

**Subject group and course title:** Individuals & Societies - Global Politics HL/SL

**Course purpose:** to critically explore the complexities of contemporary political issues and the challenges these pose.

**Aims:** to help students develop an understanding of differing socio economic and cultural environments; to allow students develop the ability to evaluate concepts and theories; to encourage students critically examine case studies via a recognized methodology; to develop an in-depth cultural understanding; to explore diverse belief systems.

**Objectives:** to facilitate knowledge and understanding via the study of case studies and application of political concepts; to encourage the application and analysis of political issues within the context of case studies to facilitate experiential learning; to expose students to the comparative analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of differing perspectives; to develop transferable skills pertaining to analysis and organization of material.

**Topics covered:** Foundational unit: power, sovereignty, and international relations

- Nature of power
- Operation of state power in global politics
- Function and impact of international organizations and non-state actors in global politics
- Nature and extent of interactions in global politics

Human rights unit

- Nature and evolution of human rights
- Codification, protection and monitoring of human rights
- Practice of human rights
- Debates surrounding human rights: differing interpretations of justice, liberty and equality

Development unit

- Contested meanings of development
- Factors that may promote or inhibit development
- Pathways towards development
- Debates surrounding development: challenges of globalization, inequality and sustainability

Peace and conflict unit

- Contested meanings of peace, conflict and violence
- Causes and parties to conflict
- Evolution of conflict
- Conflict resolution and post-conflict transformation

**Assessment model:** externally assessed requirements are:

- HL/SL: Paper-1, (1 hour & 15 min), a source-based exam paper with 4 compulsory questions
- HL/SL: Paper-2, (1 hour & 45min, selecting 2 essay questions for SL), (2 hours & 45 min, selecting 3 essay questions for HL)
- Internal Assessment:
  - HL/SL: a written report of 2,000 words
  - HL: two video oral presentations of 10min each

**Assessment tools used in class:**

- Formative:
  - Weekly essays
  - Mind mapping
  - Case studies critique
  - Debates
  - Open themed class presentations
  - Comparative evaluation of case studies
  - Comparative evaluation of theorists, case studies, interpretations
  - Evaluating the significance of primary and secondary sources
  - Peer assessment
- Summative:
  - Unit tests
  - Timed essays
  - Past papers simulations
  - Reconstructing/action planning internal assessments

**How are key concepts served?**

- Prior to introducing a unit, learning expectations are shared in class, focusing onto the key concepts, suitable to explaining the topic's complexities.
- Students, via the selection of diverse case studies, attempt to raise and explain political perspectives and intricacies within the context of suitable concepts. For example, when students examine examples of hard power practices, performed by hegemon, discuss implications, of the use of military tactics, through the framework of concepts such as, human rights, violence, conflict, and sovereignty.
- Essay mind mapping, revolves around selecting the key concepts that best address the political issues underlined and as such, may structure arguments focusing onto the pre-selected abstract ideas.
- Internal assessments are designed to address pre-selected 'key ideas', ensuring that students will not 'miss' topic focus.

**How does the course foster international mindedness?**

- The course is designed to encourage engagement with case studies of global significance. Hence students are exploring examples, by investigating stakeholders' actions, agendas, and implications of the latter, onto a global context.
- The course encourages students to study examples at local, national, international, and global context, by emphasizing socio political economic and cultural driving forces. For example, students may select to investigate a local political issue, such as influx of refugees. Part of the exploration,

will be to investigate how the refugee crisis, is manifested at local, national, regional, international, and global level and how differing actions taken, affect its development.

### **How are IB Learner Profile attributes promoted?**

Teaching, learning, and assessment tactics allow for the development of IB Learner attributes such as:

- Inquirers: students take control of their learning as research and investigate case studies, suitable to the key concepts and theoretical framework, selected.
- Thinkers: students are expected to critically and creatively discuss diverse perspectives of stakeholders involved in pre-selected case studies.
- Communicators: students are encouraged and trained in presenting evidence in diverse ways such as written reports and video presentations.
- Reflective: internal assessment processes along with unit tests and peer assessment, are concluded with student reflection, on strengths and limitations of work produced.

### **How does the course meet student needs via ATL?**

Students enhance, and discover ATL skills such as:

- Social skills:
  - Organizing the delivering debates, by representing stakeholders, agendas
  - Study groups formed for effective exam revision
- Self-Management skills:
  - Meeting deadlines pertaining to assignments and internal assessments
  - Action planning essays and case studies evaluations
  - Timed exam paper simulations and class essays
- Thinking skills:
  - Case studies are critically explored aimed at developing a synthesis of key ideas and multiple perspectives
  - Essays provide the basis for an in-depth critical conceptual exploration of posed questions
- Research skills:
  - Investigating the underpinning factors that shape the actions of stakeholders involved
  - Researching bibliographical material in support of case studies, political issues raised.

### **Describe connections with CAS:**

- Experiential learning is encouraged via the course, as students are urged to investigate political issues that concern their community. A potential CAS example is the attempt to raise awareness about the importance of recycling, at local level, and the challenges toward its implementation.
- An additional CAS task is the attempt to investigate and inform the school community of the socio-economic implications of covid-19 locally, with particular emphasis to gender, racial and other forms of reported discrimination.

**Describe connections with TOK:**

- The course allows students to delve into knowers perspectives and via the study of stakeholders' actions, of pre-selected case studies, to try and understand factors and methodology used to shaping the latter's choices
- For example, the use of contestable data, at the electoral campaigns of B. Obama and D. Trump, raised ethical questions upon such practices
- The controversial implementation of hard power practices by hyper powers, justifying violence to safeguard human rights

**Recommended resources:**

- Andrew Heywood, Global Politics interpretations, Palgrave MacMillan
- Max Kirsch, Global Politics – course companion, Oxford
- Robert Murphy & Charles Gleek, Global Politics, Pearson
- Andrew Heywood, Political Ideologies, Palgrave

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