



CIEE Global Institute - Copenhagen

Course name:	Contemporary Controversies in International Relations
Course number:	(GI) INRE 4007 CPDK
Programs offering course:	Copenhagen Open Campus
Open Campus Track:	International Relations and Political Science Track
Language of instruction:	English
U.S. semester credits:	3
Contact hours:	45
Term:	Spring 2020

Course Description

The course provides an overview of important international conflicts of our time, their causes, main agents, and recent developments. Investigating a number of case studies will allow us to not only identify and learn in detail about different areas of international controversy, but also to study models of international cooperation. Course participants are to analyze a variety of current conflicts by diagnosing the conflict, providing an outlook for the medium-term future, and proposing solutions. Classroom content is supplemented and enhanced by debate meetings with experts and practitioners from different organizations and institutions.

The course addresses the following and other questions: In which policy domains do we find contemporary / future international controversies? What are the ways in which these controversies are diffused and settled? What are existing obstacles to the resolution and settlement of international conflicts? What major multilateral forums exist? Is global governance a realistic and desirable goal? What could possible forms look like?

Learning Objectives

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

- Enhance comprehensive and critical knowledge of international politics and international conflicts
- Acquire practice in addressing pointed and critical questions to politicians and members of government bureaucracies.
- Further develop critical thinking and communications skills by regularly debating political topics of current significance – in writing and in class
- Improve team-work and public speaking skills by preparing and delivering presentations in a group
- critically evaluate, analyze and compare contemporary controversies in International Relations

Course Prerequisites

Students should have completed two courses in modern history, politics, or international relations.

Methods of Instruction



The methodology will be characterized by lectures, presentations and class discussions based on the assigned readings. Lectures will be enhanced by PowerPoint presentations whenever these are helpful to explain international conflicts and controversies. The class debates will be prepared and conducted in such a way that they can serve as preparation for discussions and meetings with politicians, civil servants, NGO representatives as well as independent experts.

Classroom activities will include individual, partner and group work and will be complemented by homework exercises.

Assessment and Final Grade

1. Homework assignments	10%
2. Mid-term	15%
3. Individual presentation	15%
4. Group project	20%
5. Take home final (essay, max. 2000 words)	20%
6. Participation	20%

Course Requirements

Homework Assignments

There are two written homework assignments that students will be required to submit during the course. These assignments are short, 750-500 word reflective responses to topics that have been discussed in class. Instructions and questions for these written assignments will be distributed at least one week prior to their due dates.

Mid-Term

Students will sit a mid-term examination that will assess their understanding of foundational theories of international relations. This exam will be based on 5 short essay questions completed within the allotted time.

Individual Presentation



Students will be required to select a real-life event which connects to one of the international relations themes discussed in the class. They are to prepare a short 10-minute presentation describing the issue, and connect it to the course literature on that theme.

Group Project

Working in small groups, students will be required to write a position paper (approximately 3000 words in length) whereby students must take and defend a position related to one of the controversial topics presented in the course. Students will be asked to use course literature, concepts, and theoretical frameworks covered in the course to defend their position.

Final Exam

Students must sit a final written exam. Students will answer three long essay questions, one of which must address a special topic of interest to the student. Students will be asked to carry out independent research on a subject of their own choice, but which connects to the general theme of the course. Students will be required to formulate a research question to guide their research, and using course literature, structure a response.

Participation

Participation is valued as meaningful contribution in the digital and tangible classroom, utilizing the resources and materials presented to students as part of the course. Meaningful contribution requires students to be prepared in advance of each class session and to have regular attendance. Students must clearly demonstrate they have engaged with the materials as directed, for example, through classroom discussions, online discussion boards, peer-to-peer feedback (after presentations), interaction with guest speakers, and attentiveness on co-curricular and outside-of-classroom activities.

Attendance Policy

Regular class attendance is required throughout the program, and all unexcused absences will result in a lower participation grade for any affected CIEE course. Due to the intensive schedules for Open Campus and Short Term programs, unexcused absences that constitute more than 10% of the total course will result in a written warning.

Students who transfer from one CIEE class to another during the add/drop period will not be considered absent from the first session(s) of their new class, provided they were marked present



for the first session(s) of their original class. Otherwise, the absence(s) from the original class carry over to the new class and count against the grade in that class.

For CIEE classes, excessively tardy (over 15 minutes late) students must be marked absent. Attendance policies also apply to any required co-curricular class excursion or event, as well as to Internship, Service Learning, or required field placement. Students who miss class for personal travel, including unforeseen delays that arise as a result of personal travel, will be marked as absent and unexcused. No make-up or re-sit opportunity will be provided.

Attendance policies also apply to any required class excursion, with the exception that some class excursions cannot accommodate any tardiness, and students risk being marked as absent if they fail to be present at the appointed time.

Unexcused absences will lead to the following penalties:

<i>Percentage of Total Course Hours Missed</i>	<i>Equivalent Number of Open Campus Semester classes</i>	<i>Minimum Penalty</i>
Up to 10%	1 content classes, or up to 2 language classes	Participation graded as per class requirements
10 – 20%	2 content classes, or 3-4 language classes	Participation graded as per class requirements; written warning
More than 20%	3 content classes, or 5 language classes	Automatic course failure , and possible expulsion

Weekly Schedule

NOTE: this schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor to take advantage of current experiential learning opportunities.



Week 1 Orientation

Class 1.1 (re)-Introduction to the International System

In this class students will evaluate their perspective on the international system through a thorough re-introduction. The international system will be reviewed in the context of recent significant international developments, including, but not limited to, changes in the EU, changes in US foreign relations, international positions on the Middle-East, and International positions on the Korean peninsula.

Mandatory Readings: Bova (2016, pp. 3-38), Frieden (2010, pp. 40-79).

Additional Reading: Betts (2012, pp. 1-53), Harston (2010).

Week 2

Class 2.1 International Actors and the Politics of Cooperation

Cooperation is an assumed necessity in international relations. This class examines this assumption through an analysis of contemporary international organisations and the main parties / actors involved.

Mandatory Readings: Martin (2012), Risse (2012), O'Brian (2012).

Additional Readings: Mearsheimer (1995), Keohane (2005, pp. 49-64), Karreth (2014).

Class 2.2 Field trip: UN City, Copenhagen

In this class students will visit the campus of UN City, where multiple UN agencies (11 in total) house over 1500 staff. Students will review the efforts of the UN to reform under the One UN agenda, and address critiques of inefficiencies and lack of coordination and cooperation.

First homework assignment due

Week 3

Class 3.1 Environmental Degradation and International Conflict

This class examines the correlation between environmental challenges and the rise of conflict throughout the world.

Mandatory Readings: Raleigh (2007), Theisen (2011), UNEP (2004).

Additional Readings: Raleigh (2007), Selby (2005), Gleick (2014).



Class 3.2 **Mid-term**

Week 4

Class 4.1 Terrorism as International Conflict

Terrorism is often understood in public discourse as a particular form of conflict used by non-state forces, yet there are multiple, and often conflicting, definitions of the term. Mandatory Readings: Buena de Mesquita (2012), Conrad (2014), Brookings (2008).

Additional Readings: Gal-Or (2015), Global Terrorism Database.

Class 4.2 Individual presentations and review

Second Homework Assignment due

Individual Presentations Due

Week 5

Class 5.1 Human Rights and the Responsibility to Protect

Guest Speaker: Johan Nilsson, Human rights attaché, European External Action Service (EEAS), European Union

Mandatory Readings: Frieden (2010, pp. 408-443), Bellamy (2010), Amnesty International (2015).

Additional Reading: Weiss (2007), Morris (2013).

Class 5.2 Crises in the Middle East

This class evaluates the multiple security and economic challenges in the context of the Middle Eastern crises. Guest speaker: Darcy Thompson, Researcher, Centre for Middle Eastern Studies, Lund University

Group Project Due

Week 6

Class 6.1 The Future of International Conflict and its Management

In this final class before the exam, students review the course thus far, and examine the capacity and accuracy of forecasting international disputes.

Mandatory Readings: Gleditsch (2013), Ward (2013), Mumford (2013).

Additional Readings: Bercovitch (1996), Crisis Watch (2016).



Class 6.2 Exam

Final Exam due

Readings

Bellamy, Alex J. (2010) The Responsibility to Protect - Five Years On. *Ethics and International Affairs* 24(2):143-69.

Bercovitch, Jacob, ed. (1996) *Resolving International Conflicts: The Theory and Practice of Mediation*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.

Betts, Richard (ed.) (2012). *Conflict After the Cold War: Arguments on Causes of War and Peace*. (4th ed.). Routledge

Bova, Russel (2016). *How the World Works: A Brief Survey of International Relations*. (3rd ed.). Pearson.

Buena de Mesquita, Ethan. 2012. "Terrorism and Counterterrorism." In *Handbook of International Relations*. (2nd ed.). Sage.

Conrad, Justin and James Igoe Walsh (2014). International cooperation, spoiling, and transnational terrorism. *International Interactions*, 40(4), 453-476.

Foreign Policy (2016). *10 Conflicts to Watch in 2016*. See <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/01/03/10-conflicts-to-watch-in-2016/>

Frieden, Jeffry, David Lake and Kenneth Schultz (2010). *World Politics: Interests, Interactions and Institutions*. (3rd ed.). W.W. Norton & Company.

Gal-Or, N. (2015). *International Cooperation to Suppress Terrorism (RLE: Terrorism & Insurgency)* (Vol. 10). Routledge.

Gleditsch, Kristian S., and Michael D. Ward. (2013) Forecasting Is Difficult, Especially about the Future: Using Contentious Issues to Forecast Interstate Disputes. *Journal of Peace Research* 50(1):17-31.

Gleick, Peter. (2014). Water, drought, climate change, and conflict in Syria. *Weather, Climate, and Society*, 6(3), 331-340.

Karreth, Johannes, and Jaroslav Tir. (2013) International Institutions and Civil War Prevention. *Journal of Politics* 75(1):96-109.

Keohane, Robert (2005). "The Concept of Cooperation." In *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy*. Princeton University Press.

Martin, Lisa and Beth A. Simmons (2012). "International Organizations and Institutions." In *Handbook of International Relations*. (2nd ed.). Sage.



- Mearsheimer, John (1995). "The False Promise of International Institutions." *International Security* 19(3), 5–49.
- Mitchell, Ronald B. (2012). "International Environmental Politics." In *Handbook of International Relations*. (2nd ed.). Sage.
- Morris, Justin (2013). Libya and Syria: R2P and the spectre of the swinging pendulum. *International Affairs*, 89(5): 1265-1283.
- Mumford, Andrew (2013). Proxy Warfare and the Future of Conflict. *The RUSI Journal*, 158(2), 40-46.
- Nye, Joseph Jr. and David A. Welch (2012). *Understanding Global Conflict and Cooperation*. (9th ed.). Pearson.
- Pape, Robert (2003). The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism. *American Political Science Review*, 97(3), 343–61
- Raleigh, Clionadh, and Henrik Urdal (2007). Climate change, environmental degradation and armed conflict. *Political geography*, 26(6), 674-694.
- Risse, Thomas. (2012). "Transnational Actors and World Politics." In *Handbook of International Relations*. (2nd ed.). Sage.
- Selby, J. (2005). The geopolitics of water in the Middle East: fantasies and realities. *Third World Quarterly*, 26(2), 329-349.
- Theisen, Ole., Helge Holtermann and Halvard Buhaug (2011). Climate wars? Assessing the claim that drought breeds conflict.
- Ward, Michael D., Nils W. Metternich, Cassy L. Dorff, Max Gallop, Florian M. Hollenbach, Anna Schultz, and Simon Weschle (2013). Learning from the Past and Stepping into the Future: Toward a New Generation of Conflict Prediction. *International Studies Review* 15(4):473-490.
- Weiss, Thomas G. (2007) *Humanitarian Intervention*. Cambridge: Polity Press

Reports:

- Brookings Institute (2008). "Combating International Terrorism". See <https://www.brookings.edu/research/combating-international-terrorism/>
- International Crisis Group (2016). "Crisis Watch: 10 Conflicts to Watch in 2017". See <https://www.crisisgroup.org/global/10-conflicts-watch-2017>
- Global Terrorism Database. See: <https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/>
- O'Brian, Emily and Richard Gowan (2012). "What Makes International Agreements Work?" Center on International Cooperation: *Overseas Development Institute*. See: <https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/7839.pdf>
- UNEP (2004). "Conflict and the Environment". See http://postconflict.unep.ch/publications/sudan/04_conflict.pdf



UN Office on Genocide Prevention. "Responsibility to Protect". See:
<http://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/about-responsibility-to-protect.html>