



## SCHOOL OF GLOBAL STUDIES

### **IR1122 Problems and issues in International Relations, 15 credits**

Teman och frågeställningar inom Internationella relationer, 15 högskolepoäng  
*First Cycle*

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#### **Confirmation**

This course syllabus was confirmed by School of Global Studies on 2021-02-02 and was last revised on 2023-06-21 to be valid from 2023-08-28, autumn semester of 2023.

*Field of education:* Social Sciences 100%

*Department:* School of Global Studies

#### **Position in the educational system**

The course is given as core course at the first year level of the Bachelor's Programme in International Relations. It can also be studied as a single subject course.

The course can be part of the following programmes: 1) Bachelor's Programme in International Relations (S1INT), 2) Bachelors' programme in Global Studies (S1GLS) and 3) Program in Political Science (S1STV)

#### *Main field of studies*

International Relations

#### *Specialization*

G1N, First cycle, has only upper-secondary level entry requirements

#### **Entry requirements**

General entrance requirements.

#### **Learning outcomes**

On successful completion of the course the student will be able to:

##### *Knowledge and understanding*

- account for different issues and problems in international relations;
- identify central questions about the social and political order that accompany central themes, challenges and issues in IR.

*Competence and skills*

- apply relevant concepts and theories to describe and analyze issues and problems in international relations;
- formulate ideas and arguments in the form of different text genres;
- analyze different sources and narratives using basic source-analytical concepts;
- provide and receive constructive critique on individual and group assignments.

*Judgement and approach*

- critically evaluate the ways in which issues and problems are framed in varied contexts;
- assess the suitability of different theoretical approaches to a problem;
- critically reflect on the knowledge produced through different types of sources and data.

**Course content**

The course examines pressing and perennial themes, problems and issues in international relations that shape the global social and political order. These issues are, but certainly not limited to, war and violence, terrorism, peace and peacebuilding, security, nationalism and identity, human rights, gender, poverty, race and racism, development and inequalities, governance and authority and climate change and the environment. The selection of particular themes, challenges and issues addressed during the course will –to some extent– be informed by contemporary events and developments, which means that they might vary from year to year. The course draws upon a variety of academic sources such as, scholarly articles, policy reports, or data bases but also non-academic works of fiction, novels, films and popular culture (understood broadly), to approach these themes, challenges and issues from a variety of perspectives. Students are encouraged to think innovatively through the questions that have been and will be central to these themes and issues (such as, why societies go to war; how race relations and racism affect people; why some people are poorer than others; how can we deal with climate change; how can we understand nationalism) and to grapple with the challenges that accompany particular answers. *Problems and issues in International Relations* is designed to further ground the student in why and how the study and practice of international relations matters. The course is writing intensive and places strong emphasis on gender, race and class as categories of analysis in an intersectional framework. Students' curiosity and creativity will be enhanced with different forms of expression and analysis (e.g., videos, 'narratives', policy briefs, source criticism, data analysis).

**Form of teaching**

Forms of teaching vary and include lectures, workshops, IR cafes, seminars, individual and group assignments.

*Language of instruction:* English and Swedish

The course may be given in both English and Swedish. When given in English, students wishing to submit their assignments in Swedish may do so.

**Assessment**

The course will be examined through five different assignments, one of which is a group assignment.

- Three individual reflection papers; These will receive peer feedback.
- One group assignment;
- One longer individual assignment.

A student who has taken two examinations in a course or part of a course without obtaining a pass grade is entitled to the nomination of another examiner. The student needs to contact the department for a new examiner, preferably in writing, and this should be approved by the department unless there are special reasons to the contrary (Chapter 6 Section 22 of the Higher Education Ordinance).

If a student has received a recommendation from the University of Gothenburg for special educational support, where it is compatible with the learning outcomes of the course and provided that no unreasonable resources are required, the examiner may decide to allow the student to sit an adjusted examination or alternative form of assessment.

In the event that a course has ceased or undergone major changes, students are to be guaranteed at least three examination sessions (including the ordinary examination session) over a period of at least one year, but no more than two years, after the course has ceased/been changed. The same applies to placements and professional placements (VFU), although this is restricted to just one additional examination session.

**Grades**

The grading scale comprises: Pass with Distinction (VG), Pass (G) and Fail (U).

1. Individual reflection papers (2 hp each) are graded on the scale U/G.
2. Group assignment (1 hp) is graded on the scale U/G.
3. The longer individual assignment (8 hp) is graded on the scale U/G/VG.

To be awarded the grade “Pass”, the student needs to receive at least a “Pass” on all five assignments.

For the grade “Pass with Distinction,” the student needs to receive at least a “Pass” on all five assignments, and the longer individual assignment needs to be awarded the grade “Pass with distinction.”

### **Course evaluation**

The course coordinator is responsible for systematically and regularly collecting the students' views of the course, and for making sure that the results of the evaluations in different forms are taken into consideration when developing the course. The results of and possible changes to the course will be shared with students who participated in the evaluation and students who are starting the course.