



SIS

1955-2025

SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
SEVEN DECADES OF EXCELLENCE



जवाहरलाल नेहरू विश्वविद्यालय
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
अंतरराष्ट्रीय अध्ययन संस्थान
SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

B.A. (HONOURS) OPTIONAL COURSE: WINTER SEMESTER

Introduction to World Politics

Course:	BA
Course No:	IO 201
Course Title:	Introduction to World Politics
Course Type:	Elective/Optional
Semester:	Winter
Course Teacher & Contact Details:	<i>Name: Sandip Kumar Singh Room No.: #318, SIS-II, JNU Email: sandipksingh@jnu.ac.in Tel. No.: (O): 26704597</i>
Credits:	04
Contact Hours:	4 hours/week
Tutorial (for difficulties & discussion)	1 hour/week
Class Schedule & Room Number	

Course Objectives:

This course is designed to introduce an undergraduate student of the humanities to politics in the international arena. It explores the fundamental concepts, actors, and issues that shapes the contemporary world political dynamics. Students will gain an understanding of international relations theory, key historical events, and contemporary global issues such as war, peace, great power politics, globalisation, and climate change. The course aims to help students develop critical thinking skills and apply theoretical frameworks to analyses the significant issues pertaining to the contemporary world.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- (i) **understand** the basic concepts and theories of international relations (IR).
- (ii) **identify** the main actors in world politics, including states, international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and multinational corporations (MNCs).
- (iii) **analyse** the causes of war and peace, and the role of diplomacy and conflict resolution.
- (iv) **evaluate** the effects of globalization, human rights, and international law on global governance.
- (v) **apply** IR theories to contemporary world events and challenges.
- (vi) **critically assess** the global issues such as terrorism, environmental and cyber-security challenges.
- (vii) **broaden** his/her analytical understanding of contemporary politics of the world and the debates.
- (viii) make clear and concise arguments in written assignments and oral class participation.

Evaluation Methods

- **Mid-Semester Evaluation (50%)** (Compulsory)
 - Mid-Term Examination or Book/Article Review or Term Paper & Presentation
- **End-Semester Evaluation (50%)** (Compulsory)
 - End-Semester Examination
- *SIS Research Manual should be used as a guide for written assignments. Available at: https://www.jnu.ac.in/sites/default/files/SIS_Research_Manual_0.pdf.*
- *Students must maintain a high degree of academic integrity, which includes but is not limited to abstaining from copying and plagiarism. For details on plagiarism and research ethics, refer to SIS Research Manual.*

Course Content

Module 1: Introduction to World Politics

Week 1: Introduction to the Course & What is World Politics?

- Overview of the international system
- Key concepts: sovereignty, power, and anarchy

Week 2: Actors in World Politics

- State and non-state actors
- International organizations

Module 2: Theoretical Approaches to International Relations

Week 3: Realism and Neo-Realism

- Core assumptions: power, security, and the state-centric view
- Key theorists: Morgenthau, Waltz, Mearsheimer

Week 4: Liberalism and Neo-Liberalism

- International cooperation, institutions, and interdependence
- Key theorists: Keohane, Nye, Oye

Week 5: Constructivism and Critical Theories

- Ideas, identity, and norms in world politics
- Constructivism, Feminism, Marxism, and Post-Colonialism in international relations

Module 3: Issues and Problems in World Politics

Week 6: Causes of War and Theories of Conflict

- International and civil wars, ethnic conflict, and terrorism

Week 7: Nuclear Weapons, Deterrence and Arms Control

- The nuclear non-proliferation regime and arms control agreements

Week 8: Issues of Contestation between States

- Globalisation, Regionalism, Trade, Cyber & Technology and Environment

Module 4: India's External Relations and Interests

Week 9-10: India's Neighbourhood Policy

A brief overview of India's role as the regional power in South Asia, its relationship with its neighbours and the challenges to regional security.

Week 11-13: India and the Great Powers

Analysing India's relations with the US, Russia, European Countries and China amid contemporary geopolitics.

Week 14: India and the Global South

Studying the leadership and role of India in reforming international governance in the Global South - BRICS and G-20.

Module 5: Contemporary Issues and Future Trends

Week 15: Terrorism and Security in the 21st Century

- The impact of terrorism on global politics and responses to transnational threats

Week 16: The Future of World Politics

- Emerging trends: power shifts, technology, and the future of the global order

Student Presentations and Course Wrap-Up (Week 16)

Reading List

Baylis, John, Steve Smith and Patricia Owens (eds.) (2011), *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations* (5th edn.), Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Brown, Chris and Kirsten Ainley (2005), Understanding International Relations (3rd edn.), New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Williams, Marc (1989), *International Relations in the Twentieth Century: A Reader*, London, MacMillan

Burchill, Scott et al. (2001), *Theories of International Relations* (2nd edn.), New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Calvocoressi, Peter (2008), *World Politics Since 1945*, 9th edn., New York: Routledge.

Dunne, Tim, Milja Kurki and Steve Smith (eds.) (2013), *International Relations Theories: Discipline and Diversity*, 3rd edn., Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Edkins, Jenny and Maja Zehfuss (eds.) (2009), *Global Politics: A New Introduction*, New York: Routledge.

Ganguly, Sumit (2010), *India's Foreign Policy: Retrospect and Prospect*, New Delhi: Oxford University

Press.

Ganguly, Sumit and Manjeet S. Pardesi (2009), "Explaining Sixty Years of India's Foreign Policy", *India Review*, 8 (1), pp. 4-19.

Griffiths, Martin et al. (2008), *International Relations: The Key Concepts* (2nd edn.), New York: Routledge. Mazlish, Bruce and Akire Iriye (eds.) (2005), *The Global History Reader*, New York: Routledge.

McWilliams, Wayne C. and Harry Piotrowski (2009), *The World since 1945: a History of International Relations* (7th edn.), London: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Mohan, C. Raja (2003), *Crossing the Rubicon: The Shaping of India's New Foreign Policy*, New Delhi: Viking Press.

Reus-Smit, Christian and Duncan Snidal (eds.) (2008), *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Viotti, Paul R. and Mark Kauppi (2007), *International Relations and World Politics* (3rd edn.), New Delhi: Pearson.

Weber, Cynthia (2010), *International Relations Theory: A Critical Introduction* (3rd edn.) London: Sage.

Most of the readings listed above are textbooks. Each student would be expected to have a distinct comfort level with different textbooks. Students are therefore advised to sample the various textbooks above and choose those that they find the most helpful. Do remember that not all topics are covered equally well in a single textbook. Please contact the course teacher in case any doubts persist.