

Course Title:	International Relations (Honors)
Grade(s):	11,12

Course Description
In a rapidly changing world, it is imperative that the 21st century learner be well-versed in contemporary global history. This course seeks to build on the foundational narrative students have learned in Modern World History to create both informed and active global citizens. This class focuses on the following topics: Globalization and its impact on economics, resource scarcity, and human migration patterns; international conflicts, threats to both international and national security and strategic responses; international trade and finance, disparities in wealth and power on the international stage; and contemporary strategies for both economic and environmental development and sustainability. Lastly, students will seek to understand America's changing roles within the international community by evaluating contemporary foreign policy options on a variety of economic, military, environmental, and geopolitical issues. International Relations is an elective course originally designed as a full year of study. As a semesterized course, students are given the opportunity to vote on which Units of Study they find most compelling. Four of the following Seven Units are covered based on student interest and choice. Prerequisite: Suggested grade of B or higher from previous placement, teacher recommendation. The honors level of this course challenges students to work at a deeper level and at a faster pace. Student-led discussions/debates are the primary summative assessment techniques utilized in this course, requiring both confidence and public speaking skills.
Approved Curricular Materials/Textbook(s)
Brown University CHOICES Program

Unit Title	Unit Description (Include Unit Objectives)	Unit Pacing
Unit 1: Global Awareness	The Global Awareness Unit immerses students in contemporary geopolitics. Students are exposed to contemporary global demographics, migration patterns, and global conflict flashpoints focused on increasing students' global awareness.	Half a Quarter

	Next, students learn foundational geopolitical vocabulary and a brief overview of global institutions. Students next analyze the geopolitical forces of Populism and Globalization, and examine the positive and negative components of their impact on the contemporary world. The unit concludes with students assessing what they think it means to be a global citizen and defining what responsibilities they think global citizenship requires.	
Unit 2: International Trade	The International Trade Unit expands on students' understanding of the economics of Globalization. The International Trade Unit provides students with a background in global economics, resulting in an informed opinion regarding contemporary Free Vs Fair Trade policies. Students begin learning core micro and macro economics vocabulary as well as economic theory. Students then learn about powerful international economic organizations such as the WTO, World Bank, IMF, and influential NGOs. Students then learn about economic conflict, such as trade wars, shocks to the global economy, sanctions, and the costs/benefits of globalist vs protectionist practices. Lastly, students analyze and debate both the merits of contemporary economic treaties and Free/Fair Trade policy.	Half a Quarter
Unit 3: Disparities In Wealth and Power	The Disparities in Wealth and Power Unit examines disparities in wealth and power on the international stage. With a background in global economics from the previous unit, students examine both domestic and global wealth gaps, analyze the various impacts of poverty, and seek to understand and find solutions to the obstacles that prevent humanity from an equitable standard of living. Students research and debate the merits of foreign aid, conduct case studies on contemporary wealth gaps, research the efficacy of charities, billionaire philanthropy, and aid-oriented Non-Governmental Organizations. Students evaluate the impact that gaps in wealth and power have on both their nation and the world.	Half a Quarter
Unit 4: The United Nations	The United Nations Unit connects the students' previously gained knowledge of Globalization and global economics with the contemporary power structures of geopolitics. Students learn about the various roles and responsibilities of the United Nations. Students conduct case studies of the UN Security Council's successes and failures, and debate the structure, funding, and evolving purpose of the United Nations. In addition, students learn how the UN seeks to balance the	Half a Quarter

	need for effective change in struggling nations while respecting state sovereignty through peace-keeping and peace enforcement. Students analyze the U.S.'s historical and contemporary relationship with the United Nations, its commitment to Human Rights, and research/debate the viability of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs). In conducting research on the UNSDGs, students will commit to a specific Goal and create a service project demonstrating their contribution to bringing their chosen goal into reality.	
Unit 5: Development and Sustainability	The Development and Sustainability Unit connects the students' previously gained knowledge of global economics and geopolitics with contemporary nation-building and sustainable development strategies. Students research and debate the merits of foreign aid, good governance, and analyze alternative strategies endorsed by the UN and various NGOs to create viable trade partners and stable governments around the world. Students will conduct case studies of both failed states and developing nations and assess what steps the international community can take to solve contemporary crisis flashpoints around the world, ranging from failed governments in Somalia, Afghanistan, and Syria, to pollution controls in China and India, and poverty reduction strategies in sub-Saharan African nations.	Half a Quarter
Unit 6: Balancing U.S. Interests in the Middle East	To understand the driving forces behind many of the contemporary international conflicts involving the United States, the Balancing U.S. Interests in the Middle East Unit is focused on the evaluation of U.S. foreign policy decisions in the Middle East. Students will conduct pre-9/11 case studies on the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, the Iran/Iraq war, the Soviet/Afghan War, and Persian Gulf Wars, evaluating motives and outcomes on geopolitics. Students will then research and evaluate the ongoing post 9/11 War on Terror, and subsequent U.S. war efforts in Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, and others. Students will assess contemporary military alliances, the shifting nature of contemporary war, debate victory conditions, and evaluate exit strategies of multiple Middle Eastern conflict zones.	Half a Quarter
Unit 7: Threats to International Security	The Threats to International Security Unit of the course seeks to prepare students for several of the transnational challenges currently facing the global community. Students will study the current international scientific consensus on climate change and analyze contemporary efforts by the international community to mitigate it. Students discuss environmental stewardship and seek solutions to the many challenges posed by rapid climate change. Next, students will conduct case	A Full Quarter

	studies on international terrorism, analyze counterterrorism strategies, and discuss U.S. counterterrorism foreign policy in the context of the ongoing War on Terror. Students will also learn about technological threats to international security, ranging from nuclear proliferation to cybersecurity, automation, and drone warfare, and the ongoing threats posed by media disinformation and artificial intelligence.	
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