



# 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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## 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* will introduce you to the major concepts, theories, and actors of the global system. You will be shown how to apply a wide range of approaches to contemporary and historical cases, giving you a critical understanding of both the cases we study and the approaches we apply to them.

The course is divided into two parts. In the first part, you will examine a number of theoretical approaches drawn from different intellectual traditions in the discipline, including varied schools of thought in both realism and liberalism, post-colonialism, feminism, constructivism, and a range of other critical theories of IR, along with contemporary debates on key concepts such as power and globalisation.

These theories will be understood and assessed through engagement with case studies including China-US relations and the Asia-Pacific region more generally, the current Covid-19 pandemic, the causes of major conflicts including the first and second world wars, and United Nations conferences on climate change.

The second part of the course focuses on key issues in international politics including the changing character of warfare and global terrorism, international political economy, world trade and finance and global economic governance, international law, the EU and the growth of regionalisation, and global warming and the environment.

## Course Format and Teaching Method

The course will be taught using a combination of recorded lectures and live tutorial sessions, with discussion groups based on current issues and debates in international relations. Students will be expected to read materials provided for the class and to participate in discussions.

## 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

- A 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