

# SA.503 (GOVERNANCE, POLITICS AND SOCIETY)

## Courses

### SA.503.100. Comparative Political Economy. 4 Credits.

This course is intended to bridge the gap between economics and politics as taught at SAIS. First examines some of the main “currents” in the literature and familiarizes the student with different variants of political economy. Presents an overview of the classical liberal, Marxian/Polanyian and Keynesian understandings of the economy, each of which serves as both a primer to political economy and as an introduction to the main contemporary approaches. Then engages with what many scholars argue is the major approach in comparative political economy: rational choice theory. By contrast, the next section looks beyond the rationalist tradition to the nowadays somewhat neglected historical tradition. Building on the historical tradition, next examines institutionalist approaches, explaining institutional change and stability over time through path dependence and earlier arrangements. Concludes with more social constructivist understandings of political economy, emphasizing the powerful role of economic ideas in the evolution of economic policymaking over time.

**Prerequisite(s):** Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.610.770[C]

### SA.503.101. Contemporary Theory in International Relations. 4 Credits.

Examines the leading contemporary theories of international relations, showing how each contributes uniquely to the larger literature. How are alliances formed? What is the relationship between absolute and relative gains? How do wars begin? Emphasizes interrelationships, divergences and cumulative developments, from the balance of power to the latest in structural, rational choice and regime theory.

**Prerequisite(s):** Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.600.702[C]

### SA.503.102. International and Comparative Political Economy of Developing Countries. 4 Credits.

This course welcomes any student pursuing a degree at SAIS. The main aim of the course is the study of the main international and domestic factors behind the economic and political development and underdevelopment of the countries in the world that are not identified or categorized as ‘advanced’ or ‘mature’ capitalist economies. While the focus of the course is on countries that are not considered rich or developed (most countries in the regions of Latin America, Asia, Africa, the Middle East), we will refer to and use material throughout the course that also covers the rich countries and emerging market ones inasmuch as: 1) they were once underdeveloped or have developed recently, and this experience sheds light on those that have not managed to develop or ‘catch up’; and 2) their own growth and development has been in many cases a cause why others have remained undeveloped (i.e. colonialism, imperialism, dependency). The main analytical tools for the study of the international component come from concepts, theories, case studies, and data from the sub-field of International Political Economy (IPE). In turn, the main tools for the study of the domestic component of developing countries come from the sub-field of Comparative Political Economy (CPE). Hence, the course identifies key overlapping international and domestic factors that have led some countries to be poorer, less developed and more vulnerable than the advanced or mature capitalist ones.

**Prerequisite(s):** Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.610.704[C]

### SA.503.103. International Investment Law. 4 Credits.

Suitable for non-lawyers, this course analyzes the legal framework for private international investment. It considers: sources of international investment law; conditions for admission of foreign direct investment and its treatment; political risks involved such as expropriation; risk mitigation techniques such as political risk investment insurance; and the settlement of investment disputes between states and investors. We review the rights and responsibilities of foreign direct investors, shareholders’ rights and joint ventures. Given the professors’ professional focus, we take a particular look at project finance and sovereign wealth funds. The privatization-expropriation cycle is analyzed. The course delves into international anti-corruption treaties and relevant domestic laws. Aspects of the One Belt One Road initiative are discussed. Active class participation is encouraged.

**Prerequisite(s):** Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.650.740[C]

### SA.503.104. International Political Economy of Emerging Markets. 4 Credits.

This course examines the relationship between politics and international economics in developing countries, with a focus on the emerging market economies. Throughout the course, we critically evaluate different political science theories of foreign economic policymaking in emerging markets. The course begins with an overview of theories of international political economy. The second section of the course focuses on developing countries’ embrace of economic globalization over the past thirty years. We examine different political reasons for why emerging market and developing countries have liberalized foreign trade, removed barriers to foreign investment, and reduced the state’s role in the domestic economy since the 1980s. The final section of the course explores how globalization has impacted emerging market economies, and considers how governments in these countries have dealt with the new challenges that have emerged in this era of economic globalization.

**Prerequisite(s):** Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.610.700[C]

### SA.503.105. Politics of International Economy. 4 Credits.

The international economy has reached a critical juncture. The threats to the liberal international economic order have expanded and intensified in recent years. Will international markets for goods and capital remain open going forward? If not, what might replace the current international economic system that has been in place for decades? This course analyses these pressing questions. The course introduces students to major theories of International Political Economy. We then apply these theories to understand how the international economy has evolved over the past two centuries. The final part of the course applies insights from theory and history to understand the functioning and future prospects of the contemporary international economic system.

**Prerequisite(s):** Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.610.717[C]

**SA.503.106. Public Opinion as a Driver for Policymakers: Analytical Tools and Illustrative Case Studies. 4 Credits.**

A key driver in any democracy, public opinion determines who will govern and which policies will be likely to succeed. Contrary to general beliefs that public opinion is highly ephemeral, both practice and scientific evidence show that public opinion is a stable, measurable, and ultimately predictable phenomenon. To explore the issue both conceptually and in practice, the course will first offer a review and discussion of relevant literature on the subject and then analyze concrete case studies exploring the uses and misuses of public opinion and polling by political and policy stakeholders. Likely case studies will include primarily Latin American examples, such as the 2002 Lula election, but also extra-regional cases, such as the 2008 Obama election and the Arab Spring, among others. The final objective is to develop a critical eye when analyzing public policy and political problems.

**Prerequisite(s):** Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.810.705[C]

**SA.503.107. Research Seminar: Political Economy in the Shadow of Conflict. 4 Credits.**

This is a research seminar organized around key ongoing debates in international relations, such as the role of institutions, audience costs, leaders, bargaining, reputation, interdependence, and ideas. The course will emphasize critical engagement of the empirical evidence presented in favor of theoretical arguments, encouraging students to devise rigorous new ways to test their observable implications. Can bargaining theory help us understand the outbreak, as well as the termination of, international conflict? Has growing economic integration among states changed the nature of military conflict? Are certain economic interest groups more prone to support military expansion than others? Do democratic institutions enable states to better signal their resolve to adversaries? By the end of the course, students will be able to recognize, engage, and develop their own taste for theoretical arguments, as well as present the most compelling empirical evidence for or against them. Note: successful completion of this course fulfills the capstone requirement for second-year MAIR students. <https://livejohnshopkins.sharepoint.com/sites/SAISInsider2/SitePages/DC-Capstones,-Professional-Skills-Courses.aspx> target="\_blank">Click here for Capstone course application information</a>

**Prerequisite(s):** Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.610.702[C]

**SA.503.108. Watching Wall Street from Washington: Financial Market Analysis for the Public Sector. 4 Credits.**

This course investigates the strategies for, as well as the relevance of, financial market analysis directed toward policy audiences. Students will develop a deeper understanding of global financial markets and learn how to leverage that understanding shape and achieve policy goals. The course will cover five major topics: 1) Basic techniques for financial market analysis across a variety of major asset classes; 2) The characteristics of financial market analysis – its forms, theoretical underpinnings, advantages, and deficiencies; 3) The hierarchy of policy relevance of financial market analysis; 4) Costs, risks, and difficulties of financial market analysis for the public sector; and 5) Future challenges and formulations of public sector market analysis given the technological developments in finance, money management, and trading.

**Prerequisite(s):** SA.100.304[C] OR SA.300.701[C] OR SA.300.706[C] OR SA.999.701[C]; Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.610.703[C]

**SA.503.109. International Human Rights Law. 4 Credits.**

This seminar focuses on the role of international law in the promotion and protection of human and people's rights the world over, a world that was once referred to as "our global neighborhood" by the Commission on Global Governance. It grapples with the concepts, histories and policies that are relevant to the international legal protection of human and peoples' rights and seeks to locate, engage, and understand the underlying economic, socio-cultural and political forces that shaped, and continue to shape, both international human rights law and the world in which it operates. It reflects on the following questions: We live in a world that is at once deeply multicultural and patently unequal, a world that is divided inter alia by race, gender, culture, and class—given these particularities, can the "international" accommodate the "local"? Why is the "international" an important element in the protection of human and peoples' rights?; and How (and to what extent) is "law" relevant to the international protection of human rights—why do we not just resort to politics. Literature including African, Asian, Islamic, European, and Inter-American perspectives will be examined, as will global and regional-level international normative texts, processes, and institutions that have been established to advance the cause of the international protection of human and peoples' rights. We will attempt to understand the nature of their design, their functions, and their effectiveness. Our focus will be on the various global texts, norms, and institutions that exist, as well as on the African, European, and Inter-American Systems for the protection of human and peoples' rights. Lessons for both international human rights theory and practice that are decipherable from our examination of the literature and seminar discussions will be analyzed with a focus on the practice of international human rights activism by states, groups, and individuals.

**SA.503.110. Soft Power in Hard Times: The Global Politics of Influence. 4 Credits.**

Behind the headlines of unrest and conflict in many corners of the world, the struggle for prestige and influence between nations, societies and institutions intensifies. This long-term trend is reinforced by the diffusion of conventional forms of power away from governments to non-state actors, and the ever-greater speed of the digital revolution. Among the consequences has been the rise to global fame of the concept of 'Soft Power', in theory a means to turn a country's attributes and achievements into a lever for gaining advantage in international competitions of all sorts. Image-making, nation-branding, public diplomacy and propaganda are all components of a state's – or an institution's – soft power strategy today. Soft power antagonisms are on display whenever censorship, internet-blocking or other forms of 'cultural protectionism' are deployed. The course will study the inter-acting dynamics of 'soft' and 'hard' power, using contemporary and historical perspectives. It will demonstrate that the concept can be applied to a much broader range of interaction between societies than that dominated by nation-states and traditional foreign policy. After an initial discussion about the evolution and meaning of the concept, case studies will look at those nations most prominent in the soft power game, starting with the only true soft power superpower - the US – and concluding with a special session on the relationship between hard and soft power in the Ukraine conflict.. The second half of the course will look at the key currencies of soft power: cultural heritage, institutions, personalities, sport, creative industries, food and fashion, models of innovation and modernity.

**SA.503.111. Political Systems of the Developing World. 4 Credits.**

The course is meant to prepare the students to deal with the most important theoretical and substantive issues affecting the nature, functioning and transformation of the political systems of the developing world. It will be focused on the analysis of the most relevant regime-types: authoritarian, military, theocratic, and democratic, and of major political processes such as political development and social modernization, state-building and state failures, political transitions and democratic consolidations. It will draw from a wide range of cross-national and cross-regional cases. Class time will be divided between lectures and discussion. Each topic will be introduced by the instructor. The readings constitute the background for each lecture, but we will build upon them and go well beyond. Occasionally, timely articles on especially significant events will be analyzed in depth. Hopefully, fertile discussions will follow on the assumption that all students have done their reading. The course will end with a take-home exam.

**SA.503.112. Afghanistan and the Failure in Mali: Any Future for Peace Operations, Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding?. 4 Credits.**

Peace operations, conducted by a variety of international actors like the UN, EU, NATO, AU, have in recent decades become a strategic pillar of international conflict management starting with the first UN peacekeeping mission UNTSO in Palestine in 1948. In 2023 more than 130,000 persons (115,000 military, 10,000 police and about 7,000 civilians) were active in a variety of peace operations, most of them led by the UN. By and large, the performance of the missions was considered encouraging, except for dramatic failures in Rwanda and Somalia in the early 90ies. This perception totally changed when in August 2021 the international media reacted with much surprise to the dramatic events at Kabul airport. Thousands of Afghans were desperate to get on the last Western flights to escape Taliban rule. Western commentators were quick to proclaim that the failure in Afghanistan would be the end of the longstanding, Western inspired conflict management strategy to end violent conflict in failing states by deploying peace operations and getting involved in long term peace- and nation building processes. The fact that in 2023 the military regime in Mali informed the UN that its mission, MINUSMA, would no longer be tolerated and would have to leave the country by the end of the year, seemed to confirm this view. But do the failures in Afghanistan and Mali really imply that there is no future for peace operations and peacebuilding? That would, indeed, be a dramatic change regarding the future of global conflict management. In the class, therefore, we will take a thorough look at the history, concepts, changing doctrines as well as unsolved problems of UN-lead peace operations to enable students to give practitioners as well as academics a convincing answer.

**SA.503.113. Civil Wars and Interventions. 4 Credits.**

The course aims to discuss key concepts and theories for analyzing the various phases and facets of intra-state wars, and to show how international interventions can affect the course of these conflict and peace processes. In order to do so, the course first analyzes the causes of civil wars and other major episodes of collective violence, the dynamics of violence in these conflicts, and early warnings measures that allow to "predict" the onset of conflict. It then examines the different ways in which external/international actors can intervene in domestic conflict, management techniques that may be introduced at various stages of conflict to halt escalation, minimize violence, and to move conflicts toward a sustainable peaceful settlement. This includes an analysis of peacekeeping, peacebuilding and state-building practices, and transitional justice. The course provides students with an advanced understanding of the thriving literature on civil wars and interventions, looking at both qualitative and quantitative scholarship, and offers students the possibility to engage with case studies to explore the real-world conflicts from their origin to their solution. In particular, the course offers detailed treatment of conflicts across continents, such as the wars in Bosnia, Colombia, Sahel region and Syria. Each case study will cover different aspects of the conflict, from their onset to evolution and the role of external actors. The expected outcome is that students will be able to engage with both academic and policy relevant literature in their quest to gain a better understanding of the conflict cycle.

**SA.503.114. Constitutional Development and Democratization. 4 Credits.**

The spread of human rights and constitutional, representative government based on the rule of law, as either spurs for development or desirable outcomes of development, seems both possible and urgently necessary and yet we appear to be in a phase where many countries are undergoing a democratic retrogression. This course examines the nature, fate and prospects for constitutional development and democratisation across the globe. Employing both the diachronic and synchronic methods of analysis typical of comparative constitutional law, the course addresses topics such as constitution-making and constitutional amendment; forms of state and forms of government as well as the role and functions of constitutional and supreme courts with the aim of understanding how a given institutional framework may facilitate or obstruct transitions to democracy. The experience of so-called 'consolidated' democracies will often be used to examine the transition to democracy of other countries.

**SA.503.115. Russia and Ukraine in Peace and War. 4 Credits.**

The war in Ukraine is the most important event in Europe since the collapse of the Soviet Union. It is also arguably the key global geopolitical development since 9/11. The Russian invasion reshaped relations between key global players, and redefined existing alliances and international organizations, such as NATO and the European Union. It killed tens of thousands, displaced millions, revived the threat of a nuclear war between Russia and the West and might unleash a global famine. The violence has and will continue to shape European and global politics for decades to come. This class centers on this war, its causes and conduct and places the conflict in the broader framework of Russia-Ukraine relations over the last 100 years. The class also leverages the war as a lens to understand Russia and Ukraine, their societies and politics.

**SA.503.116. Law and Institutions of the European Union. 4 Credits.**

The spread of human rights and constitutional, representative government based on the rule of law, as either spurs for development or desirable outcomes of development, seems both possible and urgently necessary and yet we appear to be in a phase where many countries are undergoing a democratic retrogression. This course examines the nature, fate and prospects for constitutional development and democratisation across the globe. Employing both the diachronic and synchronic methods of analysis typical of comparative constitutional law, the course addresses topics such as constitution-making and constitutional amendment; forms of state and forms of government as well as the role and functions of constitutional and supreme courts with the aim of understanding how a given institutional framework may facilitate or obstruct transitions to democracy. The experience of so-called 'consolidated' democracies will often be used to examine the transition to democracy of other countries.

**SA.503.117. Great Powers. 4 Credits.**

This course explores foreign policies of China and the USSR from the Second World War to the present. It thus provides students with an understanding of the Cold War, the post-Cold War, and the post-post-Cold War, seen "from the other side." It is a counterpart course to another course run simultaneously by the same instructor: American Foreign Policy. Unlike AFP, GP largely ignores American foreign policy (though, of course, US actions or non-actions are addressed, because they form an important backdrop for understanding foreign policies of China and the USSR; of the two, the USSR is given more weight throughout). We begin in 1945, seeking to uncover sources of Soviet conduct and understand the origins of the Cold War from a Soviet perspective. We then proceed to consider China's road to revolution, the origins of the Sino-Soviet alliance, and the Korean War. Subsequent lectures explore Khrushchev's foreign policy, including his misadventures in the Middle East and his efforts to be recognised and accepted by the United States. The Sino-Soviet split is also closely considered. The 1960s chapter look at Cuba and Vietnam (primary as seen from Moscow). We then delve into detente and the reasons for its demise. Lectures on the 1980s look at both the dangerous superpower crises (during the so called "Second Cold War") and the peaceful end of the Cold War on Gorbachev's watch. The course then explores Russia's foreign policy in the 1990s, and the unrealised promise of Russia's integration in the West. The final lecture covers Putin's years in power. We also will look at the dynamic of Sino-Russian relations, and the outlook for the Sino-American strategic competition.

**SA.503.118. 21st Century Trade Rules: Basic Principles and Emerging Issues. 4 Credits.**

Designed for non-lawyers, we will explore the 21st century challenges that face the international trade system in a very interactive setting. The emphasis will be on the rules of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and important free trade agreements, including rules governing trade in goods and services, and intellectual property protection. Policy considerations will be emphasized – such as the environmental, developmental, and public health implications of WTO rules, including human and labor rights, as well as security concerns. Particular attention will be given to the 21st century challenges (i) posed by the globalization backlash, (ii) Covid-19 and access to medicines, (iii) climate change, (iv) social policy gaps in the trade regime (environmental, labor and human rights norms), and (v) national security considerations, including the use of trade preferences and sanctions as an arm of foreign policy.

**Prerequisite(s):** Cannot enroll if you previously received credit for SA.650.743[C]

**SA.503.119. Negotiation in the Making of International Law. 4 Credits.**

International law is the set of rules generally regarded as binding in relations between States. Arguably, international law is the product of negotiation and requires ratification in order to be effective. States are expected to comply with a treaty once they become the Parties of a treaty. However, States may prioritize their perceived national interests and decide not to comply with international law if they consider necessary. Rules-based international order is ideal, but not always true in the real world. Leaders of the world gather at global summits to discuss international affairs and governance. Some summits produce outcomes such as agreements and statements. Some are considered binding while others are non-binding. Some are upheld while others are not. Why do summits take place, and how can we evaluate their outcomes? How does international relations influence international law, and vice versa? This course will address these questions by exploring two-level game theory, which views international negotiations as simultaneous discussions at both the domestic and international levels. After an overview of security, trade, development, and environmental issues typically considered at summits, seminar participants will review three types of summits with which the instructor has personal experience: US-Japan bilateral summits; Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP); and the G 7/8 Summits. The first hour of each course will be conducted as a research seminar, followed by a guest-speaker series and simulations. The course is structured around three learning objectives: (1) understanding the implication of theory of two-level games on the international legal negotiation; (2) applying the theory of two-level games to real-world foreign policy issues; and (3) experiencing negotiations and briefings which are the daily activities of practitioners in international affairs.

**SA.503.120. Japanese Grand Strategy. 4 Credits.**

Do Japanese leaders today have a grand strategy, designed to use the various tools of state power to try to shape the external environment to achieve its goals? If so, what are their goals? What are the factors that might determine Japan's success or failure in achieving these goals? How do they compare with previous episodes of Japanese grand strategy? This course tackles these questions by examining the various periods in modern Japan's history where Japanese leaders appear to have forged such strategies. The course begins with the Meiji period in the 19th Century and ends with Japan's Free and Open Indo-Pacific period today, focusing on the external and internal factors that shaped the processes by which Japanese leaders arrived at their choices.

**SA.503.121. Autocracy from Early States to the 21st Century. 4 Credits.**

Autocracy is the most prevalent regime type throughout human history and more than a half of world's population currently live in authoritarian states. This class focuses on the development of autocracy as a global phenomenon from the early states to the 21st century. We will discuss the historical evolution of this regime type, how and why autocracies are born and die, varieties of autocracy, the sources of autocratic stability and collapse, autocratic governance, how autocracies respond to crises and the external and domestic challenges authoritarian rulers and societies face in contemporary world.

**SA.503.122. International Trade Law. 4 Credits.**

Examines the law and institutions of the WTO, including its regulation of trade in goods and services, its dispute-settlement system and how it deals with policy issues (such as environment and labor standards) that may affect trade. Provides an overview of the main features of the WTO system and an in-depth examination of critical issues that have emerged in the dispute-settlement process or in negotiations.



**SA.503.123. International Political Economy. 4 Credits.**

The course aims to provide students with a solid knowledge of international political economy, with a focus on different varieties of capitalism and the role of Europe in the global economic order. The objective is to give students insights into how to think about ongoing substantive debates in the field. We will examine the interaction of multiple factors driving economic change over time: trade globalization, financial market integration, labor market integration through migration, innovation and economic development, as well as their feedback effects on political outcomes (e.g. the rise of populism, international relations, etc.). Students should thus emerge from the course with a comprehensive knowledge of theories of international political economy and with an understanding of how political economies develop under ever-changing economic challenges (e.g. polycrisis in Europe, geo-economic fragmentation, the US-China confrontation, migration and climate issues).

**SA.503.125. The Geopolitics of Organized Crime. 4 Credits.**

The course gives students a comprehensive understanding of contemporary patterns and characteristics of transnational organized crime, illicit markets and trafficking activities. It does so through a broad set of analytical tools, that are not limited to criminal justice, but rather include political science, international relations, political economy and political sociology. After offering an overview of what and how we know about organized crime, we will examine variations in its contemporary forms in the international arena, addressing key questions related to geopolitical stability and instability – therefore debating the nexus with state fragility, development and security (terrorism).

**SA.503.126. Europe and the Mediterranean Middle East. 4 Credits.**

This course aims to study the multifaceted and complex relationship between Europe/the European Union and the states of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). Starting with the history of European colonialism in the Middle East, the course will examine the post-colonial policies of single European states towards the region, together with the declarations, policies and practices of the European Community, and later European Union, from the 1970s onwards. Suggesting a widely overlooked degree of interconnectedness between Europe and the Middle East, special attention will be paid to Europe-Middle East relations in the realms of trade, migration and border control, security cooperation and democracy promotion. The conceptualisation of the policies of the EU and of single MENA states, together with questions pertaining to power relations, interdependence and leverage in Europe-Middle East relations will also be discussed.

**SA.503.127. Democracy and Its Discontents. 4 Credits.**

This course is designed to do four things. (1) teach the key concepts of democratic politics; (2) perfect writing and presentation skills; (3) underline that it is impossible to speak authoritatively and convincingly about a given country unless one has understood its recent political history; (4) explain the method of historical analysis. The course, in effect, is “history for policy makers” (with a dash of political theory, which is indispensable for any would-be analyst). This course also asks why democracies become subject to severe political upheaval and sometimes fall apart. Such a question cannot be reduced to a few simple variables in a rigid formula. It can only be answered by reconstructing (simulating) events and trying to figure out what was important and what was not in particular cases. Analysts should look at the constitutional frameworks, the expected and unexpected consequences of legislation, the moods of public opinion, the solidity of the public finances, the perception of social justice, the personal qualities of political leaders, the ambitions and self-image of the political class, the changing character of the population and so on. We should, in short, multiply variables, not reduce them, if we want to explain and analyze political upheaval.

**SA.503.128. Scenarios for the Future of Europe. 4 Credits.**

Since the global financial crisis in 2008, some of the most senior political figures in Europe have predicted the EU's collapse or disintegration. A succession of crises (the euro, migration, Brexit, rule-of-law, Covid-19, Russia's invasion of Ukraine, inflation, the Hamas-Israel war) as well as the rise of euro-skeptical populism appeared to vindicate such predictions. But others claim that European integration has always advanced through crises and see a bright future for Europe through a “green recovery” from Covid-19, a robust and united response to external threats, the building of a digital single market, and a robust industrial policy, as well as the EU's regulatory power, extending to AI, enabling Europe to compete more effectively with global rivals. Some see a growing EU role in foreign policy, security and defense, including transatlantic engagement and a strategic response to the rise of China and to Russian aggression. A major EU role in the reconstruction of Ukraine (and Gaza?) could reinforce this more positive narrative. In this course students work together in teams, in dialogue with the instructor, to develop scenarios projecting alternative futures for the EU in the period until 2035.

**SA.503.129. Twin Pillars of the Gulf: Regional Rivalries, and Geopolitical Dynamics. 4 Credits.**

This course examines Persian Gulf politics through the prism of Iran and Saudi Arabia- their history, domestic evolutions, foreign policy, ideology and position in the Persian Gulf. Once known in the American foreign policy establishment as the Twin Pillars of the Gulf, they both supported American political and economic interests until 1979. Iran and Saudi Arabia have followed similar economic and political trajectories. The outcome of such paths however, has been decidedly different. In addition to weighing in on the competing ideological visions and dominating regional position of these two Persian Gulf heavyweights, this course will assess the impact of these states on those of the region including Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Kuwait, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, and Qatar.

**SA.503.130. Contemporary Russian Foreign Policy. 4 Credits.**

This policy seminar is designed to enable students to better understand the sources and manifestations of Russian foreign and security policy. Through course readings, class discussions, assignments, and a scenario exercise, students will assess how a variety of theoretical perspectives can or cannot explain Russian foreign policy choices and actions and Moscow's evolving relationships around the world. They will build on that to develop their own perspectives on how Russian foreign policy can be improved and how other states can develop more effective policies towards Russia

**SA.503.131. Rise and Fall of the Post-Cold War World Order. 4 Credits.****SA.503.132. Political Risk: Analyzing and Managing Challenges in a World of Growing Disorder. 4 Credits.**

Politics affects risk on many levels (e.g., international, national, regional, and local), and is the result of the interaction of many different elements. In this course, we start by examining some basic issues with regard to risk analysis as well as why forecasts often fall short before examining three broad issues: country structural fragility; problems with collective action policymaking; and operational breakdowns. The first looks at how the sociopolitical and institutional dynamics of a country affects its evolution. The second looks at how the policy formulation process works and why it often yields a less than ideal result. The third looks at the challenges of implementation. As such, the class focuses more on the risks that face countries than on how particular risks might impact corporations or NGOs, though the latter is also examined. The two types of risks are related but are not identical (e.g., regulatory changes may be good for a country, but bad for a company or NGO). We conclude by examining how to prioritize and mitigate risk. Each class aims to provide students with a set of frameworks to think about and assess these issues. Students all get a chance to work on case studies to develop their skills. [Click here for the faculty bio](https://www.sais-jhu.edu/seth-kaplan)

**SA.503.133. Negotiating for Humanity: New Approaches for the 21st Century. 4 Credits.**

This course delves into the key analytical components of the concept of 'negotiating for humanity.' It provides an exploration of current approaches to international negotiations, while emphasizing the importance of novel ideas and practices that can better address the distinctive challenges of negotiating for humanity. The course will analyze lessons drawn from the negotiations of international regimes in the fields of sustainable development, climate change, ozone layer depletion, weapons of mass destruction, migration, among others, to identify approaches that can inform current global debates and future processes of negotiation for humanity. Through systems thinking, immersive training simulations and interactive negotiation exercises, the course will contribute to the students' understanding of the processes and instruments the international system needs to implement in order to address global problems, as we approach debates on such topics as human migration, climate change, inequality, ocean pollution, the human rights protection challenges stemming from emerging technologies, outer space navigation and cleanup of orbit debris, technologies in new weapons systems, and the creation of an effective regime to deal with pandemics.

**SA.503.134. Public Diplomacy, the US, and Public Opinion: Brazil Study Trip. 4 Credits.**

Students will organize themselves as a consulting team with functional roles and responsibilities. The course will include reading of foundational material on public opinion, public diplomacy, data analysis, and Brazil. The course will center around answering a client, US Department of State, question regarding its image in Brazil. The class will spend one week in Brazil engaging public, private, and third sector stakeholders and decision makers.

**SA.503.135. Democracy in Crisis. 4 Credits.**

Around the world, from Italy to Brazil, and from Hungary to the United States, populist candidates are fundamentally changing the political landscape. In this course, we explore the nature of populism; investigate whether populism poses an existential threat to liberal democracy; explore the causes of the populist rise; investigate the ways in which populism is a response to demographic change; and discuss what strategies might allow non-populist political actors to push back.

**SA.503.136. International Law Colloquium. 4 Credits.**

This capstone course will provide an opportunity for students who have taken at least one international law course (or a related course) to engage in an advanced way with selected topics in international law and produce a major research paper. The first half or so of the colloquium will be devoted to interactive sessions over zoom or other video technology with leading international law scholars and practitioners from around the world on a series of topics or issues in international law (which may include the international legal regulation of the use of force; migration; the environment; trade; sovereign debt; emerging technologies; or human rights). Students will be required to engage both in writing and orally with the presentations offered by these scholars and practitioners. The second half or so of the colloquium will focus on presentations by students enrolled in the course on the topics of their papers, with detailed feedback being offered from the instructor and their peers.

**Prerequisite(s):** SA.500.110[C] OR SA.500.115[C] OR SA.500.117[C] OR SA.500.119[C] OR SA.502.142[C] OR SA.502.143[C] OR SA.503.122[C] OR SA.553.102[C]

**SA.503.138. Debates in Geopolitics. 4 Credits.**

The purpose of the course is to provoke debate on the state of the world. Issues discussed range from current or potential international crises (for example, Russia's invasion of Ukraine, or the state of US-China relations), to broader problems, such as nuclear proliferation or climate change. The course aims at improving the students' ability to analyze these issues, to go "behind the headlines," to debate them in public. The course does not offer in-depth training in debating or public speaking, but does allow students to acquire practical skills and experience in those areas; in other words, to "learn by doing." The course consists of formal, public, four-person debates based on some of the topics listed below, and others suggested by the class. Students submit their preferences and are grouped together at the beginning of the semester. Each debate lasts one class session, plus a period of general discussion. The course includes ten regular debates and two crisis simulations.

**SA.503.139. The Politics of Population. 4 Credits.**

In 1968, Paul Ehrlich warned in *The Population Bomb* that a growing global population would lead to mass starvation. Today, some environmentalists echo those concerns, arguing that the energy needs of a growing human population would be unsustainable for the planet. At the same time, many industrialized countries from Europe to Asia and America are facing a very different problem: fertility rates that are so low that their populations are rapidly shrinking. According to projections by the United Nations, even some of the poorest countries in the world will experience a declining population soon. In this course, we will examine the politics of population from both an empirical and a normative perspective. How will the world's population change in the coming century? How can industrialized countries sustain their affluence? Should we be more worried about the specter of overpopulation or the perils of underpopulation? And what are the implications of these findings for topics from migration to climate change to the welfare state?

**SA.503.140. UN Human Rights System: Geneva Study Trip. 4 Credits.**

This course explores the significant challenges posed by the technological revolution to the international recognition and protection of human rights, a critical aspect in the advancement of global human development within the era of the UN Charter. Emerging technologies exert pressure on this established system, either by compromising existing rights or by exposing legal gaps that demand the codification of new rights or the adoption of new international protection practices. Through class discussions, legal analysis, and debates, students will build a foundational understanding before the research study trip to Geneva, the capital of the universal human rights system. During their study trip in the Spring of 2024, they will engage with government diplomats, academics, and UN officials actively addressing the system's adaptation to the new realities and challenges brought about by the technological revolution. This experience will provide firsthand insight into the functioning of the system, including the sessions of the United Nations Human Rights Council. Following this, students will have the opportunity to pursue their research projects in this dynamic field.

**SA.503.142. Reimagining Multilateralism: Between Disruption and the Quest for Cooperation. 4 Credits.**

This course examines the ongoing global debate on multilateralism in the 21st century amid the pressures of a new geopolitical landscape and great power competition. It delves into the critical state of multilateralism in an era defined by unprecedented disruption – from geopolitical shifts and technological upheaval to climate change and global health crises – and fragmentation in the international order, including the weakening of established institutions and rising nationalism. In the midst of geopolitical change, the contestation and revision of the rules-based order, both great powers and small and middle powers operate in multilateral frameworks, shaping, contesting, and navigating global norms and institutions. The urgency of the new realities is shifting the focus away from more traditional debates about effectiveness, participation and inclusion, justice, efficiency, post-state-centric approaches, and UN reform. Against this backdrop, Students analyze real-world scenarios and state behavior, and employ future-oriented thinking to gain a nuanced understanding of the ongoing debates on the need to reimagine long-held multilateral frameworks for effective global cooperation on shared challenges. Guest speakers and practitioners will enrich this learning experience.

**SA.503.143. Gender and Development. 4 Credits.**

In this course we focus on understanding the academic and practical frameworks of gender inequality in the Global South. We look critically at the impact of socio-economic, political and cultural forces on gender and development to learn about the vulnerabilities of women and other genders inclusive of changing relationships and roles between sexes in different spaces. My goal is to provide you with a strong foundation of the theoretical discourse, guide you to analyze leading issues, and teach you how to develop critical methodological tools used in the international development sector for programs to improve gender equality including Policymaking. We will use empirical data from across the globe to empower class discussions and debates about gender and development.

**SA.503.144. Current Issues in International Law. 4 Credits.**

The course will focus on leading edge international law issues and questions. Topics may include artificial intelligence, climate change, use of force, economic sanctions, sovereign debt, global health, the push for a new international economic order, international trade law and global socio-economic justice, migration and refugees, international courts and tribunals, the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA), and third world (Global South) approaches to international law. Students will engage with leading scholars from around the world who will Zoom into the classroom to discuss these current international law issues.

**SA.503.145. Human Rights and Emerging Technologies. 4 Credits.**

This course reviews the most important challenges that the technological revolution is bringing to the international recognition and protection of human rights. The students will differentiate the kind of challenges deriving from the digital space as well as those created by developments in the biotechnology revolution and will reflect on instruments and potential interventions at the global or national levels that can help the world move into the technological revolution while safeguarding one the most important legacies of the 20th Century: the creation of an international ethos on the protection of human rights, consolidated as a universal aspiration.

**SA.503.146. Globalization and the New Politics of Industrial Policy. 4 Credits.**

After decades of ever-greater global economic integration, the last five years have seen a remarkable reversal of globalization amidst a broad focus on resilience and security over economic efficiency. This anti-globalization push is driven by a range of factors, including by concerns about China's dominance in supply chains for critical industries, a deterioration of the US-China political and economic relationship, pandemic-related concerns about interdependence and lack of resilience in global supply chains, and political goals of rebuilding manufacturing economies in the West. This course critically examines the substantial transformations currently occurring in the global economy, focusing on the recalibration of economic integration driven by security and competitiveness concerns. The course then covers the resurgence of industrial policy, tracing its historical evolution and showcasing the renewed role of governments in shaping economic development and competitiveness. The seminar aims to provide a nuanced understanding of these ongoing transformations, equipping students with analytical tools to navigate the new landscape of economic disintegration. The course examines supply chain interventions in comparative perspectives, including the new American focus on domestic production (CHIPS and IRA), Europe's response to the transatlantic relationship, and the role of China in prompting a new politics of reshoring and friendshoring in key industrial sectors.

**SA.503.147. SAIS Women Lead Practicum. 4 Credits.**

The SAIS Women Lead Practicum partners SAIS students with public, private, and non-governmental organizations and provides professional experiences through projects that advance women and contribute solutions to issues of global importance. Student teams work with clients to produce reports, policies, or programs. Students will also be expected to participate in a research assignment during Winter Break (travel may be required). Upon their return, teams proceed to analyze, interpret, and present results of findings to the SAIS community and clients. Students audit the course in the fall semester (in addition to their full load) and take the Practicum as a 4-credit course in the spring semester as part of their full load. Note: successful completion of this course fulfills the capstone requirement for second-year MAIR students. [Click here for Capstone course application information](https://livejohnshopkins.sharepoint.com/sites/SAISInsider2/SitePages/DC-Capstones,-Professional-Skills-Courses.aspx)

**SA.503.148. Multiculturalism & the Human Rights of Women. 4 Credits.**

The first part of this course is designed to explore the complex inter-relationship between the quest for gender equality and multiculturalism, with an emphasis on the special dilemmas posed by religious systems which have or seek a significant measure of self-governance but do not accept liberal egalitarianism. The course, however, is not confined to an analysis of the "conflicts" generated by the anti-feminist and patriarchal nature of certain minority cultures, but seeks gender/culture connections in broader terms, taking into account liberalism's own difficulties in granting full citizenship to women. Questions to be examined include the following: Is the partnership of feminism and multiculturalism necessarily agonistic? In a culturally diverse world, what constitutes gender (in)equality? To which extent should democracies accommodate communal cultures inimical to liberal gender equality? Is there an emerging international and/or European model of accommodating cultural diversity which nevertheless adequately takes into account the gender dimension? The second part of the course analyzes the relationship between culture and the regulation of women's sexual and reproductive rights, with special emphasis on domestic and sexual violence, abortion, and pornography.

**SA.503.149. Transnational Advocacy. 4 Credits.**

The class will examine theories and practices of transnational advocacy. Students will learn about different types of advocacy: from lobbying to mobilizing and organizing, from agenda-setting to reactive, rapid response. Students will read academic scholarship on advocacy alongside texts produced by and/or for practitioners. The course explores current theoretical debates: Why do activists build transnational networks? When does advocacy have an impact? They will also engage with broader debates: How can we evaluate the effectiveness of advocacy? And what drives someone to become an activist? Students should take away an understanding of the benefits and limitations of various strategies, tactics and organizational forms.

**SA.503.150. European Union Politics and Policy-Making in a Time of Crisis. 4 Credits.**

Today's European Union is going through a series of major changes. These changes are difficult to decipher. Three-quarters of a century after its inception, European integration remains a little-understood process. Part of the difficulty lies in the fact that the European Union is unlike any other organization. While it is more developed than 'classical' international organizations and has gained some influence in areas traditionally considered the prerogative of states, it is not a state and may possibly never become one. Moreover, since the beginning of this century, it has been confronted with a series of challenges (financial crisis, Euro crisis, migration crisis, the COVID pandemic and its aftermath, the rise of populism, etc.) which have led to deep changes in its governance. Some commentators argue that the old 'Monnet method' (named after its chief architect) must now be revisited or completely overhauled. The purpose of this class is to provide students with the tools to understand how the EU operates, what it does, and the main problems it faces. In doing so, we will critically analyze some of the main academic debates on European integration and discuss their relevance for understanding today's problems. This will facilitate a broader discussion about the nature of EU governance: is the EU truly an organization "unlike any other," as some have argued, or can it be compared to other forms of government? The class is intended to be accessible to all students, irrespective of their prior knowledge of the functioning of the EU.

**SA.503.151. Arab-Israeli Conflict. 4 Credits.**

The conflict between Israel and the Palestinians is rarely out of the news cycle and for all the wrong reasons. The conflict has taken a terrible human toll, affects and is very much affected by on regional and global political dynamics and has no clear end in sight. The recent war in and around the Gaza Strip is but one front in the long and often violent struggle between Israel and other actors in the Middle East. This course unpacks and analyzes the key actors within this conflict and the diverse factors that drive it. It will address questions, including but not limited to: how did the conflict initially emerge and how has it changed over time? What solutions (if any) are currently on the table and what (or who) impedes conflict resolution? This course is recommended for students seeking a deeper immersion in the Israel-Arab conflict and for those who want to understand the origins and potential consequences of the current Israel/Gaza war. This course will be particularly useful for students who seek to better understand a prolonged conflict that still shapes the Middle East.



**SA.503.152. Geopolitics and the Private Sector. 4 Credits.**

Geopolitics is not the exclusive domain of governments. The private sector is thoroughly entangled, often as the agents—willing or unwilling—of government policy, others times as collateral damage or profiteers in the clash of competing national interests, and increasingly as powerful independent actors on the world stage that are not easily manipulated by governments. This course will survey the key concepts and roles of the private sector in geopolitics. Specific topics that student will cover include export controls; industrial and supply-chain policies; outbound and inbound investment screening; geopolitically motivated interventions in financial markets (incl. currency manipulation); and government's efforts to deal with the critical technology systems that are privately controlled (e.g., communications, social media, surveillance, biotechnology, critical minerals, and the commercialization of space). Students who complete this course will acquire a broad understanding of the U.S. government's power to compel and block private-sector activities, and the key constraints thereon, as well as the ways in which private companies gain and suffer from geopolitical forces. Students will learn to analyze geopolitically motivated government interventions in the economy from the perspective of a senior official as well as a senior private-sector executive, differentiating national interests from corporate interests, and appreciating the information asymmetries that always exist. Through discussions of topical case studies and a final research paper on a current topic, students will demonstrate the ability to assess the efficacy of the different ways in which a government can engage with a private-sector entity to advance its policy objectives.

**SA.503.153. Governance in a Vacuum: Norms, Rules, and Regimes for Outer Space. 4 Credits.**

This course explores the challenges of developing and enforcing rules of behavior in ungoverned and semi-governed spaces, with a particular emphasis on outer space. With the expansion of space activities both in and beyond Earth's orbit, it is important to understand the regulatory and policy challenges posed by issues like orbital debris, space mining, rescue and recovery of astronauts, planetary defense, and possibly even human settlements. We will examine existing treaties, national regulations and policies, and emerging governance models to help analyze the roles of various stakeholders, including states, private companies, and international organizations as they address some of these challenges. Through readings, discussions, guest speakers, and research, the course will equip students with the knowledge to assess and contribute to the evolving governance of space. Each student will, either independently or in partnership with one other student, develop a proposal for a new set of rules to govern one particular space activity, including how to develop and enforce those rules. Students will then brief their classmates on their proposal. Students in the class will also have an opportunity (if they choose) to participate in a 1- or 2-day workshop at SAIS, during spring break, that will bring together a number of space experts (scholars, government officials, and practitioners) to discuss the future of cislunar governance.

**SA.503.154. Systems Change for Gender Equity: The Why, What, and How. 4 Credits.**

Most social problems are "sticky"—they persist because they are embedded in, or are by-products of, social and structural systems that keep them in place. Gender inequity is one such sticky social issue. Traditional international development interventions aimed at reducing gender inequity often fail to address the underlying structures and conditions that sustain it. Instead, these programs tend to focus on creating or improving access to opportunities for individual women, girls, and occasionally nonbinary people, men, and boys. As a result, these initiatives typically help individuals manage or cope within the confines of gender inequity rather than transforming the systems and structures that perpetuate it. In this course, we will examine the persistence of gender inequities and the limitations of conventional international development approaches to address them. We will explore the systems that need to change to achieve gender equity, including systems of power and privilege, funding flows, and the structure of philanthropic and foreign aid organizations. We will also discuss various systems change approaches—why they are essential, what they entail, and why they are not used more widely. Finally, we will collaborate to develop actionable ideas through research, advocacy, and innovative programming.

**SA.503.155. International Law and Development. 4 Credits.**

One of the main purposes of international organizations like the United Nations and the World Bank is "international development." See, Article 1 (3) of the Charter of the United Nations and the Article 1 (i) of the Articles of Agreement of the World Bank. Through this course, students will enhance their knowledge of international law that international organizations generate or apply in their work in international development. They will learn how international development shapes international law and organizations and will directly explore the content and challenges of international development. Although there is no consensus on what international development means, this approach will lead to a more nuanced understanding of international development. Studies in this course of the multifaceted roles international organizations play in international development (such as lenders, guarantors, insurers, capacity builders) will enhance the intended learning. The course further examines how these roles have evolved over the years, as well as how international development-related laws and policies are actually formulated and implemented within international organizations.

**SA.503.156. Democracy, Backsliding, and Resilience: Global Challenges and Trends. 4 Credits.**

Around the world, democracies are facing new and persistent pressures. This course examines the state of democracy worldwide, exploring the processes of democratization, the risks of democratic backsliding, and the resilience of democratic institutions. The course will provide students with a strong analytical foundation in the study of democracy. We will then examine the political, institutional, and societal forces shaping democracies today and discuss methods for assessing democratic health in different contexts, drawing on case studies from Europe, Latin America, Asia, and the United States.

**SA.503.157. The Politics of Forced Migration. 4 Credits.**

More than 100 million people are currently displaced by conflict, violence, and persecution worldwide, the highest on record. Millions more have been forced to flee their homes due to natural disasters and climate change. This module examines the relationship between displacement and politics in the modern era. It emphasizes empirical approaches to the study of forced migration and draws on insights from international relations, sociology, economics, anthropology, and geography to shed light on the causes, dynamics, and consequences of population displacement. The course is divided into four parts. Part I examines the conceptual and legal distinctions between different types of population movements, and introduces analytical approaches to studying forced migration. Part II focuses on the causes of refugee and displacement flows, including both macro- and micro-level drivers. Part III focuses on the consequences of forced migration – for international security, host countries and societies, and the displaced themselves. Part IV explores domestic and international responses to refugees and forced migrants, and surveys a range of possible solutions to displacement. Students will engage in a series of [mock] policy simulations [and case studies] based on real-world humanitarian crises.