

17.445/17.446

International Relations Theory in the Cyber Age

SYLLABUS

INSTRUCTOR:

Prof. Nazli Choucri

COURSE MEETING TIMES

Seminars: 1 session / week, 2 hours / session

PREREQUISITES

There are no prerequisites for this course for undergrads. Graduate students need the permission of the instructor.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines cyber dynamics and processes in international relations from different theoretical perspectives. It considers alternative theoretical and empirical frameworks consistent with characteristic features of cyberspace and emergent transformations at all levels of international interaction. Theories examined include realism and neorealism, institutionalism and liberalism, constructivism, and systems theory and lateral pressure. The course also highlights relevant features and proposes customized international relations theory for the cyber age.

Students taking the graduate version are expected to pursue the subject in greater depth through reading and individual research.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- Active seminar participation—critical approach to materials
- Presentations of the arguments in the readings which allow students to select what they wish to talk about, develop slides, present these items, and get reactions

- Mid Term essay
- Final essay

Graduate students can substitute a research paper for the final essay.

READINGS

The following books are required reading:

1. Choucri, Nazli. *Cyberpolitics in International Relations*. MIT Press, 2012. ISBN: 9780262517690.
2. Nye, Jr., Joseph S. *The Future of Power*. PublicAffairs, 2011. ISBN: 9781610390699.

Additional readings can be found in the Readings section.

GRADING POLICY

ACTIVITIES	PERCENTAGES
Class attendance and participation	20%
Midterm (take home)	25%
Locating web-based resources as inputs into the class data base	20%
Final (take home) or a research paper on topic of your choice with approval of instructor	35%

CALENDAR

WEEK #	TOPICS	KEY DATES
Part I: Structure And Process In International Relations		
1	The Classics—Concepts and Contexts	
2	International Relations—Construction of Cyberspace	
3	Cyberspace and the State System—New Challenges	

WEEK #	TOPICS	KEY DATES
4	Globalization and Emergent Dynamics	
Part II: Theories of International Relations		
5	Power and Security—Realism and Neo-Realism	
6	Governance and Order—Institutionalism and Neo-Institutionalism	
7	Perceptions and Expression—Constructivism	Midterm (take home) essay due
8	Growth and Expansion—Lateral Pressure	
9	Cyberpolitics in International Relations	
Part III: Strategic Issues		
10	International Conflict and War	
11	International Cooperation and Global Agenda	
12	Contending Authority—Principles and Practice	
13	Alternative Futures—21st Century Challenges	Final (take home) essay due