

MA in International Affairs Graduate Courses AY2025 Fall

John Cabot University

Preliminary Schedule

Fall 2025

PL 610 Foundation I: International Relations (Simone Tholens; M 15-17:30)

This course will introduce students to a range of theoretical approaches in International Relations and familiarize students with critiques of the dominant ways of conceptualizing global politics. Students will be encouraged to reflect on the way in which different theoretical approaches are linked to different kinds of policy outcomes and how theoretical approaches and associated research strategies have shaped key concepts within international politics.

PL 620 Foundation II: Comparative Politics (Michael Driessen; W 11:30-14:15)

This course provides a systematic understanding and critical appreciation of alternative approaches, methodologies and paradigms of political science research. Students will learn techniques to interpret and analyze data. The training will enable students to think through how they can use their knowledge and skills of advanced research methods in different contexts and apply them to their own research project.

PL 652 Populism in Europe (Nicholas Startin; W 15-17:45)

This course will examine the forms, causes and implications of populism drawing from theoretical debates and case studies in Europe. The focus will be primarily on Radical Right Populist Parties (RRPPs) and will concentrate on themes such as historical and cultural legacies, charismatic leadership, the role of gender and the impact of Euroscepticism to unpack the complexities of populism in a contemporary context. The course will also discuss Left-Wing Populism, the impact of the contemporary media in shaping populist discourse and the wider consequences in terms of its influence on the democratic process in Europe.

~~PL 653 Revolutions (Camil Roman; M 11:30-14:15)~~

~~Political revolutions have been practically synonymous with the rise and making of the modern world, so much so that their importance is paradoxically often lost sight of, their formation naturalized and their meaning difficult to establish. Ranging from politics and economics, to technology, society and science, revolutionary transformations have~~

created and shaped particular ways of living and have even pushed the creation of new kinds of human beings and societies. This advanced course will examine revolutions specifically as a political phenomenon or as a particular range of the human experience of politics. It will provide a highly conceptual, pluri-disciplinary and non-normative approach to the study of revolutionary politics and its impact on the modern world, albeit in the full recognition that an entirely value-free science is neither possible nor desirable.

PL 629 Religion and Global Politics Directed Readings (Michael Driessen; MW 10-11:15)

This course will offer a comprehensive overview of the various debates around the role of religion in the public sphere. Themes examined include secularism and secularization; contemporary expressions of religious violence; religious revolution and state-building; the relationship between religion and peace, development and political reconciliation; the emergence of religious political parties; religious political theologies of democracy, globalization and political economy; the role of religion in identity politics and transnational institutions; the engagement of foreign diplomacy with religious communities and actors; and the global politics of interreligious dialogue.

PL 675 Politics of China (Enrico Fardella; T 15-17:45)

This course reviews the evolution of China's national policies, focusing on the narrative of National Humiliation, Mao's central role in Party's history and ideology & Chinese leadership policies from Deng Xiaoping to Xi Jinping. It examines Chinese Communist Party ideology and structure, China's key notion of national security and its foreign relations with a special emphasis on the evolution of Sino-American relations and the Belt and Road Initiative. The course will end with a class debate on China's conceptualization of world order.

PL/LAW 680 Human Rights and International Law (Lyal Sunga; Th 15-17:30)

This course sharpens substantive theoretical and practical human rights knowledge and the capacity to critically analyze key human rights issues. The course first recalls influential theoretical perspectives and the elevation of human rights to a matter of international legal concern. Second, the course critically examines international, regional and national human rights norms and institutions to uncover strengths and weaknesses as well as the role of non-governmental organizations. The relationship between international frameworks to national human rights protection and key jurisprudence from the

European, Inter-American and African regional human rights systems are then noted. Finally, the course considers some of the more urgent human rights issues of our time relating to democracy and the rule of law, economic, social and cultural rights, women and girls, gender identity, children, criminal justice, national security and terrorism, the environment, people on the move, and transitional justice in post-conflict situations.

PL 664-1 International Development and Humanitarian Action: From Theory to Practice (Sara Moussavi; M 18-20:30)

This course introduces the leading theoretical frameworks that inform international development and humanitarian action. Using an interdisciplinary lens and case studies from recent crises, students will explore how aid mechanisms and programs have evolved over time. By connecting theory with real-world application, the course equips students to analyze current practices and to envision innovative approaches that can shape the future of the development sector.

PL 710 Professional Development Course (1 Credit) (Fridays, 11:30-14:15)

This course focuses on developing the practical skills and knowledge to prepare for a professional career in International Affairs. This course serves as an accompanying course for the required internship and should be taken in the first year of the MA program.

PL 720 Practicum in International Affairs (1-2 Credits) (Driessen/Fardella; T 11:30-14:15)

The Practicum in International Affairs provides a hands-on introduction to policy work in the field of global affairs. The course will feature lectures and seminars by international practitioners and engage with the networks of policymakers present in the city of Rome. The practicum will be run as an interactive seminar with student participation and discussion strongly emphasized. Students will also draw on the lectures to formulate a policy portfolio for their work.

PL 740 Internship or Research Assistantship (3 credits)

Students will complete a professional internship or work on a research project under the supervision of a faculty member for a minimum period of 150 contact hours. Students are responsible for writing an essay on their experience and formulating an integrated professional or research plan following the end of internship or research assistantship period.

PL 780 Thesis Writing (6 credits)

Students will write a research-oriented MA thesis (approximately 15,000 words) or a policy-oriented MA thesis (approximately 8,000 words) under the supervision of a faculty member.

PL 603-Fall Semester Events Attendance

A passing grade in two semesters of PL603 is required to complete the MA in International Affairs. Students are required to attend at least 3 approved scholarly or professional lectures, workshops or events throughout the semester and write a short reflection on each to pass the course.