

COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT

Academic School/Department: Social Sciences and Humanities

Programme: International Relations

FHEQ Level: 6

Course Title: Security Studies

Course Code: INR 6105

Total Hours: 160

Timetabled Hours: 45

Guided Learning Hours: 15

Independent Learning Hours: 100

Credits: 16 UK CATS credits
8 ECTS credits
4 US credits

Course Description:

This course examines enduring and contemporary questions of security and insecurity in the international system. Security has traditionally been defined in terms of strategic state politics and the use of military force to counter external military threats. However, contemporary sources of insecurity raise questions about the continued relevance of traditional theories of security. New security threats (such as human security, environmental security, cyber security) have been defined both in the academic literature and by state security strategies. This course critically evaluates these developments using IR and security studies theories, supplemented by practical case-studies. Students investigate the definition of the term security and threats to security, questions about the referent object of security, the root causes of insecurity and the methods of eliminating or lessening such threats.

Prerequisites:

One of the following:

PLT 5201 Research Methods: Social Sciences

INR 5101 Conflict and Conflict Resolution

INR 5105 International Human Rights

CRM 5400 Terrorism and Counterterrorism

Aims and Objectives:

- To enable students to engage with key concepts in the field of security studies while exploring the relevance of IR theory to critical evaluation of this field
- To develop an understanding of the changing nature of security threats and responses and to position new security threats in the context of international relations theories
- To provide a background for eventual careers in fields (including work in government, international organisations, business, and the media) which require articulate, clear-thinking individuals with a grasp of contemporary security issues
- To provide a framework to assist concerned citizens to think critically about issues that are of increasing importance in the 21st century
- To promote critical engagement with a wide range of literature, and the development of both a succinct writing style, and the ability to present complex arguments orally

Programme Outcomes:

At the end of this course, the students will have achieved the following programme outcomes.

International Relations: A6(i); A6(ii); A6(iii); B6(ii); B6(iv); C6(i); C6(iii); D6(ii); D6(iv)

A detailed list of the programme outcomes is found in the Programme Specification.

This is maintained by Registry and located at:

<https://www.richmond.ac.uk/programme-and-course-specifications/>

Learning Outcomes:

At the end of this course, the students will have achieved the following learning outcomes.

- Demonstrates the ability to develop critical responses to, and a systematic and historical understanding of, key thinkers and theoretical approaches in Security Studies
- Demonstrates a critical and theoretical engagement with core problems and issues in security studies, at the domestic, regional, and global levels
- Demonstrates a systematic understanding of concepts of power and influence in international relations as they pertain to Security Studies
- Demonstrates a systematic insight into the continuities and transformations evident in the core thematic debates of security studies
- Demonstrates a systematic understanding of major debates in security studies
- Takes responsibility for their own learning, and completes assigned work with a degree of clarity, contextualisation, critical thinking, and reflexive normative understanding appropriate for a 6000-level course

Indicative Content:

- Traditional theories of security
- National security and the state
- Deterrence theory, balance of power and geopolitics
- Changing nature of security threats and actors
- Critical Security Studies
- Emergent security issues (i.e., human security, public health security, environmental security, cyber security, collective identity security)

Assessment:

This course conforms to the Richmond University Standard Assessment Norms approved at Academic Board and located at: <https://www.richmond.ac.uk/university-policies/>

Teaching Methodology:

This course will be taught through a combination of lectures and seminar-type activities, including group work, sub-group activities, classroom discussion, and the showing of documentaries. The general approach to classes is informal, and discussion is viewed as an essential part of an interactive and participatory learning program. Audio-visual aids, study materials and electronic learning resources will be used as appropriate.

Lectures provide a framework for the course and are designed to ensure students have an overview of main issues and concerns on a particular topic, receive clarification on the major points of debate understand the broad dimensions of core problems, and are aware of relevant literature in the specific area of concern. It is essential that lectures are supplemented with assigned readings; together, the readings and the lectures are designed to provide guidance for seminar discussion.

Seminar classes are based on the principle of active and student-directed learning, and are designed to be Safe, Enjoyable, Managed, Inclusive, Necessary, Academic, Respectful & Stimulating. The seminars provide an opportunity for discussion of contentious issues, addressing questions and exploring academic debates in more depth, group, and sub-group discussion. They are encouraged to share their opinions freely but must also maintain respect for the opinions of others. It is expected that students will participate regularly in discussions in a creative, competent, and critical way, as the formulation of their own thoughts and clarification of their assumptions, often in contradiction to other students' thoughts and assumptions, form a crucial part of the learning process. Students are expected to come to seminar classes prepared.

Indicative Texts:

Caballero-Anthony, M. (Ed.) (2016) *An Introduction to Non-Traditional Security Studies*.

London: Sage.

Collins, A. (Ed.) (2016) *Contemporary Security Studies*. Oxford University Press.

Balzacq, T. (Ed.) (2015) *Contesting Security: Strategies and Logics*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Fierke, K.M. (2015). *Critical Approaches to International Security*. John Wiley & Sons.

Williams, P. (Ed.) (2012) *Security Studies: An Introduction*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge.

Burgess, Peter J. (Ed.) (2010) *Handbook of New Security Studies*. Routledge.

See syllabus for complete reading list.

Change Log for this CSD:

Nature of Change	Date Approved & Approval Body (School or LTPC)	Change Actioned by Academic Registry
Various updates as part of the UG programme review	AB Jan 2022	
Revision – annual update	May 2023	
Total Hours Updated	April 2024	