

COURSE TITLE

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: HISTORY AND CURRENT ISSUES

Study programme
International Relations

LM-52i

LAUREA (MAGISTRALE)

A.Y. 2021-22

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SSD

CREDITS

Year of study (I, II)

Semester (I, II)

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of the course the student will have gained these abilities:

- knowing recent history and current developments of the system of International Relations;
- being able to reconstruct and analyse critically the main events of the History of the World Political and Economic System, from the end of the Second World War to the fall of the Berlin Wall;
- understanding the evolution of the World Political and Economic System from 1989 to 2016 in the new context following the end of the Bipolar System;
- using the History of International Relations to better understand the present International Political and Economic Scene, with particular reference to foreign policy of the main world powers;
- grasping the ability of critical analysis of fundamental and specific themes of this subject;
- having the ability to retrieve, to select, to use and to evaluate the main sources for the study of the discipline.

Knowledge and understanding

The student must be able to develop a complete and precise reconstruction of the different phases that have characterized the evolution of the system of International Relations, from the end of the Second World War up to the present. He will demonstrate a capacity to link the interactions that, in a multilevel context (political-diplomatic, economic-financial, social-ideological), can permit him to be introduced to the wide complex of International Relationships in today's world. These abilities are achieved by enriching lecture with didactic tools (working groups; analysis of material provided by the teacher; organization of debates and seminars with experts and professionals; homework; case studies; simulations; audiovisual aids; IT applications).

Applying knowledge and understanding

The student will gain an ability to use the competencies acquired during this course for the analysis of today's international politics, with particular attention toward the context of dialectic relations between States and regarding some specific issues which are relevant to define relationship between countries and the future of the international system. The student also will achieve the ability to pick up and to analyze information, news, data and elements with the purpose of developing an autonomous ability of evaluation of the world political-economic system.

Further expected learning outcomes:

- **Making judgements:**

The tools that will be provided to students will allow them to acquire autonomy of judgment in the analysis of key events and main topics in the history of international relations and in the contemporary international political and economic system. Moreover, the course will provide adequate knowledge and capacity of observation to compare different geopolitical, historical and economic contexts in different ages. This autonomy of judgement developed by students will be considered as relevant in the final evaluation process.

- **Communication skills:**

The student will be stimulated to preserve a knowledge of the notions transmitted from the professor and to develop an autonomous ability of study, research and communication. With use of correct terminology (acquired during this course), he/she will be able to report, both orally and for writing, on matters connected to the History of International Relations and contemporary international political and economic system. The student must show to have gained a capability to develop in the classroom, on individual basis or inside a working team, a capacity to discuss with the lecturer and his/her colleagues about the topics studied during this course. For this reason, during the lecture the student will be strongly stimulated to debate on some matters for the objective to improve his/her abilities in the field of communication, particularly relevant for his/her perspectives in job market.

- **Learning skills:**

During the course the professor will guarantee to the students, respecting an innovative concept of didactic and using online e-teaching platform, tools – as papers editing, individual analysis, research on online sources, displaying of audiovisual material, comment of documents - useful to better study the arguments of the course and to reach the best possible level of comprehension of the discipline taught. A continuous process of interaction is expected between lecturer and students that will be useful for both of them, because the professor will use students' feedback to dispose possible and suitable corrective plans aiming the objective to reach a satisfactory level of learning by them.

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CONTENTS

Part A) The History of International Relations in the Cold War Age (1945-1989)

Main Topics: 1. THE WORLD AFTER WW2 One or many policies for the Reconstruction? The failure of the Roosevelt's "Grand Design". The difficult debut of the UN. A wasting asset? Nuclear Weapons. From takeovers to conformity: the USSR and Eastern Europe. The changed Western Perception toward the Soviets. The end of the "Great Alliance". 2. THE "IRON CURTAIN" The Soviet Foreign Policy: a new geopolitical role for Moscow. A challenging debate inside the US Administration: the policy of "Containment". The Communist Doctrine of the "Inevitability of War". The negotiation for the Treaties of peace and the German question. The Italian Case. 3. THE "FIRST COLD WAR" Building a "Western Bloc": from the Treaty of Dunkerque to the Western Union. The "Four Pillars": the Truman Doctrine; the Marshall Plan; the Atlantic Pact; NATO. Asia in Turmoil: Nationalism and Independence; the Chinese Civil War; the Korean War; the US Asian Security Concept. The Middle East after WW2: the origins of the Arab-Israeli Conflict; the 1948 War. An Institutionalisation of the US Control over Latin America. The Berlin Crisis and the birth of the two Germanies. The beginning of the European Integration Process. 4. A "DÉTENTE" IN YEARS OF CRISIS A "Roll Back" or just a "New Look"? The USSR without Stalin. The "First" Détente. Stability and Revolts: trouble in the Soviet Bloc; the First Indochina War; WEU and Warsaw Pact; EEC and Euratom. Kruščev vs Kennedy: from Paris to Berlin; the Cuban Missile Crisis. 5. NEW PROBLEMS FOR NEW WORLDS The end of Colonial Imperialism and Decolonisation. The 1956 Suez–Sinai campaign. The "Developmental States". The birth of the Non-Aligned Movement. The rise and decline of the Sino-Soviet alliance. The rise and fall of pan-Africanism. The birth of the "Third World". 6. THE "COMPETITIVE CO-EXISTENCE" Towards the world of MAD; Nuclear Détente vs Space Race. France, Germany and the first "Eurocrisis"; the Italian "Neoatlantic" Attitude. A wrong idea: the "American nation-building". Mao's China and the Indochina Wars. Revolutionaries and reformers from Chile to Nicaragua. The Cold War in Africa. The 1967 Six Days War. 7. THE BREAK OF THE SEVENTIES The crisis of the West: students, dollars, oil and...Watergate. Once upon a time the UN. A western "counteroffensive": from Rambouillet to Monetarism. Kissinger's "Realpolitik" vs Carter's multilateralism. The European Integration Process between widening and deepening. China after Mao: Deng and the 'Four Modernizations'. The 1973 Yom Kippur War. The crisis of communism and the Soviet stagnation. The Second Distension: control and reduction of strategic armaments. The 1979 Islamic revolution in Iran and the re-balance of Middle East. 8. THE END OF THE BIPOLAR SYSTEM The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan and the "Second Cold War". Reagan's America, Gorbachëv's USSR, Thatcher's Europe, Deng's China. The second "Eurocrisis". The fall of the Berlin Wall and the disintegration of the Soviet Bloc. Hope of Peace and Winds of War: Camp David, Lebanon, the Falklands, Iran-Iraq; The Palestinian armed struggle. The difficult road to democracy in Africa and in Latin America. The fragmentation of the Third World.

Part B) Ten years of (failed) hopes (1989-2001)

Main Topics: The end of the History? The end of the USSR. USA, UN and the search of a new World Order. The unipolar moment: America at the apex. A rebirth for the UN in the Globalized World. The First Gulf War. Europe between Integration and Ethnic Conflicts: Germany's Reunification, EU Treaties and the Yugoslav Wars. An (attempted) Peace Process in Middle East. The new Russia between economic crisis and separatism. Africa in turmoil: the end of the Apartheid; Congo, Rwanda and Somalia cases; 9/11.

Part C) A new World Disorder (2001-2016)

Main Topics: A new American Century? The rise of Political Islam: Islamist movements; Fundamentalism; Jihadism. War on Terror. From Gaza to Lebanon, by way of Ramallah. The challenge of nuclear proliferation: Iran and Korea. The EU as (false) reality and (proposed) inspirations. The rebirth of Russia. China as World Power. Integration and development in Asia and in the Americas. Africa between hopes and permanent wars. A failed dream: Obama's presidency. The Arab Springs.

Part D) Current Issues of the Today's System of International Relations (2016-2020)

Some Countries: USA from Trump to Biden. Putin's Russia. Which Europe? Xi's PRC. The two Koreas: stalinism and IT. The past and the future: Japan and India. The fight for supremacy in the Middle East. Regional ambitions: Iran and Turkey. Asia between Economic Development and Political Immaturity. Latin America from "Bolivarianism" to Bolsonaro. A "new" Third World. CoViD19: toward a new phase of the World system?

Many challenges: Business, Trade Rows & Raw Materials. Peoples in Migration. Security & Armaments. Terrorism as usual. The environment, a sustainable development and the climate change. Democracy & Human Rights. A world of Technology. The role of International Organizations and NGO.

RECOMMENDED READING:

ANTONY BEST - JUSSI HAHNIMAKI - JOSEPH A. MAIOLO – KIRSTEN E. SCHULZE, *International History of the Twentieth Century and Beyond*, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, London and New York, 2014 (3rd or last edition). [except chapters 1-4 & 6-8]

Digital Material – especially regarding the Parts C/D of the Course – will be available in a dedicated channel on Microsoft Teams e-teaching platform.

Lesson attendance is strongly recommended.

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ASSESSMENT METHOD

a) Learning results to be verified:

To pass the exam, the student must demonstrate to have acquired at least a basic knowledge of the contents (above). The full knowledge and skills acquired will be assessed through:

- the redaction of a paper (25.000 characters, spaces included) on a topic defined with the professor.
- an oral examination on some matters discussed during the lectures and included in the contents of the course.
- a discussion on two essays chosen by the student in a list proposed by the professor.

Participation to the activities proposed by the professor during the course isn't mandatory but – at the same time – it's part of the evaluation process.

The final vote will be expressed out of thirty.

A regular lecture attendance is strongly recommended.

b) Assessment method:

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|---|------------------------------|---|---------------------|---|---------------------|--|
| The exam will consist of | Written and oral examination | X | Written examination | | Oral examination | |
| In case of a written exam, questions are* | Multiple choices | | Open questions | X | Numerical exercises | |

(*) more answers possible