



Academic Year 2026-2027

Syllabus

Course: Global History CFU 6

Dr. Raimondo M. Neironi

Course Description

The course examines key features of extra-European international relations and global governance from a historical perspective, tracing their origins and evolution between 1945 and 2001, from the post-WWII period to the accession of the People's Republic of China (PRC) to the World Trade Organization. This period encompasses three major phases: the Cold War, the brief unipolar moment of United States (US) predominance, and the formative emergence of a new international order, in which China and Asia occupy an increasingly central position in systemic transformation.

The course provides the conceptual foundations necessary to understand and critically reflect on the history of the so-called Third World (now commonly referred to by scholars, analysts, and commentators as the “Global South”), as well as the opportunities and challenges generated by institutional developments in global governance during the Cold War, with particular attention to the United Nations as the most significant framework of international co-operation ever conceived. It also examines selected aspects of the foreign and domestic policies of Northeast, Southeast and South Asian countries, alongside those of several African and Middle Eastern states, in relation to the two Cold War superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union. Finally, the course addresses the role of Asia and Africa in a changing and increasingly globalised world, assesses their position within the dynamics of hegemonic power, and considers alternative visions – particularly those advanced by the PRC and the Russian Federation – for the governance of East and Southeast Asian affairs in the post-Cold War era.

The course engages with fields of analysis that encompass not only domestic politics and diplomacy, but also economic, social, and institutional transformations within the international context.

Schedule of sections

Section 1	The post-1945 political order: the Cold War, bipolarism and the United Nations
Section 2	Decolonisation, the two Superpowers and the onset of the “Third World”
Section 3	Asia, Africa at the time of détente
Section 4	China's economic reform and opening-up, Japan's economic power and the repercussions on bipolarism
Section 5	The end of the Cold War, the development of new types of regional co-operation and the ascendancy of China

Textbooks and Materials

A) Reference Textbooks

- Luis Eslava, Michael Fakhri, and Vasuki Nesiah (eds.), *Bandung, Global History and International Law: Critical Pasts and Pending Futures*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017.
- William M. Grimes, *Unmaking the Japanese Miracle: Macroeconomic Politics, 1985-2000*, Ithaca; NY: Cornell University Press, 2001;
- Mark Mazower, *Governing the World: The History of an Idea*, London: Penguin Books, 2013;
- Catherine Schenk, *International Economic Relations since 1945*, Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2021 (2nd edition);
- Isabella M. Weber, *How China Escaped Shock Therapy. The Market Reform Debate*, Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2021;
- Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

B) Further specific readings will be made available during the course on the DIDA platform. You are required to register on DIDA to get access to all materials.

Teaching Method

The course combines a range of teaching methods, including lectures, student presentations, and a final debate. Lectures provide students with essential conceptual frameworks and reading guidance on the phenomena under study, while presentations enable critical engagement with the material and foster sustained classroom discussion. The final debate offers students the opportunity to interact with both the lecturer and their peers on themes addressed during the course. Attendance at all lectures and active participation in discussions are required.

Examination

The course includes two specific types of examination: one for attending students and one for non-attending students.

1) For attending students

The assessment of attending students' learning takes place in three main stages: two class presentations and a final debate.

Stage 1 > **Individual presentation**) Each student must examine in depth an academic article, which they can select from a list provided by the lecturer to the class representatives during the first week of the course. Each student must be able to critically evaluate the content and examine the main argument underlying the author's work. In addition, they are expected to conclude their analysis by proposing a couple of related questions for discussion to the class.

Stage 2 > **Group presentation**) The lecturer forms 6/8 groups (the number depends on the composition of the class), each of which will have to present a case study of their choice that falls within the macro-theme selected by the lecturer. Students agree on the topic of their presentations with the lecturer and give PPT presentations in which they critically evaluate the content and argument of their chosen topic. Each presentation must include a slide at the bottom of the PPT containing questions to be asked to classmates for discussion. The theme of this academic year's course is the role of science, technology, and propaganda in the Cold War.

Stage 3 > **Final debate**) During the final two class sessions of the course, a debate moderated by the lecturer is held, in which all attending students are required to participate. The debate draws on topics covered throughout the course, including those addressed in lectures as well as in individual and group presentations. To facilitate preparation, the lecturer will circulate a list of discussion questions three weeks before the conclusion of the course.

2) For non-attending students

The assessment method for non-attending students consists exclusively of an oral examination, to be taken during the regular examination sessions. They have to study:

- **one academic article**

Each student critically assesses the content and argument of an academic article chosen from a list provided by the lecturer to the class representatives during the very first week of the course (please, see above);

- the monograph by **Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London and New York: Verso Book, 2016.**

The book must be read in its entirety. This means that no changes to the programme or the topics covered in the book may be agreed upon in advance.

Non-attending students shall register in Delphi for the additional exam sessions in 2027 (Autumn/Winter session). Students will be notified of their non-attendance status soon after the end of classes. Those who will result non-attendant will automatically lose all the work that they gave in the framework of the permanent evaluation activities (individual presentation, group presentation, final debate). Accordingly, they must take the exam as non-attending student.

Only in exceptional circumstances beyond a student's control, and following consultation with Prof. Gustavo Piga and the course administration, may the lecturer take into account the grade obtained in the individual presentation for students who have participated in "Stage 1" (see above) but are nevertheless required to sit the final examination as non-attending students owing to excessive absences. In such cases, and in such cases only, the mark awarded for the discussion of the academic article will be averaged with the mark obtained for the examination on the entire monograph (please, see point 2) above).

Assessment

The aim of this assessment system is to verify the achievement of the course learning outcomes. In particular, the examination assesses the student's overall preparation, ability to integrate knowledge from different parts of the programme, consistency of reasoning, analytical skills and independent judgement. In addition, language skills and clarity of expression are assessed.

For attending students

The minimum score required to pass the written exam is 18/30 for each test. There is no final exam: indeed, the final mark corresponds to the **weighted average** of the three tests, whose values are distributed as follows:

- Individual presentation in class (40%)
- Group presentation in class (35%)
- Final debate in class (25%).

Attending students must take all three tests in order to obtain a final grade.

For non-attending students

Oral examination (100%). The student discusses specific topics or important aspects of both readings with the lecturer. He/she is expected to reproduce what he/she has learned and explain relevant interrelationships. The minimum score required to pass the written exam is 18/30.

By the way, the rules relating to the examination procedures will be carefully examined on the very first day of the course.

Office hours

On appointment. To book an appointment or ask specific questions about any aspect of the course, please contact Dr Raimondo M. Neironi at raimondo.neironi@gmail.com.

NOTE: If you are an **Erasmus** or a **non Global Governance** student who would like to attend one or more courses in the Global Governance programme, please be aware that, before enrolling in the course, you should have read the **code of conduct** and the procedural rules characterizing our programme. We assume that, if you enroll in the course, **you have read and accepted all Global Governance values and rules**. Notice that attendance is expected from the very first lesson and you need to attend at least 75% of the course to be considered an attending student.

POINT A: GRADES

For assessment purposes, the following scheme will be used:

Unsuitable: major deficiencies and/or inaccuracies in the knowledge and understanding of the topics; limited capacity for analysis and synthesis, frequent generalisations and limited critical and judgmental skills, the topics are set out inconsistently and with inappropriate language;

18-20: barely sufficient knowledge and understanding of the topics with possible generalisations and imperfections; sufficient capacity for analysis synthesis and autonomy of judgement, the topics are frequently exposed in an incoherent way and with inappropriate/technical language;

21-23: Routine knowledge and understanding of topics; ability to analyse and synthesise correctly with sufficiently coherent logical argumentation and appropriate/technical language

24-26: Fair knowledge and understanding of the topics; Good analytical and synthetic skills with arguments expressed in a rigorous manner but with language that is not always appropriate/technical.

27-29: Comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the topics; considerable capacity for analysis and synthesis. Good autonomy of judgement. Arguments presented in a rigorous manner and with appropriate/technical language.

30-30L: Excellent level of knowledge and thorough understanding of topics. Excellent analytical and synthetic skills and independent judgement. Arguments expressed in an original manner and with appropriate technical language.

POINT B: GOALS

Through this course, students will be able to:

KNOWLEDGE AND COMPREHENSION SKILLS:

Acquire and demonstrate mastery of general concepts related to global history, with particular reference to political, economic and social dynamics in the areas of Europe and East Asia; identify key concepts and major issues useful in understanding the evolution of global governance from 1945 to the early 21st century;

ABILITY TO APPLY KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING:

Students will be guided to the use of primary sources as well as of the main analytical and critical tools used by global history scholars. At the end of the cycle of lectures, the student will be able to apply these tools independently in the seminar part.

AUTONOMY OF JUDGEMENT:

Students will be introduced to the various historiographical debates related to the topics covered, in order to create sensitivity to different approaches to the same problem or event. Students will be asked to discuss interpretations and arguments proposed by scholars, as well as to present their own using the specific vocabulary of global history.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS:

Active participation in class lectures and oral presentations in the seminar part will activate in students the necessary skills to present concepts and make logical connections quickly. Furthermore, the stimuli received in class will enable students to argue with autonomy, critical capacity and terminological mastery about the main themes of global history.