Universidad de Navarra

International Relations in Asia (RRII)

Guía docente 2026-27

INTRODUCTION

Course Description:

International Relations in Asia examines one of the most dynamic and contested regions in contemporary world politics. As the centre of global economic growth, strategic competition, and institutional innovation increasingly shifts towards Asia, understanding the region has become essential to understanding the changing international order. Yet Asia is not simply a geographical space or a collection of states. It is also a political and historical construct, shaped by colonialism, imperial knowledge, nationalism, and competing visions of regional order.

This course introduces students to both the historical foundations and contemporary dynamics of Asian international relations. It explores how colonial legacies, state formation, identity, religion, and great-power politics continue to shape regional interactions while examining major contemporary issues, including the Indo-Pacific, the US–China rivalry, regional institutions, territorial disputes, and nuclear politics. Drawing on both mainstream and Global IR perspectives, the course encourages students to critically examine whose ideas, histories, and experiences have shaped our understanding of Asia and international relations. By combining theoretical approaches with contemporary case studies and an on-site study module, the course equips students with the analytical tools to understand Asia's growing influence on the evolving global order.

- **Degree**: International Relations
- **Module**: International Relations of Asia
- **ECTS**:6
- **Year**:Second Year, Second Semester
- **Type of Course:** Obligatorio(Compulsory)
- **Instructor**: Dr. Shahana Thankachan
- **Language**: English
- **Lecture Schedule**: Thursday, 17:30-19:30, AMI-P0-AULA 12

RESULTADOS DE APRENDIZAJE (Competencias)

CB2	Que los estudiantes sepan aplicar sus conocimientos a su trabajo o vocación de una forma profesional y posean las competencias que suelen demostrarse por medio de la elaboración y defensa de argumentos y la resolución de problemas dentro de su área de estudio
CB3	Que los estudiantes tengan la capacidad de reunir e interpretar datos relevantes (normalmente dentro de su área de estudio) para emitir juicios que incluyan una reflexión sobre temas relevantes de índole social, científica o ética
CB4	Que los estudiantes puedan transmitir información, ideas, problemas y soluciones a un público tanto especializado como no especializado

CG01	Analizar, valorar y razonar las diferentes situaciones internacionales a la luz de los conocimientos adquiridos.
CG04	Usar el inglés con propiedad según la terminología científica y académica propia de la Relaciones internacionales.
CG08	Manejar con destreza las nuevas tecnologías de la información y comunicación aplicándolas a las relaciones internacionales.
CE01	Conocer los conceptos y técnicas aplicadas al análisis de los actores y relaciones internacionales.
CE02	Analizar la naturaleza y características de las relaciones entre los actores internacionales y particularmente entre los Estados de Asia.
CE05	Conocer y comprender las teorías y concepciones de las relaciones internacionales en perspectiva histórica.
CE08	Conocer y comprender la situación política, social, económica y geoestratégica de Asia
CE09	Comprender la estructura, competencias y funcionamiento de las instituciones y organizaciones internacionales.
CE14	Conocer y analizar la cooperación internacional como elemento fundamental en la reducción de las desigualdades y la pobreza, conociendo los mecanismos para la implementación de la ayuda al desarrollo.
CE16	Analizar los diferentes conflictos internacionales, sus causas, desarrollo y efectos sobre los países y la sociedad internacional.
CE17	Analizar los problemas jurídicos y sociales que se derivan de las relaciones internacionales en todos los ámbitos con base en el conocimiento adecuado de los principios y normas de Derecho internacional.

CE18	Analizar las realidades internacionales (económica, social y política) como método de prevención de focos de conflicto.

PROGRAM

Syllabus IR ASIA 2026-27.pdf

ACTIVIDADES FORMATIVAS

I. **CLASSROOM TEACHING ACTIVITIES**

1. **Lectures**: Most classes will include lectures given by the Professor using the blackboard, powerpoint slides, videos and audio clips. The slides will be posted on ADI before each class. The students are required to engage with the lectures and participate in class. The students are also required to come prepared to class having read the compulsory reading meant for the topic.
2. **Seminars**: (They Include)
    1. Lectures on current topics by the Professor or by a guest lecturer who might be a practitioner or expert of the field.
    2. Group presentations on a topic related to the subject. The students have to choose from a list of topics provided by the Professor. Students will be divided into groups of 5-6, and are required to conduct a through investigation of their topic and make presentation before the class in a format of their choosing. Each presentation will be a followed by a discussion.
    3. Responses to students questions by the Professor and classmates.
    4. Discussion of the pre-assigned reading at the end of every class.
3. **Evaluation:** Exams to assess the successful accomplishment of the objectives.

II. **PERSONAL WORK**

1. The students have to devote regular study hours outside of the lectures to gain the maximum from the subject.

2. The students are compulsorily required to come prepared to class having read the pre-assigned reading in order to fully understand the lecture. The students should also be able to display their understanding of the reading and the lecture through their engagement with the instructor and other classmates during the lecture.
3. The students are required to study the powerpoint slides provided by the instructor, take notes during the lecture to use it for study, and also study the compulsory readings assigned for the subject.
4. The students also have the conduct research and prepare a group presentation.

III. Credits/hours distribution of the activities. 6 ECTS= 150 h (25 h/ECTS)

1. Lectures 1.6 ECTS 40 h (26.7 %)

2. Seminars 0.6 ECTS 16 h (10.7 %)

3. Evaluation 0.16 ECTS 4 h (2.6 %)

Total classroom activities 2.4 ECTS 59 h (40 %)

4. Personal work 3.6 ECTS 90 h (60 %)

Total 6 ECTS 150 h

ASSESSMENT

The campus module of the subject will carry 50% of the grade and will be 3 ECTS. The On-site module of the course will also carry 50% of the grade and will be 3 ECTS.

The following are the components of the evaluation for the Campus Module of the subject.

FINAL EXAM	60%
MID-TERM EXAM	30%
CLASS PARTICIPATION, DEBATE AND DISCUSSIONS	10%

Class Participation and Debates: 10%

The students will be assessed for active participation and engagement in the classroom. The participation and performance of the students in the debates and discussions initiated by the

professor at the end of every class will also be assessed. Students will also be judged for class preparation and regular reading of course material.

Mid-Term Exam: 30%

A partial exam will be conducted in the middle of the semester. Please refer to the chronogram to check the date. The student is required to study everything taught in the course until the date of the exam. The exam will include multiple-choice questions .

Final Written Exam: 60%

The final exam will consist of a series of questions in which the student must demonstrate the acquisition of factual and theoretical knowledge and conceptual clarity acquired from the content taught in class. The written exam will include long essays and multiple choice questions. The students must study the slides the professor provided and the compulsory readings for each topic. The students need to study the entire content of the course, including the part covered in the partial exam.

ON-SITE EXAM: The exam will include Multiple Choice questions and will be held at the end of the On-site programme in Asia. The exam will account for 50% of the total grade for the subject.

Pass Percentage: To pass the subject, the student has to secure a minimum GPA of 5 in the campus and on-site module combined.

Criteria to pass the course

- Students whose final grade is 5 points or more will pass the course.
- Students whose final grade is below 5 points will not pass the course and will be graded as *Suspenso* .
- Students who do not take the final exam will not pass the course and will be graded as *No presentado*.

Exams review

- Students will be able to review the exams in an interview with the professor, after publication of the grades, in a day and place that will be indicated.

CONVOCATORIA EXTRAORDINARIA

- If the students fail to attain a GPA of 5, and does not pass the subject, they will get another chance to write a single exam in June. This exam will be worth 100% of the total grade of the subject. If the student does not pass this exam either , they will have to retake the subject the next academic year.

OFFICE HOURS

Dr. Shahana Thankachan .....(sthankachan@unav.es)

- Despacho 1721, Edificio- Biblioteca Central Planta 1
- Horario de tutoria: Tuesday and Thursday, 1430-1630

BIBLIOGRAFÍA

Amitav Acharya(2010), “The Idea of Asia”, National Bureau of Asian Research, e-ir.info/2017/12 /10/towards-a-global-international-relations

Atsuhito Isozaki, “Domestic and International Factors in the Persistence of the Regime”, *Understanding the North Korean Regime*, Wilson Centre, 2017 (Pages 43-51)

Barry Schwartz and Mikyoung Kim, “Introduction: Northeast Asia’s Memory Problem”, in Mikyoung Kim and Barry Schwartz ed “*Northeast Asia’s Difficult Past: Essays in Collective Memory*”, Palgrave Macmillan Memory Studies,2010

Evelyn Goh, “ASEAN-Led Multilateralism and Regional Order: The Great Power Bargain Deficit” in Gilbert Rozman and Joseph Chinyong Liow ed “International Relations and Asia’s Southern Tier”, Palgrave and Macmillan, 2018

“Pakistan-India Relations: An Analytical Perspective of Peace Efforts” Strategic Studies,2019 (Read pages 59-67)

Medcalf Rory, “Reimagining Asia: From Asia-Pacific to Indo-Pacific” in in Gilbert Rozman and Joseph Chinyong Liow ed *International Relations and Asia’s Southern Tier*, Palgrave and Macmillan, 2018

Rajesh Basrur, “The Consequences of South Asia’s Nuclear Revolution” in Bhumika Chakma ed. *South Asia in Transition:Democracy, Political Economy and Security*, Palgrave Macmillan,2014, Pages 185-191

Shambaugh, David L. & Yahuda, Michael B. (2008). International relations of Asia. Lanham, Md : Rowman & Littlefield Publishers

Udayan Das , “Assessing India’s Shift from SAARC to BIMSTEC”, *South Asia Voices*, June 27, 2019

Weatherbee, Donald E*. International Relations in Southeast Asia: The Struggle for Autonomy*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009. Chapter 3, “The Cold War in Southeast Asia”

Zhang, Ketian. 2019. “Cautious Bully: Reputation, Resolve, and Beijing's Use of Coercion in the South China Sea*.” International Security* 44(1): 117-159.