

# World Politics and International Relations

## AY 2024/2025

### PREPARATORY AND BACKGROUND READINGS

The degree course in World Politics and International Relations is multidisciplinary, embracing most of the disciplines included within “Political sciences” in the Italian tradition. If your undergraduate studies were less multidisciplinary, you are likely to find that you lack certain basic notions in one or another specific discipline – basic notions that are essential to make headway in the relevant courses. In particular, if you have gained little or no university experience in an entire discipline – such as politics or history or law – we strongly recommend that you begin consulting the relevant volumes (listed below) well before the beginning of the degree course.

These preparatory readings are distinct from the *course readings* listed in an individual course syllabus, and which students are normally required to read *during the course*. The *course readings* form the basis of presentations and/or discussions in class, of any relevant written assignments, and of the final exam. Whatever your level of preparation prior to the beginning of classes, the course readings are an *essential* part of the degree course.

#### On political economy:

- N.G. Mankiw, *Principles of Economics*, 6th edition, South Western, 2011.

#### On international law:

- V. Lowe, *International Law*, Oxford University Press, 2007, Chs 2, 3, 4, 5.
- A. Clapham, *Human Rights. A very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, Chs 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8.

In addition, the following audio-lectures, available on internet, are recommended:

- Judge Christopher Greenwood, The Sources of International Law:

[http://untreaty.un.org/cod/avl/ls/Greenwood\\_IL\\_video\\_2.html](http://untreaty.un.org/cod/avl/ls/Greenwood_IL_video_2.html)

- Judge Thomas Buergenthal, A Brief History of International Human Rights Law:

[http://untreaty.un.org/cod/avl/ls/Buergenthal\\_HR\\_video\\_1.html](http://untreaty.un.org/cod/avl/ls/Buergenthal_HR_video_1.html)

- Mr. Kevin Riordan, Basic Ideas about International Criminal Law:

[http://untreaty.un.org/cod/avl/ls/Riordan\\_CLP\\_video\\_1.html](http://untreaty.un.org/cod/avl/ls/Riordan_CLP_video_1.html)

#### On comparative politics:

- R. Hague and M. Harrop, *Comparative Politics and Government. An Introduction*, McGraw-Hill, 2010.

or:

G. Peters, *Comparative Politics*, Macmillan, 1998.

#### On history of diplomacy:

- K. Hamilton and R. Langhorne, *The Practice of Diplomacy. Its Evolution, Theory and Administration*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Routledge, 2010. Part 1, “From the beginning until 1815”  
or

H. Nicolson, *The Evolution of Diplomatic Method*, pdf freely available at:

[https://leicester.figshare.com/articles/book/The\\_evolution\\_of\\_diplomatic\\_method/10088255/1](https://leicester.figshare.com/articles/book/The_evolution_of_diplomatic_method/10088255/1)

**On history of government:**

- M. Mann *The Sources of Social Power, Volume 2, The Rise of Classes and Nation States 1760–1914*, Cambridge University Press, 1993, Chapters 13 and 14.
- *American government*: <https://openstax.org/details/books/american-government-3e>
- Christopher Pierson, *The Modern State*, 1996, <https://archive.org/details/modernstate0000pier/page/n9/mode/2up>

**On international relations:**

- M. Spindler, *International Relations: A Self-Study Guide to Theory*, 2013, Verlag Barbara Budrich, <https://library.oapen.org/bitstream/id/ab86bf74-adb0-4da4-af91-81d1cf34c25a/1007712.pdf>

**On political philosophy:**

- Jonathan Wolff, *An Introduction to Political Philosophy* (Oxford University Press).

Or

- Colin Bird, *An Introduction to Political Philosophy* (Cambridge University Press).

You can also see these open-access background readings (The encyclopedia entries are advanced introductions. Listen to the podcasts first!):

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15-20 minute podcasts available at <https://philosophybites.com/>

- Peter Singer on consequentialism: <https://philosophybites.com/2022/05/peter-singer-on-consequentialism.html>
- Michael Sandel on justice: <https://philosophybites.com/2011/01/michael-sandel-on-justice.html>
- Jonathan Wolff on John Rawls's theory of justice: <https://philosophybites.com/2010/02/jonathan-wolff-on-john-rawls-a-theory-of-justice.html>
- Jeff McMahan on killing in war: <https://philosophybites.com/2009/11/jeff-mcmahan-on-killing-in-war.html>

Encyclopedia entries:

David Miller, "Justice", in Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/justice/>

Gillian Brock, "Global Justice", in Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/justice-global/>

Leif Wenar, "Rights", in Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/rights/>

**On methods for political research:**

- *Introductory Statistics*, 2013 OpenStax. Creative Commons, <https://openstax.org/details/books/introductory-statistics>
- Angela Nichols, *Research in Political Science: An Undergraduate Guide*. 2021. Creative Commons, <https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/lesson/77470/overview>

or

- Valerie Sheppard, *Research Methods for the Social Sciences: An Introduction*, 2020, Creative Commons, <https://pressbooks.bccampus.ca/jibcresearchmethods/>

**On European Union Politics and Governance:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gE39L48QzbA>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QXZqS6AqD3c>

The brief course descriptions in the WPIR website include, in most cases, more specific preparatory reading (which may or may not overlap with the above list of basic readings). Please consult the WPIR website for details.