



CHELMSFORD HIGH SCHOOL

International Relations SYLLABUS 2023-2024

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is for college bound seniors interested in the United States and its role in international affairs. Students will attain a global perspective and understanding of international issues including the rise of nations, colonialism, and government practices. Students will examine world events such as leadership, environmental concerns, coups, treaties, peace accords, genocides, natural disasters, failed states, terrorism, zones of chaos, and resource wars. Other significant topics explored will include national security, nuclear politics, diplomacy, economic development, and the United Nations.

Students will investigate events by analyzing spheres of influence and cultural characteristics of world regions and countries. Regions to be examined are Africa, Asia, Latin America, Europe, Australia, and North America. Students will utilize maps, research skills, regional and local newspapers, and journals. Documentary and foreign films will also be viewed to gain awareness of international relations.

Students will gain a solid understanding of regional issues and geographic locations. Students will analyze and attempt to resolve conflicts and determine the role of the United States in global affairs. Students appropriate for this course should enjoy group discussions, independent research, and becoming knowledgeable about international issues. Students should have good reading and writing skills as well as a curiosity about the world and their future role in it.

This Honors level course is for seniors interested in the United States and its role in international affairs. Students will attain a global perspective and understanding of international issues including the rise of nations, colonialism, and government practices. Students will examine world events such as environmental concerns, coups, treaties, peace accords, genocides, natural disasters, failed states, terrorism, zones of chaos, and resource wars. Through lively dialogue and debate, students will analyze and attempt to resolve conflicts and determine the role of the United States in global affairs. Students appropriate for this course should enjoy group discussions, independent research, and the complexity of international issues.

Prerequisite(s): US History II

REQUIRED TEXTS

The New World of International Relations, Roskin/Berry (ISBN: 978-0-205-07949-0)

Supplementary books: *The Ugly American* by Eugene Burdick, *A Long Way Gone* by Ishmael Beah

COURSE GOALS and STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of the course, students will be able to...

Course Goals:

Students will be expected to think and communicate effectively. Throughout this course, students should: read information critically to develop understanding of concepts, topics and issues. write clearly, factually,

persuasively and creatively in Standard English. speak clearly, factually, persuasively and creatively in Standard English using a variety of technology/media to obtain, organize and communicate information and solve problems, and conduct research to interpret issues or solve complex problems using a variety of data and information sources.

Student Learning Outcomes:

- Understand key concepts and concerns in international relations, including notably the way power is acquired and used globally and how states and non-state actors interact
- Demonstrate an appreciation for the practice of comparative political inquiry, and an understanding of institutions of American government or traditions of Western and non-Western political thought
- Become familiar with contemporary theories of international relations to use as lenses to differently explain outcomes and events in world affairs
- Become conversant in current international events through a close reading of the news and interpretation of events through international relations theories and concepts
- Develop the ability to evaluate and synthesize information from diverse and reliable sources, identifying and differentiating between primary and secondary source material
- Bring research skills to bear on a specific issue related to international affairs, producing a research paper, opinion paper, personal reflection or analytical essay
- Exhibit familiarity with research methods by students of international relations and political science to pose and answer questions and conduct research
- Effectively develop a logical argument and justify a position through written and oral presentations and demonstrate the ability to read and question original research and theoretical writings

COURSE STANDARDS

D2.Eco.14.9-12. Analyze the role of comparative advantage in international trade of goods and services.

D2.Eco.15.9-12. Explain how current globalization trends and policies affect economic growth, labor markets, rights of citizens, the environment, and resource and income distribution in different nations.

D2.Geo.11.9-12. Evaluate how economic globalization and the expanding use of scarce resources contribute to conflict and cooperation within and among countries

D2.Geo.12.9-12. Evaluate the consequences of human-made and natural catastrophes on global trade, politics, and human migration.

D2.His.1.9-12. Evaluate how historical events and developments were shaped by unique circumstances of time and place as well as broader historical contexts.

D2.His.3.9-12. Use questions generated about individuals and groups to assess how the significance of their actions changes over time and is shaped by the historical context.

D2.His.4.9-12. Analyze complex and interacting factors that influenced the perspectives of people during different historical eras.

D2.His.9.9-12. Analyze the relationship between historical sources and the secondary interpretations made from them.

D2.His.11.9-12. Critique the usefulness of historical sources for a specific historical inquiry based on their maker, date, place of origin, intended audience, and purpose.

D2.His.14.9-12. Analyze multiple and complex causes and effects of events in the past.

D2.His.16.9-12. Integrate evidence from multiple relevant historical sources and interpretations into a reasoned argument about the past.

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Chelmsford High School is committed to supporting the success and well-being of all students, regardless of varying abilities and levels of adaptive skills. The Special Education office provides services and resources to empower each student to attain their highest level of academic success and learning independence.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

At Chelmsford High School, students are expected to maintain high moral and ethical standards, as exemplified by the final sentence of our mission statement: *“A spirit of respect is fostered, as members take responsibility for their actions and acknowledge the rights and differences of others.”* (CHS Mission Statement)

Students should respect themselves, other students, staff members and the school. The acts of cheating and plagiarism violate expectations that students will exhibit respectful, ethical behavior.

[The Academic Honor Code](#) exists to address the issues of cheating and plagiarism.

GRADING POLICIES

Please connect with individual teachers for specific information regarding grading. Students will be able to monitor academic progress biweekly through X2/ASPEN.

Students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the academic support programs and services (such as PRIDE Block, after-school help, etc.) available to them to help ensure and support success. Information about these services can be found at

COURSE SKILLS

The following skills are addressed in this course:

The following skills are addressed in this course: communication, critical thinking is used to evaluate information thoroughly and leverage the insight gained in order to make an informed decision, collaboration, identify and evaluate sources, research and analysis.

COURSE OUTLINE

1. Unit I: Chapter One: Power Systems in Transformation

- a. What is power?
- b. How does IR differ from domestic politics?
- c. What is an international system?
- d. What systems have the world gone through in the past century?
- e. Are states and sovereignty still the foundations of IR?

2. Unit II: Chapter Two: IR Theories

- a. What is IR theory?.
- b. What is national interest?
- c. How do realists, liberals and constructivists differ on the national interest?
- d. How did Lenin adapt Marxism into IR theory?

3. Unit III: Chapters Three: America's Changing National Interest and Chapter Four: Vietnam and the Warping National Interest

- a. What was early U.S. interest?
- b. How did the U.S. develop their contemporary foreign policy?
- c. What factors led to changes in our national interest and foreign policy?
- d. How did containment impact U.S. foreign policy?
- e. What impact did the Vietnam War have on foreign policy?

4. Unit IV: Chapter Five: Russia and Geopolitics and Research Paper

- a. Explain the impact of geography on Russia.
- b. Explain ideological foreign policy.
- c. What was the Cold War and how did it impact foreign policy?
- d. Explain the theory of imperial overstretch.
- e. What issue does Russia pose today?

5. Unit V: Chapter Seven: From Colonialism to Decolonization

- a. Explain what caused European imperialism and could it have been avoided.
- b. Identify the major colonial empires.
- c. Explain what external factors forced South Africa to change.
- d. Explain what happened to most African lands after their independence.

6. Unit VI: Chapter 8: Chapter Eight: Eternal Warfare in the Holy Land

- a. Explain what nationalism is, and where it came from.
- b. Explain how Israelis and Arabs became nationalistic.
- c. Identify the wars fought between Israel and Palestine.
- d. Explain whether the Arab-Israeli conflict is a clash of religions or just about land.
- e. Can peace be achieved?

7. Unit VII: Chapter 15: The Challenge of Asymmetrical Conflict

- a. What is asymmetrical conflict?
- b. How does terrorism relate to insurgency?
- c. Why is terrorism so connected to the Middle East?
- d. Is the United States equipped to fight asymmetrical conflicts?

This syllabus and course outline are subject to change as Chelmsford High School seeks to continually improve the learning experiences for all students.

"We foster PRIDE* in our pursuit of excellence."

PRIDE refers to our five core values – Perseverance, Respect, Integrity, Dedication, and Empathy. These five pillars represent our points of emphasis in supporting the development of quality students and quality citizens.