

Contemporary International System (22745)

Degree: *Grau en Dret* (Law Degree)

Year: 4th

Term: 3rd

Number of ECTS credits: 5

Total study hours: 125 hours

Language: English

Lecturer: Dr. Pablo Pareja Alcaraz

1. Brief description of the course

This course aims at providing Law students with the necessary theoretical and practical tools for the understanding of the contemporary international system. More specifically, the goal of this course is to familiarize students with the notions of international system, international society, international community and power, as well as with the origins and evolution of the contemporary international society. What is the role of values and interests in the international system? How does the distribution of power among States affect the stability of a particular international system? When were established the foundations of the post-Cold war contemporary international society? What has been the impact of globalization on the evolution of the contemporary international society? What are the main challenges confronting this society? What are the global governance' mechanisms in place to cope with them? In order to address these and other relevant questions, the syllabus of the course is divided into three complementary sections: the first one identifies and defines the main theoretical conceptions for the study of the international system; the second one covers the emergence and evolution of the contemporary international society between the Second World War and the end of the Cold War period; finally, the third section analyzes the transformation of the post-Cold War international society and the main challenges it faces.

2. Syllabus

SECTION I. THEORETICAL CONCEPTIONS FOR THE STUDY OF THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM

1. International system, international society, and international community.

Theoretical approached to the study of the international system. Definition of international system. Definition of international society. Definition of international community. Differences and similarities between international system, society, and community. Change and stability in the international system.

2. The distribution of power within the contemporary international system.

Definitions of power. Material and non-material sources of power. Relational and structural power. Hard power and soft power. Definition of polarity, hegemony and interdependence. Typology of States according to their accumulation of power. Typology of international systems according to the distribution of power among States.

3. Evolution and content of the contemporary international order.

Definition of international order. Order, Anarchy and Justice in the international system. Phases in the construction of international orders. Typology of international orders. Characterization of the contemporary international order.

SECTION II. ORIGINS AND EVOLUTION OF THE CONTEMPORARY INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY

4. Foundations (1941-1945).

The Allied Victory and its aftermath: the demise of Europe in the international system and the rise of new superpowers. The confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union. The birth of the United Nations. The design of the new financial architecture: the role of the IBRD, the IMF, the WB and GATT.

5. The “first” Cold War and Peaceful Coexistence (1945-1962).

The Communist victory in China. The Korean War. The decolonization processes. The articulation of the Non-Aligned Movement: from Bandung to Belgrade. The reconstruction of Europe.

6. Détente and the “second” Cold War (1962-1985).

The Cuban missile crisis. The triangle of détente, the Vietnam War and the normalization of relations between the United States and the People’s Republic of China. The *Ostpolitik* and the CSCE. The end of détente: the Iran-Iraq War and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

7. The end of the Cold War and the restructuring of the contemporary international society (1985-1991).

Corbatchev’s *Glasnost* and *Perestroika*. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the disintegration of the Warsaw Pact. Germany’s reunification and the consolidation of an integrated Europe. United States’ hegemonic moment.

SECTION III. THE POST-COLD WAR CONTEMPORARY INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY

8. Change and continuity in the post-Cold war contemporary international society.

Globalization and regionalization. The redefinition of sovereignty and its impact on the State’s role in international affairs. The *Pax Americana*. The “proliferation” of democratic regimes. China’s economic rise and its impact on United States’ hegemony. The emergence of new powers.

9. Economic and political challenges to the post-Cold war international society.

The rise of economic and social inequalities. The Millenium Development Goals. Human Rights and the Responsibility to Protect.

10. Security challenges to the post-Cold war international society

The expansion of the security agenda. The transformation of armed conflicts: old and new wars. The privatization of security. From the right to humanitarian intervention to the Responsibility to Protect.

3. Competences and skills

This course aims to develop a comprehensive set of competences and skills:

- G1. Students' capacity to critically analyze and identify the core ideas and concepts for the study of the contemporary international system.
- G2. Students' ability to organize themselves and to plan ahead.
- G3. Students' capacity to communicate their ideas.
- G4. Students' capacity to address and solve theoretical problems and challenges.
- G5. Students' motivation and capacity to engage in critical debate.
- G6. Students' ethical commitment.
- G8. Students' capacity to work in group and to adapt to changing working scenarios.
- G9. Students' ability to autonomous learning.
- E6. Students' capacity to elaborate legal and policy-oriented documents.
- E8. Students' capacity to identify the different sources of Law, the latter's historical evolution and its current form and challenges.

4. Evaluation

3.1. Regular students.

The evaluation of this course comprises two different components:

- a) Attendance and active participation in three different seminars. This component is worth 40% of the course's final grade.
- b) A final exam based on both the content of the lectures and the list of readings available through "Aula Global". This component is worth 60% of the course's final grade. This exam will take place at the end of the term during the ordinary exam period.

Students who fail to obtain a final grade of 5,0 or above have the right to re-take both components during the exam period of July if (and only if) they meet the two following conditions: 1) having participated and submitted the activities of at least two of the three seminars; and 2) having delivered the final exam. This second exam will include two parts, each of which will be directly connected to the two components described above.

3.2. UPF Students participating in exchange programs.

The evaluation system for UPF students participating in an exchange program (Erasmus, Seneca or similar ones) during the third term of the academic year consists of a final exam. This exam will be based on the different items included in the syllabus (see section 2) and the list of readings available through "Aula Global". The exam will be worth 100% of the final grade and it will take place during the exam period of July.

5. Calendar and activities

Week	Session	Date	Description	Study hours	
				In-class	Outside
1	1	Tuesday, April 1	Introduction to the course <i>1. International system, international society, and international community</i>	2	2
	2	Thursday, April 3	<i>1. International system, international society, and international community</i>	2	4
2	3	Tuesday, April 8	<i>2. The distribution of power within the contemporary international system.</i>	2	4
	4	Thursday, April 10	Seminar I	2	6
3	5	Tuesday, April 22	<i>3. Evolution and content of the contemporary international order.</i>	2	4
	6	Thursday, April 24	<i>4. Foundations (1941-1955).</i>	2	4
4	7	Tuesday, April 29	<i>5. The “first” Cold War and Peaceful Coexistence (1945-1962).</i>	2	4
5	8	Tuesday, May 6	<i>6. Détente and the “second” Cold War (1962-1985).</i>	2	4
	9	Thursday, May 8	Seminar II	2	6
6	10	Tuesday, May 13	<i>7. The end of the Cold War and the restructuring of the contemporary international society (1985-1991).</i>	2	4
	11	Thursday, May 15	<i>8. Change and continuity in the post-Cold war contemporary international society.</i>	2	4
7	12	Tuesday, May 20	<i>8. Change and continuity in the post-Cold war contemporary international society.</i>	2	4
	13	Thursday, May 22	Seminar III	2	6
8	14	Tuesday, May 27	<i>9. Economic and political challenges to the post-Cold war international society.</i>	2	4
	15	Thursday, May 29	<i>9. Economic and political challenges to the post-Cold war international society.</i>	2	4
9	16	Tuesday, June 3	<i>10. Security challenges to the post-Cold war international society.</i>	2	4
10	17	Tuesday, June 10	<i>10. Security challenges to the post-Cold war international society.</i> Summary of the course	2	4
Study hours (weeks 1-10)				34	72
Study for the final exam				19	
Total study hours				125 hours	

6. List of references

- ART, R.C.; JERVIS, R. (eds.), *International Politics. Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, Nueva York: HarperCollins College Publishers, 2002, 6^a ed.
- BULL, Hedley, *The Anarchical Society. A Study of Order in World Politics*, London: Macmillan, 1995.

- CERNY, Philip G., *The Changing Architecture of Politics: Structure, Agency, and the Future of the State*, Londres: SAGE, 1990.
- COOPER, Richard, *The Postmodern State and the World Order*, Londres: Demos, 2000, 2^a ed. (1^a ed. 1996).
- COULOUMBIS, T.A.; WOLFE, J., *Introduction to International Relations. Power and Justice*, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1996, 5^a ed.
- HOCKING, B.; SMITH, M., *World Politics*, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1995, 2^a ed.
- HOLSTI, K.J., *International Politics. A Framework for Analysis*, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1992, 6^a ed.
- KEGLEY, Charles W.; WITTKOPF, Eugene R., *World Politics. Trends and Transformation*, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave, 2000, 8^a ed.
- RENGGER, Nicholas J., *International Relations, Political Theory and the Problem of Order. Beyond International Relations theory?*, Londres: Routledge, 2000.
- ROBERSON, Barbara A. (ed.), *International Society and the Development of International Relations Theory*, Londres / Washington: Pinter, 1998.
- SLAUGHTER, Anne-Marie, *A New World Order*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004.
- WEISS, Linda, *The Myth of the Powerless State. Governing the Economy in a Global Era*, Oxford: Polity Press, 1998.