

30141 - The world today

Syllabus Information

Academic Year: 2021/22

Subject: 30141 - The world today

Faculty / School: 179 - Centro Universitario de la Defensa - Zaragoza

Degree: 563 - Bachelor's Degree in Industrial Organisational Engineering

ECTS: 6.0

Year: 4

Semester: Second semester

Subject Type: Compulsory

Module:

1. General information

1.1. Aims of the course

- To identify the main political, social, cultural, economic and scientific phenomena that have shaped the current world.
- To comprehend the origins, evolution and characteristics of the current international order, as well as the consequences and lessons that can be deduced from it.
- To discern the structures, power units and typology of conflicts in the current world.
- To identify the main geopolitical theories.
- To comprehend the evolution of the mission of the Spanish Armed Forces (SAF), especially concerning permanent and international operations.
- "Specialization in Defence: These approaches and objectives are in line with all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations 2030 Agenda (<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/>), in such a way that the acquisition of the course learning outcomes provides training and competence to contribute to their achievement to some degree."

1.2. Context and importance of this course in the degree

The course, mandatory in the Defence profile of the Degree, allows the future officers of the Army to become familiar with the historical foundations of the current world, especially with regard to geopolitics and globalization. Thereby, it enhances their capabilities to perform their duties in multinational environments and international conflict situations.

The syllabus is structured in two major chronological blocks: the world during the Cold War and the current world. Throughout the course, mentions will be made to the place of Spain - and the role of the SAF in particular- in relation to the main events, conflicts and international, transnational and global trends.

Part of the teaching material will be in English. Likewise, on a voluntary basis, students will be

able to carry out all evaluated exercises in English or French (idiomatic mistakes will not be taken into account). The exam will be in Spanish.

Throughout the semester the contents of the course will be related to ongoing international events as well as to the content of Law and International Relations.

1.3. Recommendations to take this course

- Prior to each session, students should read the compulsory readings provided through Moodle.
- Each class session will start by discussing doubts, although, the instructor may indicate that it is a matter of personalized tutoring.
- Throughout the semester, the students should follow the general and specialized media on international news.

2. Learning goals

2.1. Competences

- C02 - Ability to plan, budget, organise, manage and monitor tasks, people and resources.
- C04 - Ability to solve problems and take decisions with initiative, creativity and critical reasoning.
- C05 - Ability to apply Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) within the field of engineering.
- C06 - Ability to communicate knowledge and skills in Spanish.
- C08 - Ability to analyse and evaluate the social and ecological impact of technical solutions, behaving ethically, with professional responsibility and social commitment, always striving for quality and continuous improvement.
- C09 - Ability to work in a multidisciplinary group and in a multilingual setting.
- C11 - Ability to continue learning and develop self-learning strategies.
- C48 - Capability of working at a professional level in English.
- C50 - Knowledge of international security and defence organisations and treaties signed by Spain in this respect. Ability to function in multinational organisations.
- C51 - Knowledge of international scenarios, analysing the historical development of the 20th century along with geopolitical regions and current conflicts.

2.2. Learning goals

- To understand the main socio political, economic, cultural and scientific processes and events that marked the evolution of the World from the First World War to the end of the Cold War.
- To know the changes and nature of globalization, international relations and war since the end of the Cold War, identifying the main actors and phenomena to be taken into account, as well as the most important sources of conflict.
- To know the bases of Geopolitics, its evolution throughout the 20th century and current trends.
- To identify and analyse the geopolitical environments in which the SAF currently operate.

2.3. Importance of learning goals

In this course students are expected to appreciate the complex interaction between past and

present, local and global circumstances. With this, we aim to equip and train them in the precise intellectual tools to understand the evolution of the main trends of the 21st century, and in particular in the causes and characteristics of current and future international conflicts. All together shall contribute to enhance their professional performance as officers of the Spanish Army.

3. Assessment (1st and 2nd call)

3.1. Assessment tasks (description of tasks, marking system and assessment criteria)

First Call

A. Continuous assessment. The students will demonstrate that they have accomplished the required learning outcomes by obtaining a final grade that must be equal to or greater than 5,00 after the completion of the following assessment instruments:

1. Class activity (**40% of the final grade**). The evaluation will be done through (a) one or more exercises (written or oral) and (b) the International Observatory (written or oral). The specific weight of each of these activities will depend on the particular circumstances of the semester.

2. Exam (**60% of the final grade**). All questions will be open essays, so answers have to be properly argued and supported with historical references. If a student cheats he/she will be expelled from the site of the exam and graded with a ZERO (0) in the call.

B. The students who do not pass the subject by continuous assessment or who would like to improve their grades, will have the right to take the **Global Exam** set in the academic calendar, prevailing, in any case, the best of both grades. This Global Exam will have a 100% weight in the final grade. All questions will be open essays, so answers have to be properly argued and supported with historical references. To pass the subject, the student's final grade must be equal to or greater than 5. If a student cheats he/she will be expelled from the site of the exam and graded with a ZERO (0) in the call.

Second Call

The students who do not pass the subject in the First Call have the right to take a Global Exam set in the academic calendar for the Second Call. This Global Exam will have a 100% weight in the final grade. All questions will be open essays, so answers have to be properly argued and supported with historical references. To pass the subject, the student's final grade must be equal to or greater than 5. If a student cheats he/she will be expelled from the site of the exam and graded with a ZERO (0) in the call.

4. Methodology, learning tasks, syllabus and resources

4.1. Methodological overview

If this teaching could not be done in person for health reasons, it would be done telematically.

The general methodology consists of a combination of lectures by the instructor, classwork and homework.

4.2. Learning tasks

1. Comprehensive **reading** of the compulsory texts before each individual session.
2. Class **lectures** by the instructor. Students will be required to share their questions and views on the compulsory readings and subjects discussed at class.
3. Unless otherwise noted, all compulsory readings and class presentations will provide the study material for the **final exam**.
4. Additional materials will be used in most lectures (motion pictures, audios, current and historical news, etc.).
5. **International Observatory**: Throughout the semester, students are required to report on the international news concerning either a certain geopolitical region, actor or global subject. Reports will take the form of class colloquiums and an individual written essay at the end of the semester.

Classwork Resources:

Students are authorized to use Internet in their laptops and tablets.

Students are NOT AUTHORIZED to use smartphones, to text message or to chat. In case of violation of these rules, the appropriate disciplinary measures will be adopted.

4.3. Syllabus

Introduction

- Notions of Classical Geopolitics.
- The World till 1945. politics, economy and societies.

PART I: The Era of the Cold War

- Origins, Nature and characteristics of the Cold War. The Bipolar World. Cold War Geopolitics.
- Evolution of international and transnational conflict and cooperation after 1945.
- Conventional, Subversive and Proxy Wars; Terrorism; Arms Developments; Propaganda; Intelligence.
- Sociopolitical and Cultural Consensus and Dissent; Fundamentalisms and Extremisms.
- Characteristics and Evolution of the international economy, commerce and finances.

PART II: The World of Today

- Evolution of international and transnational conflict and cooperation. From Unipolarity to Multipolarity. Current Geopolitics.
- The European Union and the Atlantic Alliance in the World. Geopolitical Areas. Global and Up to date State of the World. International Observatory.
- Arm Conflicts; Hybrid Warfare; Arms Trade and Developments from the Revolution in Military Affairs to Nowadays.
- Development and Globalization; Economic Models; Culture, Science and Technology; Natural Resources and Climate Change.
- Population and Migration; Poverty and Inequality; Human Rights.
- The Sustainable Development Objectives (SDO).

4.4. Course planning and calendar

- Class schedule to be determined at the beginning of the semester. Further information will be available at Moodle.
- One or various oral and written exercises will be taken at class. The specific date of each one will be announced at least one week in advance, although some could take place without prior notice. Further information will be available at Moodle.
- Guest lecturers might be invited to the Course.

4.5. Bibliography and recommended resources

<http://psfunizar10.unizar.es/br13/egAsignaturas.php?codigo=30141>
