

Master in International Relations

Programme Details

Final Qualification

Master in
International Relations

Language of Study

Arabic

Mode of Study

Full Time

Programme Structure

Study Period

2 Years

Total Credit Hours

36 Credit Hours

Number of Courses

9 Courses + Thesis or
10 Courses + Applied Project

Brief about the Programme

The Master's Program in International Relations represents an advanced academic step within the field of international studies, offered by the Department of Political Science at Applied Science University, the only department of its kind in the Kingdom of Bahrain. The program seeks to meet the needs of society in the Kingdom of Bahrain in particular, and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries and the wider Arab world in general, by preparing highly qualified graduates for careers in diplomacy, media, political studies and research centers, as well as regional and international organizations. The program is delivered in Arabic and comprises 36 credit hours distributed across two tracks: the Thesis Track and the Applied Project Track, thereby providing academic flexibility and aligning with contemporary academic and professional trends. The program has been designed based on in-depth studies of the Bahraini and Gulf labor markets, in addition to benchmarking comparisons with reputable regional and international universities.

Aims of the Programme

1. Provide graduates with a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of major theoretical approaches in international relations, including their historical context and their impact on political realities at the local, regional, and international levels.
2. Enable students to apply theoretical knowledge to real-world contexts through field visits, guest lectures, and simulation-based learning.
3. Prepare graduates capable of conducting advanced academic research using established and specialized methodologies, and of designing and implementing studies in advanced topics within international studies, thereby fostering innovation, initiative, and intellectual development through rigorous scientific inquiry.
4. Equip graduates with analytical and strategic planning tools, as well as advanced skills in communication, negotiation, and presentation.
5. Provide graduates with distinguished professional competencies and practical applications in international fields, particularly in diplomacy and the management of external affairs.
6. Develop graduates' critical thinking, analytical, comparative, interpretative, deductive, and evaluative skills, enabling them to better understand the international environment and make sound decisions within their professional institutions.
7. Enable graduates to effectively communicate with diverse audiences across varying levels of expertise and to assume roles in strategic decision-making.
8. Promote the values of citizenship, tolerance, peaceful dialogue, and the rejection of violence, while enhancing graduates' ability to contribute to the dissemination of these values within society.



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Enquiry

Career Paths

1. Diplomatic at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Third Secretary, Second Secretary, First Secretary, Consul, Chargé d'Affaires)
2. Government Sector Officer
3. Officer in Regional and International Organizations
4. Political, strategic, or security advisor
5. Expert in international or geopolitical affairs
6. Researcher or strategic analyst in research centres
7. Officer at the Shura Council or the Council of Representatives
8. Lecturer or researcher in Political Science and International Relations

Entry Requirements

1. The applicant must hold a Bachelor's degree or its equivalent from a university or college recognized by the Ministry of Education in the Kingdom of Bahrain.
2. The applicant's undergraduate field of study must qualify them for admission to the Master's program. Otherwise, the student shall be required to pass placement examinations or complete a number of supplementary (bridging) courses approved by the University and determined by the concerned department.
3. The minimum requirement for admission is that the applicant holds a Bachelor's degree with a cumulative GPA of no less than "Good" or its equivalent. In cases where the cumulative GPA is below the required minimum, the application shall be referred to the Non-Admission Appeals Committee to consider the possibility of granting the student conditional admission and to submit the appropriate recommendation to the University Council.
4. As a condition for admission to any Master's program, the applicant must pass the English language placement examination approved by the University, or submit a TOEFL certificate or its equivalent with a minimum score of 450. Otherwise, the student shall be required, during the first academic year, to enroll in and pass an English language course specified by the College. Students who have obtained an academic degree from programs taught in English shall be exempted from the English language requirement.
5. The applicant must successfully pass the personal interview.
6. The applicant must fulfill any additional requirements specified by the program.



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Study Plan

No.	Course Code	Course Title	Prerequisite	ASU Credit	NQF Credit	NQF Level
Year 1 – First Semester						
1	POL 611	Political Analysis and Scientific Research Methods	-	3	12	9
2	INT 611	International Relations Theories	-	3	12	9
3	POL 641	International Political Economy	-	3	12	9
Year 1 – Second Semester						
1	INT 612	Studies in International Relations	-	3	12	9
2	INT 621	Public International Law	-	3	12	9
3	–	Programme Elective (1)	-	3	12	9
Year 2 – First Semester						
1	INT 631	Regional and International Security	-	3	12	9
2	-	Programme Elective (2)	-	3	12	9
3	POL 642	Diplomatic and Consular Relations E	-	3	12	9
Year 2 – Second Semester - Thesis						
1	INT 699	Thesis	21 Credit Hours	9	36	9
Year 2 – Second Semester - Applied Project						
1	–	Programme Elective (3)	–	3	12	9
2	INT 698	Applied Project	24 Credit Hours	6	24	9

Programme Elective Courses						
No.	Course Code	Course Title	Prerequisite	ASU Credit	NQF Credit	NQF Level
Group 1 (6 Cr)						
1	POL 644	Contemporary International Politics	-	3	12	9
2	INT 613	Middle Eastern Studies	-	3	12	9
3	INT 614	Media and Political Communication	-	3	12	9
4	INT 622	The Art of Negotiation	-	3	12	9
5	POL 645	International Organization and Agencies	-	3	12	9
6	POL 646	International Political Crisis Management	-	3	12	9
7	POL643	Foreign Policy Analysis	–	3	12	9

Course Description

Programme Compulsory Courses:

POL 611 - Political Analysis and Scientific Research Methods

This is an advanced course in scientific research methodology and political analysis. The course introduces students to in-depth concepts of political analysis, how to build theoretical frameworks and the relationship of scientific research to theory, the latter's relationship to hypothesis and how to build theory. The student also delves into possessing advanced skills in reviewing previous studies, preparing a research plan and report, and defending both. The course addresses quantitative, qualitative and mixed political analysis and their use by focusing on particular tools such as case studies, focus groups, discourse analysis, and political ethnography. The course also demonstrates how to process political data, honesty and stability test, and quantitative curriculum applications in political science, including Research sample, measurement and computer applications. The student studies the philosophy of scientific research, its role in the renaissance, the ethics of scientific research, and the common mistakes of researchers. (Prerequisite: None)

INT 611- International Relations Theories

This course provides an in-depth examination of the theoretical frameworks associated with the field of International Relations. It focuses on the evolution of IR theorization and the major critiques directed at it, as well as the analysis of theoretical propositions and their capacity to explain patterns, regularities, and transformations in the structural characteristics, processes, and stages that shape international relations and its primary actors. The course also assesses the ability of these theories to classify International phenomena within identifiable trends and stereotypical behaviors. The course covers major theoretical paradigms, including Neorealism, Postmodernism, and Neoliberalism, in addition to partial theories such as Integration Theory, International System Theory, and Decision-Making Theory. It further examines key concepts whose interpretations and impacts on the behavior of international actors have evolved over time, including interest, power, values, and nationalism. (Prerequisite: None)

POL 641 - International Political Economy

This course addresses the interaction and mutual influence between economics and politics in the international arena through the study of the foundational theories of the international political economy such as capitalism, socialism and nationalism, and modern theories such as the dual economy, the new world order and dominant stability. The course also addresses transformative production and its role in the international economic system, foreign direct investment (FDI) - case study, poverty and inequality issues, the political economy of the environment and energy, current global financial imbalances: causes, consequences and solutions, globalization of the economy: consequences and disagreements. The course also deals with the future of the international political economy (foresight perspective). (Prerequisite: None)

INT 612- Studies in International Relations

This course examines a range of contemporary topics in International Relations that have become increasingly significant in the modern era. It provides an in-depth conceptual framework for understanding the importance of these issues and the ongoing developments within the international environment. The course also addresses objective realities relevant to scholars of political science—particularly those concerned with international relations, such as diplomats—enabling them to interpret and analyze these realities in a rigorous and scientific manner. Furthermore, the course

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emphasizes methodologies and analytical approaches in contemporary International Relations, as well as the study of variables influencing patterns of interaction among international actors. It also focuses on applying this knowledge within specialized fields and on developing analytical projections and scenarios regarding the trajectories of political, social, and economic phenomena shaping relations between states. In light of the foregoing, the course explores the nature, characteristics, and current realities of International Relations, along with the developments that have shaped their contemporary features—particularly those grounded in conflict dynamics and their implications for the distribution of power in the international system. The course also includes applied case studies drawn from contemporary international relations. (Prerequisite: None)

INT 621- Public International Law

This course provides an in-depth examination of key topics in Public International Law, including international treaties, the law of the sea, international river law, airspace law, and the law of state succession. It also offers a comprehensive analysis of applied issues in international disputes and their peaceful settlement in accordance with the rules of international law. The course further explores diplomatic methods of dispute resolution, the Charter of the United Nations, and major international conventions, alongside analytical studies of selected cases and decisions issued by the International Court of Justice (The Hague). In addition, the course addresses various mechanisms for resolving international disputes through diplomatic, political, and legal means, including international arbitration. (Prerequisite: None)

INT 631- Regional and International Security

This course is designed to provide students with an in-depth understanding of key concepts related to regional and international security. It covers state security and sovereignty, as well as contemporary dimensions of security including health security, food security, environmental security, emergency response, human security, and the principle of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) at both regional and international levels. The course also examines the role of international and regional organizations in maintaining peace and security, with particular emphasis on warfare, the ongoing proliferation of nuclear weapons, arms trade, and human security concerns. In addition, it addresses selected topics such as nuclear weapons in the Middle East, the rise of extremist groups in the region, and the major challenges confronting international security. (Prerequisite: None)

POL 642 - Diplomatic and Consular Relations E

This course addresses critical issues and topics in diplomatic studies, focusing on the historical development and definition of contemporary functions and practices. The course also deals with the forms and characteristics of consular practice in light of diplomatic and commercial transformations. The course provides an overview of the challenges in diplomatic and consular affairs in light of the complex international environment. (Prerequisite: None)

INT 699 - Thesis

This course is a supervised research project based on an approved topic within the field of International Relations. It represents the cornerstone of the Master's Program in International Relations. The course involves conducting rigorous academic research on a specialized topic of relevance to the Kingdom of Bahrain and its regional context, under the supervision of a qualified faculty member in accordance with the University's postgraduate regulations. The course provides students with the opportunity to undertake independent research grounded in a systematic methodological framework. It emphasizes

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advanced-level academic skills, including the formulation of a research problem, selection of appropriate research methodologies, critical literature review, data analysis, and the development of research findings and recommendations. The final thesis must be defended in a public oral examination, and assessment is based on both the written dissertation and the oral defense. (Prerequisite: Completion of 21 credit hours)

INT 698 – Applied Project

The Applied Project is an independent research-based endeavor aimed at applying the knowledge and skills acquired by students in the classroom to support a relevant host organization. Students are required to engage with the host entity, their academic supervisor, and effectively manage the relationship between both parties. Research topics may vary but must address an approved issue within the field of International Relations, focusing on real-world challenges relevant to Bahrain and the Arab region. The project includes a literature review and the application of appropriate analytical models and data analysis tools to derive findings and formulate practical recommendations. (Prerequisite: Completion of 24 credit hours)

Programme Elective Courses:

POL 644 - Contemporary International Politics

This course addresses the basic concepts related to contemporary international policy which has become vital in today's world through an in-depth knowledge of the significance of international policy and contemporary developments in the international environment. The course addresses key topics and objective facts that scholars of political science and international relations such as diplomats shall understand and interpret scientifically and objectively. The course focuses on methodologies and methods of analysis in contemporary international policy and the study of variables affecting international relations interactions, utilizes this knowledge in specialized fields, develops perceptions and possibilities for the paths of political phenomena. The course handles the international environment, its nature, characteristics, and developments that have resulted in their essential features, based on excellence, collaboration, conflict and the resulting phenomena of peace and war, all of which are linked to the basic concept of "power" in this science. The course also includes a study of applied models of contemporary international policy. (Prerequisite: None)

INT 613 – Middle Eastern Studies

This course provides advanced knowledge and analytical skills in Middle Eastern Studies, covering a range of key topics including the concept of the Middle East, processes of democratic transition, and a critical analysis of the Palestinian issue as a central axis of regional conflicts. It also offers forward-looking perspectives on the future of the region in light of ongoing developments. The course examines the American vision of the "Middle East Project" and its complexities, as well as the influential roles of key factors such as Turkey and the European Union. It further explores the political, economic, social, and cultural implications of this project. In addition, the course evaluates the roles and policies adopted by various states in relation to this project and analyzes current political dynamics in the region. It also seeks to deepen understanding of international conflict, the limits of declining U.S. influence in the Middle East, and the transformations of major powers and their effectiveness within the international system. (Prerequisite: None)

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INT 614 – Media and Political Communication

This course examines the core concepts of media and political communication, with a strong focus on the theoretical approaches used in analyzing this field. It provides an in-depth intellectual foundation on the emergence, definition, and key concepts of political communication, including the political environment, political propaganda, political advertising, political participation, and political marketing. The course emphasizes the relationship between media and political communication on one hand, and the political system on the other, through key communication elements such as source, channel, audience, and message. It also explores the types, functions, and objectives of political media. Furthermore, the course introduces major theories used in the study and analysis of media and political communication. These include audience-centered theories such as Uses and Gratifications Theory and Information Processing Theory; communicator-centered theories such as Cultivation Theory and Agenda-Setting Theory; and theories related to media effects, including direct (short-term) effects and cumulative (long-term) effects. Additionally, the course examines internal and external factors influencing media and political communication and incorporates case studies at both regional and international levels to assess their impact on political processes, thereby linking theory with practice. (Prerequisite: None)

INT 622 – The Art of Negotiation

This course offers an advanced study of negotiation as both a concept and an art, highlighting its role in understanding political phenomena and responding effectively through appropriate behaviors, strategies, and decision-making processes to maximize gains in various situations. The course covers the definition, historical evolution, functions, and contemporary practices of negotiation. It also examines the forms, characteristics, and core elements of the negotiation process, including persuasion, communication, strategic planning, contingency planning, and foresight. Moreover, the course sheds light on international experiences in managing conflicts and crises, exploring both theoretical frameworks and practical approaches to negotiation. It also provides an overview of the key challenges facing negotiation processes within the increasingly complex international environment. (Prerequisite: None)

POL 645 - International Organization and Agencies

The course thoroughly addresses the topics of international regulation and international bodies through studying international organizations and international bodies as effective units in the international system, besides other units. The course focuses on the concept of international regulation, its historical emergence, objectives, membership conditions, and institutional structure. The course also thoroughly examines the personality of international organizations, international bodies and general rules, from both legal and functional, at the international and regional levels. The course focuses on studying the general rules of international organizations, the powers and sources of international organizations, the methods of decision-making in international organizations, and the international organization's legal status. The course also addresses studying global organizations, and international bodies and the criteria for distinguishing between them. The course evaluates the functions and work of international and regional organizations, and their effectiveness in the international system. The course analyses the influence of globalization and international variables on the effectiveness of international regulation. The course focuses on a number of international organizations and bodies. (Prerequisite: None)

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POL 646 - International Political Crisis Management

This course addresses the most significant concepts relevant to international political crises and their management by providing in-depth knowledge of the significance of international political crises management, causes, types, characteristics and management stages. The course also focuses on scenarios for dealing with international political crises and how to measure the efficiency of crisis management, analyze the role of the media in facing international political crises and how to make political decisions in times of crisis. The course also includes the study of applied models for the management of international political crises. (Prerequisite: None)

POL 643 - Foreign Policy Analysis

This course addresses the essence and analysis of foreign policy, using the historical development to study this field as a basic framework for analysis, the objectives of foreign policy in its comprehensive dimensions, and the foreign policy patterns, focusing on rational and sensible behaviour, violent and coercive behaviour, and the various levels in between in a comparative applied study. The course also addresses the dimensions of foreign policy, external effects related to fundamental theories of international relations, societal sources of foreign policy related to the country's depth as internal influences, and its role in influencing the behaviour of political elites. The course deals with regulatory processes in foreign policy-making based on decision-making perspectives such as institutional regulation procedures and bureaucratic policy. The course also thoroughly examines the psychological factors of decision-makers, including subjective perceptions, conceptual and behavioural differences, and personal factors, through the psychological curriculum in the study of foreign policy. This part addresses the topic of international crisis resolution. The course addresses change and consistency in foreign policy using the comparative approach to foreign policy study in two concluding parts. The course considers the diversity of levels of analysis in the future study of foreign policy at the level of the individual, the country and the international system. (Prerequisite: None)