UAB
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Current Issues in International Relations

Code: 101092
ECTS Credits: 6

2024/2025

Degree	Type	Year
2500259 Political Science and Public Management	OT	3
2500259 Political Science and Public Management	OT	4
2503778 International Relations	OT	4

Contact

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Teachers

(External) Lluc Vidal López

Teaching groups languages

You can view this information at the end of this
document.

Prerequisites

It has no academic prerequisites.

The student must have the habit of reading and consulting different means of communication of general
information, especially following international news, as well as opinion articles on global political issues.

Objectives and Contextualisation

In this subject, a series of contemporary problems will be presented, depending on the facts of each academic
year, of great relevance to the current agenda of International Relations. These events and processes are
treated monographically.

The central objective is to introduce the students to the knowledge of a series of international problems of
relevance in the current political agenda, while providing them with the main conceptual tools that the theory of
International Relations brings us and that allow us to approximate -us to the understanding of contemporary
phenomena in all their complexity.

The basic objectives of the course are:

- Develop students' application of the fundamental concepts of the discipline of International Relations for the
understanding of thematic areas;

- Familiarize the student with a series of processes that shape contemporary international society;

- Contribute to improving the expression and defense orally and in writing of different points of view on relevant international issues.

Competences

Political Science and Public Management
- Applying theoretical and analytical knowledge of International Relations to practical and professional cases, in particular to the areas of conflict and cooperation between actors.
- Arguing from different theoretical perspectives.
- Assessing specific distinctive aspects and conceptual and methodological instruments of the different tendencies and analytical approximations of International Relations.
- Demonstrating good writing skills in different contexts.
- Demonstrating they know theoretical tendencies and classical and recent analytical approximations of International Relations.
- Designing data collection techniques, coordinating the information processing and meticulously applying hypothesis verification methods.
- Distinguishing the discipline's main theories and different fields: conceptual developments, theoretical frameworks and theoretical approaches underlying the discipline's knowledge and different areas and sub-areas, as well as their value for the professional practice through concrete cases.
- Identifying sources of data and conducting bibliographic and documentary searches.
- Interpreting and applying English texts in an academic way.
- Managing the available time in order to accomplish the established objectives and fulfil the intended task.
- Producing and planning researches or analytical reports.
- Realising effective oral presentations that are suited to the audience.
- Synthesizing and critically analysing information.
- Using the main information and documentation techniques (ICT) as an essential tool for the analysis.
- Working autonomously.
- Working by using quantitative and qualitative analysis techniques in order to apply them to research processes.
- Working in teams and networking, particularly in interdisciplinary conditions.

International Relations
- Analyse international society and its structure and understand its importance for real-life problems and professional practice.
- Apply knowledge of the structure and operation of international institutions to problems and/or practical cases, either real or simulated.
- Apply quantitative and qualitative analysis techniques in research processes.
- Design, plan and carry out projects and studies for analysis and/or intervention in different areas of international relations.
- Identify data sources and carry out rigorous bibliographical and documentary searches.
- Identify the main theories of international relations and their different fields (international theory, conflicts and security, international politics, etc.) to apply them in professional practice.
- Produce and prepare the presentation of intervention reports and/or proposals.
- Students must be capable of collecting and interpreting relevant data (usually within their area of study) in order to make statements that reflect social, scientific or ethical relevant issues.
- Students must be capable of communicating information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
- Students must develop the necessary learning skills to undertake further training with a high degree of autonomy.
- Use metatheoretical data to argue and establish plausible relation of causality and establish ways of validating or rejecting them.

Learning Outcomes

1. Apply quantitative and qualitative analysis techniques in research processes.
2. Apply theoretical and analytical knowledge of international relations in practical and professional case studies, in particular in the area of conflict and cooperation between actors.
3. Applying theoretical and analytical knowledge of International Relations to practical and professional cases, in particular to the areas of conflict and cooperation between actors.
4. Arguing from different theoretical perspectives.
5. Assessing specific distinctive aspects and conceptual and methodological instruments of the different tendencies and analytical approximations of International Relations.
6. Critically assessing the impacts of globalization in several areas: safety, environment, human rights, migrations and peace.
7. Demonstrate knowledge of theoretical trends and classical and recent analytical approaches to international relations.
8. Demonstrating good writing skills in different contexts.
9. Demonstrating they know theoretical tendencies and classical and recent analytical approximations of International Relations.
10. Describe the international order: anarchy versus order, national society and transnational society.
11. Describe the main approaches to international relations (realism, transnationalism, structuralism).
12. Describe the main elements that characterise international global society (1945-2000).
13. Describing the international order: anarchy versus order, society of states and transnational society.
14. Describing the main characteristic elements of the international society as a whole (1945-2000).
15. Designing data collection techniques, coordinating the information processing and meticulously applying hypothesis verification methods.
16. Evaluate the distinctive and instrumental aspects of the different trends and analytical approaches to international relations from a conceptual and methodological focus.
17. Explaining the major approximations to the international relations (realism, transnationalism and structuralism).
18. Identify data sources and carry out rigorous bibliographical and documentary searches.
19. Identifying sources of data and conducting bibliographic and documentary searches.
20. Interpreting and applying English texts in an academic way.
21. Make adequate use of the theory and concepts of international relations (Hobbesian, Grotian and Kantian thought).
22. Managing the available time in order to accomplish the established objectives and fulfil the intended task.
23. Produce and prepare the presentation of intervention reports and/or proposals.
24. Producing and planning researches or analytical reports.
25. Properly using the theory and concepts of international relations (traditions of Hobbesian, Grotian or Kantian thought).
26. Realising effective oral presentations that are suited to the audience.
27. Students must be capable of collecting and interpreting relevant data (usually within their area of study) in order to make statements that reflect social, scientific or ethical relevant issues.
28. Students must be capable of communicating information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
29. Students must develop the necessary learning skills to undertake further training with a high degree of autonomy.
30. Synthesizing and critically analysing information.
31. Use metatheoretical data to argue and establish plausible relation of causality and establish ways of validating or rejecting them.
32. Using the main information and documentation techniques (ICT) as an essential tool for the analysis.
33. Working autonomously.
34. Working by using quantitative and qualitative analysis techniques in order to apply them to research processes.
35. Working in teams and networking, particularly in interdisciplinary conditions.

Content

Throughout the semester, international current affairs will be monitored. Likewise, the different topics dealt with will help us to approach current problems in international relations.

Introduction

- Contemporary global agenda and main international tensions and problems.

Block I: sub-Saharan Africa, a region of problems and opportunities

- Reflections on the study of the African subcontinent.

- Socio-political context of the emergence of the post-colonial state.

- The construction of the postcolonial state

- Neopatrimonialism and extraversion.

- The position of African states in the international system.

- World system and imperialism

- Dynamics of conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa

- Internal-internationalized conflict

- Cooperation and development aid

- Main African intergovernmental organizations

Block II: The Anthropocene

- Emergence of the concept and relevance

- Planetary limits

- The great acceleration

- Consequences in the social sciences

- International relations and environment

- Currents in international relations and the Anthropocene

Block III: The political systems of East Asia: the link between democracy and growth

- The different political systems of East Asia: the case of Japan, China, South Korea and Indonesia.

- The different States: the developmentist State Model

- The study of democracy in East Asia: polyarchy, autocracy, accountability and civil society.

- More economic growth, more democracy? The case of China, Singapore and India

Block IV: The China Sea: a sea of conflicts? Conflict and cooperation

- Public International Law and the Law of the Sea: the China Sea

- Cooperation processes in the area

- The rise of China

- The normalization of Japanese foreign policy

Activities and Methodology

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Debates on required readings	3	0.12	2, 4, 9, 22, 30, 34
Lectures with use of ICT and large group discussion	43	1.72	1, 4, 5, 8, 26, 32, 35
Practices and oral presentations in class, case studies	6	0.24	4, 5, 15, 26, 32, 33, 34, 35
Type: Supervised			
Reading and preparation of the texts that will be the subject of a class control	7	0.28	10, 12, 13, 14, 17, 25, 27, 28
Tutorials and exam comments	3	0.12	
Writing the course work	9	0.36	8, 14, 25
Type: Autonomous			
Study of the subject syllabus and supplementary readings	72	2.88	22, 33

The dedication to this subject is specified in several types of activities, each with a certain teaching load. Its value, 6 ECTS credits, implies a total dedication of 150 hours, which will be distributed in several types of activities:

- Directed activities are activities in the classroom, with the presence of the teacher and will consist of lectures (with the possibility of developing large group debates); in seminars for discussion of required readings or thematic materials in smaller groups; in sessions more oriented to practical issues, in which cases, problems and examples relating to the course syllabus will be analysed. These activities represent around 35% of the total work required.

- Supervised activities are activities carried out by the student outside the classroom in accordance with a work plan designed and subsequently tutored and evaluated by the teacher. These activities represent, approximately 10% of the required work.

- Independent activities are all those activities that the student does on his own and in accordance with the requirements of the course in order to successfully pass the subject, such as basic and complementary readings, study of class notes or all those other activities that complement the training achieved in this course.

Annotation: Within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

Assessment

Continous Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes

Continuous assessment: written comments on readings or videos, preparation of discussions or simulation games, etc.	30%	4	0.16	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35
Group work and oral presentation	50% final grade (80% written part and 20% oral presentations)	3	0.12	1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 15, 16, 18, 19, 22, 24, 26, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35
Participation in class, debates and other activities programmed by the teachers	20%	0	0	15, 24, 26, 28, 33

The evaluation of this subject involves, on the part of the student:

- Regular attendance in class and participation in activities (20% of the final grade): debates, comments on readings, contributions to oral presentations, etc.
- Continuous assessment (30% of the final grade): written comments on readings or videos, preparation of debates or simulation games, etc.
- A group work on one of the topics/cases discussed in class (50% of the final mark), which will be presented in public in the last sessions of the subject.The written part will be worth 80% of the grade, while the oral defense will count for the remaining 20%. The length of the work will be a maximum of 5,000 or 6,000 words, plus bibliography and appendices. The work will be done with spacing of 1.5, Arial font size 12 in the body of the work and 10 in the footnotes. The delivery date will be specified once the course has started.

There is no final exam

In July there will be a compensation test in which students who have followed the course regularly but have not passed the subject can resit. The grade obtained in this compensatory test will average 70% with the grade obtained during the course (30%). This compensatory assessment will take place on the dates established by the Faculty.

Attendance at two of the aforementioned assessment activities is incompatible with the grade of "NOT PRESENTED".

Unique assessment:

Students who have requested it in time and form will be able to take a single assessment which will consist of an exercise composed of an exam (60% of the grade) and a practical activity (40%)This exercise will take place at the end of the semester, on the day set by the Faculty for the examination of the ordinary assessment and will be made public in sufficient advance. If you do not pass this test with a score of 5 out of 10, the exercise can be retaken on the date set by the Faculty as a compensatory assessment.

Bibliography

Complementary bibliography:

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Software

It does not require specific software.

Language list

Name	Group	Language	Semester	Turn
(PAUL) Classroom practices	1	Catalan	second semester	morning-mixed
(TE) Theory	1	Catalan	second semester	morning-mixed