

Johannes Gutenberg-University Mainz
Department of Political Science
Centre for Political Economy
Winter term 2024-25

Sem (BA/MEd) Introduction to the International Political Economy of Everyday Life

Tuesday 16:00-18:00, Room GFG 02-617
Lecturer: Dr Ruben Kremers

DESCRIPTION

The research tradition of International Political Economy (IPE) often focuses on abstract market forces, hidden power structures, multinational corporations, and high-level politics. This seminar in turn places the focus on the lived experience of global capitalism. How does global capitalism shape your everyday life and what can your everyday life tell us about global capitalism? The first part of the seminar introduces different theorizations of “the everyday” in social sciences. The second part examines a range of everyday actors, things, and practices – the influencer you follow, the clothes you wear, the way you commute to work – to explore how they link up with broader debates about global capitalism. The third part provides room for students to pursue their own research project. It offers both theoretical and methodological reflections guiding the formulation of a topic, the execution of research, and the writing of a paper. Students will learn how to use the analytical tools of IPE to interpret and question the mundane experiences of global capitalism, and to think about ways to expose, resist, or subvert broader power structures, especially as they relate to hierarchies of social difference, such as class, gender, and race.

ASSESSMENT

The requirements for active participation are:

- ❖ Formal registration
- ❖ Reading two key texts per session
- ❖ Submission of a visual reflection on the Everyday Archive of Global Capitalism
- ❖ Regular attendance

Everyday Archive of the Global Political Economy: This class introduces various perspectives on the everyday life of global capitalism. This assignment asks you to reflect on how these perspectives can shed light on the impact of the global economy on your everyday life. At the end of the semester, take a photo of an activity, object, or situation from your everyday life that you feel illustrates or resonates with the ideas discussed in class. Send the picture to my email (kremers@politik.uni-mainz.de), along with a short explanation (250-500 words). We will discuss the entire archive of pictures in the last session of this course.

Term paper: The paper should be 25 000 characters (+/- 20%), including spaces, and broadly relate to the topic of the course. Please find the formal requirements and marking criteria in Moodle. Deadline for submission is 22 September 2025.

Chatbots: Chatbots based on large language models produce plausible-sounding texts based on statistical probabilities. However, these can be completely wrong in terms of content. Therefore, if you want to use such applications, you need to consider the following:

- ❖ Essays are there to examine your academic progress and skills. They must be authored by yourself. Chatbots are therefore not a permissible tool for generating the final draft of your essay.
- ❖ Chatbots can, however, be a useful tool for exploring the topic of your essay or even for producing bits of text. Please be alert to the fact that while the texts might sound authoritative, there is nothing on the backend of the technology (other than you) that fact checks the results.
- ❖ If you choose to use a chatbot for parts of the essay, add a footnote, explain how you used it, and provide the name of the chatbot and its source (e.g. URL).

OUTLINE

Date	Topic	Literature
15.04.2025	Introduction	Felski R (2000) <i>Doing Time: Feminist Theory and Postmodern Culture</i> . NYU Press, 2000. Chapter 3. Guillaume X & Huysmans J (2018) The concept of ‘the everyday’: Ephemeral politics and the abundance of life. <i>Cooperation and Conflict</i> 54(2): 278-296. https://doi.org/10.1177/0010836718815520 .
Theories of the Everyday		
22.04.2025	How does global capitalism shape everyday life?	Kopp T, Becker M, Decker S, Eicker J, Engelmann H, Eradze I, Forster F, Haller S, Heuwie-ser M, Hoffmann M, Noever Castelos C, Podstawa C, Shah A, Siemons A, Wenzel T & Wolfinger L (2019) At the Expense of Others? How the imperial mode of living prevents a good life for all. Oekom, available at: https://aufkostenanderer.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/01-kopp-et-al-2019-at-the-expense-of-others--introduction-1.pdf .
29.04.2025	How does everyday life shape global capitalism?	Enloe C (2013) <i>Seriously!: Investigating Crashes and Crises as If Women Mattered</i> . University of California Press, Chapter 3. https://doi.org/10.1525/9780520956667
06.05.2025	The I-PEEL approach	Brassett J, Elias J, Rethel L & Richardson B (2023) I-PEEL: The International Political Economy of Everyday Life. Oxford University Press: Introduction.
The International Political Economy of Everyday Life		
13.05.2025	Clothes	Brassett J, Elias J, Rethel L & Richardson B (2023) I-PEEL: The International Political Economy of Everyday Life. Oxford University Press: Chapter 2

20.05.2025	Food	Brassett J, Elias J, Rethel L & Richardson B (2023) I-PEEL: The International Political Economy of Everyday Life. Oxford University Press: Chapter 3
27.05.2025	Care	Brassett J, Elias J, Rethel L & Richardson B (2023) I-PEEL: The International Political Economy of Everyday Life. Oxford University Press: Chapter 5.
03.06.2025	Cities	Brassett J, Elias J, Rethel L & Richardson B (2023) I-PEEL: The International Political Economy of Everyday Life. Oxford University Press: Chapter 6.
10.06.2025	Social Media	Brassett J, Elias J, Rethel L & Richardson B (2023) I-PEEL: The International Political Economy of Everyday Life. Oxford University Press: Chapter 7.
Everyday Archive of the Global Political Economy		
17.06.2025	Groupwork	
24.06.2025	Feedback	
01.07.2025	Presentation	
08.07.2025	Feedback & Conclusion	