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Political Science: Int'L Relations

WORLD'S #1 ACADEMIC OUTLINE

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POLITICAL SCIENCE

International Relations

INTRODUCTION

1. **International relations** is a major subfield of political science; political scientists refer to international relations simply as **IR**.
2. IR is also referred to as **world politics**, **global politics**, **international politics**, and **international studies**.
3. Usually, the "relationship between countries" or "is concerned with the relationships among the governments of the world and the relationship of state governments with other actors, such as the United Nations (UN), multinational corporations, and individuals."
4. The subject matter of IR includes war, peace, diplomacy, foreign policy, international political economy, international organizations, international law, the global environment, ethnic conflict, human rights, security studies, world population trends, and international development.
5. **Politics** is the struggle for power; **international politics** is the struggle for power on a global stage.
6. **Power** is the ability to make people or things do what they otherwise would not have done; **hard power** is measured by a nation-state's military capabilities, size of population, and geographic territory; **soft power** is based on the ability of a nation-state to achieve its goals through persuasion and diplomacy rather than military force.
7. IR is both **descriptive** and **prescriptive**; the **descriptive** study of IR is largely theoretical, whereas the **prescriptive** study of IR is largely practical and deals with practical problems and political issues.
8. **Political scientists**, who specialize in IR, attempt to describe what world politics is like, predict what will happen, and prescribe how it ought to be; they use both **qualitative** and **quantitative** research methods.

THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM

1. The **international system** is composed of nation-states, individuals, intergovernmental organizations, nongovernmental organizations, and multinational corporations.
2. The **modern international system** comprising independent nation-states emerged after the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia.
3. Over time, as the post-Westphalian system, state sovereignty replaced the **dynastic system of kings**.
4. The **international system** has been shaped to a great extent by the West, primarily the great European powers and the United States.
5. The balance of power in the world periodically shifts.
6. From 1945 after the end of the Thirty Years' War to 1945 after World War II, there was a **multipolar world**.
7. From 1945 until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, there was a **bipolar world** and an **Euro-Asian axis** between the United States and the Soviet Union.
8. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the United States was left as the world's dominant superpower.
9. A modified multipolar world may be emerging with the balance of power spread between the United States, Russia, China, the European Union, and the UN.
10. A significant characteristic of the 21st-century international system is a disparity of wealth and power between the rich countries of the **global north** and poor countries of the **global south**.
 - A. The countries of the **global north** (e.g., in Europe and North America) are referred to as **economically developed countries** or the **First World**.
 - B. The **global south** consists primarily of Asian, African, and South American countries and are referred to as **less economically developed countries** or the **Third World**.

C. The terms **First**, **Second**, and **Third World** have evolved since the end of World War II in 1945 and the end of the Cold War in 1991.

1. **First World:** Originally the countries aligned with the United States and its allies during the Cold War; the term is now associated with the wealthy, industrialized, capitalist, democratic, economically developed countries, compared to the **global south**, the average annual per capita gross **domestic product (GDP)** is high, literacy and education rates are high, health is good, and life spans are long.
2. **Second World:** Originally the countries aligned with the Soviet Union and China during the Cold War; this term has mostly lost its original meaning in the modern language of IR.
3. **Third World:** Originally nonaligned countries, mostly in Asia, Africa, and South America, that sided with neither the United States nor the Soviet Union during the Cold War; the term is now associated with the poor, underdeveloped (or in the process of underdeveloping), less economically developed countries that are often transitioning to democracy; many were colonized by the European powers, compared to the **global north**, the average annual per capita GDP is low, literacy and education rates are low, health is poor, and life spans are short; the term "Third World" is not accepted in some contexts and so "less economically developed" is often used as an alternative.
4. **Fourth World:** The poorest of the poor countries of the world, the indigenous peoples of the world, and the poor colonies living in the wealthy First World countries.

Evolution of the International System

1. **16th-century system (1492-1700)**
 - A. Begins with the end of the Thirty Years' War in 1648 and the Treaty of Westphalia, which established secular nation-states as the main actors on the world stage.
 - B. Multipolar system with power distributed between Great Britain, France, Austria, Spain, Russia, and the Ottoman Empire.
 - C. Influenced by the political ideas of John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau.
2. **18th-century system (1700-1800)**
 - A. Begins with the onset of the French Revolution in 1789 and the French Revolution in 1789.
 - B. Multipolar distribution of power between Germany, Austria-Hungary, France, Britain, and Russia.
 - C. Rise of nationalism and Marxist, nationalist, and Christian conservative political ideologies.
 - D. Continuation of the Industrial Revolution.
 - E. Urbanization in Europe and continuation of European colonialism.
 - F. Ends with the onset of World War I.
3. **19th-century system (1800-1900)**
 - A. Begins after World War I, the Treaty of Versailles, and the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian and Russian Empires.
 - B. Multipolar distribution of power between Britain, France, Germany, Japan, the United States, and the Soviet Union.
 - C. Creation of the League of Nations.
 - D. Rise of fascism, Nazism, and communism.
 - E. Shattered by the Treaty of Versailles.
 - F. Ends with the onset of World War II.
4. **Cold War system (1900-1990)**
 - A. Begins after World War II.
 - B. The UN is founded.
 - C. Bipolar distribution of power between the United States and the Soviet Union.
 - D. Colonized countries gain their independence.
 - E. Nuclear arms race between the two superpowers.
 - F. Ends with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the reunification of Germany in 1990.
5. **Post-Cold War system (1990-)**
 - A. Starts with the collapse of the Soviet Union.
 - B. The United States remains a dominant military power.
 - C. Disintegration in Eastern Europe.
 - D. Emergence of the European Union.
 - E. Intensification of the process of globalization.
 - F. September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks occur.
 - G. Marked by wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

TIMELINE OF MAJOR EVENTS

Year	Event	Year	Event	Year	Event
1492	The fall of Spain	1789	The French Revolution begins	1918	World War I ends
1648	The Treaty of Westphalia ends the Thirty Years' War	1799	The French Revolution ends	1919	The League of Nations is founded
1800	Charlemagne is crowned Emperor of the Romans	1800	World population hits 1 billion	1920	World population hits 1 billion
1815	The Hundred Years' War ends	1815	The Congress of Vienna begins	1921	World War II ends; the UN is founded
1848	The Revolutions of 1848 begin	1848	Napoleon Bonaparte is defeated at Waterloo	1945	The People's Republic of China is founded
1871	Germany is unified as a nation-state	1871	Unification of Germany into a nation-state	1946	World population hits 2 billion
1914	World War I begins	1914	World War I begins	1947	Cold War begins
1917	October Revolution in Russia	1917	October Revolution in Russia	1948	World population hits 3 billion
1945	World War II ends	1945	World War II ends	1950	World population hits 4 billion
1949	The People's Republic of China is founded	1949	The People's Republic of China is founded	1954	World population hits 4 billion
1950	Cold War begins	1950	Cold War begins	1954	World population hits 4 billion
1954	World population hits 4 billion	1954	World population hits 4 billion	1954	World population hits 4 billion
1954	World population hits 4 billion	1954	World population hits 4 billion	1954	World population hits 4 billion



Synopsis

Navigating the complex world of international relations has always been, and continues to be, an important part of being an intelligent world citizen. Whether you are a student of international relations or just looking for a refresher to get up to speed with current events, you will now find it easier to follow along with BarChartsâ™ Political Science: International Relations QuickStudy® guide. This three-panel guide includes up-to-date information on the history of international relations, fields of thought, and important organizations.

Book Information

Hardcover: 6 pages

Publisher: QuickStudy; Lam Chrt edition (May 31, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1423218302

ISBN-13: 978-1423218302

Product Dimensions: 8.5 x 11 x 0.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (1 customer review)

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