FOREIGN POLICY AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD

Professor: **Carl Rihan**
Language of instruction: **English**
Number of hours of class: **12h**

Objective of the Course

This course offers a foundational introduction to International Relations and Foreign Policy Analysis: why states behave as they do, how their leaders decide, and how they operate within an international order that is being contested and remade. It is designed for students considering undergraduate studies in international affairs, political science, economics or global governance.

By the end, students can compare how realists, liberals and constructivists read the same event; analyze how foreign-policy decisions are made under uncertainty; assess how shifts in power, war, the global economy and digital technologies are transforming the international order; and defend a clear, evidence-based policy recommendation in front of an audience.

Summary

Since the end of the Cold War, the world has moved from a single superpower to a crowded and contested system. Globalization has bound economies together, yet great-power rivalry has returned, war is back in Europe, trade and technology have become instruments of pressure, and the institutions built after 1945 are under strain. Understanding why states choose cooperation or confrontation has rarely mattered more.

The course gives students the tools to make sense of it. It starts with the foundations: how the modern state system emerged, how realism, liberalism and constructivism explain it, and how leaders actually decide, from the Cuban Missile Crisis to today. It then applies these tools to the forces reshaping the global order: the measurement of power and the shift toward multipolarity; war, nuclear deterrence and proxy conflict, with Russia's invasion of Ukraine as a central case; globalization after the COVID-19 pandemic; global governance and its financial architecture; and the rise of digital power, from algorithmic governance to artificial intelligence and autonomous weapons.

Ten one-hour sessions combine a short lecture, a case study and an applied exercise. The course closes with a simulated international crisis that prepares students for the

Petit Oral, a group presentation on a determined topic that counts for 80% of the grade, alongside class participation (20%).

Professor's Biography



Carl Rihan is the founder and lead consultant of *Septentrion Insights*, an economic intelligence, business analytics and data engineering firm based in Belgium. He is an associate of the German Institute of Global and Area Studies, specializing in the economic and quantitative determinants of political risk. Carl teaches business management at Ecole Jeannine Manuel, economics and data science at the Catholic University of Lille, and international security at SciencesPo Lille. He holds a Ph.D. from SciencesPo Paris.