CONTENTS

1. Welcome p.2

2. Assessment information p.2

3. Politics and Governance in the Contemporary World p.4
   3.1 The structure of the course
   3.2 Reading Politics and International Relations
   3.3 Administration and Information

4. 1st term written assignment p.6

5. Essay Questions p.7

6. The course week-by-week p.9

   Term One: Michaelmas
   Section One: Principles of Liberal Democracy p.9
   Section Two: Practice of Liberal Democracy p.10
   Section Three: International Institutions p.11

   Term Two: Lent
   Section Four: Principles of International Relations p.12
   Section Five: Practice of International Relations p.13
   Section Six: The USA and its discontents p.14

   Term Three: Summer
   Section Seven: Global Crises p.15
1. ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Welcome to POLI100: Politics and Governance in the Contemporary World.

Please familiarise yourself with the material covered in this booklet as soon as possible.

Communication: It is your degree and your responsibility to follow the course and to know the rules of the Department and the University. It is compulsory for you regularly to check your Lancaster email account for messages, Moodle, and the Departmental e-noticeboard and noticeboard. You should respond to any emails or letters that we send to you. You should inform us if you are experiencing difficulties on your degree – if we do not know we cannot help.

Lectures: Lectures take place in Faraday Lecture Theatre, in Michaelmas Term. This lecture theatre can be found in the centre of campus, on the North Spine. In Lent and Summer Terms the lecture will be in the George Fox Lecture Theatre 1, which is opposite Grizedale and Pendle Colleges. The lectures are held every week during term time on Mondays 17.00 – 18.00 and Tuesdays 15.00 – 16.00. You will need to attend both lectures. The first lecture is on Monday 6th October 2013 at 5 pm.

Seminars: In addition to attending your two lectures each week you must also attend a weekly seminar. You should note that seminar attendance is strictly compulsory and will be monitored. If you are to be absent from your seminar you must contact Gillian Taylor (preferably before the absence). We need to keep detailed records of absences, as failure to attend seminars without a proper excuse could ultimately result in disciplinary action being taken against you. More positively, a spotless record of seminar attendance will be very helpful when you ask members of the Department to write references for prospective employers!

Additional information on all things PPR can be found in the Undergraduate Handbook.

2. ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

Assessment for this course takes the form of three pieces of written coursework and a written examination. All coursework should be submitted by no later than 12 Noon on deadline date.

Deadlines are

- Thursday of week Michaelmas Term 6th November 2014 (1st written assignment)
- Thursday of Week 9 Michaelmas Term Thursday 4th December 2014 (2nd written assignment)
- Thursday of Week 9 Lent Term Thursday 12th March 2015 (3rd written assignment)

1st written assignment: The first piece of written work for the course is a 1000 word analysis of a key text in liberal democratic thought. This piece of writing is unassessed but submission is required to proceed to Part II.
Essays: 2nd and 3rd coursework assignments are essays of not more than 2000 words each. (Details on p.8.)

You must submit two copies of your coursework. One should be printed and posted in the essay submission box within the Department. The other should be submitted electronically via Moodle. Instructions for electronic submission can be found in the Undergraduate Handbook. Be aware that your essay will be considered ‘late’ if you do not submit both paper and electronic copy by the deadline.

For essays submitted up to three days late (to include weekends) there is a mandatory and fixed deduction of a full grade. Please note that tutors have no discretion about this deduction. Where the third day falls during the weekend, then work is to be submitted by 12 noon on the first Monday afterwards.

Essays submitted more than three days late (but before the Senate deadline) will be marked by tutors, but initially the mark will count only as ‘supplementary evidence’ and not for CWA (Course Work Assessments, e.g. essays). Full details can be found in the PPR Undergraduate Handbook V.3 p.14.

Extensions to the essay deadlines are allowed only in exceptional and unavoidable circumstances. You must notify Gillian Taylor (County South B.43) of these circumstances in advance.

The coursework must be word-processed and must not exceed the stated word length (see PPR Undergraduate Handbook v.3 p. 14-15).

Plagiarism is treated very seriously and will not be tolerated (see PPR Undergraduate Handbook v.3 p.20).

Examination: In addition to the three course work essays you will sit a written examination in Summer Term. The exam is three hours long and you will be asked to answer four questions: two relating to the first term lectures, and two relating to the second and third term lectures.

Getting help: If you have any questions about the details of these arrangements, or if you are having difficulties, then you should initially consult your seminar tutor. However, if your tutor cannot answer your question then you should first consult a member of the support staff who will answer any questions especially those relating to the requirements and administration of the course, or refer you to Dr Mabon if appropriate.

Part One Director: Dr Simon Mabon
County South B29
s.mabon@lancaster.ac.uk
3. Politics and Governance in the Contemporary World

3.1 Politics and Governance in the Contemporary World is taught for twenty-four weeks and over three terms. The aim of the course is to introduce you to the key areas of Politics and International Relations. The course is designed to be accessible to those who have studied Politics before, but also to those who have not. For the latter the course will provide an introduction and a foundation for future study; for the former it will expand and develop knowledge into new areas. The course will give a ‘taster’ of the kinds of modules which are available in Politics and International Relations in the second and third years (Part Two). The course is taught by eight members of academic staff, each focusing on an area of their expertise.

The course is divided into two main sections. In the first term students are introduced to the principles, practice and institutions of ‘liberal democracy’. Liberal democracy is the political and economic order that for many years has characterised life in ‘the West’. We begin the course by looking at the foundations of the liberal state, liberty and democracy, and examine their meaning, value and compatibility. We then explore two states that exemplify those principles (the UK and USA). Finally we will survey some of the institutions of liberal democracy which work within and beyond the state level (such as the European Union and the United Nations). The second term concentrates on the international system. First we look at different ways of understanding the world of states, a field of study known as International Relations. We then look at the application of these IR theories to the non-Western world, in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. We will explore the complex and challenging role that the USA has on the current world political stage, and take a survey of some contemporary issues in politics. The course concludes in the third term where we will build upon all of the material covered in the course to consider instances of global crisis.

The course therefore embraces several components, which (when put together) build up into a complete picture. No part of the picture can really be understood without reference to the whole. It is therefore very important for you to attend all lectures and seminars. However, simply attending lectures and seminars will not complete the picture for you. One of the most important things that you will need to do is to undertake your own reading, participate in seminar discussions and to think about the issues that are outlined in the course. One of the most exciting things about studying Politics and International Relations is the opportunity to develop informed opinions and to base our views on facts and arguments. This course is designed to enable you to do this, but the process is not simply a passive one – you must be actively engaged in taking responsibility for your own intellectual development.

3.2 Reading Politics and International Relations

A vital but often overlooked component of any course is reading. Although the expression is not used very often any more, when students attend a university they are said to be ‘reading’ for a degree. There is much more to this expression than a quaint way of expressing student life. Degrees are not just the result of turning up to lectures and seminars: they are the product of students working and engaging with the books, essays, articles, and manuscripts that generations of scholars have produced on their discipline. Reading, like any skill, takes
time, hard work, and patience to develop. Tutors and lecturers will help you to navigate this material, but part of your responsibility is actively to engage with the books on reading lists, taking notes from them when appropriate, and to use them as a resource and a spur to your progression.

In order to smooth your introduction into the study of Politics and International Relations we have compiled a bespoke book for the course, which will contain core readings required for seminars. These will be supplemented by pieces posted on Moodle. It is your responsibility to read – and engage – with the material in the book and on Moodle before each seminar. You should also take advantage of the resources that the library has to offer. Your seminar tutors will explore this with you in the early weeks of the course.

In addition to these resources, be sure to read around the topic. Having a general interest in politics should mean that you’re reading newspapers on a daily basis already; if not, it is essential that you start. This will help to supplement and test knowledge gained and developed in lectures and seminars. Another good source of information is social media. Facebook, YouTube and Twitter are proving to be increasingly useful tools to disseminate information and ideas. If you don’t already use social media for this purpose, it is worth doing so. A list of key people and organisations that you should follow will be put on Moodle. In the meantime you should follow @pplancaster and @drmabon for regular updates about the course, and articles/stories to read.

3.4 Administration and Information: Using Moodle Virtual Learning Environment and submitting essays

Throughout your time at Lancaster you will need to keep up-to-date with the schedule of the Department, events and meetings which are being held, and alterations to planned events. However well a programme is planned there are always unexpected events which mean that alternative arrangements are necessary. The Moodle Virtual Learning Environment is one of the ways in which you can keep yourself informed of this vital information.

Moodle is therefore used in two ways. First, it is used to post messages about changes or pass on information about the University and your course. Second, it can be used to post information about the contents of lectures (such as lecture notes and slides if the lecturer chooses to make these available).

As Moodle is the primary way in which we will try to keep you informed it is therefore essential that you check the Moodle message board frequently. Additionally, please be aware that it is your responsibility to use and check your Lancaster email account regularly. We will only communicate with you through these accounts. It is far too complicated to use alternative accounts.

Further information about Moodle can be found in the Welcome Booklet http://www.lancs.ac.uk/welcome/welcome-booklet.pdf
4. **1st Written Assignment**

**Term One:** Written assignment 1  
**Deadline:** Thursday 6\(^{th}\) November 2014 by 12 noon

Read the following excerpt from John Stuart Mill’s classic essay *On Liberty* (1859), and write a critique of around 1,000 words, addressing the following questions:

1. In what respects does this excerpt exemplify liberal thought?  
2. In what way does Mill set a limit on government by democracy?  
3. How might Mill’s ideas be applied, in one or more specific policy area(s)?

‘The object of this Essay is to assert one very simple principle, as entitled to govern absolutely the dealings of society with the individual in the way of compulsion and control, whether the means used be physical force in the form of legal penalties, or the moral coercion of public opinion. That principle is, that the sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number, is self-protection. That the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilised community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not a sufficient warrant. He cannot rightfully be compelled to do or forbear because it will be better for him to do so, because it will make him happier, because, in the opinions of others, to do so would be wise, or even right. These are good reasons for remonstrating with him, or reasoning with him, or persuading him, or entreating him, but not for compelling him, or visiting him with any evil, in case he do otherwise. To justify that, the conduct from which it is desired to deter him must be calculated to produce evil to some one else. The only part of the conduct of any one, for which he is amenable to society, is that which concerns others. In the part which merely concerns himself, his independence is, of right, absolute. Over himself, over his own body and mind, the individual is sovereign’.
5. Essay Questions

Term One Written assignment 2
Deadline: Thursday 4th December 2014 by 12 noon
Word Length: 2000 words
Choose ONE question from the list below.

Principles of Liberal Democracy:

1. Why does Hobbes think that, without the state, life would be ‘nasty, brutish, and short’?

2. Under what conditions, according to social contract theorists, are governments legitimate?

3. “Every democracy should have a constitution in order to protect the rights of its citizens.” Explain and assess this view.

Practice of Liberal Democracy:

4. 'In a fast-changing political context, rigid constitutions are a menace to liberal democracy'. Discuss, with reference to the US and UK examples.

5. Critically evaluate the view that the legislature in the UK is too weak, and its US counterpart

6. Are powerful pressure groups compatible with representative democracy?

International Institutions:

7. To what extent does the doctrine of Responsibility to Protect provide the United Nations with a viable new mission in the 21st century?

8. Is economic cooperation between states more or less likely in the wake of the global financial crisis?

Term Two Written assignment 3
Deadline: Thursday 12th March 2015 by 12 noon
Word Length: 2000 words
Choose ONE question from the list below.

Principles of International Relations:

1. How do critical theories differ from other approaches in International relations? Assess their distinctive contributions in comparison to Realism and Liberalism. Illustrate with examples.

2. Assess the post-development claim that binary identities characterise North-South relations and discuss the consequences of these representations. Illustrate with examples.
3. To what extent is the Realism versus Liberalism debate still relevant for the study of International Relations? Illustrate with examples.

**Practice of International Relations:**

4. 'Mainstream IR theory is essentially Eurocentric and is therefore problematic when analyzing the behaviour of states of the 'Global South'. Do you agree?

5. Do nations need states?

6. Has India and China's dominance in the Asia Pacific region impacted upon the domestic policies and foreign policies of smaller states in the region?

**The USA and its Discontents:**

7. How has global politics changed since 9/11?

8. What can Realism teach us about the War on Terror?
6. The Course, Week by Week

Outline
In the next seven lectures we will explore the principles which underpin liberal democracy. Liberal democracy is one of the most influential forms of government, and describes the kinds of government that are exemplified by the UK, USA, states of the EU, Australia, Canada and others. It combines elements of democracy (rule by the people) and liberalism (a concern with freedoms and rights), though these strands should be carefully distinguished. We are not only concerned with thinking about what the components of this form of government are and how they fit together; we are also concerned with trying to think about why people support the principles behind liberal democracy, and whether their arguments in support of it as a just or good form of government are convincing ones.

Readings
Seminar readings are posted on Moodle, as are other ‘further readings’ marked + below. Other reading are available from the library, and can be found via Onesearch. You should read these in combination with readings found in the course textbook. Remember also to explore bibliographies and ‘further reading’ sections as you come across them. Though there are copies in the library, you may find it useful to purchase an introductory text on political philosophy. If you do purchase a book, I recommend J. Wolff An Introduction to Political Philosophy (Oxford University Press, 2006) as the best.

Lecture One: What is Political Theory?
Seminar: Are we free to choose our political institutions?

Lecture Two: The State of Nature

Lecture Three: The Social Contract
Seminar: What would life be like without the institutions of the state?

Lecture Four: The Nature of Consent

Lecture Five What is Democracy?
Seminar: Is the authority of the state only legitimate because we consent to it?
Lecture Six: Virtues and Vices of Democracy

Lecture Seven: Liberal Rights and Constitutions

Seminar: What, if anything, would be wrong with unconstrained democracy?

Section 2 The Practice of Liberal Democracy

Term: Michaelmas Weeks 5 – 8

Lecturer: Dr Mark Garnett

Outline

These seven lectures will focus on key elements of government and politics in liberal democracies, using Britain and the United States as examples. The aims are:

● To consider how, and with what success, the principles of liberal democracy (covered in the previous section) are put into practice;

● To introduce students to the study of comparative politics;

● To provide information about domestic government and politics which underpins the role of the state in the international arena.

Lecture One: Constitutions

Lecture Two: Legislatures

Seminar: In what ways is the US Constitution designed to protect liberty? Have constitutional changes since 1997 made Britain more democratic? How effectively do the US Congress and the UK Parliament perform the roles normally assigned to legislatures in liberal democracies?

Lecture Three: Executives

Lecture Four: Judiciaries

Seminar: Is executive dominance inevitable in modern states? Does the political power of judges enhance or detract from democracy in the US and the UK?

Lecture Five: Elections
Lecture Six: Parties and Party Systems

Seminar: Do elections in Britain and the US ensure ‘government by the people’? To what extent do the party systems of the UK and the US make government ‘responsible’?

Lecture Seven: Groups in Politics

Seminar: Is the promotion of ‘special interests’ contrary to the spirit of liberal democracy, or integral to it?

Section 3 Global Governance Nations

Term: Michaelmas Weeks 9 – 10

Lecturer: Dr Thomas Mills

Outline
The next four lectures build on the previous discussions of the practice of liberal democracy at the level of the nation-state by exploring how liberal democracies have sought to achieve forms of governance on a global scale. This has been attempted in the political domain, principally through the body of the United Nations. This sections begins by exploring the founding and structure of this institution, before going on to explore its principal functions throughout the course of its history and some of the main challenges facing the UN today. Global governance has also been attempted in the economic domain. The second half of this section explores this process firstly by discussing the rise and fall of the so-called Bretton Woods system and finally by discussing the rise of neoliberal economics and the challenges facing global economic governance in the wake of the recent global financial crisis.

Lecture One: Global Political Governance 1: United Nations: Founding and Structure

Lecture Two: Global Political Governance 2: United Nations: History and Contemporary Debates

Seminar: How effective has the United Nations been over the course of its history in promoting international cooperation?

Lecture Three: Global Economic Governance 1: Rise and Fall of the Bretton Woods System

Lecture Four: Global Economic Governance 2: Rise (and Fall ?) of Neoliberalism
Seminar: Why has global economic governance proved to be such a challenge for nation states?

Section 4  Principles of International Relations
Term: Lent Weeks 11 – 13
Lecturer: Dr Basil Germond

This section introduces students to key theories within the discipline of International Relations. It begins by exploring the traditional theories of Realism and Liberalism before moving towards more critical approaches to understanding International Relations.

Lecture One: International Relations Theories

Seminar: To what extent is IR a contested discipline? Why do we need IR theories?

Lecture Two: Realism and Structural Realism

Lecture Three: Liberalism and Institutional Liberalism

Seminar: (a) How do Realists understand the role of the state in the international system? (b) What makes liberal states peaceful? Would a world of liberal states be a world of endless peace?

Lecture Four: Critical IR Theories

Lecture Five: Post-Structuralism

Seminar: (a) What do critical IR theories (including Marxism) bring to the study of world politics in the post-Cold War world? (b) What is the post-structuralist understanding of the relations between knowledge and power? [Discuss the case of the Iraq war]

Lecture Six: Critical approaches to North-South relations

Seminar: Why do states give foreign aid?
In this section we examine the politics and international relations of three major regions: Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. We will explore the role of these regions in world politics, their historical marginalisation within international relations, and the increasing role and recognition of these regions within the IR field.

**Lecture One: The ‘Global South’**

**Seminar:** To what extent does the legacy of colonialism impact on the study of contemporary politics?

**Lecture Two: The African Experience**

**Seminar:** Account for the ongoing problems of development in Africa.

**Lecture Three: The Middle-Eastern Experience**

**Seminar:** Is the Middle East a ‘unique’ region in the study of International Relations?

**Lecture Four: South Asia**

**Seminar:** What are the main security concerns of South Asia? Discuss with special reference to the rise of Islamism in the AF-Pak region, and also with regard to the separatist movements in India. How do secessionist movements in India especially in Kashmir and the Indian Northeast impact on regional security?

**Lecture Five: East Asia**

**Seminar:** Discuss the main political and economic developments that have taken place in China since 1949, when the PRC/People's Republic of China was established?

**Lecture Six: The Nation-State Unbound I – Nationalism, Ethnicity, Identity and Belonging**

**Seminar:** Is the nation in decline or in ascendance?

**Lecture Seven: The Nation-State Unbound II - Transnational Communities and Diasporas**

**Seminar:** Account for the unprecedented interest in diasporas in the study of International Relations.
This series of lectures examines the impact of 9/11 on the American politics of security. What strategic, ethical and political ideas explain a foreign policy response that even the ‘realists’ of foreign policy consider problematic? And how has the politics of security – and the American way of war – changed during the war on terror? What does the war on terror reveal about the problems of security politics in the twenty first century?

**Lecture One: The United States and Neoconservatives After 9/11**

**Seminar:** Exceptional Times Require Exceptional Measures. Discuss. What is unusual about Gray’s essay?

**Lecture Two: Realism, Democracy and the War on Terror**

**Seminar:** Do you agree with Mearsheimer’s criticism of the Bush administration?

**Lecture Three: The Future of US Foreign Policy: The Debate over the Israel Lobby**

**Seminar:** Is Israel’s foreign policy damaging for the national interest of the US? What is problematic about Mearsheimer’s and Walt’s argument?

**Lecture Four: Change and Continuity in US Geopolitics**

**Seminar:** How do the use of drones and cyber weapons change geopolitics?

**Lecture Five: The Future of US Foreign Policy: New Threats?**

**Seminar:** Create a ‘league’ table of security threats to the United States. Are we at the end of the war on terror and at the dawn of a new ‘cold war’ with China? How will international relations change in a post American age? Should we be worried?

**Final Lecture of 2nd term:**

**Core Concepts C and Exam Information**

**First Lecture of 3rd term: Careers**
The final section of this course explores several of the challenges facing actors in the international system in the 21st century. It is driven by questions about the nature of states and sovereignty in response to these challenges.

Lecture One: Contested Sovereignty and Territorial Crises

Seminar: What is sovereignty? Is it a useful concept in the contemporary world?

Lecture Two: The Global War on Terror?

Lecture Three: Terror, Sectarianism and the Rise of ISIS

Seminar: What impact have the War on Terror and the rise of ISIS had upon global security and sovereignty?

BANK HOLIDAY – No lecture

Lecture Four: Cyber Security and ‘Anonymous’ Threats

Seminar: How does the Internet alter understandings of sovereignty and law? How can these problems be addressed?

Lecture Five: Humanitarian Intervention

Lecture Six: Environmental Security, Insecurity and Crisis

Seminar: Should we still talk about state sovereignty? If not, what should we focus upon?