AI and Global Politics: Navigating Technology's Impact on International Relations

PROFESSOR ALESSANDRO QUARENGHI

Area of study:	International Relations
Course Code:	IR/PO 326
Credits:	6 ECTS
Dates:	23 June – 4 July

Description

The course aims to provide students with tools to understand how the current wave of technological innovation (AI, quantum computing, 3-D printing, etc.) is transforming the world. To do so, it defines the contemporary international order and its processes of change before focusing on the relationships between international relations and technology. Finally, it discusses how technology is influencing the reshaping of politics, society, economics, security, diplomacy, and even identities.

Upon successful completion of the course, students will
- be familiar, both from a theoretical and empirical perspective, with the features of the main models of the international system, its current structure and its contemporary processes of change;
- be aware of the reciprocally influencing relationship that has always existed between technology and politics;
- be able to discuss and trace how current technologies are redefining humans and the environment in which humans operate;
- have gained a preliminary knowledge of the tools that states are employing to govern technological change.

Course contents

The course is divided into two main parts. The first section focuses on international politics, tracing its transformation since its birth, before defining the concepts of social, political, and international order. The main models of the international order are then outlined. Finally, it outlines the main features of the contemporary international order and the issues and processes that are transforming it.
The second part of the course initially discusses the relationship between international politics and technology, but focuses on the ways the current wave of technological innovation is changing the ideas, images, and relationships which the world is based upon. In order to trace the complexity of technological influence, it discusses how technology is redefining identities, and the environments in which humans operate (socio-political, economic, security, and diplomatic). The end of the course aims to discuss tools and strategies that states are developing to govern this technological wave.

Prerequisites

The course can be accessed by students of all backgrounds. A good working knowledge of English is essential.

Method of teaching

The course will combine lectures, analysis of case studies, guest speakers, and debates. Students will have to research some case studies during the course, according to the instructor's guidelines provided at the beginning of the course. Finally, students will have to research and orally present (15-20 minutes) issues and/or case studies provided by the instructor and according to his instructions.

Course requirements

a) Students are expected to actively take part in debate;
b) Before each class, students are expected to have read the compulsory readings (and are strongly advised to read the recommended readings);
c) Students are expected to research some case studies according to the instructor's guidelines;
d) Students are required to research and orally present one of the topics provided by the instructor;
e) Students will have to take a final written exam.

Credits

6 ECTS

Grading

Class participation	20%
Case studies	25%
Group Presentation	25%
Final written exam	30%

Course readings and materials

All course readings and materials will be available on the course Blackboard page, in the Materials section, or can be accessed through the links provided.

Instructor bio

Alessandro Quarenghi is a Lecturer in International Politics at the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, where he teaches International Relations, Economic Geography, and International Relations of the Middle East. He holds a degree in Law, a PhD in International Relations, a Specialization in International Economics and Politics, and Master's Degrees in Postcolonial Politics and Cross-cultural Mediation. His work focuses on US foreign policy, international order and international relations and politics of the Middle East.

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Course Schedule

Lesson	Date	Topic
1	TBD 13.30-18.00 Room TBD	**INTRODUCTION** • Presentation of the course: aims, structure, class-by-class overview. Assignments: suggestions on how to successfully complete the course • Introduction to Power. Main concepts (Dahl's, Bachrach and Baratz's, Luke's, and Foucault's proposals)
2	TBD 10.00-14.30 Room TBD	**THE STATE AND THE INTERNATIONAL ORDER: BIRTH AND CHANGE** • The State: historical change and contemporary models • The international system: historical change and models • International Relations Theory: Brief review of 'traditions' and 'approaches' to International Politics
3	TBD 10.00-14.30 Room TBD	**INTERNATIONAL ORDER, AND PROCESSES OF CHANGE** • Social, Political, International, and World Order • Types of International Order • The contemporary international global order and its interpretation • Introduction to contemporary changes in the global sysytem: environment, anti-globalization politics, populism, migration, shift to power (hegemonic transition)
4	TBD 10.00-14.30 Room TBD	**TECHNOLOGY AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICS** • Technology and the international system • Main theoretical approaches
		NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND IDENTITY • The Fourth Industrial Revolution: technologies (AI, quantum computing, etc.) • The reshaping of identity: the liberal, the post-human and its critiques
5	TBD 10.00-14.30 Room TBD	**NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND ECONOMICS** • Innovation and State competitiveness • Technology innovation as an economic process • A Knowledge economy? • Supply and Demand change
6	TBD 10.00-14.30 Room TBD	**NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND SOCIO-POLITICAL CHANGE** • A new 'Great Transformation?" • Co-production: knowledge, society, and power
7	TBD 10.00-14.30 Room TBD	**NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND SECURITY** • New security threats and dimensions • Issues influencing country competitiveness

8	TBD 14.30-19.00 Room TBD	**NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND DIPLOMACY** • Digital Diplomacy
9	TBD 10.00-14.00 Room TBD	**GOVERNING TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE** • Overview: technology foresighting, strategy, roadmap, evaluation. • The European Union's AI Act
	TBD 10.00-14.00 Room TBD	**EXAM**