



O.P. JINDAL GLOBAL
Institution of Eminence Deemed to be
UNIVERSITY
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**Jindal School of
International Affairs**
India's First Global Policy School

M.A.(DLB)0865 INDIA-U.S. RELATIONS: ALLIES, PARTNERS, FRIENDS

Elective – Fall 2026

Course Information

Course Duration: 15 weeks

Credit Hours: 60 hours

Meetings: Mondays 1-4 PM

T4-T114, T4 Third Floor, South Side

Prerequisites: None

Equivalent Courses: None

Instructor Information

Instructor: Dr. Debotri Dhar

Bio: Dr. Debotri Dhar's professional trajectory spans India and the United States. Her interdisciplinary work sits at the intersection of international relations, women's studies, comparative politics/policy, law, and humanitarian education. She is also a novelist and short story writer. Dr. Dhar has authored and edited 7 books including *Education and Gender* (Bloomsbury: London, New York, New Delhi), published book chapters and journal articles, and her next two books are forthcoming. Dr. Dhar has presented lectures / papers at Harvard, Oxford, Yale, Princeton, Boston, U-Penn, Delhi, JNU, BHU, Ashoka Young India Fellowship, British Council, India Habitat Centre, and wider audiences. She served as a reviewer for the National Endowment for the Humanities (USA) and Indian Institute for Advanced Study fellowships, reputed humanities and social sciences publishers, a judge for the Barbara Deming Fund for women writers (New York) and Kitaab's Best Asian writing series (Singapore). Dr. Dhar previously lectured at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, where she was affiliated with the Institute for Research on Women and Gender and the Ford School of Public Policy, consulted across sectors, provided public commentaries on global affairs in media, and has been faculty advisor for public diplomacy research. She writes for numerous newspapers and magazines including the *Times of India*, *Deccan Chronicle*, *Asian Age* and *Outlook*. Dr. Dhar earned a B.A in Economics from Shri Ram College of Commerce, Delhi University, Masters in Women's Studies, with distinction, from Oxford University, and Ph.D in Women's and Gender Studies from Rutgers University. Dr. Dhar is the founder of the Hummingbird Global Writers Circle and Leaders Forum.

1. Course Description

This course examines bilateral relations between the world’s oldest and largest democracies: USA and India. In 2022, I became the first Indian scholar to analyze contemporary mainstream international relations through the framework of friendship, interrogating what friendship means for states, and whether friendships between individuals may be compared to friendships between states. Drawing upon a small body of work by “friendship scholars” in the West, primarily Europe and the United States, my work developed an interdisciplinary theoretical framework also attentive to feminist and Global South realities while foregrounding East-West dialogue. This course will examine the past, the present and the future of India-US Relations through multiple IR perspectives – realism, liberal institutionalism, constructivist, feminist IR, postcolonial, critical IR and comparative IR – arguing that a lens of friendship adds interesting dimensions to our analysis.

What is the difference between allies, strategic partners, and friends in interstate relations? How has ‘great power’ competition shaped the trajectory of this bilateral relationship? How effective is the concept of a “security community” in assessing India-US security cooperation, including in the Indo-Pacific? How do friendships with other states and across Global North / Global South power blocs impact state partnerships/friendships? Moving beyond discussions centered only on defense, trade and nuclear cooperation, we will ask more probing questions. For instance, can military cooperation be expanded to include human security? What is ‘friendshoring’ and can economic cooperation lead to inclusive development? Since foreign policies are connected with domestic policies, how can the two democracies ensure basic human rights, including women’s rights? Ultimately, how can the India-US bilateral relationship be a force of good in the world?

Classroom learning will be supplemented with a class trip / panel, and visiting lectures by thought leaders. This course would be of interest to students of international relations, women’s studies, comparative politics/policy, journalism, law, and the liberal arts.

2. Course Intended Learning Objectives

Course Learning Outcomes	Teaching-Learning Activities	Assessments/ Activities
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IR Lens: Realism/Neo- realism	3	a) Examining the work of prominent India-US relations realist scholars b) Assessing the strengths and limitations of realism/neorealism
IR Lens: Liberal Institution- alism	4	a) What is Liberal Institutionalism? How does an institutionalist IR lens understand India-US ties? b) India-US Nuclear Cooperation c) The role of global organizations
IR Lens: Feminist IR	5	a) Assessing the contribution of feminist/ critical IR b) India-US Relations through a feminist IR/ feminist foreign policy lens
FFP in India and USA	6	Feminist Foreign Policy in India and USA: A Comparative Analysis
Friend- ship and IR	7	a) Relationship between Friendship Studies and IR b) Allies, strategic partners, friends: Similarities and Differences
India-US Security Cooperation: Indo-Pacific	8	a) What is a security community? b) Assessing QUAD as a security community and India-US strategic partnership for Indo-Pacific security c) Differences in approach of QUAD partners: India, USA, Japan, Australia
India-US Security Cooperation: Terrorism	9	a) Military cooperation for counter-terrorism b) Expanding traditional security to human security c) The role of humanitarian law

India-US Trade	10	a) What is 'friendshoring' in trade relations? b) Assessing economic growth and inclusive development, including through G20 international economic cooperation
Panel	11	Panel/ Event on India-US Relations
Conclusions/ Future Directions	12	Discussion: How can USA-India bilateral relations be a force of good in the world?
Presentations	13	Presentations
	14	Presentations (contd.)
Revision	15	Revision of course materials/ exam preparation

4. Course Evaluation

Percentage	Course Assignment
10%	Class participation
30%	Class presentation
30%	Final paper
30%	Term-end exam

Class participation: Student engagement is necessary for the success of the course. Please come prepared to class, having done the assigned readings for the day. Your contribution to classroom discussions will be in the form of ideas, questions and comments based on the readings as well as connections with current events in the news.

Class presentation: Each student will be responsible for a class presentation based on the assigned reading for that day. Your presentation will review the key points in the assigned article. Then, going beyond summary, please reflect more deeply on the material and describe the new perspectives you gained. Make your presentation interesting, such as by incorporating exercises, short visual clips, art, and music. Each presentation will be 15-20 minutes, and will be graded on content, organization, and creative use of course materials.

Independent project: For this assignment, students will write an essay-type paper (1500-2000 words) on some aspect of India-US relations of their choice. This assignment has a rolling deadline and may be emailed at any point in the semester, no later than the 13th week of classes. Students will also make a short class presentation (10 minutes) on their independent project in 12th / 13th weeks.

Term-end exam: The final exam (Q&A essay type, total 1200-1500 words) will be of a duration of 1:30 hours. Multiple choices will be provided, of which students will answer 3 questions (of 400-500 words each.)

5. Grade Definition

Letter Grade	Percentage of Marks	Grade Points	Comments
O	80 and above	8	Outstanding: Exceptional knowledge of the subject matter, thorough understanding of issues; ability to synthesize ideas, rules and principles and extraordinary critical and analytical ability.
A+	75 - 79	7.5	Excellent: Sound knowledge of the subject matter, thorough understanding of issues; ability to synthesize ideas, rules and principles and critical and analytical ability.
A	70 - 74	7	Very Good: Sound knowledge of the subject matter, excellent organizational capacity, ability to synthesize ideas, rules and principles, critically analyze existing material and originality in thinking and presentation.
A-	65 -69	6	Good: Good understanding of the subject matter, ability to identify issues and provide balanced solutions to problems and good critical and analytical skills.
B+	60 - 64	5	Fair: Average understanding of the subject matter, limited ability to identify issues and provide solutions to problems and reasonable critical and analytical skills.
B	55 - 59	4	Acceptable: Adequate knowledge of the subject matter to go to the next level of the study and reasonable critical and analytical skills.
B-	50 - 54	3	Marginal: Limited knowledge of the subject matter and irrelevant use of materials, and poor critical and analytical skills.
P1	45 - 49	2	Pass 1: Pass with Basic understanding of the subject matter.
P2	40 - 44	1	Pass 2: Pass with Rudimentary understanding of the subject matter.

6. Academic Integrity

A. Plagiarism Rules:

Plagiarism is the use of someone else's words or ideas without acknowledgement. Any idea taken from a web source (e.g. newspaper articles) or scholarly (i.e. books, book chapters, and journal articles) and other published material must be credited with the original source.

B. Participation/Attendance Policy

Please see JSIA / JGU Attendance Policy. Low class attendance will affect class participation grades.

C. Use of phone/ texting/ laptop

Mobile phones and tablets are not allowed for use during class. Laptops are permitted in class solely for academic purposes and notetaking.

7. Course Material

No textbooks are required for purchase. Course readings, including journal articles and book chapters, will be made available as PDF files. Web links will be provided for online articles, including policy papers and newspaper columns. Find here a list of reading materials.

1. Simon Koschut and Andrea Oelsner, *Friendship and International Relations*, Palgrave Macmillan London, 2014
2. Simon Koschut, 'Emotional (Security) Communities,' *Review of International Studies* 40(03), 2013
3. Debotri Dhar 'Can Friendship Bring a More Hopeful Era in International Relations?' *Outlook*, July 2023
4. Debotri Dhar, 'Chanakya, China and Diverse Ideals of Global Friendship,' *Deccan Chronicle*, 2023
5. Debotri Dhar, 'In a Multipolar World, Will the QUAD be able to thrive?' *Asian Age*
6. Debotri Dhar, 'Food Insecurity, Health Inequity, Gender Violence: Three Critical Policy Areas for Women's Empowerment along with G20 Global Economic Priorities,' *The Times of India*, 2023
7. John Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, WW Norton, 2001
8. C Raja Mohan, *SamudraManthan: Sino-Indian Rivalry in the Indo-Pacific*, OUP, 2012
9. Ashley J Tellis, 'The US-India Global Partnership: How Significant for American Interests?' Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2005
10. Harsh V Pant and Julie Super, 'India's Non-Alignment Conundrum,' *International Affairs*, 2015
11. Alyssa Ayres, 'Don't Let India-US Trade Differences Escalate into Trade War,' NPR, 2019
12. Shyam Saran, 'India and the US: The Limits of Convergence,' *The Hindu*, 2015
13. John Ciorciari, 'The India-US Nuclear Deal and the Liberal Order,' *Asian Survey* 2010
14. Felix Berenskoetter, 'Friends, There are No Friends? An Intimate Reframing of the International,' *Millennium Journal of International Studies*, 2007
15. Sreeram Chaulia, 'The USA and India in the Asian Century,' in *Friends: India's Closest Strategic Partners*, Rupa, 2024
16. Maria Lugones and Elizabeth Spelman, 'Have we got a theory for you: Feminist Theory, Cultural Imperialism and Demand for the Woman's Voice,' *Women's Studies International Forum*, 1983