

Understanding the International System

Module Code:	PES4018-B
Academic Year:	2019-20
Credit Rating:	20
School:	School of Social Sciences
Subject Area:	Peace Studies
FHEQ Level:	FHEQ Level 4

Pre-requisites:

Co-requisites:

Contact Hours

Type	Hours
Lectures	18
Seminar	11
Project supervision	5
Supervised time in	7
Directed Study	159

Availability Periods

Occurrence	Location/Period
BDA	University of Bradford / Semester 1 (Sep - Jan)

Module Aims

To give you (i) a broad introduction to the context and origins of the present-day international system and current debates about its characteristics and (ii) an understanding of contemporary mechanisms of regional and international political and security governance.

To give you an understanding of the principal theories of international relations (realism, liberalism, Marxism, constructivism) and how they explain the international system.

To encourage you to reflect on the connections between this module and the subjects

introduced in the other core modules in semester one.

To introduce you to the analysis of complex ideas at first year university level through group discussion oral presentations and a written assignment.

To highlight the theoretical and thematic connections between this module and the other two core modules in semester. This will be particularly the case at the start of the module and at the conclusion of the module.

Outline Syllabus

The syllabus will include: the evolution of the international system to WW1; core elements of the principal theories of international relations (realism, liberalism, Marxism, constructivism); the short twentieth century (e.g. San Francisco, Bretton Woods, superpower competition); the post-Cold War multi-polar international system; transnational actors; new wars; and contemporary mechanisms of regional and international political and security governance. The module will conclude by examining debates about the contemporary challenges facing the mechanisms of international political and security governance. The module will also include an immersion day involving an intensive examination of a theme (e.g. gender) relevant both to this module and the other two core Level 4 modules in semester one.

Module Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this module, students will be able to...

- 1 Explain, employ and compare key threshold concepts, theories and approaches in international relations, international history, and associated social sciences.
- 2 Demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of the origins, evolution and contemporary dynamics of the international system.
- 3 Distinguish a range of research designs and methods used in international relations and more broadly across the social sciences and humanities.
- 4 Formulate and evaluate clear arguments, using knowledge of the different components of argumentation and showing an understanding of scholarly rigour.
- 5 Gather, manage and interpret evidence, data and information from valid and appropriate sources, both printed primary and secondary, in relation to a given topic.
- 6 Explain differences between contending theories of knowledge and their implications for problem solving.
- 7 Use relevant concepts and theories to investigate issues in international relations- and international history-related case studies, to develop insights and perspectives.
- 8 Produce planned, properly referenced and well-structured written arguments with clear introductions, appropriate use of academic concepts, and effective summary of academic debates in international studies, and showing awareness of the differences between important theoretical approaches in relevant disciplines
- 9 Competently present ideas and information.

Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy

Learning will develop through lectures focusing on threshold concepts, and seminar discussion and debates on particular case studies. Where appropriate, relevant sections of documentaries will be used to broaden the approach to case studies. There will also be an immersion day on a topic (e.g. gender) relevant to both this module and the other two core modules in semester one.

Formative assessment will be undertaken through class and individual discussions of planned written work.

Summative assessment will consist of

1. An essay (LOs 1-8)
2. Oral presentation on a topic covered in the module (LO9)
3. A diagrammatic representation of at least two IR theories showing (i) how they explain a contemporary international problem and (ii) the kind of policy frameworks/actions that might be suggested by those explanations (LOs 1, 2, 5, 6, 7)

Mode of Assessment

Type	Method	Description	Length	Weighting	Final Assess'
Summative	Presentation	Oral presentation on a topic covered in the module	15 minutes	15%	No
Summative	Coursework	Diagrammatic representation of at least two IR theories.	-250 words	15%	No
Referral	Coursework	Written speech on a topic relevant to the module	-500 words	15%	No
Formative	Coursework	Small group discussions, supervised by module tutor, tackling the same presentation and other assessments		%	No
Summative	Coursework	Essay	2000-2200 words	70%	Yes
Referral	Coursework	A diagrammatic representation of at least two IR theories.	-250 words	15%	No

Referral

Coursework

Essay

2000-2200
words

70%

No

Legacy Code (if applicable)

Reading List

To view Reading List, please go to [rebus:list](#).