

COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT

Academic School / Department:	Humanities and Social Sciences
Programme:	MA in International Relations
FHEQ Level:	7
Course Title:	International Relations
Course Code:	INR 7121
Student Engagement Hours:	200 (standard 4 credit MA course)
Seminars:	39
Tutorials:	6
Independent / Guided Learning:	155
Semester:	Spring
Credits:	20 UK CATS credits 10 ECTS credits 4 US credits

Course Description:

This course explores the relationship that exists between the media, the implementation and execution of foreign policy and the management of security and environmental threats. Covering a century's worth of media reports on politics, diplomacy and warfare, the course will address the fundamental issues pertaining to the role of the media in both free and command societies and the manner in which the media manipulate and is manipulated by governmental agencies. The course will consider the manner in which journalists gather information, the role of the PR industry in managing the news industry, and issues of bias, media ownership and agenda-setting. Drawing upon the experiences of international journalists, this course will challenge students to reflect upon the degree to which the media influences foreign policy.

Prerequisites:

MA International Relations; MA International Development; MA Advertising and PR; and MA Public Relations and Journalism students only

Aims and Objectives:

- To examine the different ways (if any) whereby the news media influences global politics.

- To analyse the debate surrounding the “CNN effect”, a theory that argues that the media coverage of humanitarian disasters was leading state actors to formulate policy in direct response to the media.
- To examine theories on the media power of agenda-setting, as well theoretical debates on state propaganda, news management techniques and “soft power” and public diplomacy.
- To consider topical themes that cover the entire globe, namely, the effect of Al Jazeera on North American diplomacy in the Middle East, new media and Twitter effect in Iran and China, global social movements of resistance to the “Washington consensus”, terrorism and the Internet and effect of news media coverage on the global politics of climate change.

Programme Outcomes:

N/A (the course is optional not core; programme outcomes are not assessed)

A detailed list of the programme outcomes is found in the Programme Specification. This is maintained by Registry and located at: <https://www.richmond.ac.uk/programme-and-course-specifications/>

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, successful students should be able to:

- Apply concepts, theories and methods used in the study of the role of the media in international relations.
- Be able to critically assess the role of the media of agenda-setting and framing issues for public opinion consumption.
- Be able to critically analyse the interests, motivations and agendas of the media with regards to international affairs
- Be able to analyse and explain the role of information technology in international relations, in particular with regards to conflict, terrorism, censorship and surveillance
- Be able to gather, organise and deploy evidence, data and information from a variety of secondary and some primary sources so as to synthesise information in an innovative and critical manner.
- Demonstrate a level of conceptual understanding and an ability to construct a reasoned argument, synthesise relevant information and exercise critical judgment.
- Demonstrate an ability to challenge accepted orthodoxy on the basis of new or re-interpreted evidence or new conceptual approaches.
- Confidently present seminar papers in group situations.

- Undertake research with minimum guidance and become an independent and self-critical learner.
- Work independently, demonstrating initiative, self-organisation and time management; progressing through the programme to become a mature, independent learner.
- Communicate effectively and fluently in speech and writing; engage confidently in academic and professional communication with others, reporting on action clearly, autonomously and competently.

Indicative Content:

- The political agendas of media actors
- Agenda-setting and framing
- Role of media in international relations decision making process
- Role of media in conflict resolution
- Role of media in war
- Public diplomacy and propaganda

Assessment:

This course conforms to the Richmond University Standard Assessment Norms approved at Academic Board and are located at <https://www.richmond.ac.uk/university-policies>.

Teaching Methodology:

The course will consist of lectures and discussion led seminars, which will be based on assigned readings. Audio-visual aids and study materials will be used as appropriate. Students will be expected to participate regularly in discussions, as the formulation of their own thoughts and clarification of their assumptions, often in contradiction to other students' thoughts and assumptions, form a crucial part of the learning process. The teaching and learning strategy is designed to enable students to engage in focused research on key aspects of Global Political Economy. The course establishes a framework for intellectual engagement and as a forum in which students can hone their analytical skills in the context of discussion and debate. Although an emphasis will be placed on autonomous learning and study, tutorial opportunities will also be provided for more refined forms of academic support.

Indicative Text(s):

Cook, Timothy E., *Governing With The News: The News Media as a Political Institution*, (London: University of Chicago Press, 2005)

McChesney, Robert W.; Nichols, John, *Our Media, Not Theirs: The Democratic Struggle Against Corporate Media*, Seven Stories Press, 2002

McCombs, Maxwell, *Setting the Agenda: The Mass Media and Public Opinion*, Polity Press, 2004.

Hafez, Kai, *The Myth of Media Globalization*, Polity Press, 2007

Robinson, Piers *The CNN Effect: The myth of news, foreign policy and intervention*, Routledge, 2002. Seib, Philip, *Headline Diplomacy: How News Coverage Affects Foreign Policy*, Greenwood Press, 1996 Seaton, Jean, *Carnage and the Media: The Making and Breaking News about Violence*, London, Alan Allen, 2005.

Seib, Philip, *The Al Jazeera Effect: How the New Global Media Are Reshaping World Politics*, Washington D.C., Potomac Books, 2008

Thussu, Daya Kishan; Freedman, Des, *War and Media*, London, Sage, 2003.

Journals

Web Sites

See syllabus for complete reading list

Change Log for this CSD:

Nature of Change	Date Approved & Approval Body (School or AB)	Change Actioned by Registry Services