

POP88244 The History of International Relations as an Academic Discipline

Lecturer: Dr. Curran Flynn

Module description

The History of the Development of International Relations as an Academic Discipline is a comprehensive course that traces the evolution of the field of International Relations (IR) as a distinct academic discipline. Through a chronological exploration of key historical events and influential theories, students will gain a profound understanding of how IR emerged, evolved, and expanded over time. Topics include the beginnings of modern international relations as a distinct discipline in the 19th century, the importance of the First World War and the myths of the founding of IR in its aftermath and the myth of idealism in the 1930's, the formation of realism as a theoretical paradigm after the Second World War and the beginning of the Cold War and the historical neglect of international political economy from 1945-1970, the diversification of subject matter and theoretical approaches such as gender, postcolonialism, critical theory and constructivism and the conceptual divides that exist currently. By the end of the course, students will have a nuanced appreciation of the historical context, theoretical foundations, and intellectual debates that have shaped the study of international relations into its present form.

Learning aims

The module aims to allow students to the history of international relations as an academic discipline in order to understand the nature and development of the field. Students will gain an appreciation of how myths develop regarding past academic debates. Students will see how dominant paradigms can shape the nature of study and thus the interpretation and manner in which foreign policy is conducted. Students will see how international relations has grown from a relatively provincial discipline to one that spans other fields and subject matter.

Learning outcomes

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

- Evaluate the impact of previous uncritical acceptance of the historiography of international relations.
- Critically reflect upon how dominant paradigms can alter the course and subject matter of a field.
- Examine the impact of ideas on the development of international relations.

Assessment details

- Participation – 10%
- Response Papers – 30%
- Research Paper– 60%