

Course Title: **Research Methods in International Relations (Core)**

Course Code: IR-822

Credit Hours: 3

Course Description

1. This course provides students with an in-depth understanding of the research methodologies used in International Relations. It explores the philosophical foundations, research designs, and techniques used in both qualitative and quantitative IR research. Emphasis is placed on equipping students with skills to conceptualize, design, and carry out original research on global political phenomena using methods such as case studies, comparative analysis, discourse analysis, content analysis, interviews, and survey techniques. Students will also learn to critically evaluate existing literature, develop theoretical frameworks, and use analytical tools to understand international issues.

2. **Course Objectives**

- a. To familiarize students with the epistemological and ontological foundations of IR research.
- b. To equip students with the necessary skills for formulating research questions and hypotheses in global politics.
- c. To develop competency in both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analysis.
- d. To enable students to critically engage with existing literature and contribute original insights.
- e. To teach students how to structure and write a research proposal, literature review, and final research report in IR.

Learning Outcomes

3. By the end of the course, students will be able to:
 - a. Understand the nature and philosophy of social science research in IR.
 - b. Develop coherent research questions and appropriate research designs.
 - c. Apply qualitative and quantitative research methods in IR.

- d. Utilize software tools (e.g., SPSS, NVivo) for analysing data.
- e. Conduct fieldwork, case study, or archival research with ethical considerations.
- f. Write and present research in a clear, academic format.

Course Contents

4. Topics:

- a. Introduction to Research in IR: Nature, Purpose & Scope
- b. Epistemology and Ontology in IR: Positivism vs Post-Positivism
- c. Formulating Research Problems, Questions & Hypotheses
- d. Literature Review: Sources, Techniques, and Writing
- e. Research Designs: Exploratory, Descriptive, Explanatory
- f. Case Study Method in IR
- g. Qualitative Methods: Interviews, Focus Groups, Content Analysis
- h. Quantitative Methods: Surveys, Sampling Techniques
- i. Comparative Method and Discourse Analysis in IR
- j. Measurement and Data Collection Tools
- k. Data Analysis Techniques – Qualitative and Quantitative
- l. Ethics in IR Research
- m. Writing Research Proposals and Final Reports

Nature of Assessment

Nature of Examination	Duration	Frequency	Weighting (%age)
End semester Exam	3 hours	1	30 – 50
Mid Term	2 hours	1	15 – 25
Quizzes	-	Minimum: 3	05 – 15
Class Participation	-	-	0 – 5*
Assignments / Project(s) / Case Studies	Own time	-	10 – 40

n. *Shall be allocated only if there are no case studies.

Readings

Compulsory Readings:

- Jackson, P. T., & Sørensen, G. (2017). *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches*.
- Gerring, J. (2017). *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices*.
- Bryman, A. (2016). *Social Research Methods*.
- Booth, W. C., Colomb, G. G., & Williams, J. M. (2016). *The Craft of Research*.

Additional Readings:

- George, A. L., & Bennett, A. (2005). *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*.

Software and Tools

- **SPSS** – for quantitative data analysis
- **NVivo** – for qualitative content and thematic analysis
- **Zotero / Mendeley** – for citation management