

Module Details	
Module Title	The international system in theory and context
Module Code	PES7054-B
Academic Year	2024/5
Credits	20
School	School of Social Sciences
FHEQ Level	FHEQ Level 7

Contact Hours	
Type	Hours
Lectures	11
Seminars	11
Directed Study	178

Availability	
Occurrence	Location / Period
BDA	University of Bradford / Semester 1

Module Aims
<p>* To provide an advanced knowledge and understanding of the context and origins of the modern state and of modern and contemporary international relations.</p> <p>* To provide a good grounding in the key academic perspectives, theories and debates concerning the nature and development of the contemporary state system and global order; and the capacity to apply such perspectives and theories to develop advanced analyses of specific international relations trends and issue areas.</p> <p>* To develop understanding of key theoretical issues and concepts in international relations to an advanced level.</p> <p>* To enable you to appreciate the significance of identity and gender in international relations and associated disciplines.</p>

Outline Syllabus

The syllabus typically comprises of two main thematic areas. The first focuses on the development of the state, and of its relations with other states, over an extended historical period. The second examines the various contemporary theories and interpretations of international relations and the present international systems; and the interrelationship with the roles and characteristics of states.

The development of the state in the international system is analysed through at least three main themes. The first is the emergence of the legally 'sovereign' state from an age of religious universalism (with the treaty of Westphalia as a major landmark here). The second is the era of the sovereign state, from Westphalia to the First World War; and the third is the century from 1920 to the present.

The second part of the module analyses essential themes in the study of international relations. These include: an introduction to the foundational and post-foundational theories of international relations; war and the process of state-making, colonialism and decolonisation; the Cold War and Cold War security logic; global economic governance after World War Two. It engages in depth for example with Realism, Liberal Institutionalism, Constructivism and post-colonialism, and the ways in which they may help us to make sense of the contemporary international system. Finally, it examines the roles and significance of non-state actors, international and regional institutions, and trans-national networks, and their relation to today's international system.

Learning Outcomes

Outcome Number	Description
01	Conduct advanced and systematic research and analysis into the nature and origins of the modern system of international relations, using relevant techniques and technologies to gather, evaluate and manage evidence, data and information from valid, appropriate sources, and using data and theory in the analysis of relationships, dynamics and impacts within case-studies from the past and present.
02	Identify and critically assess at an advanced level the ideas, practices and conditions that influence debates concerning the context and current practice of international relations.
03	Collaborate effectively with others in the completion of appropriate academic tasks.
04	Generate clear, concise and coherent advanced analysis and communication, whether essay or reflective research report tailored to the appropriate audience.
05	Gather and analyse information about the factors shaping the evolution of the international system or contributing to the outcomes of international relations processes; and conduct advanced library research and work independently using advanced academic analysis skills.
06	Apply at an advanced level key concepts and theoretical frameworks to the analysis of selected cases in the areas of international relations.

Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy

Learning will develop through a blended learning strategy. This will be based on lectures (online and face to face), and seminar discussion and debates (online and face to face). Teaching will be through a combination of lectures, seminars, directed study, coursework and class discussions. There will also be an intensive workshop, in the form of a thematic laboratory day, enabling students to explore and reflect on the roles and significance of a particular theme (e.g. gender) relevant to the study of IR.

Learning will develop through lectures (focusing on key frameworks, developments and threshold concepts); coursework, directed study, discussions in class, and tutor support; and also through thematic laboratory sessions on a specific theme. The seminar discussion and debates are on selected case studies, including selected international trends and processes and also studies on the major philosophers and political thinkers. Where appropriate, relevant sections of documentaries will be used to broaden the approach to case studies.

Assessment on this module is based on an essay of 3400-3600 words, presenting desk research and analysis of a question set by the module tutors. This assessment may contain components of reflective writing.

Formative assessment will be undertaken through class and individual tutor feedback on planned written work (up to 250 words per assignment).

Mode of Assessment

Type	Method	Description	Weighting
Summative	Coursework - Written	Preparation and written presentation of desk research and analysis, 3400 - 3600 words	100%
Formative	Not assessed	Supervised seminar discussions on assessment topics; plus tutor individual feedback on planned essay outlines	N/A

Reading List

To access the reading list for this module, please visit <https://bradford.rl.talis.com/index.html>

Please note:

This module descriptor has been published in advance of the academic year to which it applies. Every effort has been made to ensure that the information is accurate at the time of publication, but minor changes may occur given the interval between publishing and commencement of teaching. Upon commencement of the module, students will receive a handbook with further detail about the module and any changes will be discussed and/or communicated at this point.