

PO131-30 World Politics

26/27

Department

Politics & International Studies

Level

Undergraduate Level 1

Module leader

Iain Pirie

Credit value

30

Module duration

20 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

International politics affects each and every person on the globe at some level, whether they are taking part in anti-globalisation demonstrations in Buenos Aires, lending to 'sub-prime' mortgage applicants in Australia, fighting in a conflict in the Middle East, or buying a can of Coca-Cola in Coventry. As the famous feminist thinker, Cynthia Enloe writes "the personal is international" and "the international is personal".

This core first year module in Politics and International Studies asks you to engage with political questions on a global scale as it lays the foundations for study in World Politics across your degree. The module will challenge you to think about why politics matters internationally and to engage with its consequences for the daily lives of people all over the world.

The module introduces some of the core theories and concepts in the study of International Relations and considers different and often competing approaches to understanding politics globally. It asks you to consider the nature and structure of the international political system. It also focuses critically on questions of identity, power, and globalisation. Where does power lie in World Politics? Should we focus our study on states, on regions, on governments, on institutions, on alliances, on people? Should we emphasise conflict or cooperation? What impact do the legacies of empire and coloniality have on contemporary international relations? The aim is to provide you with the theoretical and conceptual tools you'll need to engage with these fundamental questions in Politics and International Studies as you progress through your degree.

Module aims

The module aims to: *Provide students with an introductory overview of politics at the international level; *Introduce students to the concepts, issues and structure of the international political system, along with its complexity and continuing evolution; *Locate the theoretical debates on the nature of the international political system within contemporary world politics; *Locate contemporary concepts and issues of global politics within the international historical narrative

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

Weekly topics as taught in 2025-26 - exact structure and content may be adapted and enhanced year by year

1. Introduction: What are your assumptions about World Politics
2. Realism and World Politics
3. Liberalism and World Politics
4. Marxism and World Politics
5. Feminism and World Politics
6. Reading Week
7. Constructivism and World Politics
8. Postcolonialism and World Politics
9. World Politics Before Europe
10. Empires and Sovereign States
11. Cold War 1945-1989
12. Emerging World Order
13. Globalisation
14. Production and World Politics
15. Money and World Politics
16. Reading Week
17. Global Governance
18. Poverty and Development
19. Global Environmental Governance
20. International Human Rights and Human Right

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- To become familiar with the major characteristics of world politics, as developed by scholars of international relations.
- To acquire an understanding of the history of post-1945 world politics.
- To acquire an awareness of some of the core concepts used in the study of world politics.
- To be familiar with a range of contemporary scholarly literature on issues and problems in

world politics.

- To be able to critically analyse ideas about world politics, both orally and in writing.

Indicative reading list

[Reading lists can be found in Talis](#)

International

The module is concerned with World Politics so every dimension studied is international

Subject specific skills

By studying this module, students will acquire the following subject specific skills:

To be familiar with the major characteristics of world politics, as developed by scholars of international relations.

To acquire an understanding of the history of post-1945 world politics.

To acquire an awareness of some of the core concepts used in the study of world politics.

To be familiar with a range of contemporary scholarly literature on issues and problems in world politics.

To be able to critically analyse ideas about world politics, both orally and in writing.

Transferable skills

The module provides students with opportunities to acquire or develop the following:

Written communication skills

Oral communication skills

Skills of interpretation and the critical analysis of sources

Awareness and sensitivity to diversity (in terms of people, cultures) and the ability to understand unfamiliar ideas and ways of thinking

Ability to digest, retain and apply complex information and ideas

Ability to reference work appropriately

Time management skills and the ability to meet deadlines

The ability to reflect critically on what you have learned

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	22 sessions of 1 hour (7%)
Total	300 hours

Type	Required
Seminars	22 sessions of 1 hour (7%)
Private study	256 hours (85%)
Total	300 hours

Private study description

TBA

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Students can register for this module without taking any assessment.

Assessment group A2

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Assessment component			
Essay 1	25%		Yes (extension)
Essay			
Reassessment component is the same			
Assessment component			
Essay 2	75%		Yes (extension)
Essay			
Reassessment component is the same			

Feedback on assessment

Essay feedback will be returned within 20 working days of essay submission.

Feedback for the essay plan will be provided via a checkbox with the plan assessed in terms of proposed structure, indicative bibliography, strength of proposed argument. This is limit pressures on markers time.

Availability

Courses

This module is Core for:

- Year 1 of UECA-LM1D Undergraduate Economics, Politics and International Studies
- Year 1 of UPOA-M102 Undergraduate Global Politics (with Integrated Year Abroad at Brussels School of Governance, VUB)
- Year 1 of UHIA-VM11 Undergraduate History and Politics
- Year 1 of UPOA-M100 Undergraduate Politics
- Year 1 of UPOA-M16A Undergraduate Politics and International Studies
- Year 1 of UPOA-M168 Undergraduate Politics and International Studies with Chinese
- Year 1 of UPOA-M169 Undergraduate Politics and International Studies with Chinese (3 year)
- Year 1 of UPOA-ML13 Undergraduate Politics and Sociology
- Year 1 of UPOA-M163 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and French
- UPOA-M164 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and German
 - Year 1 of M100 Politics
 - Year 1 of M164 Politics, International Studies and German
- Year 1 of UIPA-L2L8 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Global Sustainable Development
- Year 1 of UPOA-M166 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Hispanic Studies
- Year 1 of UPOA-M165 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Italian
- Year 1 of UPOA-M162 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Quantitative Methods

This module is Optional for:

- Year 1 of UECA-LM1D Undergraduate Economics, Politics and International Studies
- Year 1 of UPHA-V7ML Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics

This module is Unusual option for:

- Year 1 of UPHA-V7ML Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics

This module is Option list A for:

- Year 1 of UPHA-V7ML Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics

This module is Option list B for:

- USOA-L301 BA in Sociology

- Year 1 of L305 Sociology with Specialism in Cultural Studies
- Year 1 of L303 Sociology with Specialism in Gender Studies
- Year 1 of L304 Sociology with Specialism in Research Methods
- Year 1 of L302 Sociology with Specialism in Social Policy