



THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
INTERNATIONAL SUMMER SCHOOL (JULY SESSION)
26 JUNE – 29 JULY 2024

COMM3670 ISSUES IN CURRENT AFFAIRS

Credits: 3

Time: Tuesday, Wednesday, & Thursday 09:30 – 12:15

Location: YIA 201

Instructor: SAUTEDE, Eric

Email: ericsautede@cuhk.edu.hk or sudingde@gmail.com

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to key social, economic, and political current issues—such as climate change, economic liberalization, transnational migrations, terrorism, pandemics—and how different stakeholders—municipalities, nation-states, civil societies, as well as regional and international organizations—measure up to these issues and challenges. The course will also emphasize the connection and the articulation of these current affairs and public policies between the global and local levels. The course will thus make room for guest-speakers from local NGOs, news agencies or institutions to present their own take on global matters. While some of the topics addressed in this class have been covered at length by the literature, some will reflect immediate concerns as they arise from current affairs – the Israel Gaza war being one among others. Ultimately, it is our hope that this class will help students understand better that current affairs have both the potential to bring the world together or, on the contrary, ever-further differences and enmities.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course, students should be able to

1. Understand and put in perspective key global political, economic, and social issues;
2. Reflect upon the power distribution among political institutions at different levels and in different regions;
3. Express their opinion in a constructive manner – weighing pros and cons – regarding major global issues through verbal and written means, and realize their ultimate agency.

COURSE MATERIALS

- Heywood, Andrew. 2014. *Global Politics*. 2nd edition. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. – Available in CUHK library (in the form of e-book: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/cuhk-ebooks/detail.action?pq-origsite=primo&docID=4763355>);
- Steger, Manfred B. 2020. *Globalization: a very short introduction*. Oxford University Press. – Available in CUHK library (in the form of e-book: <https://academic-oup-com.easyaccess2.lib.cuhk.edu.hk/book/28418/chapter/228868832>);
- Optional reading and additional references: Harari, Yuval N. 2018. *21 lessons for the 21st century*. London: Jonathan Cape. Please check the weekly readings assigned to each lecture/topic.
- *The Conversation* (<https://theconversation.com/global>) and *The Diplomat* (<https://thediplomat.com/>).

COURSE FORMAT

The summer semester is characterized by its intensity. The course consists of both lectures and workshops. A typical class consists of a **one-hour and 20mn lecture (broken down in two times 40mn)**, followed by **one-hour and 15mn interactive activity session (with a 5mn break between them)**. The **lecture sessions** will cover various key topics that are today part of global affairs and public issues, including the issues per se, the concepts to formulate them, the key stakeholders involved, and their diverse dimensions, including spatial ones. The **interactive activity sessions** will comprise various class activities, including short presentations based on current affairs, individual sharing of thoughts on specific aspects of global issues, group discussions and debates, movie screening, and guest speakers from the outside.

COURSE ASSESSMENTS

Students are required to pass all the assessment components in order to pass the course.

1. In-class participation (participation in discussions,)	10%
2. An individual presentation based on two news clippings (basis for the essay)	30%
3. 800 words essay/article to be published on a blog	30%
4. A group presentation on a given topic	30%

1. **In-class participation (10 points).** There will be a lot of in-class activities, including in-class discussions of the weekly readings, briefing on the news and their context, and reactions to your classmates' presentations. Your grade for participation will not only reflect how frequently you contribute to these activities, but also the quality of your contributions. You probably cannot contribute if you do not read the assigned reading.
2. **Individual presentation based on news clippings (30 points).** Starting on Day 2 (June 27), and up to Day 6 (July 10), each and everyone will make a short 5-minute presentation based on two news clippings from the week. The two clippings should deal with the same topic, but offer a different perspective, and be somehow related to one of the main issues of this class. The presentation should be short and snappy, identifying the main topic, the main arguments, and stress in what way it is both stimulating and frustrating. Never forget the sources and their possible biases. This presentation can serve as the basis for your short essay. I will myself do such a presentation on Day 1 (June 26).
3. **800 words essay/article to be published on a blog (30 points).** Preferably based on your individual presentation, you will write a short essay/article dealing with an issue covered in this class (globalization, global politics, the global economy, global environmental issues, war, terrorism, global migrations, identity politics in a global context, international & regional organizations, etc.). This essay/article should be both *particular* (focused on a particular aspect of current affairs) and *general* (connected to broader topics and the main issues at stake). The idea is to publish these essays on a blog (only visible to the class) and thus others will be able to leave comments/make suggestions. Please submit a draft of your short essay one day (maximum) after having made your short presentation. I will then review and comment on it, and you will resubmit within two days so that I can publish it 4 days after you made the presentation [i.e. if you present on Day 1, submit your draft on Day 2; I review/comment on it and you submit a final version on Day 4; I then publish it on Day 5].
4. **Student-led presentation (30 points).** From Day 7 (July 11) to Day 13 (July 24), in a team of four (depending on the final class size), you will do a slide presentation on a predetermined topic (see below). You must conduct research and do extra readings for this presentation, but the slide presentation should be as visual as possible. This presentation should be 30 minutes plus Q&A from your classmate. You form your own team on Day 4 (July 3). Team members receive the same grade, but I reserve the right to adjust individual grades if free riders are spotted.

Day 7: The Israel Gaza war, what prospects for peace?

Day 8: Immigration: some societies do better than others?

Day 9: Global inequalities and climate change

Day 10: The Uberisation of the world

Day 11: The #MeToo movement around the world (how it started, how it evolved, and what it has changed)

Day 12: Whither the right to disconnect at work?

Day 13: Covid-19: What have we learned from three years of pandemic?

COURSE DESCRIPTOR

A:	Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes.
A-:	Generally outstanding performance on all (or almost all) learning outcomes.
B+/B/B-:	Substantial performance on all learning outcomes, or high performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance.
C+/C/C-:	Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes, possibly with a few weaknesses.
D+/D:	Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes
F:	Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, or failure to meet specified assessment requirements.

Numerically, each grade corresponds to the following points:

A	93–100	B-	80–82.9	D+	67–69.9
A-	90–92.9	C+	77–79.9	D	63–66.9
B+	87–89.9	C	73–76.9	D-	60–62.9
B	83–86.9	C-	70–72.9	F	below 60%

COURSE POLICIES

Academic Honesty

I have zero tolerance for any academic dishonesty. If you violate this code, you will receive an F for the entire course. Details can be found at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>.

Communication via Emails

My primary means of getting in touch with you outside of class is through emails. So, check your email regularly. Because I receive a lot of emails every day, please help me identify your email by using a clear the subject line. Feel free to send me a follow-up email if you do not hear from me after 24 hours.

Feedback for Evaluation

You are welcome to give comments and feedback at any time during the class. You can also send me emails.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Day 1 (Wednesday 26 June): Housekeeping and Orientation

Key Ideas

- Global affairs – what does it mean to you?
- Global affairs versus international affairs
- The concept of globalisation

Reading

- ✧ Heywood (2014). Chapter 1, Introduction to Global Politics & Steger (2013). Chapter 1, What is globalization?

Activities

- ✧ Documentary viewing & discussion: "Mapping the Future of Global Civilization" by Parag Khanna, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oVlac9Sli7M>
- ✧ Exploring diverse perspectives on global affairs: CNN, NPR, BBC, Al Jazeera, RT, CGTN, DW & France 24.
- ✧ Presentation based on news clipping (done by me) & discussion.

Day 2 (Thursday 27 June): Historical context & Theoretical approaches

Key Ideas

- The making of the modern world
- Realism, liberalism & critical approaches

Reading

- ✧ Heywood (2014). Chapter 2, Historical Context, and Chapter 3, Theories of Global Politics
- ✧ Optional reading: Heywood (2014). Chapter 21, Why Theory Matters.

Activities

- ✧ Discussing current issues: the news this week (*Quartz Daily Brief, New York Times Morning Brief, Bloomberg Open*, etc.).
- ✧ Presentations based on news clippings & discussion:
 - o 1:
 - o 2:
 - o 3:
 - o 4:
 - o 5:
 - o 6:
 - o 7:

Day 3 (Tuesday 2 July): An economic-led globalisation?

Key Ideas

- Capitalism and neoliberalism
- Economic globalization
- Global capitalism in crisis

Readings

- ✧ Heywood (2014). Chapter 4, The Economy in a Global Age & Steger (2013). Chapter 3, The economic dimension of globalization.
- ✧ Optional reading: Thomas L. Friedman (2005), *The World Is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-first Century* & Joseph E. Stiglitz (2006), *Making globalization work.*

Activities

- ✧ Discussing current issues: the news this week (*Quartz Daily Brief, New York Times Morning Brief, Bloomberg Open*, etc.).
- ✧ Documentaries viewing & discussion: "Three Eras of Globalization" by Thomas Friedman, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pjiq-ObPhF0> & "Can the economy grow forever?" by Ted-Ed (World Economic Forum), <https://youtu.be/mT3P0YSNonE> [For more from the WEF, <https://www.youtube.com/worldeconomicforum/featured>].
- ✧ Presentations based on news clipping & discussion:
 - o 8:
 - o 9:
 - o 10:
 - o 11:
 - o 12:
 - o 13:
 - o 14:

Day 4 (Wednesday 3 July): Nation-states in global affairs: past and present

Key Ideas

- Nation-states as the defining units of international relations
- Foreign policy transformed
- Nationalism today

Readings

- ✧ Heywood (2014). Chapter 5, The state and Foreign Policy in a Global Age and Chapter 7, The Nation in a Global Age and/or Steger (2013). Chapter 4, The political dimension of globalization.

Activities

- ✧ Discussing current issues: the news this week (*Quartz Daily Brief, New York Times Morning Brief, Bloomberg Open*, etc.).

- ✧ Documentary viewing & discussion: "Is nationalism ever a force for good?" by Jared Diamond (Big Think), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bkw7545dQGM>
- ✧ Presentations based on news clipping & discussion:
 - o 15:
 - o 16:
 - o 17:
 - o 18:
 - o 19:
 - o 20:
 - o 21:

Day 5 (Thursday 4 July): Beyond the nation-states (I) – Global Civil Society

Key Ideas

- The concept of global civil society and its different members
- The role of global civil society in global issues and public affairs

Readings

- ✧ Heywood (2014). Chapter 6, Society in a Global Age; Chenoweth, Erica (2022). "Can nonviolent resistance survive COVID-19?," *Journal of Human Rights*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (July 2022), pp. 304-316. [see also <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/30/world/middleeast/iran-protests-haiti-russia-china.html>] & Mitrani, Mor, "Global Civil Society and International Society: Compete or Complete?," *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*, Vol. 38, No. 2 (May 2013), pp. 172-88.

Activities

- ✧ Discussing current issues: the news this week (*Quartz Daily Brief, New York Times Morning Brief, Bloomberg Open*, etc.).
- ✧ Presentations based on news clipping & discussion:
 - o 22:
 - o 23:
 - o 24:
 - o 25:
 - o 26:
 - o 27:
 - o 28:

Day 6 (Tuesday 9 July): Beyond the Nation-states (II): Supra-, sub- and trans-national actors

Key Ideas

- International organizations and the UN
- Subnational actors and the rise of regionalism
- The concept of the global city and its role in global affairs

Readings

- ✧ Heywood (2014). Chapter 18, International Organizations and the United Nations and Chapter 20, Regionalism and Global Politics & "The growing role of cities in international diplomacy," World Economic Forum (<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/11/the-growing-role-of-cities-in-international-diplomacy/>).

Activities

- ✧ Guest Speaker on the EU Office (TBC)
- ✧ Presentations based on news clippings & discussion:
 - o 29:
 - o 30:
 - o 31:
 - o 32:
 - o 33:
 - o 34:
 - o 35:

Day 7 (Wednesday 10 July): War(s) and terrorism in a global context

Key Ideas

- Can we justify military intervention or unilateral use of force?
- The concept of responsibility to protect and its application
- The many forms and significance of contemporary terrorism

Readings

- ✧ Heywood (2014). Chapter 10, War and Peace & Chapter 12, Terrorism.

Activities

- ✧ Guest Speaker from an institution dealing with security (TBC)
- ✧ Student-led presentation on *The Israel Gaza war, what prospects for peace?*

Day 8 (Thursday 11 July): Migrants and Refugees – Transnational Challenges and Human Security

Key Ideas

- Migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers
- A world on the move
- Transnational communities

Readings

- ✧ International Organization for Migration (UN), *World Migration Report 2022* (<https://publications.iom.int/books/world-migration-report-2022>), OECD, *2021 Annual International Migration and Forced Displacement Trends and Policies Report to the G20* (https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---ddg_p/documents/publication/wcms_829943.pdf) & Harari (2018), Chapter 9 "Immigration: Some Cultures Might Be Better Than Others" (pp. 140-157).

Activities

- ✧ Guest Speaker from The Justice Centre (TBC)
- ✧ Student-led presentation on *Immigration: some societies do better than others?*

Day 9 (Tuesday 16 July): Climate Change and Global Climate Governance

Key Ideas

- The threats of climate change and the international society responses
- The role of non-state actors in global climate governance

Readings

- ✧ Heywood (2014). Chapter 16, Global Environmental Issues, Steger (2013). Chapter 6, The ecological dimension of globalization & Lenaerts, K. and S. Tagliapietra (November 2021). "Goodbye Glasgow: what's next for global climate action?", Bruegel Blog (<https://www.bruegel.org/blog-post/goodbye-glasgow-whats-next-global-climate-action>).

Activities

- ✧ Guest Speaker from Greeners Action (TBC)
- ✧ Documentary viewing & discussion: "What is net zero?" by *The Economist* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aM31RyxSSCw>).
- ✧ Student-led presentation on *Global inequalities and climate change*

Day 10 (Wednesday 17 July): The global supply chain vs. the fight against poverty

Key Topics

- The many aspects of poverty
- The global supply chain, and making it fairer
- Fighting poverty: adjustment programs, aid and making the world a fairer place

Readings

- ✧ Heywood (2014). Chapter 15, Poverty and Development, Villena, Verónica H. and Gioia, Dennis A. March 2020. "A More Sustainable Supply Chain," *The Magazine*, Harvard Business Review (<https://hbr.org/2020/03/a-more-sustainable-supply-chain>) & "Main message" and "Introduction" (pp. 1-16) in Brenton, Paul, Ferrantino, Michael J. and Maliszewska, Maryla. March 2022. *Reshaping Global Value Chains in Light of COVID-19*, World Bank Group (<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/37032/9781464818219.pdf>).

Activities

- ✧ Guest Speaker from SoCO (TBC)
- ✧ Student-led presentation on *The Uberisation of the world*

Day 11 (Thursday 18 July): Gender in global politics

Key Ideas

- Feminism, gender and global politics
- Gendering global politics

Readings

- ✧ Heywood (2014). Chapter 17, Gender in Global Politics

Activities

- ✧ Guest Speaker from RainLily / ACSVAW (TBC)
- ✧ Student-led presentation on *The #MeToo movement around the world, how it started, how it evolved, and what it has changed*

Day 12 (Tuesday 23 July): Social media, big data, and the challenges from online civil society

Key Ideas

- The impact of social media on traditional social movement and communications
- The politics of big data and the growing digital surveillance

Readings

- ✧ Harari (2018), Chapter 3 "Big Data Is Watching You" and Chapter 4 "Equality: Those Who Own the Data Own the Future" & Contents/Introduction of MacKinnon, Rebecca. 2012. *Consent of the Networked: The Worldwide Struggle For Internet Freedom*. New York: Basic Books. (available on Blackboard)

Activities

- ✧ Guest Speaker from Agence France Presse (TBC)
- ✧ Student-led presentation on *Whither the right to disconnect?*

Day 13 (Wednesday 24 July): Global health: tackling the biggest challenges

Key Ideas

- Universal Health Coverage
- Emergencies
- Health and Well-Being

Readings

- ✧ World Health Organization. 2023. *World health statistics 2023: monitoring health for the SDGs, sustainable development goals*. Geneva: World Health Organization.
[\[https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240074323\]](https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240074323)

Activities

- ✧ Guest Speaker from Institut Pasteur in Hong Kong (TBC)
- ✧ Documentary viewing & discussion: "Covid-19: why your life will never be the same again" by *The Economist* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pFaGbtDJFwA>).
- ✧ Student-led presentation on *Covid-19: What have we learned from three years of pandemic?*

Day 14 (Thursday 25 July): Global politics and the future of globalization

Key Ideas

- Contending images of the global future
- Towards a more fragmented world?

Readings

- ✧ Heywood (2014). Chapter 22, Images of the Global Future & Steger (2013). Chapter 8, The future of globalization.

Activities

- ✧ General discussion.
- ✧ Documentary viewing & discussion: TBC.