



**Department of Politics**

**School of Law, Politics and Sociology**

## **Course Handbook**

### **MA in International Politics**

**2017-2018**

**Course Convenor**

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**Office Hours**

**Mondays, 16.30h-17.30h**  
**Wednesdays, 9.00h-10.00h**

# MA in International Politics

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## DEPARTMENT OF POLITICS

The Department of Politics is internationally recognised for its research and teaching. Our approach to politics is grounded in rigorous and disciplinary methods but complemented by an interdisciplinary perspective on studying politics at the domestic, European and international level. The postgraduate courses offered by the Department provide award-winning research-led teaching and the opportunity to work with world-leading scholars in their fields of expertise.

The Department has two highly renowned interdisciplinary research centres, the Sussex European Institute (SEI) and the Sussex Centre for the Study of Corruption (SCSC). The SEI is an outstanding postgraduate training and cutting edge research centre of excellence in contemporary European studies and acts as a hub for scholars both within Sussex and beyond through internationally renowned collaborative networks. The SCSC is a world-leading centre for corruption analysis which works closely with organisations such as Transparency International in developing recommendations and proposals for combating corruption both in the United Kingdom and internationally.

Politics at Sussex plays host to a vibrant postgraduate community of masters and research students from nearly thirty different countries. Our postgraduate students can participate in a wide range of academic activities, such as conferences, research seminars, and workshops. Time at Sussex means not only time spent at the Department, however, but as part of a wider community of international and high-quality students. The Department has also established many links with other international universities and with political, social and economic institutions in Britain, Europe and beyond. The faculty here all enjoy being part of such a unique environment – we hope that you will too.

### POLITICS FACULTY

Prof Claire Annesley	Professor of Politics, Head of Department
Dr Sabina Avdagic	Senior Lecturer in Politics
Dr Sue Collard	Senior Lecturer in Contemporary European Studies
Dr Elizabeth David-Barrett	Senior Lecturer in Politics
Dr Neil Dooley	Lecturer in Politics
Dr Rekha Diwakar	Lecturer in Politics
Dr James Hampshire	Reader in Politics
Dr Olli Hellmann	Senior Lecturer in Politics
Prof Dan Hough	Professor of Politics
Prof Alan Mayhew	Professorial Fellow
Mr Francis McGowan	Senior Lecturer in Politics
Dr Kai Oppermann	Reader in Politics
Dr Emily Robinson	Senior Lecturer in Politics
Prof Aleks Szczerbiak	Professor of Contemporary European Studies
Prof Paul Taggart	Professor of Politics
Dr Adrian Treacher	Lecturer in Contemporary European Studies
Prof Paul Webb	Professor of Politics

All members of faculty have weekly office hours during which time they are available for feedback and consultation. For the contact details of individual members of academic staff see: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/politics/people/peoplelists/group/academic-staff>.

# MA in International Politics

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## MA IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

### COURSE INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS

The MA is designed to integrate the study of international politics, foreign policy and domestic politics. This reflects the real-world interaction between politics at domestic levels with the wider functioning of politics at the transnational, regional and international levels as much as the blurring of the academic lines between the analysis of the international realm of politics and of politics within nations and regions.

The way domestic politics functions in an era of globalisation and internationalisation is ever more influenced by transnational actors, new forms of political and economic regionalism as well as broader patterns of international governance. At the same time, the politics within states remains the most fundamental building block of regional and international politics. Moreover, the specific shape and form of these interactions across different levels of politics plays out differently in different world regions. The starting point of the course, therefore, is that political processes in domestic, regional and international arenas can no longer be adequately understood separately. Rather, this MA will focus on developing your analytical skills to critically examine the interdependencies between these arenas and how they manifest themselves in different regions of the world. Specifically, the course will explore three themes.

First, it puts an analytical focus on the bottom-up and top-down (or inside-out and outside-in) relationships between domestic, regional and international politics. The MA will introduce you to different theoretical perspectives to understand both the domestic sources of regional and international politics as well as the impact of the international arena on domestic and regional politics.

The second theme of the course is comparative regional governance. The MA will provide you with the methodological and analytical skills to compare and contrast patterns of regional politics and regional cooperation in a variety of world regions, in particular with a view to the interplay across different levels of politics in these regions.

Third, this MA will equip you with the toolbox of comparative foreign policy analysis. Foreign policy is in many ways the critical interface between domestic and regional/international politics in that it is the means by which states seek to shape their regional and international environment while at the same time being influenced by regional and international politics. The course will enable you to critically evaluate the foreign policies of different countries in the world.

The MA will pursue these themes in a three-part structure. First, the core modules during the autumn term are designed to give you the necessary theoretical, methodological and empirical foundations for the course. No matter what academic background you come from, the first term should give you the analytical skills to undertake critical studies of a diverse range of topics in international politics. Second, the optional modules during the spring term will allow you to focus in more detail on two specialist topics. For example, you can choose to become an expert on the politics of one or two world regions or on more cross-cutting issues, such as foreign policy analysis. During both terms, you will be invited to attend weekly research in progress seminars at which you will be able to discuss cutting-edge research with a broad range of internal and external speakers. Finally, the dissertation during the summer term will give you the opportunity to undertake an in-depth postgraduate research project on any topic related to the course under the supervision of a dedicated member of faculty at the Department.

# MA in International Politics

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## TEACHING AND LEARNING

You will find all necessary information on the teaching pattern and assessment of individual modules on your personal **Sussex Direct** site: <https://direct.sussex.ac.uk/login.php>. Each of your modules will be supported by a **Study Direct** online learning site which is designed by the module tutor and which provides you with key learning resources: <https://studymdirect.sussex.ac.uk/login/>. You will need your Sussex username and password to access your Sussex Direct and Study Direct sites.

The **course structure** consists of three broad parts.

Firstly, in the Autumn Term students are required to do three compulsory modules:

- International Politics (30 credits)
- Comparative Governance (15 credits)
- Research Methods and Approaches (15 credits)

Secondly, in the Spring Term students select two optional modules (each being worth 30 credits).

Finally, in the Summer Term students will complete a 60 credit (i.e. 15,000 word) dissertation (to be submitted in September 2017). Dissertations can be on any topic related to the course, but titles have to ultimately be agreed with the course convenor.

**Part-time students** do the following;

- Autumn Term (year 1): International Politics (30 credits)
- Spring Term (year 1): One optional module (30 credits)
- Summer Term (year 1): Begin working on their dissertation
- Autumn Term (year 2): Comparative Governance (15 credits) and Research Methods and Approaches (15 credits)
- Spring Term (year 2); One optional module (30 credits)
- Summer Term (year 2): Complete Dissertation

## EXAMINATION AND ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS

The definitive source of information on regulatory matters associated with examination and assessment is the Examination and Assessment Handbook published by the Academic Office. It is available here: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/adqe/standards/examsandassessment>. This is a version of the handbook used by Exam Board members and it describes the regulations in formal terms. You may also find the FAQs on examination and assessment matters useful that are available on the same webpage.

A variety of assessment modes are used to develop and test different types of knowledge, skills and aptitudes. The assessment modes have been approved to test the course and module learning outcomes. Written submissions usually form an integral part of assessment at all levels. Written submissions include essays, reports, logs etc as appropriate to the module and the skills that you are being expected to develop. *Examinations usually focus more on your ability to use your knowledge of the subject, rather than simply testing your memory for facts.* Feedback is provided to support you in future assessments.

Unseen examinations are typically used to assess your level of knowledge and/or understanding of the discipline without the support of textbooks, notes or internet resources, unless these have

## MA in International Politics

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been specifically permitted by the examination rubric. When, in accordance with the academic judgement of the School, an unseen exam has been approved for a module to assess competence standards, learning outcomes and any accreditation requirements, an alternative mode may not be approved as a Reasonable Adjustment for a student registered with the Student Support Unit.

### COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to...

- ...critically analyse the interplay between the domestic, regional and international levels of politics;
- ...use different theoretical approaches to critically assess contemporary issues in international and regional politics;
- ...use a variety of comparative research methods and apply them to critically analyse the politics of different countries and world regions;
- ...critically transfer knowledge about a range of topics in international politics to appreciate practical challenges in contemporary governance on different levels of politics;
- ...utilise a diverse set of practical skills including IT and traditional resources for presentation of critical analysis, both written and oral, in the field of international politics;
- ...design and implement a substantial postgraduate research project in international politics.

### STUDENT SUPPORT

The **Student Handbook** is a comprehensive guide for Sussex students. It very clearly explains the services, facilities and conventions of Sussex and contains detailed information on areas including your responsibilities as a student, registration and record-keeping, appeals and complaints plus regulations and policy documents. You can access the handbook here: [www.sussex.ac.uk/studenthandbook](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/studenthandbook).

The **Student Life Centre** offers information and advice to all students at Sussex. It is there to help you to gain the best possible university experience, whatever your circumstances, by ensuring if you run into problems you get appropriate guidance and support. You can access their website here: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/studentlifecentre/>.

Finally, the **Students' Union** is also a very useful source of information, advice and representation: [www.ussu.info](http://www.ussu.info).

#### Study Skills

The **Skills Hub** is a study skills resource for all students at the University of Sussex. You are very strongly recommended to use the skills hub regularly; it contains vital information and will answer many of the questions you may have: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/skillshub/>. The following pages are particularly useful:

Writing and referencing: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/skillshub/writing>.

Library and research: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/skillshub/research>.

IT skills: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/skillshub/it>.

Exams and assessment: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/skillshub/exams>.

## MA in International Politics

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Personal development: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/skillshub/personaldevelopment>.

While there are no subject specific rules in Politics for which **referencing style** to use, I would recommend the **Harvard system**. For detailed information and guidance see: <https://studydirect.sussex.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=20813&topic=18>.

English Language and Study Skills Support will be available at no cost in workshops and tutorials from the Sussex Centre for Language Studies **for all students whose first language is not English**. For more information, see: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/languages/english/acadev>.

### The Library

The University Library is a key resource during your studies. Library staff are ready to help and advise you from the day you arrive to the day you come to write your dissertation and prepare for your future career.

In addition to the books, documents, official publications and audio visual items held in the Library building, you can access Library information and collections, including eBooks and online resources via Sussex Direct or Study Direct anywhere and at any time.

Our web-based tutorial, InfoSuss (<https://studydirect.sussex.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=20813&rel=home>) will help you use our resources and services more effectively. It will show you how to use the Library catalogue, understand your reading lists and find good quality information online.

The following are just some of the services and facilities provided by the Library

- Extensive opening hours during term time;
- A variety of study spaces, including group study rooms, social study areas and individual silent study spaces;
- Computer clusters with printers and scanners plus lap top facilities and wireless coverage throughout the building;
- Inductions and teaching sessions to help you find and use the resources we provide;
- Automated self-issue and return;
- AV viewing facilities and a microform reading room with readers and scanners;
- Copy centre – photocopiers, binding services and stationery supplies;
- Assistive technology and support for students with additional needs;
- Special collections – a unique collection of manuscripts, archives and rare books;
- Additional support for your research through an enquiries service and advice on accessing resources held in other libraries;

You need your library/ID card to enter the Library so always carry it with you.

For detailed information about opening times and services, including subject-based information, please always refer to the library website [www.sussex.ac.uk/library](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/library).

# MA in International Politics

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## MODULE OUTLINES

### CORE MODULES (AUTUMN TERM)

#### **International Politics**

This module will provide students with advanced knowledge about key approaches and issues in international politics. It is particularly focused on the interplay between politics at the domestic, regional and international levels. Students will develop analytical skills to investigate the interaction between these different realms of politics across countries and regions. The module will be taught by one one-hour lecture and one two-hour seminar per week. Specifically, the module is organised in three blocks. The first block will take a comparative perspective on the politics of different world regions and on regional integration in world politics. The second set of sessions will introduce the main approaches to the comparative analysis of foreign policy with a special emphasis on what are sometimes termed the rising powers. The third block, finally, will discuss theories and concepts in international politics and explore their contribution to analysing contemporary issues in the field. Like in the first two blocks, a special focus will be put on understanding the interaction across different levels of politics. The aim of the module is to prepare students for the specialist options they take in the Spring Term as well as for the research they will do for their dissertation.

#### **Comparative Governance**

The module will take students through some of the key topics and concepts in comparative politics. The focus is on concepts and not on particular regions. This means that it will cover issues such as regime types including non-democracies, parliamentary–presidential regimes, electoral behaviour, political opportunity structures, state–society relations and policy-making models. This means that students will each week take a classic article/book extract and, for the seminars, write a short one-page paper applying the week’s reading to a region, or comparing regions using the concepts, or offering a critical reflection on the concept. These papers will build into a portfolio that will be used to assess the module.

#### **Research Methods and Approaches**

The module will cover the range of qualitative and quantitative methods in social science and will provide the skills to develop a research outline. It will equip students with the ability to come up with an interesting and workable research question and testable empirical hypotheses, an ability to select cases/sample and appropriate methods for analysis, a focus on how to find appropriate data sources and conduct data analysis (either quantitative or qualitative), and how to interpret the results in relation to the available literature.

### OPTIONAL MODULES (SPRING TERM)\*

#### **Foreign Policy Analysis**

Who acts in international politics, and why? All too often, the answer seems to be states, or other collective actors, with their interactions determined by the logic of broad systemic forces. This however leaves out a lot of factors: does it matter whether these states are democracies or dictatorships, who is taking the decision to act and why? Foreign policy analysis breaks up the

## MA in International Politics

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'black box' of the state and looks at the way that the domestic environment and indeed the individual decision maker matters. Foreign policy making is a messy, sometimes political process, and 'the national interest' is by no means as clear and uncontested as foreign policy elites would like to make out. The module draws on classical and critical literature in foreign policy analysis to explore the broad tension between agency and structure (domestic and international) in international politics. It asks how decision-making in international politics may be less than rational, for a variety of reasons; how lobby groups, bureaucratic actors and (perhaps) public opinion may influence foreign policy, and whether foreign policy can ever be ethical. The course will apply different theoretical perspectives to contemporary foreign policy issues in selected countries around the world.

### **The State in East Asia**

Good governance requires state capacity, which, broadly speaking, refers to the ability of the state to implement policy choices within the territorial boundaries it claims to govern. However, in many countries in the developing world the power relationship between state and society is tilted towards the latter. That is to say, the state lacks the strength to fend off predatory attacks by powerful, self-interested social actors. In such cases, good governance becomes difficult, if not impossible, to achieve. This module will study state building in East Asia through a comprehensive theoretical framework. East Asia is a useful 'laboratory' to generate and test general theories of state building, as the region features a wide variety of state types, ranging from 'developmental' to 'predatory states. Students will thus not only be equipped with key concepts and theories to analyse challenges to state building in the developing world but will also gain an advanced introduction to the particular issues of governance in East Asia.

### **Politics and Government in India**

The study of Indian politics and government offers powerful insights into the challenges faced by and achievements of a young and vibrant democracy in an often challenging regional environment. The proposed module will examine and evaluate how key constitutional features have functioned in India to support its governance and democracy. Indian democracy is an important area of research for political science scholars, especially with regard to its ability to survive and function amidst high social heterogeneity, widespread poverty and illiteracy. Indian politics, society and economy have undergone substantial changes since the country's independence in 1947. Today, India is an important emerging economy with a well-developed party system, and has a good record of holding regular elections. It is an interesting case to further our insights into the dynamics of political change in a large complex country with significant intra-country differences and an evolving party system. This module aims to provide students with a detailed understanding of major political, social and economic changes in India, beginning from its independence in 1947 to contemporary times, and of how these changes interact with the incentives and pressures India faces on the regional and international level. It will provide students an in-depth understanding of the ability of institutions such as parliament, political executive, bureaucracy and party system to adapt to and deal with the ongoing pressures of social and economic development in India. The key themes which are analysed in the module are (1) understanding Indian democracy and the institutional set up, (2) the transformation of Indian party system from single party dominated system to a multi-party competitive system, and the emergence of coalition politics, (3) identity politics and rise of ethnic parties, (4) the growing influence of civil society and mass movements and the need for political parties to respond to demands from these organised interests, (5) the political economy of public policy making and economic reforms in India, including the influence of international institutions such as the World

## MA in International Politics

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Bank and the IMF, (6) analysis of how domestic politics, in terms of ideology, party positions and institutions impact India's international politics, and (7) the key challenges facing the Indian nation both domestically and in the international arena. The module primarily uses an empirical approach but also presents relevant theoretical constructs and comparative analysis to provide students a rich insight into the politics and government in India.

### **Domestic Politics of European Integration**

The module examines the impact of the European integration process, politics and institutions on the domestic politics of European states. The module looks at the impact of the European issue on political parties, party systems, referendums and public opinion. The module is designed explicitly to link the fields of European Union studies and Comparative European Politics. The module addresses both the theoretical literature (in asking what different approaches to European integration have to say about the domestic politics of member states) and the empirical literature looking at a number of specific areas (namely European referendums, European Parliament elections, the impact of Europe in domestic elections and party systems and the structure of public opinion on European integration in member states).

### **Internship**

The internship option enables students to spend three months working on a project within an NGO, think tank, international organisation, media, business or other suitable organisation that has an active interest in analysing international politics. The student will be expected to spend a minimum of three and a maximum of four days per week working with the organisation. The student will be expected to write a 5000 word report based on what they did and how it links in to the theoretical analysis of international politics introduced in the core modules in the Autumn Term.

\* Please note that not all options will be available every academic year.

# MA in International Politics

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## OFFICE HOURS

I, as course convenor, hold office hours twice a week. During this time I am specifically available to see students. These will take place at the times stipulated on page one. You really are encouraged to use this time to talk to me about any aspect of the course that concerns you - including your individual progress, written work and plans for the future (both in terms of the course itself and also beyond it!). You are, however, welcome to email me at any time in order either to make an appointment to see me in person or simply to ask questions. I will also be your academic advisor here at Sussex – for more information on the role of academic advisors and other sources of support and advice see: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/s3/?id=31>.

## ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Whilst I am your main point of contact for academic enquiries about the course, if you need advice on administrative issues then it will make sense to contact the LPS School Office. Your ‘go to’ person in the School Office is the Course Co-ordinator, James Dowling ([J.Dowling@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:J.Dowling@sussex.ac.uk)).

## ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

The University takes cases of academic misconduct very seriously. Academic misconduct includes collusion, plagiarism, personation, misconduct in unseen exams and fabrication of results. It is very important to understand the academic standards expected of you and what constitutes academic misconduct.

The **Academic Development and Quality an Enhancement (ADQE)** office is a source of detailed information on academic standards and academic misconduct. You can access the relevant webpages here: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/adqe/standards>.

The **Skills Hub** has very useful guidance on how to avoid academic misconduct and on how to follow academic best practice: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/skillshub/writing>.

It is essential that you familiarise yourself with this information and that you make absolutely sure to avoid academic misconduct!

## EMAIL AND SUSSEX DIRECT

Do keep an eye on your Sussex email. We always use your Sussex email address to keep you updated on matters such as assessment deadlines, last minute timetable changes and dissertation supervision arrangements so please make sure you check your emails on a regular basis. Much administrative information is also made available to you via Sussex Direct (<https://direct.sussex.ac.uk/login.php>) so please also try and check that on a daily basis.

Dr Kai Oppermann  
Reader in Politics  
Convenor, MA in International Politics

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