



UNIVERSITY  
OF LONDON  
INSTITUTE  
IN PARIS

# Course Outline

BA in  
International  
Politics  
(single honours or  
with French)

2021-2022

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The BA in International Politics programme is available in two versions:

- **International Politics (UCAS Code L241)**
- **International Politics with French (UCAS Code L242)**

The International Politics modules are listed below. The module information for the French Studies minors is listed on page 7 onwards.

## **BA in International Politics**

All modules on the programme are taught and assessed in English. Teaching is by a mixture of small group seminars and Learning Labs. The seminars are designed to generate informed discussion around set topics, and may involve student presentations, group exercise and role-play as well as open discussion. Learning Labs involves field experience where you will engage actors of international politics to develop an advanced understanding of practical aspects of international politics.

### **Year 1 - Compulsory Courses**

#### **POLP101 – Doing International Politics (1): Theories & Actors**

This module develops the idea that politics in general and theory in particular are not passive pursuits. Focusing on the embodied and empirical aspect of international politics, you will explore the main actors doing international politics today.

Students will learn about some of the most important theoretical innovations in many of the disciplines of the social sciences including International Relations, Sociology, Anthropology and Development Studies and understand how each contributes to the study of global politics. The classroom will be experienced as an embedded political space where students will bring their own experiences to bear on how globalisation, migration, and inequality are not abstract and rarefied domains but relate to our everyday, even banal, existence.

This module aims to make all students aware of their own position as active participants in international politics both in Paris and beyond.

#### **POLP102 – Learning Lab: Field Experience (Actors)**

The contemporary study of international politics recognises actors in addition to nations and states for doing international politics such as artists, activists, non-governmental organisations, collectives, and movements.

Students will gain practical experience of how these various actors perform international politics. This module teaches students how to identify, understand and analyse a specific actor (e.g. individual, corporate, collective, institutional, governmental, non-governmental) and study the ways which this actor performs international politics by using theoretical and methodological tools.



Through a collaborative and workshop environment, this module will help students understand the practical sense of actors performing international politics, interpret these actors with theoretical tools and study their actions with methodological tools.

### **POLP106 – Introduction to International Politics**

This module will provide a comprehensive survey of the historical and contemporary events which have and continue to shape the world we live in, as well as a distinct set of concepts developed to help understand this history as more than simply a disparate set of loosely connected events.

The module is organised within a framework that is partly chronological and partly thematic. It aims to equip students with a historical and conceptual knowledge such that they can account for the major historical developments in international relations beginning with the formal appropriation of vast parts of the planet under imperial rule in the mid to late 19th century, and identify and trace the roots of contemporary issues and problems in international relations.

The module will address the major developments in international relations since the 1870s including the 'scramble for Africa', the two world wars, the Bolshevik Revolution, Fascism, the origins and evolution of the Cold War - and its impact on different regions of the world - decolonisation and North-South economic relations, the origins of the war on terror, the financial crisis and the Arab Spring.

### **ULC140 – Issues in Contemporary French Politics**

This course will introduce students to the ways in which institutions and political practices have developed since the inception of France's Fifth Republic in 1958 and how they, in turn, have been shaped and have responded to the changes affecting post-war French society. The first part of the course covers some of the major characteristics of contemporary French politics (institutions, the state, party politics).

The second part of the course offers a thematic approach by focusing on a selection of social and political issues (immigration, race and ethnicity, gender, religion, environment), and analysing the ways in which they have contributed to shape common understandings about what being French means in the late 20th and early 21st century.

### **ULC150 – Introduction to Cultural Studies**

Cultural Studies attempts to identify the common forms of experience and shared modes of understanding by which societies and communities live. It thus makes the argument that culture, and in particular 'popular' culture, is intrinsically political.

Where critical theorists such as Theodor Adorno were often dismissive of popular culture, theorists in the tradition of Cultural Studies took the popular seriously and began from the recognition that consumers were not merely passive spectators within late capitalism, but occupied more complex, often contradictory positions.

In studying the politics of popular culture, this module will introduce some of these key debates in twentieth century critical thought.



## Year 2

### **Compulsory Courses**

#### **POLP201 – Doing International Politics (2): Methods**

Nineteenth-century Marxists and positivists attacked idealism, laying the foundations for modern social science's distrust of actors' own explanations for their behaviour. More recent authorities such as Pierre Bourdieu remained suspicious of 'biographical illusions'.

This module will introduce these debates by asking what we can and cannot learn from people giving an account of themselves. It will begin with the study of how various actors give accounts of themselves (activists, diplomats, lawyers, migrants, technicians) and culminates in students conducting and analysing their own account of international political actors and themselves as actors.

This addresses a central question for political studies – the (in)significance of actors' own explanations for their actions – with a focus on how this issue affects methods of doing international politics research. By conducting your own studies, finally, you will learn to engage those actors doing international politics through interviews, focus groups, surveys — data analysis methods that evaluate actors' accounts of themselves.

#### **POLP202 – Learning Lab: Field Experience (Sites)**

The contemporary study of international politics recognises heterogeneous places where international politics happens. These places range from city streets and squares to internet platforms and are often intensification points for international politics.

This module enables students to gain practical experience of how these various sites become intense points of international politics. This module teaches students how to identify a site and study the ways in which a particular site becomes an intense locus by using various methods of analysis taught in the module through fieldwork.

The module also enables students to share their findings with other students in a collaborative and workshop environment, disseminate their findings with social and other media, present their work to other students, and write a research essay.



## **POLP203 – Sites of International Politics**

This module makes the concept of 'site' its prime academic instrument. It explores how sites of international politics – such as museums, streets, internet platforms, socio-political movements and NGOs amongst others – are implicated in the construction of global politics. The key concept of the 'site' is best conceived as an extended version of the concept 'field' used in political sociology to describe a concentration of various arenas and forces, including the ways in which sense-making and memory function to legitimise certain stories and histories at the expense of others. This includes critically thinking about the 'site' as an analytical tool against conventional naming of the world into categories such as the 'East' and the 'West'.

Students will identify, understand and analyse different sites of international politics as worthy conceptual and empirical tools, exploring how these sites are created, maintained, resisted and (re)configured in the 21st century.

Students will also play with the dichotomous interpretation of site/sight examining how much a site revolves around one's sight or perspective.

Finally, building on previous theoretical knowledge students will incorporate more complex ways of making sense of the complex and networked world we inhabit, not least in order to question the arbitrary but sense-making division of the world into 'East' and 'West'.

## **Electives – Students choose two of the following options.**

### **ULC223 – Text and Image in Mass Culture**

This course will focus on visual and textual interactions in specific artistic forms of the 20th century. It will begin by briefly glancing back in history to early manifestations of text-image interaction via the study of the emblem and caricature. It will then concentrate closely on sequential art (bandes dessinées, graphic novels and manga), examining the evolution and formal specificity of these forms.

This will be followed by a study of visual advertising and propaganda, examining how textual and pictorial elements interact in these media to convey their desired meanings and whether these essentially 20th-century forms may be considered as "art" or "document". (taught and assessed in English, one written assignment).

### **ULC230 – Climate Politics**

The module will provide students with a historical account of the international climate regime, and its evolutions since the 1990s. In particular, it will explore France's particular status and role in the international climate debate, as well as how the climate issue plays out in the French context.

Students will also adopt a 'non-state actor' lens when analysing international climate politics. This will involve identifying a range of non-state actors (NGOs, foundations, think-tanks), and analysing their involvement in the international climate policy space. (taught and assessed in English, three written assignments).

### **ULC231 – Politics and Fiction**

This module will provide a broad, introductory overview of classic and contemporary works of literature written in English or in English translation, in which political themes are foregrounded.

Undertaking close, historically contextualised readings of textual extracts, students will analyse and evaluate the relationship between politics and literary text in class discussions, group presentations and written assignments. The module requires no previous background in literary studies. (taught and assessed in English, two written assignments).

### **ULC232 – Queer Politics in Contemporary France**

This module offers an introduction to queer theory and politics in modern Francophone literature, culture and film. It reads seminal theoretical writing that emerged from 1990s America (Butler, Sedgwick), alongside French narratives of the AIDS crisis in the 1980s (Guibert), fluid performances of identity (Genet), non-binary experimentation (Garréta), and trans-culture (Ben Jelloun). Because queerness resists dominant forms of belonging, it also intersects with questions of race, class, and power.

Through Foucault's analysis of heteronormative oppression, we consider the politics of queer Maghrebi French writing and film (Taïa), while probing new critical ways to think about intersectionality, trans theory, queer affect, and homonationalism. (taught and assessed in English, two written assignments and one oral presentation)

### **ULC234 – France, Britain and Empire: Comparative and Connected Histories**

This module examines the French and British colonial Empires in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Taking a comparative and connected approach, the module encourages students to think beyond the nation as a frame of historical analysis, in order to develop a deeper understanding of the transnational and global dimensions of colonial power.

The module examines the contribution of interimperial networks of journalists, scientists and diplomats to articulated discourses of race, gender and civilisation, and compares the dynamics of settler colonialism across empires. The geographical areas examined include Africa, Asia and the South Pacific. (taught and assessed in English, three written assignments)

## **Year 3**

### **Compulsory Courses**

#### **POLP301 – Doing International Politics (3) – Practices**

Many narratives of nationalist movements claim each nation-state as a unique formation, and yet the methods they use to encourage the loyalty of their populations are everywhere so similar. This module works through this paradox from an international political perspective.

It will enable you to understand and explain the emergence of the nation-state form and its dramatic extension to the world. Topics include comparative nationalist music; mimetic diasporic nationalisms; similarities and differences between African, Asian and Latin American decolonisations; and differing global responses to the French Revolution.

#### **POLP302 – Learning Lab: Field Experience (Practices)**

The contemporary study of international politics recognises other actors than nations and states for doing international politics such as artists, activists, non-governmental organisations, collectives, and movements.

This module enables students to gain practical experience of how these various actors perform international politics. This module teaches students how to identify organisations, institutions, and movements through which actors develop routine, regular, and durable practices and transmit these practices from one site to another and from one generation to another. The module teaches students how to understand these practices through fieldwork.

The module also enables students to share their findings with other students in a collaborative and workshop environment, disseminate their findings with social and other media, present their work to other students, and write a research essay.

#### **POLP388 – Research Project**

The research project is designed to give students the opportunity of studying an agreed topic under supervision on an individual basis and to a greater depth than is possible within existing modules.

The research project is an independent study programme. Student will select their own research topic and will be expected to develop a strong research commitment. Each student is appointed a research project supervisor, with whom they will meet regularly, to offer advice and guidance.

The research project module encourages final year students to take responsibility for their own learning, with the guidance of the supervisor, by the end of the module students will be able:

- To explore areas of interest within the discipline of their degree programme with an in-depth research
- To develop a number of useful research skills
- To apply critical analysis to areas of interest





- To challenge, through an original research, dominant theories and perspectives within the discipline.

## **Electives – Students choose two of the following options.**

### **ULC313 – French Colonialism in North Africa**

Much of the rich diversity of contemporary French society, and many of the political and cultural debates about how to manage this diversity, have emerged from French colonial presence in the Maghreb. This course will reflect upon the nature of French colonial power in Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia, in order to understand the operation of empire and its legacy in France and the Maghreb today.

Covering topics such as imperial science, settlement and urbanisation, gender and sexuality, journalism and colonial resistance, the course offers a thematic approach to the study of the colonial period, and interrogates its links with 'pre' and 'post' colonial eras. Students will consider the ways in which historical relationships influenced the nature of decolonisation and post-independence political and cultural exchange.

### **ULC326 – Trauma and Transmission: Holocaust Afterlives**

This course is divided into two halves. The first half focuses on the artistic and literary production in the wake of the Second World War bearing witness to the realities of the concentration camps, either as they were directly lived or mediated through contact with victims. This material is profoundly marked by the traumatic nature of these years and in many respects it fell on 'deaf ears' when it was first produced, too disturbing, too distressing to reach wide audiences.

The second part of the course deals with the time lag in the reception of Holocaust testimony and the questions about transmission that this raises. Focusing on film as a 'popular' medium for transmission of history and culture, the class will consider both the chronology of these works and their different narrative and filmic strategies for conveying what is now "part of human history".

### **ULC333 – Postcolonial Fictions in the City of Paris**

How has fictional writing served as a vehicle for the representation and processing of France's complex colonial legacy? To what extent has fiction enabled the surfacing of unacknowledged or contested events within the city of Paris, and how has the city served as an active component in the telling of this history, emerging in these texts and films as more than a mere backdrop to 'politics' and/or 'immigrants'?

This course addresses these questions through fictional readings and site-based study. Three main forms of fiction have been chosen, which will be associated primarily with three sites, though the resonance of these books will work across all of the sites explored: crime fiction and *The Palais dorée*; postcolonial novels of neighbourhood life and *the Goutte d'Or*; women's cinema of the 'banlieue' and the town of Bobigny (Seine-Saint Denis).





### **ULC334 - Contemporary Theory I: Critique**

Critical theory can be thought of as a philosophical mode of reflecting on the forms of power that structure our daily lives. From our embodied subjectivity and the institutional ways in which we are policed, to understanding what makes us human and the ethics of engaging with the other, this course offers an introduction to seminal thinkers across twentieth century thought who have helped shape the politics of identity, agency, power, and belonging.

The course will explore five key concepts in contemporary theory – identity and gender politics (Butler, Spivak), power and policing (Foucault, Rancière), biopolitics (Foucault, Mbembe), self/other (Derrida, Khatibi, Badiou), the human and posthuman (Braidotti, Haraway) – in order to navigate the tension between how we live now and how we might live differently.

Central to these wide-ranging ideas are questions around how the individual operates in the collective space they inhabit. How does the lived experience of Paris as a host city contribute to theoretical questions of belonging or alienation? What forms of (dis)empowerment are made possible by the multicultural city? How can we conceptualise the ethics and emotions of each encounter, and what lasting legacy might they leave on the body?

### **ULC335 - Contemporary Theory 2: Crisis**

Marxists have long argued that capitalism tends towards 'crisis' but since the 2008 Financial Crash this vocabulary has become more widespread in relation to a range of issues such as climate change, migration and the rise of neofascist politics.

Taking a step back and considering the term's analytical qualities, this module asks how crisis helps illuminate the unprecedented challenges of 21st century politics and examines different critical-theoretical approaches to manifestations of contemporary crisis.

Crises occur when social formations can no longer be reproduced on the basis of pre-existing governing strategies and systems of social relations. Any given crisis means there is a systemic instability that can only be addressed through radical measures from various actors. This means that as well as studying authoritarian turns within liberal states, including emerging and ongoing forms of policing and racialisation, we will also look at the less familiar, sometimes improvisatory, forms of resistance pursued by subaltern peoples and social movements in turbulent times.



# BA in International Politics with French

Students taking a minor in French take 90 credits per academic year in their major subject and 30 credits in French Studies.

## Year 1

Students take POLP101, POLP102 and POLP106.  
They also take the following French language course:

### **ULL100 – Written and oral expression – taught and assessed in French**

Students have a total of 5 hours per week on language (4h written work and 1-hour oral work) in Term 1 and 4 hours per week in Term 2. Oral work focuses on developing students' readiness for employment, with the preparation of French CVs, mock interviews and business pitching exercises. Class sizes are 15 maximum.

## Year 2

Students take POLP201, POLP202 and POLP203.  
They also take the following French language course:

### **ULL 200 – Advanced Grammar of Written and Spoken French – taught and assessed in French**

Advanced study of grammatical, lexico-linguistic and stylistic aspects of French to improve students' written French and oral competence. Assessment takes place through a series of coursework assignments, oral presentations and a written exam.

## **Elective module**

Students also choose one of the following elective modules (further details included in the single honours BA in International Politics section and in French Studies course outline)

**ULC201 – Introduction to French Linguistics**

**ULC212 – Identités I: Gender and Sexuality**

**ULC213 – Twentieth-Century Art**

**ULC214 – History and Memory I – Les récits nationaux**

**ULC221 – A Tale of Two Cities**

**ULC223 – Text and Image in Mass Culture**

**ULC230 – Climate Politics**

**ULC231 – Politics and Fiction**

**ULC232 – Queer Politics in Contemporary France**

**ULC233 – Text and Image in Mass Culture**

**ULC234 – France, Britain and Empire: Comparative and Connected Histories**

## Year 3

Students take POLP301, POLP302B and POLP388.  
They also take the following French language course:

### **ULL300 – Advanced techniques in formal discourse – taught and examined in French**

The course aims to develop the students' linguistic and methodological skills necessary for the production of French formal writing and oral presentations.

Written classes will involve the study and practice of syntactic constructions at work in French formal discourse, as well as linguistic analysis of writing samples, and composition of business letters, reports, summaries, etc.

Oral classes will focus on the development of students' capacity to produce formal oral discourses suitable for academic or professional contexts, based on a range of current affairs topics.

### **Elective module**

Students also choose one of the following elective modules (further details included in the single honours BA in International Politics section and in French Studies course outline)

- ULL311 Advanced French-English translation**
- ULL312 Advanced English-French translation**
- ULC304 *Fin de siècle I: Politics and Ideology***
- ULC307 *La Prose de la ville***
- ULC310 *Le Republicanisme en France: 1789-1914***
- ULC313 French Colonialism in North Africa**
- ULC315 Y2K BD: The fin de millénaire bande dessinée**
- ULC320 *Le Republicanisme en France : 1914-Présent***
- ULC326 Trauma and Transmission: Holocaust Afterlives**
- ULC327 Elements of French Linguistics**
- ULC328 Classic French Cinema**
- ULC329 Research dissertation**
- ULC333 Postcolonial Fictions in the City of Paris**
- ULC334 Contemporary Theory I: Critique**
- ULC335 Contemporary Theory 2: Crisis**

*Course information is correct at time of printing.  
Options may vary from year to year and are subject to availability.*