

1. BASIC INFORMATION

Course	Current Affairs Observatory
Degree program	Bachelor's Degree in International Relations and Law
School	School of Social Sciences
Year	First Year
ECTS	6 ECTS
Credit type	Compulsory
Language(s)	English
Delivery mode	Face-to-face
Semester	Second Semester
Academic year	2025/2026
Coordinating professor	PhD. Carolina Punset Bannel

2. PRESENTATION

To understand international relations and theories taught at the university, you have to follow the news. Knowing the current state of international politics and economics is essential if you want to fully understand why governments, international organizations and non-governmental actors do the things they do, and how their actions are interpreted by the different currents of RRII theory.

However, the news, valuable as it is, is also just a glimpse. The news informs us of what is happening today, but it does not always place the present in a historical or theoretical framework. In addition, those who write the news we read have the power to advance our interests on some issues, while neglecting (or concealing) others that deserve more attention. That's why it's important to read the news carefully, with a critical mindset.

In this course you will read, analyze, debate and write about world news, from the next elections to the civil wars, and from (sub)development to gender issues. The course is divided into seven units and we will read an article of the magazine "A respected news source" of that week, we will do a thorough investigation to place the topic in a broader framework, we will read and discuss a theoretical text that helps us analyze the topic, and we will present our conclusions in an essay, forum, discussion or presentation (video).

At the end of the course, you should not only have learned about the most current issues of the last 6 months, but also have learned to read the news critically, to place them in a broader (historical) framework and to analyze them from different theoretical perspectives.

3. COMPETENCIES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

Core competencies:

- CB1. Students must demonstrate to possess and understand knowledge in an area of study that starts from the base of general secondary education, and is usually found at a level that, although supported by advanced textbooks, also includes some aspects that imply knowledge coming from the vanguard of her/his field of study.
- CB2. Students must know how to apply their knowledge to their work or vocation in a professional manner and possess the skills that are usually demonstrated through the elaboration and defense of arguments and the resolution of problems within their area of study.
- CB3. Students must have the ability to gather and interpret relevant data (usually within their area of study) to make judgments that include a reflection on relevant issues of a social, scientific, or ethical nature.
- CB4. Students must transmit information, ideas, problems, and solutions to a specialized and non-specialized public.
- CB5. Students must develop those learning skills necessary to undertake further studies with a high degree of autonomy.

Cross-curricular competencies:

- CC1. Autonomous Learning: Skill to choose the strategies, the tools, and the moments that the student considers more effective to learn and to put into practice of an independent way what he has learned.
- CC2. Autoconfidence: Aptitude to value our own results, performance and capacities with the internal conviction of which we are capable of doing the things and the challenges that appear us.
- CC17. Teamwork: Ability to integrate and collaborate actively with other people, areas and / or organizations to achieve common objectives.

Specific competencies:

- SC01. To know and understand the historical evolution of international society.
- SC08. Recognize and explain general theories of international relations.
- SC09. Recognize the global, universal, cosmopolitan perspectives in the study of the actors, institutions, structures, and transactions that constitute International Relations.
- SC14. Conduct research and studies on the international scope and the areas that comprise it: economic, social, political, and cultural.
- SC25. Identify and to be related with the different international actors.
- SC26. Report, evaluate and assess current international events and situations.

Learning outcomes:

- LO1. Recognize and explain the general theories of International Relations.
- LO2. Be able to know and understand the historical evolution of international society.
- LO3. Conduct research and studies on the international sphere and the areas that integrate it: economic, social, political and cultural.
- LO4. Will be able to develop a critical attitude in the analysis of the past and the present.
- LO5. To recognize global, universal, cosmopolitan perspectives in the study of the actors, institutions, structures and transactions that constitute International Relations.

The following table shows the relationship between the competencies developed during the course and the learning outcomes pursued:

Competencies	Learning outcomes
CB1, CB2, CB4, CC1, CC2, SC08	LO1: Recognize and explain the general theories of International Relations.
CB1, CB3, CB5, CC1, CC2, SC01	LO2: Be able to know and understand the historical evolution of international society.
CB2, CB3, CB5, CC1, CC2, SC14, SC26	LO3: Conduct research and studies on the international sphere and the areas that integrate it: economic, social, political and cultural.
CB3, CB4, CB5, CC2, CC17, SC26	LO4: Will be able to develop a critical attitude in the analysis of the past and the present.
CB1, CB3, CB4, CC1, CC2, SC09, SC25	LO5: To recognize global, universal, cosmopolitan perspectives in the study of the actors, institutions, structures and transactions that constitute International Relations.

4. CONTENT

Study and analysis of real situations. Historical perspective, political perspective, evolutionary development of the conflict and/or international fact. Focus on the analysis of world current affairs through articles in specialized magazines, television programs and other audiovisual media.

5. TEACHING-LEARNING METHODOLOGIES

The types of teaching-learning methodologies used are indicated below:

- Cooperative learning
- Problem-based learning
- Simulation environments
- Case Method

6. LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Listed below are the types of learning activities and the number of hours the student will spend on each one:

Campus-based mode:

Learning activity	Number of hours
Debates and colloquiums	8
Oral presentations	2
Tutorials	18
Independent work	50
Master class	18
Asynchronous lectures	5
Case analysis	15

Problem solving	15
Reports and written papers	12
Face-to-face knowledge tests	2
TOTAL	150

7. ASSESSMENT

Listed below are the assessment systems used and the weight each one carries towards the final course grade:

Campus-based mode:

Assessment system	Weight
Knowledge Test	40%
Individual assignments	30%
Oral presentation	20%
Portfolio	10%

When you access the course on the *Campus Virtual*, you'll find a description of the assessment activities you have to complete, as well as the delivery deadline and assessment procedure for each one.

7.1. First exam period

To pass the course in the first exam period, you must obtain a final course grade of at least 5 out of 10 (weighted average).

In any case, you will need to obtain a grade of at 5.0 in the final exam in order for it to count towards the final grade along with all the grades corresponding to the other activities.

7.2. Second exam period

To pass the course in the second exam period, you must obtain a final grade of at least 5 out of 10 (weighted average).

In any case, you will need to obtain a grade of at 5.0 in the final exam in order for it to count towards the final grade along with all the grades corresponding to the other activities.

The student must deliver the activities not successfully completed in the first exam period after having received the corresponding corrections from the professor, or those that were not delivered in the first place.

8. SCHEDULE

This table shows the delivery deadline for each assessable activity in the course:

Assessable activities	Deadline
Test of knowledge	It will take place on the official date established by the center in the period set in January and will be communicated at the appropriate time through the official channels
Practical exercises and participation in class	Weeks 3, 6, 9 and 12
Presentations and final work in group	Week 14

This schedule may be subject to changes for logistical reasons relating to the activities. The student will be notified of any change as and when appropriate.

9. BIBLIOGRAPHY

The main reference work for this subject is:

- American Association of Psychology. (2010). *Mastering the APA style: Resource guide for the instructor*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Herman and Chomsky. (1988). *Manufacturing Consent: the Political Economy of the Mass Media*. Nueva York: Vintage Books.
- Putnam, Robert (1988). *Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games*. International Organization 42;3 , pp 427 - 460.
- Attkisson, S (2017). *The Smear: How Shady Political Operatives and Fake News Control What You See, What You Think, and How You Vote*. New York: Harper.
- BENEYTO, JUAN, La opinión pública internacional, Madrid: Tecnos, 1963.
- MONZÓN ARRIBAS, CÁNDIDO, Opinión pública, comunicación y política, Madrid: Tecnos, 2006
- NOYA, JAVIER. Diplomacia Pública para el siglo XXI. La gestión de la imagen exterior y la opinión pública internacional. Ariel, Madrid, 2017.
- SÁNCHEZ ARANDA, J., NOVOA JASO, M.F., International Communication and Public Opinion, Ed. Universidad de Navarra, 2021.
- TORCAL, MARIANO, La ciudadanía europea en el siglo XXI: estudio comparado de sus actitudes, opinión pública y comportamiento políticos, Madrid: CIS, 2010.
- VV.AA., Conflictos, opinión pública y medios de comunicación: análisis de una compleja interacción / Dirección General de Relaciones Institucionales, Instituto Español de Estudios Estratégicos, Grupo de Trabajo número 01/2010, Madrid: Ministerio de Defensa, Subdirección General de Publicaciones, 2011.
- VV.AA., Les Européens vus par eux-mêmes: les enseignements des sondages d'opinion, Luxembourg: Office des publications officielles des Communautés européennes, 2001.

10. EDUCATIONAL ORIENTATION, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION UNIT

From the Educational Orientation, Diversity and Inclusion Unit we offer support to our students throughout their university life to help them reach their academic achievements. Other main actions are the students inclusions with specific educational needs, universal accessibility on the different campuses of the university and equal opportunities.

1. Accompaniment and follow-up by means of counselling and personalized plans for students who need to improve their academic performance.
2. In terms of attention to diversity, non-significant curricular adjustments are made in terms of methodology and assessment for those students with specific educational needs, pursuing an equal opportunities for all students.
3. We offer students different extracurricular resources to develop different competences that will encourage their personal and professional development.
4. Vocational guidance through the provision of tools and counselling to students with vocational doubts or who believe they have made a mistake in their choice of degree.

Students in need of educational support can write to us at:

orientacioneducativa.uev@universidadeuropea.es

11. ONLINE SURVEYS

Your opinion matters!

The Universidad Europea encourages you to participate in several surveys which help identify the strengths and areas we need to improve regarding professors, degree programs and the teaching-learning process.

The surveys will be made available in the “surveys” section in virtual campus or via e-mail.

Your assessment is necessary for us to improve.

Thank you very much for your participation.