

2.1 MIR551 Theories of International Relations

2.1.1 Course Description

The module explores a range of theoretical approaches to the study of International Relations thus introducing students to the different ways of current trends in the international system. The module will follow a historiographical approach thus starting with the “classical debates in IR theories, then moving on to mainstream debates and concluding with critical approaches.

2.1.2 Learning outcomes

On successful completion of this module students will be able to:

1. Identify key features of theoretical approaches in International Relations;
2. Demonstrate the ability to compare and contrast between positivist and post positivist theoretical approaches in International Relations,;
3. Understand and be able to situate IR theories across a range of different spectra from Problem Solving to Critical, from Rationalist to Relativist etc.;
4. Show critical appreciation for the epistemological and philosophical basis of theoretical approaches, their evolution historically, their relationship to each other in terms of political and academic development;
5. Ability to show detailed understanding through writing of key debates;
6. Ability to show detailed understanding through discussion of key debates;
7. Demonstrate ability to make links between key IR literature and contemporary empirical problem areas;

2.1.3 Course Content

- a. Introduction
- b. Mainstream Approaches
- c. Alternative Debates
- d. Critical Sub-disciplines

2.1.4 Recommended Readings

1. Baylis, J., Smith, S., Owens, P. (2020). *The globalisation of world politics: An introduction to international relations*. (8th ed). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
2. Lawson, S. (2015). *Theories of International relations: Contending approaches to world politics*. Cambridge: Polity/Wiley.
3. Mingst, K. A, Snyder, J. L. (2014). *Essential readings in world politics* (5th ed). New York: W. W. Norton.
4. Ralph, J. (2018). What should be done? Pragmatic constructivist ethics and the responsibility to protect. *International organisation*, 72(1), 173-203.
5. Sanjay, S. (ed.). (2012). *Postcolonial theory and international relations: A critical introduction*. Oxon/New York: Routledge.
6. Sterling-Folker, J. (2015). All hail to the chief: Liberal IR theory in the new world order. *International Studies Perspectives*, 16(1), 40-49.
7. Tansel, C. B. (2015). Deafening silence? Marxism, international historical sociology and the spectre of Eurocentrism. *European journal of international relations*, 21(1), 76-100.
8. Weber, C. (2014). *International relations theory: A critical foundation* (4th ed.). London: Routledge.
9. Zondi, S. (2018). Decolonising international relations and its theory: A critical conceptual meditation. *Politikon*, 45(1), 16-31.