

## Rethinking Teaching and Learning about International Relations

*Friday, 19 June 2020 16:15 (1h 30m)*

This roundtable explores different ways of teaching International Relations that is methodologically aware and offers a coherent overview of IR without replicating a “march of the ‘isms.” International Relations syllabi and course design matter. When instructors teach students how to think about IR, we present powerful narratives about what the world looks like and what matters. Yet introductory international relations courses tend to adopt remarkably similar formats; most are structured around theoretical debates, known as “-isms” (Agathangelou and Ling 2004; Hobson 2012; Schmidt 1998; Vitalis 2015). The majority of textbooks mirror this structure. Diverse feminist, post-colonial, constructivist, critical, post-structural, post-positivist, indigenous, and Afro-centric approaches offer alternatives to the “House of IR” (Agathangelou and Ling 2004). Yet instructors often add these important critiques to existing IR syllabi in ways that replicate disciplinary theoretical silos. Thus, instead of providing a radical reframing of the field, our courses often present critical theoretical approaches as a “cacophony of different voices” (Hermann 1998). We propose a different way of teaching and learning IR. Introductory courses provide students with the foundation for their future studies, careers, and transferable skills. Our courses shape how students think. As such, we are not just teaching a subject, we are teaching skills, practices, and ways of knowing and relating to the world. We aim to develop approaches to teaching introductory IR courses that defy disciplinary silos, learn from the important efforts of decolonising the reading list, pay attention to the content of the reading list (including race, class, gender and colonial relations), and emphasise transferable thinking skills.

**Track Classification:** Learning and Teaching Working Group