



## COURSE UNIT (MODULE) DESCRIPTION

Course unit (module) title	Code
<b>From Empires to Nation States: History and Ideas of World Order</b>	

Lecturer(s)	Department(s) where the course unit (module) is delivered
<b>Coordinator: dr. Teodoras Žukas</b>	Vilnius University, Faculty of History, Department of Modern History, Universiteto st. 7, Vilnius (2026)

Study cycle	Type of the course unit (module)
Bachelor	Optional

Mode of delivery	Period when the course unit (module) is delivered	Language(s) of instruction
Face to face	Autumn, Spring	English

Requirements for students	
<b>Prerequisites:</b>	<b>Additional requirements (if any):</b>

Course (module) volume in credits	Total student's workload	Contact hours	Self-study hours
5	133 h	32 h	101 h

Purpose of the course unit (module): programme competences to be developed		
The course explores the historical development of world order from ancient empires to modern nation-states. It examines how ideas of legitimacy, sovereignty, power, and justice have shaped the international system across different eras, from the Greek world to the Cold War and contemporary crises. By analyzing key thinkers, institutions, and events, students will gain a deeper understanding of how global order has been imagined, contested, and transformed over time.		
Learning outcomes of the course unit (module)	Teaching and learning methods	Assessment methods
1. The course fosters analytical insight, effective communication, and cooperative skills as students explore and debate the historical dynamics and concepts of world order.	Through seminar debates and group discussions, students will engage more deeply with complex issues, expand their understanding, and practice the norms of scholarly exchange. Self-study hours.	Active participation in the seminars
2. Understand and evaluate the role of major historical events, figures, and institutions in shaping global stability and disorder.	Seminars, self-study hours	Active participation in the seminars
3. Knowledge of how history and political thought have shaped world order, from ancient Greece through the Cold War to the present.	Lectures and self-study of primary sources and historiography.	Essay

Content: breakdown of the topics	Contact hours							Self-study work: time and assignments	
	Lectures	Tutorials	Seminars	Exercises	Laboratory work	Internship/work placement	Contact hours	Self-study hours	Assignments
1. Introductory Lecture – Concepts, Terms, and Main Figures of the History of World Order	2						2	6	Independent reading, analysis of literature
2. Perceptions of the World Order in Ancient China, India, and Greece	2						2	6	Independent reading, analysis of literature
3. Medieval Concept of International Order: The Holy Roman Empire	2						2	6	Independent reading, analysis of literature
4. Sovereignty and the Westphalian System	2		2				4	16	Preparation for the seminar, analysis of the literature, preparation of the position on the topic of the seminar, and argumentation
5. The Congress of Vienna: Legitimacy and Balance of Power	2		2				2	16	Independent reading, analysis of literature
6. Special Seminar – The Emergence of Globalization: Representations and Manifestations of World Order in Art and Culture			2				2	6	Independent reading, in-class reading of the seminar text, and in-class analysis of seminar material
7. The First World War as a Global Disorder	2						2	6	Independent reading, analysis of literature
8. The Idea to Abolish War: International Law & the Interwar Period	2		2				2	6	Independent reading, analysis of literature
9. The Order of 1945: Nuremberg, United Nations, Washington Consensus & the Origins of the Cold War	2						2	6	Independent reading, analysis of literature
10. Peculiar Stability of the Cold War: Nuclear Weapons & <i>the Essence of Decision</i>	2						2	6	Independent reading, analysis of literature
11. The Collapse of the Soviet Union and <i>the New World Order</i>	2		2				4	15	Independent reading, and in-class reading of the seminar text
12. Crises of the 21st Century: World Order and Disorder from 9/11 to 2/24	2						2	6	Independent reading, analysis of literature
Total	22		10				32	101	

Assignment strategy	Weight, %	Deadline	Assessment criteria
Active participation at the seminars	30	<b>Throughout each seminar</b>	<p>Each seminar is evaluated in 10 points system. Total assessment of two seminars consists of 30% of final assessment.</p> <p>1–4 points – The student struggles to select relevant historical material, cannot clearly define the problem, or set appropriate aims and tasks for the topic.</p> <p>5 points – The student identifies the topic and problem of the presentation, sets aims and tasks, and uses historical facts, but has difficulty organizing material according to the main concepts of the course.</p> <p>6–7 points – The student can formulate problems relevant to global and transnational history of world order, compare historical events and processes, but does not consistently integrate key concepts and terms of the course.</p> <p>8–9 points – The student effectively formulates central questions in the history of the world order, compares historical developments across different eras, selects relevant material, and connects it to major ideas and concepts of world order. Visual aids are integrated with research questions, and the student can synthesize different viewpoints to draw independent conclusions.</p> <p>10 points – The student presents the topic in an original and insightful way, independently formulates research problems, uses innovative materials, and develops original conclusions that reflect a deep understanding of the historical development of world order from empires to nation-states.</p>
Essay	70	<b>End of the course</b>	<p>At the conclusion of the course, students will complete a 2–3 page in-class essay, selecting two questions from a group of six broad questions that reflect the core themes of the class.</p>

Author	Year of publication	Title	Issue of a periodical or volume of publication	Publishing house or web link
<b>Compulsory reading</b>				
KISSINGER, Henry	2014	World Order		Penguin Books
OSIANDER, Andreas	2001	Sovereignty, International Relations, and the Westphalian Myth	International Organization, Vol. 55., no. 2, 2001	
<b>Optional reading</b>				
JARRETT, Mark	2013	The Congress of Vienna and Its Legacy: War and Great Power Diplomacy after Napoleon.		London/New York: I.B. Tauris
Ed. BOOTH, Ken & DUNN, Tim	2002	Worlds of Collision: Terror and the Future of Global Order		Palgrave Macmillan
OSIANDER, Andreas	2001	Sovereignty, International Relations, and the Westphalian Myth	International Organization, Vol. 55., no. 2, 2001	
THUCYDIDES	431 BC	The Peloponnesian War		Translation by Martin Hammond, Oxford Classics Edition (2009)
OSTERHAMMEL, Jürgen	2009	The Transformation of the World: a Global History of the Nineteenth Century		Princeton University Press
CLARK, Christopher	2012	The Sleepwalkers: How Europe Went to War in 1914		Penguin Books
ALLISON, Graham T.	1971	The Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis		Little Brown
KANTAROWICZ, Ernst	1957	The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology		Princeton University Press