HKU MIPA

Master of International and Public Affairs

BUILD A GLOBAL MINDSET



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HKU **MIPA**

Master of International and Public Affairs

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OVERVIEW

The Master of International and Public Affairs (MIPA) is a taught postgraduate programme in international relations focusing on the Asia Pacific region and beyond. Networked with institutions in Chinese Mainland, East Asia, North America, and Europe, the programme is designed for early- and mid-career professionals and university graduates who want to further develop or prepare for careers in international relations.

The MIPA curriculum helps students develop in-depth understanding of international relations theory and practice needed to meet the challenges of an increasingly complex world.



Austin Strange
Director, MIPA Programme

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

In an increasingly complex and volatile world, urgent questions confront the next generation of leaders and professionals. How will technological and economic shifts continue to shape conflict and cooperation between countries? How can China, the United States, and other major countries co-exist and achieve stability and progress? Can governments, companies, and other stakeholders more effectively coordinate to solve problems without borders such as climate change, public health crises, global poverty, and AI governance?

Addressing these challenges requires diagnosing their fundamental causes. International relations–the study of relationships among states and other important international actors–offers important starting points. At the same time, the world has experienced several major shocks in recent years, and some of these have challenged our long-held basic assumptions about how international politics work. Moving forward, we need policymakers, researchers, and other professionals versed in international relations theory and practice who also can grasp how political, economic, and technological forces are reshaping the world and our understanding of it.

The Master of International and Public Affairs (MIPA) programme helps students and professionals–including policymakers, diplomats and civil servants, economic and political researchers, private sector employees, journalists, educators, NGO workers, and others–develop this requisite knowledge and perspective.

Situated in the University of Hong Kong's Department of Politics and Public Administration, MIPA is Hong Kong's first taught postgraduate programme in international relations.

MIPA enjoys unique advantages that help make it a high-caliber international relations programme. Our programme faculty are trained at many of the top political science and international relations programmes worldwide and offer a diverse range of courses and perspectives. At the same time, we possess strong expertise in the international relations of China and the broader Asia-Pacific due to our strategic location in Hong Kong. HKU is a major and leading research university in Asia and is consistently recognized as one of the most international universities in the world. Our classrooms reflect this diversity and enable our teachers and students to analyze international problems using different lenses and approaches.

These features position MIPA to play an important role in training the next generation of international leaders and thinkers in Hong Kong, Greater China, the Asia Pacific, and around the world.

We appreciate your interest in the MIPA programme, and look forward to welcoming you to campus soon.

Austin Strange
Director, MIPA Programme

WHY MIPA



I. Strategic location:

As a major international city and global economic hub, Hong Kong has long served as a major meeting point between East and West, and provides an ideal location for the study of international relations. A regional communications and business centre, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region is home to a large number of leading international organizations, companies, media agencies, non-governmental organizations, and other important institutions. Over 110 countries have opened diplomatic missions in Hong Kong, which is strategically located as a unique gateway between China and the rest of the world.

II. Pioneer programme:



Established in 2000, MIPA is Hong Kong's first taught postgraduate programme in International Relations. Our faculty, trained at top universities worldwide, offer international-caliber expertise in international relations theory and practice across a wide range of topics. This allows students to deepen their knowledge of general international relations theory while also specializing in the Asia Pacific region. Our programme faculty and home department, the Department of Politics and Public Administration (PPA), are well connected with academics, professionals, and policy communities locally and internationally, and regularly host world-class international scholars and experts.

III. Flexible structure:

The flexible structure of the programme allows candidates to choose courses from international relations and related areas including law, media studies and public policy. Courses are held mostly during weekday evenings as well as Saturdays over a maximum of a 2-year period. In addition to coursework, programme candidates have the opportunity to pursue an original research project through our capstone programme. MIPA candidates also have the option to take courses offered by partner institutions such as Peking University, George Washington University, Johns Hopkins University, Seoul National University and Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva (GIDSG).

CURRICULUM

To receive the degree of Master of International and Public Affairs, candidates must complete 8 courses or equivalent, plus a capstone project successfully within 1 year for full-time study, or within 2 years for part-time study. In selecting courses, candidates must meet the following requirements:

1. 2 compulsory courses

2. 1 capstone project

3. No fewer than 24 credits of elective courses

4. No more than 12 credits of FLEX courses

As an example, a student could satisfy the required coursework by completing the 2 compulsory courses, 1 capstone project; 24 credits of elective courses, plus the equivalent of 12 credits of courses from the following options:

- **12 credits of elective or FLEX courses; or**
- **Overseas study at Peking University, Johns Hopkins University, George Washington University and Seoul National University;**
- **Public policy courses offered by Department of Politics and Public Administration, HKU;**
- **Law courses offered by Faculty of Law, HKU;**
- **Media studies course offered by School of Future Media, HKU**

Students also have the opportunity to participate in the graduate exchange programme with partner institutions overseas such as George Washington University, Seoul National University and Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva.



FACULTY



Professor Haohan CHEN
Assistant Professor
(B.Soc.Sc., HKU; M.S., Ph.D., Duke)

Expertise:
Computational social science, political communication, inequality, redistribution

Dr. Wilfred CHOW
Honorary Assistant Professor
(B.A., UC Berkeley; Ph.D., UC Davis)

Expertise:
International trade and dictatorships, authoritarian politics and interstate conflict, coup risk and food security, democratization and international institutions, and alliance politics

Dr. Daniel Barker FLORES
Senior Teaching Associate
(BA., UCL; MSc., Oxford; DPhil., Oxford)

Expertise:
Organized crime, state building, subnational politics, governance, security, violent conflict, qualitative research methods



Professor Enze HAN
Associate Professor
(B.A., BFSU; M.A., UBC; Ph.D., George Washington)

Expertise:
International relations, China's relations with Southeast Asia, ethnic politics in China, Southeast Asian politics

Dr. Sarea LEE
Lecturer
(B.A., Handong Global University, MA, Ewha Womans University & University of Iowa, Ph.D., University of Iowa)

Expertise:
Military alliance, international institutions, international conflicts, nuclear non-proliferation deterrence, institutionalization, quantitative methodology

Professor Dov H. LEVIN
Associate Professor
(B.A. & M.A., UHaifa; Ph.D., UCLA)

Expertise:
Partisan electoral interventions, strategic public diplomacy, differences between western and non-western publics, foreign interventions, strategic interaction



Dr. Daniel MARWECKI
Lecturer
(M.A., University of Bremen; Ph.D., SOAS University of London)

Expertise:
Crisis of the global order, politics of the global south, the Middle East in international relations

Dr. Hung PHAM
Senior Teaching Associate
(BA., Monash; Ph.D. Monash)

Expertise:
Political science, comparative political economy, international organizations, ASEAN

Professor Kai QUEK
Associate Professor
(B.A., Cornell; Ph.D., MIT)

Expertise:
Causes and prevention of war, international politics of East Asia, global-level strategic interactions, local-level policy pathologies, experimental political science



Dr. Cartland ZHOU
Senior Research and Teaching Associate
(M.S., & Ph.D., UCLA)

Expertise:
International security, international political economy, political methodology

Dr. Martin SEBENA
Honorary Lecturer
(MA, Charles University in Prague; M.Fin., Curtin; Ph.D., HKU)

Expertise:
Comparative politics, international relations, European studies, EU – China relations

Professor Uwe STEINHOFF
Professor
(M.A., Johann-Wolfgang-GoetheU; Ph.D., Würzburg)

Expertise:
Contemporary western political philosophy and applied ethics, in particular: the ethics of violence (self-defense, war, terrorism, torture, assassination, punishment, etc.), global justice, political obligation, collective responsibility, Egalitarianism vs. anti-egalitarianism



Professor Austin STRANGE
Associate Professor
Director, MIPA Programme
(B.A., William & Mary, MA, ZJU, Ph.D., Harvard)

Expertise:
Chinese foreign policy, international political economy, international development, trade, diplomacy

Professor Robert THOMSON
Professor
Head, Department of Politics and Public Administration
(B.A., Strathclyde, Ph.D., Groningen)

Expertise:
Western democracies, democratic representation, international governance, European Union

Professor Nicole WU
Assistant Professor
(B.S.Sc., CUHK; M.A. & Ph.D., Michigan)

Expertise:
International political economy, automation, globalization, United States, China



ADMISSIONS

To be eligible for admission to the programme, a candidate shall:

(a) hold a Bachelor's degree or higher;

(b) satisfy the English language requirements of HKU; and

(c) if deemed necessary, satisfy examiners in an interview and/or qualifying examination, if shortlisted.

Applicants with some academic training and/or relevant professional experience related to international relations, political science, public administration, business, law, or journalism/communication are preferred.

On-line application

https://shorturl.at/2j3jD

Contact Us

https://ppa.hku.hk/mipa/

Tel: (852) 3917-0904
Fax: (852) 2858-3550
Email: mipa@hku.hk

Fee Schedule

For regular students 2027-2028 (in HK$) (subject to University's approval)

Application Fee: $780 (non-refundable)
Caution Money: $350
Composition: $298,000.
The tuition fee is subject to annual review. For the most up-to-date information, please refer to the official website:
https://ppa.hku.hk/mipa

ALUMNI TESTIMONIALS

> The MIPA Programme at the University of Hong Kong has offered me more than I ever imagined. It welcomes students from diverse backgrounds and provides rich, diverse courses in international relations and other disciplines that are highly accessible and easy to engage with.
>
> Beyond that, the programme's pluralistic and inclusive atmosphere has enabled me to connect with classmates of different ages and professions from around the world, which has profoundly inspired my career choices.

Jingdong Cao /International Development /Trade /Chinese mainland

> I feel it had a big impact on my personal development. It is probably a large part of why I am now active in local politics (the timing was important too). It made me interrogate my own beliefs and understandings of politics and philosophy, something that I hadn't stopped to do properly before.

Ritchie Latham /Finance /Politics /UK

> Built upon Hong Kong's 'One Country, Two Systems' framework, the MIPA programme at HKU enhanced my ability to navigate emerging geopolitical issues, deepened my understanding of cross-border negotiations, and enabled me to build meaningful connections with public sector professionals.

Vivian Leung /Real Estate Finance /Hong Kong, China

> The course was intellectually stimulating and also fun - and I learnt a lot. The MIPA offers great academic flexibility, so you can tailor it to your interests.
>
> I work in an investment bank and the insights I gained from the course have been invaluable, in this time of heightened geopolitical tensions and trade wars. The issues we studied and discussed on the MIPA are highly relevant to the business world, particularly businesses with a global or regional footprint, as well as being of purely academic interest.
>
> I'd strongly recommend the MIPA to anyone wanting to get a more sophisticated take on the major geopolitical issues of the day, with a focus on the Asian region and, of course, China.

Patrick Huggard /Finance /UK

> The programme's flexibility allowed me to take courses beyond the core curriculum—including in law—and attend a summer programme at George Washington University, which broadened my global perspective and helped me form lasting connections with peers worldwide. The courses themselves continue to be highly relevant to what I do today at the United Nations. I still think back to the papers I wrote—on topics like the Millennium and Sustainable Development Goals, global political economy, energy, and sovereign risk—which are all issues I now work on directly.
>
> Being a part-time student while working full-time also gave me the chance to learn alongside other professionals, which made the experience even richer. Looking back, MIPA was the bridge that connected my academic foundation with my career as an international civil servant. It shaped how I see the world—and my place in it.

Geneva Damayanti /International Development /Indonesia

> MIPA programme allowed me to view international politics and government affairs from a different perspective. As a member of the legislative branch in Mexico is valueable to learn about China and overall Asian countries policies.

Jesús Salazar /Politics /Mexico

> I would like to say I am beyond grateful for everything I have learnt as part of the MIPA programme. In terms of career development it was all anyone wanted to talk about in my interviews and the prestige of HKU certainly helped me secure the position in which I am currently. Furthermore I am sure that in future this degree will open doors for me in a wide range of international contexts moving forward.

Alastair Fleming /FMCG /UK

> The MIPA programme at HKU was a truly valuable experience that broadened my perspective and expanded my professional network in ways I wouldn't have been able to achieve otherwise. I had the opportunity to work closely with peers from diverse cultural and professional backgrounds, across both public and private sectors. Though my time in the MIPA programme at HKU was just the beginning of my journey in Hong Kong, it laid a foundation that continues to influence my path today.

Christopher Holmes /Global Security /USA

ALUMNI TESTIMONIALS

One of the most significant impacts the programme has had on my career is the strong network I have built with my classmates, many of whom are also key stakeholders in my professional field. The high relevance of my peers to the programme created an environment where everyone was deeply passionate about learning, sharing knowledge, and gaining insights from both classmates and teachers.

Additionally, the diverse backgrounds of the faculty were incredibly valuable to me. Gaining insights from teachers with varied perspectives allowed me to approach challenges and opportunities in more innovative and multifaceted ways.

Rina Kwan /Communications /Hong Kong, China

I deeply appreciate all the faculty members and instructors in the MIPA programme. Every one of them was incredibly supportive, highly professional, and inspiring. Their dedication to teaching and their diverse expertise made the entire learning experience exceptionally rewarding.

Ming Tsun CHAU /Government Agency /Hong Kong



CAREER OUTCOMES

Our alumni have a global presence, ranging from Europe—such as the UK, Switzerland, Germany, the Netherlands, France, Norway and Spain—to the Americas, including the United States, Canada, and Mexico, as well as the Asia-Pacific region, encompassing Hong Kong, Chinese Mainland, Australia, Japan, Indonesia, India, Singapore, and more. Their careers span a wide array of professions, covering the following sectors. Below are a few recent, non-exhaustive examples:

Government agencies:

- Local government (Elected Councillor, UK)
- Economy and Tourism Commission, Mexico
- Government of Japan
- The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region: Immigration Department; Correctional Services Department; Harbour Office, Development Bureau; The Hong Kong Disciplined Services; Leisure and Cultural Services Department, Independent Commission Against Corruption,

International organizations:
United Nations; The World Food Programme; The European Union Office to Hong Kong and Macao

International non-governmental organizations:
Washington Maritime Blue; World Vision Hong Kong

Nonprofit organizations:
The Hong Kong Jockey Club

Geopolitical consulting:
The Asia Group, APCO Worldwide, Global Institute for Tomorrow

Private sector:
Bank of America, The Big 4 - The four largest accounting firms: Deloitte, PwC (PricewaterhouseCoopers), KPMG, and EY (Ernst & Young); Asia Business Council; Baxter, JLL (Jones Lang LaSalle); BBVA (Banco Bilbao Vizcaya Argentaria); Kraft Heinz; Lee Kum Kee; Bilby; MSCI Real Assets; HK Express; PR agency; Marketing agency

Law:
Government Counsel, HKSAR; Lawyer of the Department of Justice, HKSAR; Various law firms

Education:
Princeton University; The University of Toronto; Clark University; Kyoto University; The Chinese University of Hong Kong; Jinan University of Guangzhou, China; Tianjin Foreign Studies University, China; University of Virginia; Kitasato University

Media:
The New York Times; Radio France à l'international, South China Morning Post; Bloomberg Businessweek/Chinese edition

Chinese state-owned enterprises:
China Tourism Group

COMPULSORY COURSES

Theories of international relations (POLI6004)	This survey course is designed for graduate students and offers a rigorous introduction to the main debates and theoretical perspectives of international relations: what do we know about international conflict and international cooperation? Is the state the most significant actor in international affairs today? Can theory inform us about the actual day-to-day of international politics? Students will familiarize themselves with a variety of theoretical perspectives; however, the course will not manage to cover in depth and breadth each theoretical approach to International Relations theory. It is most likely that you will leave the course with more questions than answers.
International political economy (POLI6006)	This course studies the international political economy. How do economic and political forces interact in the international arena? How do these interactions shape the outcomes experienced globally, nationally, and by individual citizens? We address these questions in this course. We begin by sharpening our thinking technologies: grasping the key analytical paradigms used in IPE, and developing the methodological awareness that we need in order to consume IPE research. Equipped with the tools to understand IPE, we next turn to its substance. Substantive topics include international trade, global capital flows, financial crises, multinational production, climate change, international movements of people, and the performance of different national economies in the global economic system. We conclude by reflecting on ethical dilemmas, the future of the global political economy, and how that future affects us individually and collectively.

CAPSTONE PROJECT

Capstone project (POLI6031)	The capstone project enables students to integrate what they have learned from the MIPA Programme and demonstrate their ability to analyze critical issues in international relations and public affairs. Students will work in small groups and complete a research project. A topic is selected in consultation with relevant teaching staff in September and the title of the capstone project is submitted for approval by December 1 of the final academic year of study. The project is then researched and written and submitted for examination by May 31 of the final academic year of study.

ELECTIVE COURSES

International organizations (POLI6005)	This course provides a general survey of the development of international organizations. It begins with the philosophical and theoretical foundations of international organizations. This toolbox is then used to explain the role of the main international institutions in specific policy domains, including international security, trade, finance, human rights and environment. For each of those domains, the course analyses the construction of the global policy problems, the international organizations established at addressing them, the way in which policies are negotiated and decided within those institutions, and their ability to solve the problems that motivated their creation. Special emphasis is given to exploring the roles and functions of the United Nations, and its affiliated organizations. Attention will also be given to regional organizations such as North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and European Union (EU). Students will complete the course with a deeper understanding of the both similarities and differences between international organizations and their effective contribution to the governance of global politics.
International relations in the Asia-Pacific (POLI6007)	This course is a survey of international relations in the Asia Pacific region. Instead of providing a comprehensive examination of the history, culture, and national policies of countries in the region, it mainly addresses four issues here: What are major trends in regional IR? What is the source of conflict in the region? What are the common interests that unite peoples and states of the Asian Pacific? How does the region organise itself? It explains dynamics and patterns of regional international relations in a broad geopolitical and geoeconomic context. Topics in discussion include major powers' role in the region, the Korean Peninsula, the Taiwan Strait, ASEAN, Southeast Asia and regional institution-building.
Understanding global problems: theory and practice (POLI6008)	This course aims to critically explore some of the major challenges confronting an international community that is faced with unprecedented levels of global interdependency and escalating power asymmetry. The class will provide a detailed analysis of the issues at stake, providing students with the intellectual grounding necessary to critically evaluate many of our most pressing global problems and their proposed solutions. While the list of controversies changes each semester, some past questions have included: Are genetically modified foods crucial to the fight against hunger? Is U.S. hegemony a force for global (in)stability? Is globalization inherently "anti-religious"? Was NATO intervention in Kosovo justified? In exploring these and other controversies, the course will combine perspectives from the academic literature with those of practitioners, including senior diplomats, representatives from non-governmental organizations, government officials, and corporate executives.
Chinese foreign policy (POLI6010)	This course examines China's evolving role in international politics and investigates basic questions about China's foreign relations: Is China's history relevant for its contemporary foreign policies? Can the United States and China successfully accommodate each other, or will China's growing role in world politics result in tension and conflict? Do China's military, political, and economic activities abroad help or hurt the interests of other states and societies? This course addresses these and other puzzles through a survey of China's historical and contemporary foreign relations. The first third of the course focuses on historical Chinese foreign relations. The remaining two thirds turn to contemporary issues in the study of Chinese foreign policy.
War and armed conflict: philosophical issues (POLI6029)	This course provides a thorough introduction into the moral issues of war and armed conflict, with a focus on current debates in just war theory, and in particular on such controversial issues as "the moral (in)equality of soldiers", the principle of discrimination, terrorism, torture, guerrilla warfare and humanitarian intervention.
International Law (POLI6032)	This course is taught under the assumption that most of the students are not majoring in public international law. It begins with an introduction to the study of international law, its sources, subjects, and its relations with domestic laws. It is then followed by a number of topics including, state sovereignty over territory and jurisdiction, immunities and treaties, UNCLOS, use of force and peaceful settlements of disputes, human rights and humanitarian laws, economic and environmental laws, etc. The course is mainly composed of two parts: lectures and class discussions. As an integrated part, the discussion session demands everyone's active participation. A list of international legal issues and/or cases shall be distributed in advance and "mock chambers" of ICJ or other judicial bodies shall be formed by the students from time to time to render decisions or give advisory opinions on the legal questions concerned.
Cross-Taiwan Strait relations (POLI6033)	This course will explore the historical background and contemporary dynamics of the relationship across the Taiwan Strait, and introduces relevant theoretical concepts and analytical tools in studying cross-Taiwan Strait issues. The Taiwan problem has been a defining issue for China and its rise towards a great power in world affairs. The convergence and divergence between Taiwan and the mainland have troubled the Chinese nation for centuries. The course will examine the historical origin of the Taiwan problem and how cross-Strait relations have evolved since the late 19th century. In studying the evolving Taiwan problem, particular attention will be given on the role of the United States in shaping cross-Strait relations. In studying contemporary dynamics, the course will focus on the issues of economic integration, political dialogues, mutual confidence building, and people-to-people exchanges in the development of cross-Strait relations.
War and strategy (POLI6035)	Chinese strategist Sun Zi declared: "War is a matter of vital importance to the state; the province of life or death; the road to survival or ruin. It is mandatory that it should be thoroughly studied." Complying with Sun's exhortation this course provides a composite introduction to the theory and practice of modern warfare based upon the precepts of Strategic Studies. It considers the complex relationship between politics and strategy, and the evolution of strategic thought, through focusing on the application of land/air/naval/space/cyber power. It also exposes questions of nuclear deterrence, revolutionary technologies, irregular warfare and terrorism. Through this course students will gain both conceptual and practical knowledge of warfare, and hone their critical and analytical faculties through the examination of complex strategic problems.
Special topics in international relations (I) (POLI6036)	This course is designed to explore a selected area or a set of selected issues in international relations studies. The course applies different theoretical approaches to enhance students' understanding of the changing international order and environment, the future prospects for international conflict and cooperation, international security, and current problems of world politics.
Special topics in international relations (II) (POLI6037)	This course is designed to explore a selected area or a set of selected issues in international relations studies. The course applies different theoretical approaches to enhance students' understanding of the changing international order and environment, the future prospects for international conflict and cooperation, international security, and current problems of world politics.
Special topics in international political economy (I) (POLI6038)	This course applies different theoretical approaches to important historical and contemporary empirical issues in the study of international political economy. Different from the general survey course POLI6006 International Political Economy, this course examines a set of special topics in international political economy. It examines more recent theoretical developments and applies comparative approaches to real world economic issues. Previous background in the study of international relations and international political economy is helpful but is not a requirement.

Special topics in international political economy (II) (POLI6039)	This course applies different theoretical approaches to important historical and contemporary empirical issues in the study of international political economy. Different from the general survey course POLI6006 International Political Economy, this course examines a set of special topics in international political economy. It examines more recent theoretical developments and applies comparative approaches to real world economic issues. Previous background in the study of international relations and international political economy is helpful but is not a requirement.
Special topics in Asia Pacific international relations (I) (POLI6040)	This course examines a set of selected topics in the study of Asia Pacific international relations. Different from POLI6007 International relations in the Asia-Pacific, this course focuses on special topics in the study of Asia-Pacific international relations, such as regional stability and cooperation, regional institutions and multilateralism, traditional and non-traditional security issues, regional conflict management and resolution, major powers' foreign policy towards the region, and international relations in Northeast Asia or Southeast Asia.
Special topics in Asia Pacific international relations (II) (POLI6041)	This course examines a set of selected topics in the study of Asia Pacific international relations. Different from POLI6007 International relations in the Asia-Pacific, this course focuses on special topics in the study of Asia-Pacific international relations, such as regional stability and cooperation, regional institutions and multilateralism, traditional and non-traditional security issues, regional conflict management and resolution, major powers' foreign policy towards the region, and international relations in Northeast Asia or Southeast Asia.
Special topics in global and regional governance (I) (POLI6042)	This course examines current scholarly debates relating to the interdisciplinary study of global and regional governance in the context of globalization. The current wave of globalization has created opportunities and challenges for governance at both global and regional levels. This course introduces students to the study of a set of selected issues in global and/or regional governance. It examines competing perspectives on globalization, global governance, regionalization, and regional governance. It explores the sources and consequences of globalization and regionalization as well as the key actors, institutions, regimes, and norms of global and regional governance.
Special topics in global and regional governance (II) (POLI6043)	This course examines current scholarly debates relating to the interdisciplinary study of global and regional governance in the context of globalization. The current wave of globalization has created opportunities and challenges for governance at both global and regional levels. This course introduces students to the study of a set of selected issues in global and/or regional governance. It examines competing perspectives on globalization, global governance, regionalization, and regional governance. It explores the sources and consequences of globalization and regionalization as well as the key actors, institutions, regimes, and norms of global and regional governance.
World energy issues: international political economy and security (POLI6044)	This course examines the interaction of global energy concerns with economic and geopolitical issues, with a focus on petroleum. Energy has been central to the formulation of national strategies, regional security dynamics, great power politics, and the macroeconomic stability. The class begins by providing an overview about oil in international security and political economy, and then examines the role of oil in geopolitics and economy in regions such as the Persian Gulf, Central Asia, and East Asia in more detail. The classes will involve in-depth discussions about many of current international issues including Russian relations with Ukraine, wars and conflicts in the Persian Gulf, the recent Iran nuclear deal, as well as China's growth and its diplomacy where the political economy of oil has been a major factor. The course also looks at other current energy issues such as the shale oil boom, the future of nuclear power, and the impact of energy on the environment.
The politics of global inequality (POLI6045)	This class explores several questions surrounding the importance of income inequality. Why have some countries grown rich while others have not? Why are some societies more equal than others? Is wealth inequality the only type of inequality? Does inequality even matter? This class examines these questions by studying the political economy of growth and inequality. The main goal of this course is to understand both the causes and the consequences of income inequality. To this end, this course will draw from a variety of theoretical perspectives including economics, political science, psychology, and sociology to examine the sources of inequality and what can be done about it.
Political and sovereign risk assessment (POLI6046)	This course will assess political and sovereign risk models from an academic, governmental, and business perspective. The course will introduce both quantitative and qualitative models of political and sovereign risk analysis within the framework of theories of international political economy (IPE). The course will apply these models to the sovereign debt crisis of the 1980s, the Asian Financial Crisis of 1997, the Global Financial Crisis of 2008, and current issues within the global economic order. Students will learn how to analyze and present contemporary international risk assessments that integrate theoretical models, historical experience, financial market constraints, economic realities, and political exigencies.

Law, politics and the international system (POLI6047)	This course examines the complex interaction between law, politics and power in international relations. It asks whether international law can tame power politics and, if so, how? The course comprises two broad strands. Firstly, students will be introduced to the concept of international law. What is it? Where does it come from? And, critically, how is it enforced? We will then build on those foundations by analysing key issues in contemporary international relations, including human rights, the use of force, international criminal justice, and state secession. Taking specific cases, such as the NATO intervention in Libya, Russia's annexation of Crimea, and the conflict against ISIS in Syria, we will examine the challenges of building an international order that is both just and stable. Upon completion of the course, students will have a deep understanding of both the possibilities and limits of international law as a tool for resolving conflict and mediating power in international relations.
International Security: History and Global Perspectives (POLI6048)	This course surveys the field of international security. It starts by examining international relations theory to provide students with frameworks through which they can analyze international security issues objectively and critically. Then it will overview origins of modern wars among countries and discuss tools that the international community and individual states can use to prevent and end conflicts. The course will also examine current topics in international security, such as the rise of China and its impact on international security, maritime security, nuclear proliferation, threats from cyber warfare and artificial intelligence, and humanitarian intervention.
Epistemics of international relations (POLI6049)	How do we know what we know in international relations (IR)? What are the epistemic underpinnings of IR? What assumptions underlie our knowledge about IR, how factual are our "facts", and how valid are our theories and evidence? This seminar explores these questions from the historical, institutional, sociological, constructivist, methodological and causal-inferential perspectives. The goal is to develop a deeper understanding of where our IR knowledge comes from and the fallibilities of what we think we know. The seminar is designed for students with strong academic interest in specialized and in-depth study. Students are expected to read intensively and contribute fruitfully to seminar discussions.
Governance and Policy in International Organizations (POLI7009)	Governance is about managing complex policymaking processes. It refers to the formal and informal interactions between stakeholders that have different perspectives on how to address the most pressing problems we face. The range of stakeholders with an interest in today's significant policy problems is vast. For instance, mitigating and adapting to climate change requires action by governmental and non-governmental stakeholders at the local, national, regional and global levels. Tackling policy problems that have international dimensions requires the coordination of multiple government agencies within states, different levels of government, non-state actors, which include corporations, civil society organizations and think tanks, as well as international organizations and agencies. This complexity is magnified in today's interconnected world, as policymaking in one region of the world can have significant effects elsewhere. This course covers the concepts, theories and methods required to understand governance and policymaking processes that have significant international dimensions. The course reviews the structure and functioning of serval international organizations (including the United Nations, the European Union and ASEAN), as well as the role of states (including a range of established and emerging countries) and non-state actors (including corporations, civil society groups, and think tanks). The course will apply this knowledge to recent case studies of governance and policymaking from the fields of international security, trade and finance, environment and climate change, health, migration and digital technologies.
Global information wars (POLI7011)	With new information technologies, states and citizens around the world fight escalated information wars against one another: Governments restrict or contaminate domestic information flow with censorship and propaganda; political and business elites operate domestic or international information campaigns to manipulate public opinions; citizens organize collective actions with new information technologies. In these information wars, who are the players? What are their interests? And what are their strategies? By reading classic and frontier research on political behavior and communication from a comparative perspective, this course introduces students to social scientific findings on how states, elites, and citizens shape the global information environment with new technologies. The first part of the course introduces the behavioral foundations of global information warfare. The second part examines information warfare in domestic politics of both democratic and authoritarian countries. The third part examines information wars in international political economy, with a focus on international online influence operations of governments, tech giants, and the civil society.
Comparative politics of modern Southeast Asia (POLI7012)	This course covers comparative politics of modern Southeast Asia, with a focus on political transformations in the region since the Cold War. The course provides a historically grounded approach to understand the formation of Southeast Asian states as well as the contemporary dynamics of political changes in the region. It starts by reviewing the impact of colonialism and historical trajectories in the region. We then delve deep into specific Southeast Asian countries, overviewing key political events and important leaders, tracing logics of political contestation, and providing a foundation to understand the structures of governments. After the specific country studies, we will focus on a few specific issues and challenges pertaining to the region, such as economic development, political regimes and governance, and regionalization.

International development (POLI7013)	Developing countries, sometimes collectively referred to as the "Global South," have been consistently marginalized yet strategically important in international relations throughout modern history. This course examines the intersection of development and international politics in three parts: the major development bottlenecks faced by developing countries; the role of powerful states and international institutions in shaping the field of global development; and several frontiers in international development including the rise of "emerging donors," Chinese development finance and China-U.S. coexistence in the Global South, global public health, and climate change. The course will familiarize students with a wide range of political science and other social science research on international development. It will also introduce students to a diverse set of conceptual and methodological research approaches in political science and international relations.
International relations and the Middle East (POLI7014)	The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) plays a key role in international relations. This course explores the reasons behind and the consequences of this fact. Topics covered include the role of oil, the formation of ideologies such as Arab nationalism and Islamic fundamentalism, the Arab-Israeli conflict, the war on terror, the Arab uprisings, and more. By employing the conceptual toolbox of International Relations (IR), we will also assess whether dominant IR perspectives facilitate or hinder a comprehensive understanding of MENA's position within the international order. A central challenge in studying MENA, as with other regions of the Global South, is the tension between autonomy and external influence. To what extent have the peoples of MENA been able to shape their own histories? What types of states, economies, and ideologies have emerged from the region's complex and often violent contemporary history? The course makes use of a combination of textbook readings, academic papers, and other learning materials, such as videos and podcasts. Studying and engaging with the provided learning content will be essential for a successful outcome.
Introduction to research methods in international relations (POLI7015)	This course introduces the empirical methods commonly used in international relations to answer political questions and explains why these methods matter. We begin by exploring how data and information are used in the social sciences broadly, and in international relations specifically. We then examine strategies for overcoming obstacles to reliable knowledge about the political world—such as experimentation, quantitative analysis (including statistics), and qualitative case studies. This course will prepare you to engage more deeply with these methods in future coursework.
Causal inference in international affairs (POLI7016)	Effective implementation of projects and programmes is central to international and public policy. The success of infrastructure, education, agriculture, and other initiatives—whether by governments or international organizations—depends on understanding if similar interventions worked elsewhere and how to improve effectiveness in new contexts. This course trains students to design and conduct rigorous programme and policy evaluations using statistical analysis and causal inference methods. It focuses on retrospective evaluations, enabling students to assess real-world impacts. Through practical questions—e.g., did rural roads increase agricultural output? Did labour standards improve worker rights?—students apply rigorous data analysis, design evaluation plans, conduct regression analysis, and write policy research proposals. Core methods include randomized controlled trials (RCTs), difference-in-differences (DiD), regression discontinuity (RDD), instrumental variables (IV), and matching. The course has two parts: the first covers foundational statistical concepts; the second focuses on causal inference and applications from academic case studies. Assessment includes participation, tests, and graded assignments. A key assignment requires students, in pairs, to develop an impact evaluation plan for a real-world policy or development project. These tasks foster critical thinking, methodological application, and the ability to assess the policy relevance of programme outcomes.
Politics and security on the Korean Peninsula (POLI7017)	This course explores the complex political and security dynamics of the Korean Peninsula. As the world's only divided nation still technically at war—governed by an armistice rather than a peace treaty—Korea represents both a persistent challenge and a potential opportunity for the international community. On one hand, North Korea's nuclear weapons programme and repeated threats of military action against South Korea and the United States remain urgent global security concerns. On the other hand, many scholars argue that meaningful cooperation between the two Koreas could yield significant economic and diplomatic benefits.
Armed nonstate governance (POLI7018)	Across the world, the lives of millions of people are shaped in profound ways by armed nonstate actors: from rebel groups, to mafias, to warlords, and street gangs. This course will analyze the systems of governance that these groups produce, examining how and why violent nonstate actors acquire and exercise power over territory, markets, institutions, and civilian populations. Students will learn to appreciate the major challenges that armed nonstate actors pose to States and State order. However, students will also come to understand how and why State and armed nonstate actors collaborate towards shared goals, producing perverse political synergies with wide-reaching consequences. Examining cases from contexts as diverse as Europe, Asia, Latin America and Africa, students will become familiar with the burgeoning inter-disciplinary research on armed nonstate governance, a subject with important implications for political science and international relations scholarship.

Half-course: Workshop on survey and survey-experimental research (POLI7019)	This half-course introduces students to the logic and practice of survey and survey-experimental research in international relations. Specifically, it covers the foundations and design of social scientific surveys and survey experiments, and their practical applications. The purpose of the workshop is pragmatic—it seeks to equip students with the necessary knowledge and skills to design a survey or survey-experimental project in a collaborative workshop setting. The course will also examine the issues and challenges that a student might face in conducting survey and experimental research, and the possible ways to address these challenges.
Half-course: Political risk analysis and forecasting (POLI7020)	This course will introduce students to the analysis of political risk. It will explore the various aspects of political risk that affect the interests of governments, businesses, and international organizations, and highlight how the nature of risk varies across countries and regions and time periods. Students will learn different methods for measuring political risk, apply these techniques to real-world cases, and use different techniques to present their findings, including scenario planning, base cases, risk maps, and probability sets. The primary goal of the course is to equip students with in-depth knowledge and practical experience in assessing political risk and presenting this information both in written form and through oral presentation.
Half-course: Comparative politics in western countries (POLI7021)	This course examines democratic governance in established Western democracies, focusing mainly on Western Europe and North America. The course investigates how democratic institutions and processes are being reshaped by economic globalization, technological transformation, and societal change. The theory of promissory representation is central to course. Promissory representation is distilled in the idea that political parties make commitments to voters during elections and are held accountable for fulfilling those promises in government. We examine how economic integration into global markets constrains governing parties' ability to deliver on campaign promises, creating tensions between democratic accountability and the realities of governing in an interconnected world. Students will explore critical contemporary challenges facing Western democracies that arise partly from these tensions, including the rise of populist movements, and changing party competition dynamics. The course analyzes how political parties across the ideological spectrum have adapted their electoral strategies in response to globalization constraints, sometimes resorting to populist rhetoric or deliberately vague policy commitments to maintain electoral viability. The course also addresses emerging policy challenges including the regulation of Artificial Intelligence, climate change responses, and migration management. This approach provides students with sophisticated tools for understanding where Western democracies stand today and where they may be headed as they grapple with tensions between democratic governance and global economic integration.
Half-course: Workshop on comparative case studies (POLI7022)	This half-course introduces students how to conduct case studies in their research design, and will cover conceptions of causality and strategies of case selection. Students will learn how to apply comparative case study methods for both theory building and theory testing. It will include topics such as the difference between qualitative and quantitative designs, the specificities and challenges of comparative case studies, methods of case selection, and process tracing, etc.
Nuclear politics (POLI7023)	This course offers a comprehensive introduction to the politics and theories related to the proliferation of nuclear weapons, as well as the role of nuclear energy and technology. Core topics of this course include the basics of nuclear weapons, nuclear strategies, and deterrence theory. Students will examine these issues within historical and theoretical frameworks, drawing on both conceptual and empirical perspectives to better understand the evolution of nuclear politics and strategy. This course also examines the development of nuclear dynamics across both the Cold War and post–Cold War eras, with particular emphasis on the strategic rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union. Despite the Cold War's conclusion, nuclear security continues to pose urgent challenges. Numerous contemporary international crises remain closely tied to nuclear-related concerns, including North Korea's nuclear crisis in the early 1990s, the 1998 nuclear tests conducted by India and Pakistan, and the implications of nuclear weapons in the ongoing Russia–Ukraine conflict. Throughout the semester, students will engage with key academic literature in political science and history, focusing on nuclear politics and international security. Students will engage in various academic activities, including reading, critiquing, presenting, and debating scholarship from leading journals.
International organization practicum (POLI7024)	International institutions and organizations are important actors in the practice of international relations. Major debate persists over whether and the extent to which these organizations shape international politics by changing the incentives of state and non-state actors and performing unique functions in world politics, or whether these agencies simply reflect the interests of their member states. This course complements academic coursework on the study of international institutions and organizations by embedding students within actual organizations as interns, volunteers, or team members. It provides real-world, hands-on experience and insight into how international organizations actually work in practice.

Half-course: The political economy of technology (POLI7025)	This half-course explores the interplay between technology and politics. In an era of rapid technological advances (e.g., artificial intelligence, automation), technological change is poised to be a key catalyst for societal disruption and an avenue for intensifying geopolitical competition. This course examines these contemporary challenges by reviewing historical, theoretical, and empirical research in international and comparative political economy. Key topics include the impact of automation on labor markets and politics, the geopolitics of technology, the (big) tech economy, and industrial policies and the green transition. The course aims to enable students to critically analyze the drivers and consequences of technological change.
Half-course: Qualitative methods in social science research (POLI7026)	This short course is designed to develop students' abilities to undertake qualitative research, with a focus on developing causal explanations with qualitative methods. The course will introduce students to the method of process tracing, and will teach students how techniques including interviewing, ethnographic approaches, and archival research, can be employed to collect original qualitative data for analysis. The course will adopt a workshop format, providing students with the opportunity to get hands-on practical experience using these techniques. Please Note: while this course complements the topics covered in POLI7022, it can be taken independently.
ASEAN and regional cooperation in Southeast Asia (POLI7027)	This course examines the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) as a regional organisation, focusing on its institutional design, decision-making processes, and substantive areas of cooperation. The course is structured in two parts. The first part introduces students to the concepts and theories needed to analyse regional organisations, including theories of regionalism, the norms and institutional features often grouped under the "ASEAN Way," the organisation's institutional architecture from the Bangkok Declaration to the ASEAN Charter, the concept and practice of ASEAN centrality, and how ASEAN compares with regional organisations elsewhere. The second part turns to substantive cooperation, examining how ASEAN operates across key policy domains: economic integration and trade, political-security cooperation, human rights and (non-)democratic governance, and non-traditional security challenges including disaster management, transboundary environmental issues, and digital governance and artificial intelligence. Throughout the course, students engage with recent scholarship that moves beyond culturalist accounts of ASEAN to analyse the organisation's performance using the tools of comparative politics and international relations.
War and Peace: Theoretical Perspectives (POLI7028)	This course aims to understand the conditions for war and peace in international relations. Throughout the course, students will examine causes of war, the outcomes and consequences of war and solutions to prevent or limit war. Students will be able to apply the factors that promote or mitigate international conflict and should be able to apply these factors in examining real world scenarios and assessing the prospect of future conflict in troubled areas.
Risk assessment of global conflicts (POLI7029)	This course introduces a general analytical framework and heuristics for understanding contemporary issues in international politics and assessing risk levels of interstate conflict. The course is structured into three major parts: the motivations of conflict, the resources available to states, and finally, how the motivations of conflict and available resources converge to form a policy space containing possible options for the manifestation of the underlying conflict motivation.
Half-course: Europe-China relations (POLI7030)	This half course will introduce students to the history, politics and economics of the relationship between the countries of the European Union (EU) and China. The goal is to produce a nuanced and fair understanding of each side's perception of the other. Whilst the course is multidimensional and historically sensitive, it aims to be practical in the sense of clearly identifying the potentials and pitfalls of the Europe-China relationship moving forward in a fractured and post-unipolar world. Students are required to engage in academic readings and undertake case-study research by themselves.

FLEX COURSES

Overseas study at Peking University: "Current issues in China's international relations" (POLI6021)	The course will explore the major foreign policy issues that are confronting China in recent years. These issues include China and globalization, China and regional security, China's relations with US, China's relations with Europe, China's relations with Japan, and China and international environmental protection. It will be jointly taught by renowned Chinese foreign policy scholars at Peking University and practitioners and specialists based in Beijing.
Overseas study at Johns Hopkins University: SAIS programme (POLI6023)	The School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) summer programme provides students from across the United States and abroad an opportunity to enrol in excellent courses taught in a condensed form. Courses offered include American foreign policy since World War II, global issues: drugs, crime and terrorism, principles and practices of conflict management, strategy and policy, international monetary theory, international trade theory. Students are required to take 1 to 2 SAIS course.
Overseas study at Johns Hopkins University: SAIS programme (POLI6024)	The School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) summer programme provides students from across the United States and abroad an opportunity to enrol in excellent courses taught in a condensed form. Courses offered include American foreign policy since World War II, global issues: drugs, crime and terrorism, principles and practices of conflict management, strategy and policy, international monetary theory, international trade theory. Students are required to take 1 to 2 SAIS course.
Overseas study at George Washington University: U.S. foreign policy summer programme (POLI6030)	This two-week intensive course examines how U.S. foreign policy is made, the history that informs it, the political culture that sustains it, and the ideas and interests that drive it. Taking full advantage of its location in downtown Washington, DC, the programme features visits to key institutions that influence American foreign policy as well as lectures by leading scholars and experts from government, think tanks, international organizations, non-profit organizations, the media, and foreign embassies.
Overseas study at Seoul National University: Seminar on area studies – East Asia in the modern world (POLI6034)	This course is intended to make students familiar with the contemporary issues related to the East Asian countries, ranging from trade disputes and soft powers to financial problems. Taking an historical approach and using key theoretical perspectives, students will learn how the East Asian region has been coping with policy challenges and how East Asian regional order has evolved into its current forms.
Summer overseas study of international relations in East and Southeast Asia (POLI6052)	Embark on an immersive exploration of East or Southeast Asia's dynamic international relations through this summer overseas study programme. This course will be offered in rotation in a different East or Southeast Asian country, pending availability and cooperation with a university in a particular country. It offers a comprehensive examination of the region's geopolitical landscape, historical conflicts, and emerging global roles. Students will engage with topics such as regional security, economic integration, cultural diplomacy, and the impact of major powers on regional politics. Based in a key East or Southeast Asian city, the programme combines academic rigor with experiential learning. Participants will attend lectures by distinguished experts from a local university, visit international organizations/local NGOs, and engage in cultural exchanges. On-site learning experiences include visits to historic landmarks that will enrich students' appreciation of East or Southeast Asia's political trajectory. By the end of the course, students will gain a deeper understanding of international relations in the East or Southeast Asian context and develop cross-cultural communication skills essential for careers in diplomacy, international business, and global advocacy.





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