CIEE Global Institute - Madrid

Course name: Contemporary Controversies in International Relations
Course number: (GI) INRE 4007 MASP
Programs offering course: Madrid Open Campus
Open Campus Track: International Relations and Political Science Track
Language of instruction: English
U.S. semester credits: 3
Contact hours: 45
Term: Spring 2020

Course Description

This course looks at current global controversies to gain greater understanding of world politics and international relations among countries. The course will analyze what nations can do to minimize the emergence of international conflicts, and what are the existing means to resolve those conflicts. As part of the analysis, the role of individuals, states and international organizations will be addressed. A central issue in the course is the role of governments and international organizations and their role with facing terrorism, global warming, environmental destruction, poverty, civil conflict, underdevelopment and violations of human rights. The course includes debate meetings with representatives of the political establishment and civil society organizations, a guided tour of one of the two chambers of the Cortes Generales, the Spanish parliament, as well as meetings with members of policy think tanks, such as Fundación Alternativas, FAES, and Fundación IDEAS.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

• Understand the importance of international governance issues in a globalized world
• Recognize political, economic, social and cultural aspects involved in international relations.
• Develop a deeper understanding of the theoretical and practical approaches to governance issues.
• Demonstrate an appropriate use of specific vocabulary in international relations.
• Recognize the importance and need of governments’ actions in addressing global and regional issues.
• Develop the ability to write critically about international politics and international relations.
• Critically analyze and explain policies, actions and challenges in international relations, both from a historical and a political science perspective.
• Understand the policy options available to states and governments.
• Recognize the role of key events in shaping the history and study of international politics.
• Develop informed knowledge around the notions of governance, global warming, civil conflict, violation of human rights and sustainability.
• Recognize the stakes in domestic and international surveillance as perceived in Europe.

Course Prerequisites

None.

Methods of Instruction

The course learning outcomes will be achieved through a teaching approach that emphasizes interactive methods of learning. This course will combine lectures, class debates, field trips, film screenings, press reviews and conversations with guest speakers. All these activities are mandatory assignments for this class.

Assessment and Final Grade

Weekly Press Reviews (five): 25%
Group Presentation: 20%
Midterm exam 15%
Final Exam: 20%
Class Participation and Attendance: 20%

Course Requirements

Individual Assignment: Weekly Press Reviews
Students will be asked to write 5 short press reviews (one per week) on 5 articles published in newspapers, academic journals, and/or on web pages (associations, research centers, political networks) on topics discussed and analyzed in class. The reviews should consist of a competent summary and an informed critique revealing the theoretical framework it relies on. The professor will provide precise guidelines. At the end of the course students will presents their main insights during the final debate guided by the instructor.
Group Presentation
Students will form small groups and present on a research question that they would like to explore during the course and that is not included in the syllabus. In the choice of topics the emphasis should be on the World and European political scene. Each member of the group must participate in preparing and delivering a portion of the presentation. Topics will be discussed and agreed with the professor during the second week of classes.

Examinations
Students will take two exams: a midterm (week 3) and a final exam (week 6). The exam (multiple choice test and short essays) will cover all topics discussed and analyzed in class. Rubrics will be used to assess each assignment. Exams are non-cumulative.

Class Participation
A student's participation in class should reflect the regular and careful preparation of assigned material as well as the consistent and enthusiastic attempt to share their understanding and questions. Oral participation is also an opportunity for students to develop their speaking and listening skills.

Students will be asked to prepare the various interview and debate meetings that are part of the course, by researching the backgrounds of the experts and their organizations / institutions, planning interview strategies, and developing a catalogue of questions.

Attendance Policy
Regular class attendance is required throughout the program, and all unexcused absences will result in a lower participation grade for any affected CIEE course. Due to the intensive schedules for Open Campus and Short Term programs, unexcused absences that constitute more than 10% of the total course will result in a written warning.

Students who transfer from one CIEE class to another during the add/drop period will not be considered absent from the first session(s) of their new class, provided they were marked present for the first session(s) of their original class. Otherwise, the absence(s) from the original class carry over to the new class and count against the grade in that class.

For CIEE classes, excessively tardy (over 15 minutes late) students must be marked absent. Attendance policies also apply to any required co-curricular class excursion or event, as well as
to Internship, Service Learning, or required field placement. Students who miss class for personal travel, including unforeseen delays that arise as a result of personal travel, will be marked as absent and unexcused. No make-up or re-sit opportunity will be provided.

Attendance policies also apply to any required class excursion, with the exception that some class excursions cannot accommodate any tardiness, and students risk being marked as absent if they fail to be present at the appointed time.

Unexcused absences will lead to the following penalties:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Total Course Hours Missed</th>
<th>Equivalent Number of Open Campus Semester classes</th>
<th>Minimum Penalty</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to 10%</td>
<td>1 content classes, or up to 2 language classes</td>
<td>Participation graded as per class requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 – 20%</td>
<td>2 content classes, or 3-4 language classes</td>
<td>Participation graded as per class requirements; <strong>written warning</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 20%</td>
<td>3 content classes, or 5 language classes</td>
<td><strong>Automatic course failure</strong>, and possible expulsion</td>
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**Weekly Schedule**

**Week 1**

**Class 1.1**  
Introduction to the course. International Relations under the Global Framework  
The syllabus will be presented and reviewed, with emphasis on assessment methods and course requirements. Defining international relations on the global scenario, students will brainstorm on the definition of IR, using as starting point articles from relevant journals.
Assigned Readings from Art and Jervis (2009) and Gaddis (2002)

Class 1.2  IR Controversies and Challenges. This session will explore the various approaches to the study and analysis of IR, from positivism to constructivism, from liberalism to Marxism.
Assignment due: Press Review I

Week 2
Class 2.1  Past and Present of Multilateral Institutions
Organizations such as the WTO (World Trade Organization), the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) and the United Nations (UN) will be analyzed.
Assigned Readings from Gaddis (2002)

Class 2.2  This session will study the European Union institutions and the Political Challenges they face.
Assignment due: Press Review II

Week 3
Class 3.1  The People: Development and Poverty. A session focused on world trends on Population, Immigration and Poverty. Special attention will be given to migration flows, and the gender dimension of poverty.
Assigned Readings from Beeson and Bisley (2010)

Class 3.2  Discussion and Debate Documentary “Don’t Panic: The Truth About Population”
Assignment due: Press Review III

Class 3.3  Midterm exam.
Site visit: The EU delegation in Madrid

Week 4
Class 4.1  Guest speaker 2: Environment and Climate change
Class 4.2 Definitions of sustainability, global warming and economic development will be discussed: Food and Water Management. Resources and Energy. Reflections on the Paris 2015 Climate Summit will be done.
Assigned Readings from Blewitt (2014)
Assignment due: Press Review IV

Week 5
Class 5.1 The Borders: Security and Crime. This class will discuss the concept of terrorism, the tactics and responses nations have undertaken in order to avoid and prevent acts of terrorism. Students will discuss the role of nuclear weapons and tensions with countries such as Iran and North Korea, policies and national laws will be also analyzed, as well as issues new security threats such as cyberterrorism.
Readings from Singer and Friedman (2014) and Kenney (2007)
Assignment due: Review V

Class 5.2 Guest Speaker 3: DAES and Islamic Terrorism
Assignment due: Final Paper

Week 6
Class 6.1 Challenges for International Relations. In groups, students will simulate a political debate with the instructor asking questions on the topics analyzed during the course and covered in their press reviews. Students are expected to provide answers, solutions and proposals.
Group Presentations

Class 6.2 Final Exam

Readings


**Required Audiovisual Viewing:**

Film Documentary: "Don’t Panic: The Truth About Population"

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FAcK2knC08E](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FAcK2knC08E)

**Online Resources and Additional Readings**

*Recommended Web Pages*

El Pais in English ([www.elpais.com](http://www.elpais.com))

Financial Times ([FT.Com](http://ft.com))

Wall Street Journal ([wsj.com](http://wsj.com))

Economist ([economist.com](http://economist.com))