



**GENEVA SCHOOL OF DIPLOMACY
& INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE

BACHELOR OF ARTS IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS (BA-IR)

PROGRAMME HANDBOOK



BACHELOR OF ARTS IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS (BA-IR)

The Geneva School of Diplomacy & International Relations (GSD) is located in the *Domaine de Penthes* at Pregny-Geneva, a very beautiful campus in the heart of the most diplomatic neighborhood on the planet. That neighborhood is home to more than 190 international organizations – governmental and non-governmental. GSD students are regular visitors to one or another of these organizations. And every GSD student carries a card and pass to one of the great libraries of the world in the field of international relations and international law – the United Nations Library.

The mission and commitment of GSD is that its graduates and alumni contribute to improving the state of world society – while building careers for themselves of high value. To this end, the faculty of GSD is second to none: lecturers are either renowned academics or are themselves serving diplomats. A number of ambassadors serving their countries in Geneva are regularly teaching at GSD.

The GSD prepares future world leaders for their roles on the world stage to advance peace and human rights. Based on its core values of Excellence, Leadership, Humanitarian Commitment, and Experience, GSD provides high quality and praxis-orientated education combined with an commitment to student support and promotes a philosophy rooted in the School's motto '*serviendo guberno*' – that to govern is to serve.

[The Bachelor of Arts in International Relations \(BA-IR\) Programme](#) has been established to cater for the interests of students seeking both a broad scholarly understanding of the way the world works, and/or for those preparing for a variety of employment options related to international careers in government, business, non-government organisations, media and international agencies.

The Bachelor of Arts in International Relations (BA-IR) Programme aims to introduce students to International Relations, initially via the broad historical and intellectual framework which has framed the modern world of states since the 17th century. It will then concentrate on International Relations in the 20th and 21st centuries, the age of World Wars and the Cold War, before finally addressing issues of the present age, the age of global political economy, global culture and communication, global environmental concerns and post-Cold war political conflict, including the 'War on Terror'.

PROGRAMME AIMS

The aims of the programme are:

- To prepare and develop graduates for a career in departments of government, politics, international relations, journalism and private industry;
- To develop understanding and knowledge of the nature and extent of politics and international relations and the organisation, management and impacts associated with the production and consumption of events in a contemporary global environment;
- To develop students' intellectual capabilities of analysis and interpretation, critical evaluation, selection and synthesis, reasoned argument, research and problem solving;
- To develop graduates who can demonstrate effective technical, IT, numerical, communication and research skills, and
- To produce graduates who have a range of generic transferable attributes enabling them to communicate effectively, work individually and in teams to guidelines, be innovative and adaptable to change, manage and reflect on their own learning and who can contribute and respond effectively to the demands of their chosen profession.



ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Entry to the GSD BA-IR Programme requires that candidates should have reached the age of 17 at the beginning of the Programme and have an appropriate school-leaving qualification or its equivalent.

Candidates should also have reached a minimum English proficiency level equivalent to an overall IELTS¹ test score of 6. This should include a minimum score of 6 in both the Writing and Reading components of the IELTS test, or TOEFL² minimum score of 550.

In order to progress to Year 2 students need to achieve a mark of at least 50% in each of the Year 1 Examinations and attain a level of English language proficiency equivalent to IELTS band score 6 or TOEFL 550. Students' attendance and general attitude to studying will also be taken into account.



¹ IELTS : International English Testing Service examination, administered by the British Council.

² TOEFL CBT or PBT (not IBT) : Test of English as a Foreign Language, administered by the Educational Testing Service, Rosedale Road, Princeton, New Jersey 08541, USA.

ADMISSIONS INTERVIEW

Prospective students may be dispensed from [written proof of English language test](#) if they have:

- 1) Attended an international school where the language of instruction was English.
- 2) Their mother tongue is English.
- 3) Passed the admissions interview (in person or facilitated via IT media) resulting in a satisfactory command of the English language by the admissions department.
- 4) Passed the compulsory motivational essay as part of the application process written in English.



TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES

Classroom teaching is based on a communicative and student-centred approach to learning. Students will learn through a variety of learning activities both in small group and whole class situations. Students are encouraged to share their views and opinions with others. Students are given encouragement to become more autonomous in their learning. Different teaching and learning formats are used in the Programme with the aim of making the learning experience more wide-ranging. These teaching and learning formats include lectures, seminars, simulations, round tables, conferences, etc. [Resources](#) and guidance are provided to encourage independent learning and independent research.



PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Year I

Autumn Semester	ECTS	Spring Semester	ECTS	Total
Core, International Economics	6	Core, Introduction to International Relations	6	
Core, International History (except BA 1 February intake)	6	Core, Introduction to International Law I	6	
Core, Political Science	6	Core, Critical Thinking and Global Issues	6	
Core, Academic Writing	4	Specialized, Civil Society	4	
Core, Introduction to International Law II (BA 1 February intake and BA 2 Sept intake)		Specialized, Regional Studies: Africa	4	
Core, Diplomatic Neighbourhood: Intergovernmental Organizations	4	Seminar Series: Emerging Issues and Persistent Challenges	2	
Seminar Series: Emerging Issues and Persistent Challenges	2			
	28		28	56

Year II

Autumn Semester	ECTS	Spring Semester	ECTS	Total
Core, Dilemmas in Foreign Policy (BA 2, except Feb Intake)	6	Core, Multilateral Diplomacy	6	
Core, Introduction to International Law II (BA 1 February intake and BA 2 Sept intake)	6	Core, Applied Macroeconomics	6	
Workshop, Investment and Sustainable Development Goals	2	Specialized, Human Rights Jurisprudence	4	
Specialized, Challenges of Leadership Today	4	Specialized, Regional studies: Middle East (BA 2 and BA 3)	4	
Specialized, Regional studies: BRICS (BA 2 and BA 3)	6	Internship	8	
Specialized, International Trade and WTO (BA 2 and BA 3)	6	Seminar Series: Emerging Issues and Persistent Challenges	2	
Seminar Series: Emerging Issues and Persistent Challenges	2			
	32		30	62

Year III

Autumn Semester	ECTS	Spring Semester	ECTS	Total
Specialized, International Criminal Law (BA 3 and BA 2 Feb intake)	6	Thesis	30	
Workshop, Investment and Sustainable Development Goals	2			
Specialized, Challenges of Leadership Today	4			
Specialized, Regional studies: BRICS (BA 2 and BA 3)	6			
Specialized, International Trade and WTO (BA 2 and BA 3)	6			
Seminar Series: Emerging Issues and Persistent Challenges	2			
Core, Research Methods (only year 3)	6			
	32		30	62

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CURRICULUM CONTENT

The GSD curriculum is based on three pillars: International Relations, International Law and International Economics. Moreover, a number of general social science courses (e.g. History) are offered as a part of the curriculum.

GSD curriculum of the BA Programme offers the following types of courses:

- **Core Courses**
- **Specialized Courses**
- **Seminar Series with invited Guest Speakers**
- **Workshops**



CORE COURSES

DIPLOMATIC NEIGHBORHOOD: INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

The course offers an introduction to the history of international organizations, including topics such as the way of their establishment, the role of states within international organizations, as well the role of various organs. Different organizations, including regional (especially European ones) and universal organizations, but equally transnational and religious ones and their influence on intergovernmental institutions, will be considered. The course will also provide a critical overview of the work of such organizations, including the United Nations, with a clear emphasis on linking theoretical knowledge to the real-world situations. The course examines several key international organizations. It aims, firstly, at providing students with solid theoretical knowledge of basic concepts and issues, processes and practices of these organizations. Secondly, it aims to assist students in acquiring practical skills to understand how the international organizations foster international cooperation, what are their mandates and modus operandi, as well as their strengths and weaknesses.

INTRODUCTION TO INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The main objective of this course is to introduce the students into essential concepts, theories and debates in international relations. The course is conceived as a toolbox for students to acquire a foundation in this discipline and develop their analytical skills when apprehending world politics at large.

The course objective is not limited to a simple transmission of concepts and theories but invites students to engage with the readings and mobilize their critical thinking. Students are also strongly encouraged to follow the news of world politics. Suggestions of sources include the New York Times, CNN, Al Jazeera English, The Economist, Foreign Policy, Foreign Affairs.

This course is conceived as a general introduction to the discipline. It is structured in two sections:

1. The first section, "*Framework and Theories*", gives an overview of main frameworks of analysis and theories in the discipline;
2. The second section, "*Concepts*", delves into classic concepts of international relations (war, peace, security...) by exploring not only theoretical foundations of such concepts but also current implications and dynamics affecting them.

ACADEMIC WRITING

With the intention of fostering your confidence in undertaking research, writing, and referencing at an advanced level – academic level – the purpose of this class is to assist you in developing the basic writing skills necessary to university success. It is an excellent and necessary choice for students who want to prepare themselves for academic world.

Through using different explanations, examples and quizzes, this class' objective is not only to give you the

basics of academic integrity and research. But, it will provide the basics for assessing, referencing and critically reading sources.

Thus, this course is designed to help the students to become a more organized and independent scholar.

INTERNATIONAL ECONOMICS

The role of international economics is to provide indispensable the future diplomats, world leaders and international civil servants with solid theoretical knowledge and analytical skills in this field.

The main objective of this course is to introduce the students to the essential concepts, theories and forecasting tools needed to evaluate policies and objectives at the national or international level. Every policy and priority of a nation or a party has an economic implication and cost. The student will become familiarized with the critical analytical tools needed to evaluate their impact.

The aim of this module is to develop knowledge and understanding of the philosophical, historical and methodological origins of Economics and its nature and significance in society and International Relations. The students are expected to understand various methods of Economics analysis, to be able to analyse schools of Economics thought, case studies and Economic policies applied around the world. The module also aims at introducing the students to comprehensive, methodologically sound economic research.

Additionally, the module gives an overview of the historical context, development and origins of current Economic theories, its main sources and different branches, the main actors as well as the most important Treaties and norms ruling the international system. Part of this module is the application of these norms and procedures to monitor compliance and mechanisms of enforcing them on the basis of specific historical cases.

INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL SCIENCE

The main objective of this course is to introduce the students into essential concepts, mechanisms, processes and debates in political science. The course is conceived as a toolbox for students to acquire a foundation in this discipline and develop their analytical skills when apprehending politics at large.

The course objective is not limited to a simple transmission of concepts and theories but invites students to engage with the readings and mobilize their critical thinking. In this perspective, readings combine material from textbooks, classic texts of political theory and contemporary articles to reflect on the latest developments in the field.

This course aims to provide students with key concepts of political science and is conceived as a general introduction to the discipline. It is structured in three sections:

1. The first section, "*Defining and Exploring the Science of Politics*", explores political science foundations as a discipline;

2. The second section, “*Major Concepts*”, delves into selected concepts of political science by exploring not only theoretical foundations of such concepts but also current implications and dynamics affecting them;
3. The third section, “*World Politics*”, chooses to focus on one particular sub-field of political science, international relations, and gives priority to analysis and reflection on the current political world order.

INTRODUCTION TO INTERNATIONAL LAW I & II

The role of the international law in international politics constantly increases, which makes it indispensable for the future diplomats, world leaders and international civil servants to have solid theoretical knowledge and practical skills in this field. The main objective of this course is to introduce the students into essential concepts, processes and practice of modern international law and to increase the students’ awareness of the role and current challenges of the international law in the modern world. Moreover, the course objective is not only to provide students with theoretical base, but also to help them develop practical skills to be able to deal with international law issues in their future professional activities.

This course offers an advanced introduction to the key topics of the modern international law, with the emphasis on the issues relevant for the future practitioners in the field of international relations and diplomacy. The course shall allow students to develop a versatile understanding of the most important areas of international law. The course deals with the issues of the *general part of international law*, including such essential topics as sources of international law, statehood, states recognition, the issues of jurisdiction and state immunity, territory, legal status of individuals, inter-governmental organizations. The course is organised in a way to incorporate both theoretical and practical aspects of contemporary international law.

INTERNATIONAL HISTORY

This course’s main objective is to provide to students with the skills and knowledge necessary to competently analyse and understand the complexity of world history. As specific objectives & learning outcomes this course enables one to identify and describe significant historical periods and processes of economic, political, social and religious change; to develop knowledge as to how identity has been interpreted in cultures and societies through the family, kinship, religion, gender, ethnicity, class, nationality and status; to demonstrate the interactions between ethnic, national and cultural influences in concrete happenings; to discern the conditions, actions and motivations that contribute to conflict or cooperation among the peoples of the world; to familiarize students with the current process of globalization, understood as a combination of political, economic and cultural interconnections between peoples, as impacted by history and tradition.

INTRODUCTION TO SECURITY STUDIES

The module provides an advanced introduction into security studies. While taking mainly a theoretical approach, it also explores how the concept of security has been widened and deepened since the end of the Cold War, and how the traditional agenda of politico-military security reflecting mainly inter-state relations has been enlarged to address the impact of globalization on the nation-state, as well as the role of non-international aspects of security, including new non-military and transnational risks and challenges to security, as well as the role of non-state actors.

The module explores the main theoretical approaches to international security studies, taking into account classic international relations theories alongside more specific theoretical perspectives such as human security, critical security studies, and securitization.

The module is divided into two main blocks. The first block reflects security studies from the perspective of the main international relations theories and discusses corresponding conceptual discourses on international security. Upon completion of this first block, students take an intermediary examination. The second block addresses more specific security studies theories and further illustrates them against the background of emerging issues in international security affairs. During this second block, students finalize their essay outlines and submit their essays with the second last class. During the two final classes of the course, students will present their essays to fellow-students in an inter-active learning setting.

APPLIED MACRO-ECONOMICS

GSD's course in applied macro-economic issues will equip you with concrete tools and methods to make the relationship and application of real-world economic data to macro-economic theories in the most-concise terms.

Demonstration of the importance of basic macro-economic concepts and techniques as tools and instruments for international managers.

Illustration of the role of Macro-Economics within the domain of the external economic environment of international business.

Examination of fundamental macro-economic theories: Pre-Keynesian Classical Economists; traditional Keynesian Economics and the Cambridge School of Neo-Keynesians; the Chicago School of Friedmanian Neo-Monetarism; Regional Economics.

Students should be able to apply Neo-Keynesian and Neo-Monetarist theories in order to explain: dynamic, real-world economic problems, such as inflation, unemployment, economic growth; dynamic government macro-economic policies, such as *fiscal policy*, *monetary policy*, regional policies; variable levels of macro-economic *identities*, such as aggregate consumption, savings and investment.

The key benchmark is the ability to make the relationship and application of real-world economic data to macro-economic theories in the most-concise terms.

Every macro-economic problem and every aspect of government macro-economic policy should be analysed in the context of the Neo-Keynesian *versus* Neo-Monetarist debate.

MULTILATERAL DIPLOMACY

Multilateral diplomacy is an important component of diplomacy, particularly in the current international life. This means that the Bachelor students should have a better understanding of this subject as well as a basic knowledge of essential concepts, processes and practices of discussions and negotiations in this field.

The main objective of this course is to provide students with the fundamental theoretical notions of and practical approaches to the key issues of multilateral diplomacy, its historical development, principles, and basic concepts; to familiarize students with the place and role of multilateral diplomacy in major spheres:

international security, economic and social, juridical, human rights, specialized spheres, with goals and forms of multilateral diplomacy; to give knowledge of problems of Post-Cold War multilateral diplomacy: unilateralism vs. multilateralism, globalization, anti-terrorism and anti-trafficking, multilateral (in contrast to bilateral during the Cold War) approach to nuclear crises and territorial disputes; to develop critical and objective approach to specific cases in contemporary practice of multilateral discussions and negotiation.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

The intended goal of this course is to explain how to write a dissertation or a thesis. Students will learn how to choose a subject and a clear topic, to write a plan of writing / research, how to elaborate a problem question, a cover page / title page, an introduction, research questions and hypotheses; how to respect a theoretical framework, to develop the main body of their dissertation and to write a conclusion.

Students will also learn to gather documentation, to select it and to evaluate sources. They will be taught how to quote, to insert footnotes, to establish a table of content, to elaborate a bibliography and to prepare the defence / presentation of their thesis.

A particular emphasis will be put upon the respect of the rules of academic writing, the rules of citation, methodology and academic honesty (prevention of frauds and plagiarism).



ASSESSMENT

The assessment strategy is designed to ensure that the learning outcomes are achieved. Assessment is done through examinations and coursework. Coursework consists of a variety of assessment methods and includes written assignments (essays, case studies, reports, summaries) and oral presentations.

Specific and clearly stated deadlines are set for coursework assignments. If a deadline is missed without a good reason, then the assignment will be capped at a maximum mark of 50%, if the assignment is submitted within one week after the missed deadline. If submission is more than one week late then assignment will be given an F.

Feedback to students on assessed coursework and examinations is seen as of fundamental importance to encourage and support their learning and also to indicate their standards of achievement. Workloads are carefully scheduled to balance activities and clear criteria are given for marking and grading.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The [grades and descriptors](#) are as follows:

Swiss Grade (CRUS)	English distinctions (CRUS)	GSD Letter equivalent (ECTS)	Ideal distribution of pass grades (ECTS)	Percentage equivalent (GSD)	Latin for dissertations (CRUS/GSD)	US/GPA equivalent (WES)
6	Excellent	A	top 10%	90-100%	summa cum laude	A (4.0)
5 1/2	Very good	B	next 25%	80-89%	insigni cum laude	B+ (3.3)
5	Good	C	next 30%	70-79%	magna cum laude	B (3.0)
4 1/2	Satisfactory	D	next 25%	60-69%	cum laude	C+ (2.3)
4	Pass	E	lowest 10%	50-59%	Rite	C (2.0)
3 ½	Fail, some more work required	FX	[best fail grades]	40-49%		F
3 and below	Fail, much further work required	F	[remaining fail grades]	0-39%		F

THESIS

This module gives students the opportunity to do research and to produce [a piece of academic writing](#) (10 000 words) on a topic of their choice (agreed with by an advisor and approved by GSD). The module “Research Methodologies” (Year III) shall develop students’ skills on how to formulate research questions, on how to compose academic texts, on how to use references, on research methods, on research ‘ethics’, and on presenting papers at academic conferences.

Each BA student will have a ‘dissertation advisor’, who will guide the student towards the relevant literature, help with the design of the dissertation project and offer subject specific advice. All dissertations must be written in English. Upon submission of the dissertation, an Adviser is given one month to revise and evaluate the dissertation. Latin denominations are used for evaluation the dissertations.



INTERNSHIP

GSD students have the opportunity to do [internships](#) as part of their BA International Relations Programme. The internship is for one semester, and receives 9 credits.

Internship projects are approved by GSD in order to ensure that they complement the programme and the job aspirations of the student. This guarantees that students make the most of the opportunity to adapt their academic knowledge to professional life in their field of interest, to explore career paths, to acquire relevant hands-on practice, and to make important professional contacts.

GSD ensures that interning students incorporate their internship experience into the academic programme, by assigning them an internship coordinator who guides them in the fulfilment of internship requirements:

- [Researching and writing a paper on their internship \(10 pages minimum\).](#)
- [Internship guidelines document](#)

In order to help students in their internship search, GSD has developed regular agreements with a network of organizations, benefitting from its Geneva location and the nearby presence of embassies, diplomatic missions, governmental agencies, NGO's, multi-national private corporations, etc.

In the past, GSD students have interned at:

- United Nations
- UNEP (United Nations Environment Program)
- UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization)
- OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development)
- Various Diplomatic Missions
- World Health Organization
- International Labour Organization



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