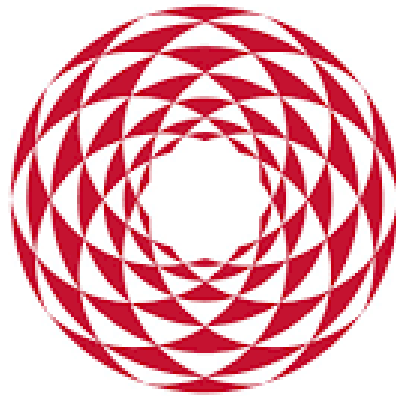


# **Department of International Relations**



**ashoka**  
UNIVERSITY

**STUDENT HANDBOOK**  
**(last updated January 2025)**

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## **I. Introduction**

The undergraduate programme in International Relations at Ashoka University is designed for students interested in understanding historically shaped, socially diverse world events around them from multiple perspectives—political, economic, and sociological—to develop an intellectually rigorous and reflexive engagement with global affairs. The faculty at the department are committed to epistemic inclusivity and methodological innovation, offering a wide range of courses from introductory modules in international relations theory and international history, to advanced courses on security, globalization, gender, identity politics, ethics, foreign policy, populism, area studies and popular culture. The larger pedagogical philosophy of the department opens up possibilities for interdisciplinary engagements in allied fields including political science, history, sociology, and media studies. Apart from rigorous intellectual training, the department also organizes public seminars involving academic experts, policymakers, journalists, and professionals whose work is centered around international politics. The vibrant student society (Ashoka Society of International Affairs) contributes in fostering values of dialogue and creative engagement, adding to the strength of the department. In times of economic uncertainty, climate emergency and political polarization, our teaching and research aims to inculcate critical thinking skills through a supportive and stimulating environment among our students. This handbook provides a comprehensive introduction to the department and information on all aspects of your degree programme.

## II. Curriculum

The Department of International Relations offers two 1000-level gateway courses that give students access to the department's programmes along with 2000-level core courses that are a requirement for the Major in International Relations and a range of advanced electives.

### A. Gateway Courses

1. IR-1009 — International Relations Theory (offered in Monsoon and Spring semesters)

This course is an undergraduate-level introduction to the discipline of International Relations (IR).

It is structured to acquaint students with key theoretical perspectives and concepts of IR and encourages them to apply these to contemporary issues of international politics. The course begins by studying mainstream theoretical approaches—realism, liberalism, and constructivism. Turning to more reflective approaches, the course discusses the need to 'globalize'/'decolonialize' IR, as well as feminist contributions to the study of international relations. In terms of application of the theories, students are provided with an introduction to pertinent issues of war, humanitarian intervention, nuclear proliferation, and environmental concerns among others, weighing and evaluating the contributions that the different perspectives make to our understanding of each of these topics.

2. IR-1010 — International History (offered in Monsoon and Spring semesters)

This course provides an overview of the major events of the Cold War through the prism of three analytical lenses: interests, individuals, and ideology. It evaluates the extent to which each of these factors, either singularly, or in combination, affected decision making on inter-state relations during the decades of the Cold War. The course highlights the deeper inter-connections across the globe and examines how the developments of the Cold War were equally shaped, not just by the superpowers, but also by peripheral, recently decolonized countries. Finally, the course explores newer directions of the historiography on the Cold War, including the ways in which it influenced popular culture and the international perceptions of technological aid. Ultimately, its analysis of the Cold War helps us in shaping our present-day understanding of the conduct of international affairs.

### B. Core Courses

1. IR-2048 — War and Strategy (offered in Monsoon and Spring semesters)

This course offers a global perspective on the evolution of modern warfare and strategy within a historical context. While delving into different case studies from Afghanistan and Vietnam to Ukraine,

it evaluates the potential and limitations of causal explanations of warfare, and their embeddedness within different traditions of strategic thought, including from within Asia, as well as Western Europe. Through these discussions, it explores the extent to which explanations about war need to be contextualized within global developments of the nineteenth and twentieth century, and how its present-day conduct is also shaped by colonial and post-colonial influences. Finally, the course evaluates the role of access to technology and how decision-making structures on military affairs serve as the means to contain or to further proliferate war.

2. IR-2050 — Foreign Policy Analysis (offered in Monsoon and Spring semesters)

As a discipline, IR is initially taught in terms of grand theories—realism, liberalism, constructivism—which try to explain in one fell swoop, the entirety of international politics. Foreign policy analysis is granular, for it examines how policymakers decide. As you will learn, actual decision-making is always messier than what grand theories imply. So, from the grand and the ‘macro’, we look on the domestic, state, organizational, and personal levels to understand the multitude of factors that affect a country’s foreign policy. In order to do this, we make use of various conceptual lenses: theories of rational choice, individual/group psychology, emotions, culture/identity, and political economy.

3. IR-2053 — Introduction to Research Methodology (offered in the Spring semester)

Most courses that you study are geared towards ‘consuming knowledge’. But how does one produce knowledge? The short answer is research, but in order to do research, you have to equip yourself with tools or methods. This course will first ground you in the philosophy of science, so that you are able to discern what makes a good (and doable) research question. Next, the course will acquaint you with ideas about causality (what does it mean when we say ‘A causes B’), the debate between conventional and heterodox approaches to methodology, case selection, and finally, we go deep into various methods—discourse analysis, ethnography, process tracing, and quantitative text analysis. By the end of this course, you will be able to design your own research project and execute it.

### **C. Elective Courses**

Elective courses draw on diverse faculty and student interests. The elective course offerings change from year to year, but the list below provides an outline of the range and depth of the electives that the faculty members of the department have taught in the past at Ashoka:

1. Gender Matters in World Politics
2. What Makes the World Hang Together: Culture, Norms and Identity in World Politics

3. A History of India-Pakistan Relations
4. International Relations of South Asia
5. The International Relations of Latin America
6. International Cyber-Security
7. Shaping the India Way: Foreign Policy Institutions, Sites and Forces
8. Hegemony, The United States and the World
9. Aesthetics in International Relations
10. International Security
11. Ethics and International Relations
12. Security, Conflict and Political Violence in the Contemporary World
13. International Conflict Analysis
14. Regime Type and War
15. The Democratic Peace
16. Social Theory and International Politics
17. Democratization and Foreign Aid
18. The Rise of Populism in Global Politics
19. Migrants, Refugees and Citizens: A 20th Century History of Human Rights
20. Shifting Power Balance in Asia and the Rise of China: A View from the Front Row
21. The Politics of Peace: Reconstruction and Justice in Post-Conflict Societies
22. Critical International Relations: Constructivism and Beyond
23. Constituting South Asia: The Past and Present in India's Neighbourhood
24. Globalization and its Discontents
25. Understanding Partition: A Global Perspective
26. Knowing Thy Neighbour: An Introduction to Pakistan
27. Globalisation: Facing the Challenge of Nationalism and Pandemic
28. Diplomacy and Statecraft in South Asia
29. India in Asian Geopolitics
30. Towards Understanding Chinese Politics
31. The Rise of China and Shifting Balance of Power in South-East Asia
32. Will COVID-19 Pandemic Kill Globalisation
33. Pan Islamism and Making of the Modern Middle East
34. Global Capitalism in the Long 20th Century

### III. The Major in International Relations

The Major is the department's flagship programme. It provides students with a holistic under-graduate training in International Relations, introduces them to major subfields such as International History, Security Studies and Foreign Policy Analysis, trains them in academic skills and critical thinking, and allows them to compose part of their programme in line with their personal preferences by choosing electives. The programme prepares students for a variety of career options, including but not limited to international business, government, international civil service, non-governmental organizations, diplomacy, risk analysis, and journalism. Those interested in pursuing post-graduate training in International Relations or related fields are particularly advised to take this option.

Students can take the Major as part of three degrees offered at Ashoka University:

- The three-year BA Honours in IR of 52 credits.
- The four-year BA Honours in IR of 72 credits.
- The four-year BA Honours with Research in IR of 72 + 12 credits.

To pursue a Major in International Relations, a student must complete a minimum of 13 courses.

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| 2 Gateway Courses | International Relations Theory<br>International History                             |
| 3 Core Courses    | War and Strategy<br>Foreign Policy Analysis<br>Introduction to Research Methodology |
| 8 Electives       | Including up to 3 cross-listed courses  |

An ideal time table for the Major in International Relations looks like the following sequence.

| 1 | 2                                     | 3                            | 4                              | 5                       | 6   | 7                               | 8               |
|---|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|---|---------------------------------|-----------------|
|   | <b>International Relations Theory</b> | <b>International History</b> | <b>Foreign Policy Analysis</b> | <b>War and Strategy</b> | <b>Introduction to Research Methodology</b> | <b>(Research Methodology 2)</b> | <b>(Thesis)</b> |
|   |                                       | <b>8 electives</b>           |                                |                         |   | <b>5 electives</b>              |                 |

Students taking the three-year BA complete semesters 1 to 6 in the table (52 credits in total). For the four-year BA, students add semesters 7 and 8 that contain 5 electives (20 credits), with the optional research component for those keen to obtain the BA Honours with Research. This research component consists of one mandatory course, Research Methods II (IR-2057 for 4 credits), and the thesis (8 credits).

### ***Thesis***

In the fourth year, IR Majors have the option to pursue a supervised research project, culminating in an undergraduate thesis of 15,000-20,000 words. The thesis consists of 12 credits, divided between a research prospectus (4 credits) that you submit at the end of the Research Methodology II course and the final thesis (8 credits).

Students in UG2023 (graduating in 2027) and UG2024 (graduating in 2028), who wish to write a thesis must finish the mandatory Introduction to Research Methodology (henceforth IRM) course prior to Year 4, and ideally in the Spring semester of Year 3. The IRM class introduces you to the fundamentals of research methodology, such as ‘constructing a research question’, the logics of case selection, ideas of causality and constitution, and finally, specific methods such as discourse analysis, ethnography, and quantitative text analysis. At the end of the class, you undertake a research project of your choice, and submit a final essay based on your findings. The IRM module enables students to design coherent and robust research proposals for the 4th year IR thesis. However, even students who choose not to opt for the thesis option will gain a grounding in the basics of research design and methods.



After taking the IRM course, those students opting for the thesis take the Research Methodology (henceforth RM2) course in the Monsoon semester of the 4th year. The RM2 course is more of a deep dive into the intricacies of research design and will be designed keeping the students' research projects in mind. It enables students to develop their own research projects, and learn skills such as conducting a literature review, data collection, and analysis. At the end of the RM2 course, students submit the first chapter of their thesis as the final assignment. This consists of a basic introduction, literature review, and a discussion of theoretical framework and methods. Students also make a presentation based on their first chapter to the department at the end of the semester. This will account for 4 of the 12 credits of the final year thesis. Furthermore, it allows students to focus on the empirical aspect of their research in the final (Spring) semester.

At the end of the Spring semester, besides submitting their final thesis, students give a presentation of their work. The thesis is graded by your supervisor and a secondary grader from the department.

#### *Fourth-year thesis for UG25*

UG25 students pursuing a minor can write an undergraduate thesis with the department in their fourth year (2025-2026) via the Ashoka Scholars Programme (ASP). In order to be eligible for the programme, they need to have completed 1 Gateway Course and IRM prior to Year 4. The department will publish a call during the Spring semester outlining the ASP application process.

#### IV. The Minor and Concentration in International Relations

Students may also opt to pursue a Minor or Concentration in IR. These programmes enable students of other disciplines to pursue their interest in International Relations.

For the Minor, students must complete 6 courses.

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| 1 Gateway Course | <i>Either</i> International Relations Theory <i>or</i> International History |
| 5 Electives      | Including up to 2 cross-listed courses                                       |

For the Concentration, students must complete 4 courses.

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| 1 Gateway Course | <i>Either</i> International Relations Theory <i>or</i> International History |
| 3 Electives      | Including up to 1 cross-listed course  |

#### V. The Interdisciplinary Major in History and International Relations

The Department of International Relations also offers an Interdisciplinary Major in History and International Relations, organised in conjunction with the Department of History. The credit requirements are as follows:

- Three-year interdisciplinary programme 68 credits
- Four-year interdisciplinary programme 80 credits
- Four-year interdisciplinary programme with research  $80 + 12 = 92$  credits

The requirements for completing the Interdisciplinary Major from the Department of International Relations are as follows:

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| 3 Core Courses       | International Relations Theory<br>International History<br>Introduction to Research Methodology |
| Three-year programme | 5 electives of which 3 can be cross listed  |
| Four-year programme  | 7 electives of which 5 can be cross listed  |

Students who wish to pursue a thesis (12 credits) as part of their Interdisciplinary Major, should consult the IR Department's guidelines for thesis students (see above). Please note that students who pursue the thesis will obtain a BA (Hons.) with Research in History and International Relations.

Students should contact the Department of History about the History components and requirements of the Interdisciplinary Major.

## **VI. Departmental Policies**

### **A. Policy on cross-listed courses**

When a course is cross listed, the first department listed alongside the course code denotes the originating department. For this department, the course is classified as part of its standard offerings and does not count as a cross-listed course. Cross-listing is applicable to all other departments mentioned in the course code.

Students enrolled in the four-year IR Major are permitted to count a maximum of six cross-listed courses towards their degree, with no more than three in their first three years and three in their fourth year. Students pursuing a three-year IR major can count a maximum of three cross-listed courses towards their degree. Students pursuing the IR minor can count no more than two cross-listed courses. Students opting for the IR Concentration can count no more than one cross-listed course.

Students intending to enroll in cross-listed courses at the 2000 and 3000 levels and have them credited towards their IR degree must have completed at least one 1000-level gateway course in a prior semester.

Students are encouraged to contact the OAA for further information about cross-listed courses.

### **B. Policy on Teaching Assistants (TAs)**

Teaching Assistant positions within the department are open to students in their third and fourth year of study. Eligibility is contingent upon academic standing and fulfillment of departmental requirements.

The department issues a formal call for applications prior to the commencement of each academic semester. Prospective candidates are required to submit their applications in accordance with the specified guidelines and deadline.

TAships are formally recognised through the allocation of 2 academic credits per course. Students cannot take no more than 2 TAships during their third and fourth year at Ashoka.

While credits earned through a TAship cannot be substituted for course credits, they can be utilised in overall credit requirements of a student's degree programme.

## VII. Department Timetable Spring 2025

| SNo. | Faculty Name       | Course Name   | Course Level | Course Cap | Timing                                 |
|------|--------------------|---|--------------|------------|--|
| 1    | Ananya Sharma      | International Relations Theory  | 1000         | 50         | Mon/Wed<br>10:10-11:40                 |
| 2    | Nayan Chanda       | International History   | 1000         | 45         | Tue/Thu<br>11:50-13:20                 |
| 3    | Amit Julka         | Introduction to Research Methodology  | 2000         | 20         | Tue/Thu<br>10:10-11:40                 |
| 4    | Pallavi Raghavan   | War and Strategy  | 2000         | 35         | Mon/Wed<br>11:50-13:20                 |
| 5    | Quintijn Kat       | Foreign Policy Analysis   | 2000         | 35         | Wed/Fri<br>15:00-16:30                 |
| 6    | Ananya Sharma      | Culture, Norms and Identity in World Politics   | 2000         | 25         | Mon/Wed<br>15:00 - 16:30               |
| 7    | Arun Sukumar       | International Cybersecurity   | 2000         | 25         | Wed/Fri<br>10:10-11:40                 |
| 8    | Bann-Seng Tan      | International Conflict Analysis   | 2000         | 25         | Mon/Wed<br>11:50-13:20                 |
| 9    | Constantino Xavier | Shaping the India Way: Foreign policy institutions, sites and forces                    | 2000         | 20         | Thu (08:30-10:00)<br>Thu (10:10-11:40) |
| 10   | Dipin Kaur         | The Politics of Peace: Reconstruction and Justice in Post-Conflict Societies            | 2000         | 35         | Tue/Thu<br>11:50-13:20                 |
| 11   | Nayan Chanda       | Rise of China and the Shifting Balance of Power in Southeast Asia                       | 2000         | 25         | Tue/Thu<br>15:00-16:30                 |
| 12   | Pallavi Raghavan   | Refugees, Migrants, Citizens: A Global History of Human Rights in the Twentieth Century | 2000         | 35         | Mon/Wed<br>15:00-16:30                 |
| 13   | Amit Julka         | Social Theory and International Politics  | 3000         | 20         | Tue/Thu<br>15:00-16:30                 |

## VIII. Faculty Members

### Amit Julka

Amit Julka is an Assistant Professor of International Relations at Ashoka University. He completed his Ph.D. from the Department of Political Science, National University of Singapore. His research lies at the intersection of International Relations, popular culture, and South Asian politics. In his doctoral research, he conceptualised and operationalised Antonio Gramsci's idea of mass common-sense as an analytical lens to understand the influence of mass ideas on India's foreign policy. He is also a coordinator for the [Making Identity Count](#) project.

### Ananya Sharma

Ananya Sharma is an Assistant Professor of International Relations at Ashoka University. She completed her Ph.D. in International Relations from Jawaharlal Nehru University. Her research focuses on tracing the disciplinary history of International Relations through the great debates and analysing the decline of utopian thought within the discipline. She is currently working on her first book project, interrogating the sociology of knowledge production in IR through utopian world-making projects and failures. Her work has been published in *International Studies*, *Economic and Political Weekly (EPW)*, *South Asian Survey* and edited volumes including the *Oxford Handbook on International Studies Pedagogy* and *Routledge Handbook of South Asia*. She has also contributed to The Indian Express, LSE South Asia Blog, South Asian Voices, RSIS Commentary and The Interpreter.

### Arun Sukumar

### Bann Seng Tan

Bann Seng Tan is Assistant Professor of International Relations and Political Science. He previously taught International Relations at Bogazici University; the College of William & Mary, Queens College, City University of New York (CUNY), and Hunter College, CUNY. He is an associate editor at the Asia Europe Journal: Studies on Common Policy Challenges. Bann Seng's primary research interests include the causes and effects of democratisation. His current research focus is on the effective use of foreign aid in democracy promotion. A secondary focus is also on authoritarian reactions to disaster aid. Bann Seng is the author of *Aid and Democracy Promotion: Liberalization at the Margins*, published in 2020. He received a Ph.D. from the City University New York, Graduate Centre.

## **Constantino Xavier**

### **Dipin Kaur**

Dipin Kaur is an Assistant Professor of Political Science and International Relations at Ashoka University. Her research focuses on ethnicity and state strategy in the shadow of political violence, with a regional focus on South Asia and the British Empire. In her ongoing book project, she investigates why states collaborate with co-ethnics (i.e., individuals belonging to the same ethnic groups as insurgents) in response to some conflicts, but rely on ethnic outgroups in others. She deploys a variety of empirical methods, including qualitative interviews from multi-site fieldwork, archival research, counterfactual analysis, and quantitative analysis of medium-n observational and survey data. Her other work – published in the *American Journal of Political Science* and *Social Text* – studies gender dynamics, public opinion-building in conflict, and the politics of post-conflict transitional justice. Dipin completed her Ph.D. in Political Science from Yale University in 2022 and received a Bachelors in Political Science from the University of California, Berkeley, in 2016.

### **Nayan Chanda**

Nayan Chanda is Associate Professor of International Relations. His deepening interest in contemporary history led him to wartime Saigon as bureau chief of the Hong Kong-based magazine *Far Eastern Economic Review*. After two decades as a correspondent, he was appointed editor of the magazine. Nayan was the first Asian to serve as editor since the magazine's inception. In 2001, Nayan was appointed director of publications at the Yale Centre for the Study of Globalization at Yale University. He founded *YaleGlobal Online* in 2002, and edited the journal until 2015. Nayan has been passionately interested in Asian history and in the phenomenon of globalization. He is the author of *Bound Together: How Traders, Preachers, Adventurers and Warriors Shaped Globalization* (2007) and *Brother Enemy: the War After the War* (1986). He co-authored several books on Asian politics and globalization. Nayan has been widely published in international newspapers and continues to contribute articles and book reviews. He is the winner of the 2005 Shorenstein Award for journalism presented for lifetime achievement jointly awarded by Harvard and Stanford University. He earned a MA in history from Jadavpur University.

### **Pallavi Raghavan**

Pallavi Raghavan is Assistant Professor of International Relations. Her book, titled *Animosity at Bay: An Alternative History of the India-Pakistan Relationship, 1947 – 1952* was published in 2020, by Hurst & Co. (UK), and OUP (Global). She has published extensively in peer-reviewed journals, including *The Economic and Political Weekly* and *Modern Asian Studies*, and *International History*

*Review*. She also contributes frequently to news outlets such as *The Wire* and *Scroll.in*. She has previously taught at OP Jindal Global University and been a Fellow at the Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi. In 2018, she taught a course on South Asia's Shared Histories jointly to Indian and Pakistani students, as part of an attempt to understand how the teaching of history can contribute to narratives of commonality and peaceful co-existence in the region. Her current project looks at how experiences of Partition can be compared in different contexts, such as Ireland, Palestine, and South Asia. She is interested in developing a broader history of the British Empire's theories of partition in the twentieth century. She holds a Ph.D. in Modern South Asian History from the University of Cambridge.

### **Quintijn Kat**

Quintijn Kat is Assistant Professor of International Relations at Ashoka University and currently a visiting professor at the Institute of Advanced Studies, University of Warwick, UK. He previously taught at the Jindal School of International Affairs and spent visiting research stints at the George Washington University, USA, and the University of São Paulo, Brazil. He was also a research fellow with the Centre for Latin American Research and Documentation (CEDLA) at the University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Quintijn received his Ph.D. in International Relations of the Americas from the Institute of the Americas, University College London, UK. During his doctoral studies, he was the recipient of a Prins Bernhard Fellowship and a Mullerfonds Fellowship. He also holds degrees from King's College London and the University of Amsterdam. Quintijn's scholarly work, which has appeared in the *International Studies Review* and *Latin American Politics and Society*, has a geographical focus on the Americas. His main research interests are hegemony, asymmetrical relations, and norm socialization in international relations, as well as the relations between the United States and Latin America.

### **Shivshankar Menon (Visiting)**

Shivshankar Menon, visiting faculty of International Relations and Chair of the Ashoka Centre for Chinese Studies, has a distinguished diplomatic career, serving as National Security Advisor and Foreign Secretary of India. He has been an Indian Ambassador to several countries. In 2016, he published *Choices: Inside the Making of Indian Foreign Policy* and in 2021, he authored *India and Asian Geopolitics: The Past, Present*.

### **Srinath Raghavan**

Srinath Raghavan is Professor of International Relations and History. He previously taught at King's College London, and has worked at the Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi. Srinath is the author of several books, including *The Most Dangerous Place: A History of the United States in South Asia*



(2018), *India's War: The Making of Modern South Asia, 1939-1945* (2016), *1971: A Global History of the Creation of Bangladesh* (2013), and *War and Peace in Modern India: A Strategic History of the Nehru Years* (2010). He co-authored, with Sunil Khilnani, *NonAlignment 2.0: A Foreign Strategic Policy for India in the Twentieth Century* (2013). He has edited *Imperialism, Nationalism, Democracy: The Collected Essays of Sarvepalli Gopal* (2013), and co-edited *The Oxford Handbook of Indian Foreign Policy* (2015). He is the recipient of the K. Subrahmanyam Award for Strategic Studies (2011) and the Infosys Prize for Social Sciences (2015). Srinath received a Ph.D. in war studies from King's College London.

### **Rudra Chaudhuri (Visiting)**

Rudra Chaudhuri is the director of Carnegie India, conducting research on South Asia's diplomatic history and contemporary security matters. He is currently writing a book on the global history of the Indian Emergency (1975-1977) and leading a research project analyzing violent incidents and infrastructural development along India's borders.

## **IX. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

Q1: For the four-year IR major, do I get a different degree if I choose to write a thesis in my final year?

Ans: Yes. Without writing a thesis you will be awarded a BA Honours degree (72 credits), and if you choose to write a thesis you will be awarded a BA Honours with Research degree (72 + 12 credits).

Q2: How many courses do I need to complete a Minor or Concentration in IR?

Ans: You need 6 courses to finish a Minor in IR. You need 4 courses to finish a Concentration in IR.

Q3: How many IR courses do I need to finish my Interdisciplinary Major in History and International Relations?

Ans: You need to complete 8 IR courses for the three-year and 10 IR courses for the four-year Interdisciplinary Major. These include:

- 3 core courses offered by the Department (International Relations Theory, International History, and Introduction to Research Methodology)
- In the three-year programme: 5 electives, of which 3 can be cross listed.
- In the four-year programme: 7 electives, of which 5 can be cross listed.

Q4: Can I finish my IR Minor within three years?

Ans: Yes, you can finish the minor within three years. However, it is important to plan your courses accordingly. Please keep in mind that before taking most courses in IR you must fulfill the 1000-level course requirement. The Department advises you to take at least one 1000-level gateway course in your second semester at Ashoka University.

Q5: Can any 1000-level course count as the 1000-level requirement for the minor?

Ans: Students need to take one 1000-level gateway course, either International Relations Theory or International History, to meet the requirements of the IR Minor.

Q6: Can I take higher-level IR courses while simultaneously fulfilling my 1000-level mandatory requirement?

Ans: No. You must complete at least one 1000-level gateway course in a prior semester before you take higher-level courses.

Q7: Can I take a second 1000-level IR course and count it as an elective?

Ans: Yes, for the purposes of the Minor or the Concentration, if you have met your mandatory 1000-level requirement, another 1000-level course can be counted as an elective.

Q8: For the IR Major, is there a sequence according to which I am required to take my courses after I have taken a gateway course?

Ans: Yes. After completing the two gateway courses, you should also complete the three 2000-level core courses before the end of your third year. Prior to enrolling in the final core course, Introduction to Research Methodology (IR-2053), in their sixth semester, IR Major students must complete two gateway courses (International Relations Theory, International History) and two core courses (that is, War and Strategy, and Foreign Policy Analysis).

For the ideal time table for the IR Major, please refer to page 8 of this handbook.

Q9: Do I need to take both gateway courses before I can take the other core courses or electives?

Ans: No. Once you have taken one gateway course you can enroll in other IR courses (both core courses and electives), provided that you meet any specific prerequisites set by the course instructor.

Q10: Do I need to take 2000-level courses before taking 3000-level courses?

Ans: If you have completed your mandatory 1000-level requirement, you can take courses of any level. However, please note that for electives the course instructor may set specific prerequisites. It is advisable to inquire with them about this in advance.

While choosing your courses, do keep in mind that the levels indicate the level of difficulty. In general, it is better to opt for the higher-level elective courses after completing lower-level courses.

Q11: What is the maximum number of cross-listed electives I can take for IR Major, Minor, and Concentration?

Ans: The requirements are as follows.

- Three-year IR Major: Up to 3 cross-listed courses out of 8 electives.
- Four-year IR Major: On top of the 3 cross-listed electives taken in the first three years, you can cross list up to 3 courses out of the 5 electives in your fourth year.
- IR Minor: 2 cross-listed courses out of 5 electives.
- IR Concentration: 1 cross-listed course out of 3 electives.

Q12: I took a course in an earlier semester which was cross listed with International Relations. It is being offered again but is not showing as cross listed. Is this a problem?

Ans: No, cross-listings may change between semesters. If you took a course that was cross listed in the semester that you took it in, it will count towards your degree.

Q13: I am interested in becoming a Teaching Assistant (TA) for an IR course. How should I proceed?

Ans: Third- and fourth-year students are eligible to become TAs. The department calls for applications prior to the start of each semester. Interested students should look out for the call and apply following the instructions provided.

Q14: I am in UG25/ASP25. Can I do a Major in IR?

Ans: No. Unfortunately, the Major in IR is accessible only to UG2023 (those graduating in 2027) and after.

Q15: Can any course of any level count as an elective for the IR Minor or Concentration?

Ans: Yes.

Q16: Can I do a thesis with the IR department before my final year?

Ans: No. The thesis programme is accessible to students in their final year of undergraduate studies. Interested students should keep in mind that to access the programme they should complete Introduction to Research Methodology prior to the start of the fourth year.

Q17: Is it mandatory to complete a research methodology course to complete an IR Major, Minor, or Concentration?

Ans: In the case of the IR Major, students must complete Introduction to Research Methodology by the end of the third year. This does not apply to students opting for the Minor or the Concentration. However, UG25 students interested in pursuing a fourth-year thesis should complete Introduction to Research Methodology in the Spring 2025 semester.

Q18: Who should I contact for further queries?

Ans: You can contact the IR Student Representative, Ananya Madan at [ir.rep@ashoka.edu.in](mailto:ir.rep@ashoka.edu.in) and the Department Manager, Pratima Kadian, at [pratima.kadian@ashoka.edu.in](mailto:pratima.kadian@ashoka.edu.in).