or ‘Britain’? Toward an American Grand Strategy after Bipolarity,” *International Security* 19:4 (Spring 1995): 94-117; Stephen G. Brooks, G. John Ikenberry, and William C. Wohlforth, “Don’t Come Home America: The Case Against Retrenchment,” *International Security*, 37:3 (Winter 2012/13): 7- 51; Hal Brands, “Fools Rush Out? The Flawed Logic of Offshore Balancing” *The Washington Quarterly*, 38:2 (2015): 7-28; Stephen M. Walt, *The Hell of Good Intentions: America’s Foreign Policy Elite and the Decline of U.S. Primacy* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2018); Barry Posen, *Restraint: A New Foundation for U.S. Grand Strategy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014); Michael C. Desch, “America’s Liberal Illiberalism: The Ideological Origins of Overreaction in U.S. Foreign Policy,” *International Security*, 32:3 (Winter 2007/08): 7-43.

IV. The Liberal International Order Debate

• Essential Readings

Gideon Rose, “The Fourth Founding: The United States and the Liberal Order,” *Foreign Affairs*, December 11, 2018; Paul Staniland, “Misreading the ‘Liberal Order’: Why We Need New Thinking in American Foreign Policy,” *lawfareblog*, July 29, 2018; Yan Xuetong, “The Age of Uneasy Peace: Chinese Power in a Divided World,” *Foreign Affairs*, December 11, 2018.

Recommended Additional Reading: Jake Sullivan, “What Donald Trump and Dick Cheney Got Wrong About America,” *The Atlantic*, January-February 2019, <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2019/01/yes-america-can-still-lead-the-world/576427/>; John J. Mearsheimer, *The Great Delusion: Liberal Dreams and International Realities* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018) chapter 1,5,6; Daniel Deudney and G. John Ikenberry, “Misplaced Restraint: The Quincy Coalition Versus Liberal Internationalism,” *Survival*, 63:4 (2021): 7-32; Alastair Iain Johnston, “China in a World of Orders: Rethinking Compliance and Challenge in Beijing’s International Relations,” *International Security*, 44:2 (Fall 2019): 9-60.

V. Regional Powers and Regional Security: Do They Matter?

• Essential Readings

Andrew Hurrell, “One World, Many Worlds? The Place of Regions in the Study of International Politics,” *International Affairs* 83:1 (2007): 151-66; Barry Buzan and Ole Waever, *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003): 27-127; Amitav Acharya, “The Emerging Regional Architecture of World Politics,” *World Politics* 59 (July 2007): 629-52.

Recommended Additional Readings: Andrew Hurrell, “Hegemony, Liberalism and Global Order: What Space for Would-Be Great Powers?” *International Affairs* 82:1 (2006): 1-19; Daniel Flemes, *Conceptualising Regional Powers in International Relations: Lessons from the South African Case*, GIGA Working Papers No. 53 (June 2007) at http://www.giga-hamburg.de/dl/download.php?d=/content/publikationen/pdf/wp53_flemes.pdf

VI. Asia Future – Europe’s Past?

• Essential Readings

Robert S. Ross, “Balance of Power Politics and the Rise of China: Accommodation and Balancing in East Asia,” *Security Studies* 15:3 (July-September 2006): 355-95; Jeff M. Smith, “China’s Rise and (Under?) Balancing in the Indo-Pacific: Putting Realist Theory to the Test,” *WarOnTheRocks.com*, January 8, 2019; C. Raja Mohan, “India and the Balance of Power,” *Foreign Affairs* 85:4 (July- Aug 2006), pp. 17-32; Kate Sullivan de Estrada, India and order transition in the Indo-Pacific: resisting the Quad as a ‘security community’, *The Pacific Review*, Vol. 36, no. 2, 2023, 378-405.

Recommended Additional Readings: Adam P. Liff and G. John Ikenberry, “Racing Towards Tragedy?: China’s Rise, Military Competition in the Asia-Pacific and the Security Dilemma,” *International Security* 39:2 (Fall 2014): 52-91. Steve Chan, “An Odd Thing Happened on the Way to Balancing: East Asian States’ Reaction to China’s Rise,” *International Studies Review* 12 (2010): 387-412; Darren J. Lim and Zack Cooper, “Reassessing Hedging: The Logic of Alignment in East Asia,” *Security Studies*, 24:4 (2015): 696-727; Aaron L. Friedberg, “Ripe for Rivalry: Prospects for Peace in a Multipolar Asia,” *International Security* 18:3 (Winter 1993-1994): 5-33; David C. Kang, “Getting Asia Wrong: The Need for New Analytical Frameworks,” *International Security* 27:4 (Spring 2003): 57-85;

VII. Postcolonial Theory and Indian Foreign Policy

• Essential Readings

Sanjay Seth, “Postcolonial Theory and the Critique of International Relations” *Millenium* (August 2011), pp. 167- 83; Itty Abraham, *The Making of the Indian Atomic Bomb: Science, Secrecy and the Postcolonial State* (London: Zed Books, 1998) chapter 1, pp. 6-33; Geeta Chowdry and Sheila Nair (eds), *Power, Postcolonialism, and International Relations: Reading Race, Gender and Class* (London: Routledge, 2002); Ian Hall, “Narendra Modi and India’s Normative Power,” *International Affairs* 93:1 (2017): 113-31.

Recommended Additional Readings: Priya Chacko, “The Search for a Scientific Temper: Nuclear Technology and the Ambivalence of India’s Postcolonial Modernity,” *Review of International Studies*; Sankaran Krishna, *Postcolonial Insecurities: India, Sri Lanka and the Question of Nationhood*; Robert S. Ross, “Balance of Power Politics and the Rise of China: Accommodation and Balancing in East Asia,” *Security Studies* 15:3 (July September 2006): 355-95 at <http://www.gwu.edu/~power/literature/dbase/ross1.pdf>

VIII. Asian International Relations Theory

• Essential Readings

All essays in the Special Issue of *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 7 (2007), “Why is There No Non-Western International Relations Theory?” editors Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan; Benoy Kumar Sarkar, Hindu Theory of International Relations, *The American Political Science Review*, (Aug., 1919), Vol. 13(3): pp. 400-414; Siddharth Mallavarapu, “Development of International Relations Theory in India: Traditions, Contemporary Perspectives and Trajectories,” *International Studies* 46 (January-April 2009): 165-83.

Recommended Additional Reading: Amitav Acharya, “Will Asia’s Past Be Its Future?” and David C. Kang, “Hierarchy, Balancing and Empirical Puzzles in Asian International Relations,” *International Security* 28:3 (Winter 2003-2004): 149-80; Peter J. Katzenstein and Nobuo Okawara, “Japan, Asian-Pacific Security and the Case for Analytical Eclecticism,” *International Security* 26:3 (Winter 2001/2002): 153-85; David Martin Jones and Michael L.R. Smith, “Making Process, Not Progress: ASEAN and the Evolving East Asian Regional Order,” *International Security* 32:1 (Summer 2007): 148-84; David C. Kang, “Hierarchy and Stability in Asian International Relations,” in G. John Ikenberry and Michael Mastanduno eds., *International Relations Theory and the Asia-Pacific* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003): 163-90.