



Debating International Relations (SSPS08011)

School & College	College of Humanities & Social Science Centre for Open Learning
Subject Area	Social and Political Science
SCF Credit Level	SCQF Level 8 (Year 1 Undergraduate)
Credits	20 SCQF/10 ECTS/4 US
Course pre-requisite	1 year of undergraduate study
Language Requirements	IELTS 6.5 (with a minimum of 5.5 in each component)

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Course Summary

Examine concepts and theories in Politics and International Relations in the context of real world matters, for example Syria and Brexit. Discuss issues of power and democracy alongside classic International Relations theories such as Realism and Liberalism. Develop skills in critical analysis and the expression of ideas and knowledge, both in writing and in group discussion.

Course Description

Debating International Relations focuses on the major principles, concepts, actors and theories of the international system and their application to current issues in world affairs. The course is divided into two parts.

Part one examines a number of theoretical approaches drawn from different intellectual traditions in the discipline, including classical and contemporary realism, liberalism, constructivism, Marxism and radical approaches to International Relations, as well as contemporary debates on power-structures and globalization.

The second part discusses a number of current policy issues such as terrorism and security, human rights, governance and global institutions, global trade and finance, the environment and poverty and development.

Course Format and Teaching Method

The course will be offered using a hybrid teaching model, using a combination of on-campus teaching and digital elements that allow students to take the course either based physically in Edinburgh, or remotely from home.

The course consists of lectures and seminars. Lecture classes will be a combination of lecture, followed by small group activities, ending with a question and answer session. Seminars will be less formal with more time spent on conversation, class activities and revision. Students are expected to participate actively and the course material is cumulative, each class building on the information from the previous one

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- Demonstrate a critical understanding of the main theories in International Relations
- Demonstrate knowledge of the key structures and agents that constitute International Relations and global politics
- Critically assess debates and contemporary issues in International Relations theory and world affairs
- Apply the theoretical knowledge gained in analyses of concrete processes and changes in contemporary International Relations

Assessment Method

- Written answer on a previously chosen question (500 words) and short presentation (Formative - 0%)
- Submission of an essay plan (Formative - 0%)
- 2500 word essay (100%)

Recommended Reading

- Baylis, J., S. Smith and P. Owens (2014) (eds), *The Globalization of World Politics*, 6th ed., Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Brown, C. and K. Ainley (2009) *Understanding International Relations*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan
- Heywood, A. (2014) *Global Politics*, 2nd ed. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan