

PIA3126: INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ECONOMY

Effective Term

Semester B 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

International Political Economy

Subject Code

PIA - Public and International Affairs

Course Number

3126

Academic Unit

Public and International Affairs (PIA)

College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

AIS3126 International Political Economy

GE3207 Comparing Capitalisms in East Asia and the West

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

This is an introductory course on international political economy. It is structured around key issues of contemporary international political economy, including production, trade, finance and technology, with an emphasis on how various theoretical perspectives and levels of analysis (global, regional, national, city, individual) can help us understand these issues. Discussion will transcend the international/global level, and covers domestic affairs, and interactions between various levels of analysis. IPE is a thriving sub-discipline that seeks to combine political and economic variables in its analysis of the changing global economy and students should be well prepared, by the end of the course, for deeper study in upper year courses and in Master's studies.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Analyze issues of international political economy from different theoretical perspectives		x	x	
2	Collect evidence on the sources of power in the global economy		x	x	
3	Grasp the interplay between international and domestic levels of analysis		x	x	
4	Present well thought-out analysis on the likelihood of change in the global economy		x	x	x

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs		Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	1 - 4	Carry out assigned and recommended readings	1, 2, 3, 4	
2	1 - 4	Attend and engage with lecture material	1, 2, 3, 4	
3	1 - 4	Work individually and in groups on in-class problem solving	1, 2, 3, 4	
4	1 - 4	Listen and share feedback in class discussions	1, 2, 3, 4	

5	1 - 4	Closely follow guest visits by experts from business, government, international organizations and NGOs, as well as field trips	1, 2, 3, 4	
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Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- " for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Research essay	1, 2, 3, 4	42.5	The most important piece of assesment comes last when discoveries from theories and cases during the semester will be applied in the form of intensive research. The findings will be presented in a research essay.	No

2	Problem-solving debates	1, 2, 3, 4	35	This exercise moves beyond conventional debates and engages students in a different problem-solving methodology where the objective is to determine if middle grounds and possible ways forward on challenging issues can be found. Each debate will be linked to an interview, a field trip, a provocative reading, a guest lecture, a podcast, a social media exchange, or a YouTube video. Towards the end, debaters will work through their differences in the pursuit of common terrain, rather than declaring a winning and a losing side. Compromise means figures from different positions and backgrounds agreeing to steps, even smaller steps, that could be contemplated.	No
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3	Class participation	1, 2, 3, 4	15	Grading here is based on 70% for active and informed participation and 30% for attendance. Being active means contributing insights, asking questions and being a good listener. Being informed entails careful reading of the course materials.	Yes
4	Discussant role	1, 2, 3, 4	7.5	Each student is responsible for serving as a discussant in one week. Discussants will have carried out advance research to go deeper into the topic and they will: -present their position on some of the key issues -think of critical cases that shed light on the topic -think about provocative/ penetrating questions that will challenge classmates and/ or any guests and generate discussion -be prepared to answer questions from classmates -take on a leadership role in smaller groups	Yes

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

Research essay

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Evidence of excellent conceptual and critical thinking. Ability to comprehend and critique lectures and reading materials. Student is able to make sophisticated arguments and draw insightful conclusions about the key issues and debates concerning IPE as well as being able to extend the different theoretical models in a clear and precise manner.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Evidence of good conceptual and critical thinking. Major themes of the lectures and readings are understood. Student is able to form plausible arguments and reasonably convincing conclusions about key issues and debates concerning IPE and have broad understanding of the theories that underpin them.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Evidence of incomplete/marginal ability to analyse material presented in lectures and discussion groups. While the student has regularly attended class, performance has been below class average demonstrating only a general understanding of lectures and reading materials. Student cannot make sustained arguments or reach convincing conclusions.

Marginal (D)

Evidence of limited comprehension of the lectures or readings materials. The student was marginal in class discussions. Limited participation in discussions and groupwork. The written work was of a low standard. Student has a very limited grasp of key issues and debates concerning IPE and the theories used to explain it.

Failure (F)

Little or no effort put into the course. The student has failed to demonstrate even a minimal capacity to analyse issues and debates concerning IPE and theories behind it. The student has missed a number of classes and participated little, if at all, in class discussions and group activities. Written work, if submitted, has been of a poor standard or plagiarized.

Assessment Task

Problem-solving debates

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Evidence of excellent conceptual and critical thinking. Ability to comprehend and critique lectures and reading materials. Student is able to make sophisticated arguments and draw insightful conclusions about the key issues and debates concerning IPE as well as being able to extend the different theoretical models in a clear and precise manner.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Evidence of good conceptual and critical thinking. Major themes of the lectures and readings are understood. Student is able to form plausible arguments and reasonably convincing conclusions about key issues and debates concerning IPE and have broad understanding of the theories that underpin them.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Evidence of incomplete/marginal ability to analyse material presented in lectures and discussion groups. While the student has regularly attended class, performance has been below class average demonstrating only a general understanding of lectures and reading materials. Student cannot make sustained arguments or reach convincing conclusions.

Marginal (D)

Evidence of limited comprehension of the lectures or readings materials. The analysis was of a low standard. Student has a very limited grasp of key issues and debates concerning IPE and the theories used to explain it.

Failure (F)

Little or no effort put into the course. The student has failed to demonstrate even a minimal capacity to analyse issues and debates concerning IPE and theories behind it. The debate performance has been of a poor standard or plagiarized.

Assessment Task

Class participation

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Evidence of excellent conceptual and critical thinking. Ability to comprehend and critique lectures and reading materials. Student is able to make sophisticated arguments and draw insightful conclusions about the key issues and debates concerning IPE as well as being able to extend the different theoretical models in a clear and precise manner.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Evidence of good conceptual and critical thinking. Major themes of the lectures and readings are understood. Student is able to form plausible arguments and reasonably convincing conclusions about key issues and debates concerning IPE and have broad understanding of the theories that underpin them.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Evidence of incomplete/marginal ability to analyse material presented in lectures and discussion groups. While the student has regularly attended class, performance has been below class average demonstrating only a general understanding of lectures and reading materials. Student cannot make sustained arguments or reach convincing conclusions.

Marginal (D)

Evidence of limited comprehension of the lectures or readings materials. The student was marginal in class discussions. Limited participation in discussions and groupwork. The written work was of a low standard. Student has a very limited grasp of key issues and debates concerning IPE and the theories used to explain it.

Failure (F)

Little or no effort put into the course. The student has failed to demonstrate even a minimal capacity to analyse issues and debates concerning IPE and theories behind it. The student has missed a number of classes and participated little, if at all, in class discussions and group activities. Written work, if submitted, has been of a poor standard or plagiarized.

Assessment Task

Discussant

Criterion

Students will serve as a discussant and lead class discussions in one class

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Outstanding quality of student's contributions (comments, questions, summaries of group discussions, and reference to key readings, cases, and materials)

Good (B+, B, B-)

Good quality of student's contributions (comments, questions, summaries of group discussions, and reference to key readings, cases, and materials)

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Fair quality of student's contributions (comments, questions, summaries of group discussions, and reference to key readings, cases, and materials)

Marginal (D)

Marginal quality of student's contributions (comments, questions, summaries of group discussions, and reference to key readings, cases, and materials)

Failure (F)

Failing quality or absence of student's contributions (comments, questions, summaries of group discussions, and reference to key readings, cases, and materials)

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

international trade; foreign investment; global finance; multinational corporations; Realism; liberalism; Marxism; globalization; regional level of analysis; national capitalisms; global cities; economic approaches to environmental change; automation and labour; Hong Kong as a technology hub; the political economy of food; global supply chains; tax havens.

Reading List**Compulsory Readings**

Title	
1	Ravenhill, J., 2020. Global Political Economy. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
2	O' Brien, R. & Williams, M., 2020. Global Political Economy: Evolution and Dynamics. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Balaam, D. & Dillman, B., 2019. Introduction to International Political Economy. Boston: Longman.
2	Stiglitz, J., 2002. Globalization and its Discontents. New York : W. W. Norton & Co
3	Asian Development Bank. Available at: http://www.adb.org/
4	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation. Available at: http://www.apec.org/apec/publications/all_publications/human_resources_development.html
5	International Centre for the Study of East Asian Development. Available at: http://www.icsead.or.jp/7publication/wp2006_e.html
6	IPEnet, International Political Economy Network. Available at: http://www.isanet.org/sections/ipe/
7	The Economist. Available at: http://www.economist.com/index.html
8	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. Available at: http://www.unescap.org/
9	World Bank. Available at: http://www.worldbank.org/