

THIS SYLLABUS IS A DRAFT AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE. A FINAL VERSION
WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE AT THE START OF THE SEMESTER.

Foreign Policy Analysis

IR 2050

Spring 2024

Instructor: Quintijn Kat

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Lecture hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays: 3:00 – 4:30 pm

Office hours: Thursday 5:00 – 6:00 pm

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As a discipline, IR is initially taught in terms of grand theories—realism, liberalism, constructivism, Marxism—which try to explain in one fell swoop the entirety of international politics. Foreign Policy Analysis is much more granular because it examines how policymakers decide. As you will learn, actual decision-making is always messier than what grand theories imply. So, from the grand and the ‘macro’, we look on the domestic, state, organizational, and personal levels to understand the multitude of factors that affect a country’s foreign policy. In order to do this, we make use of various conceptual lenses: theories of rational choice and alternatives to rational choice, individual/group psychology, emotions, culture/identity, and more. In a way, this course will be an exercise in unlearning IR Theory 101.

So, what are the kind of questions that this class will help you think about? Perhaps questions such as ‘Why did the United States respond to the discovery of Soviet missiles in Cuba with a blockade rather than any other possible response?’, ‘Why do state leaders sometimes choose policy options with a high risk of failure while less risky options are available?’, ‘How did domestic politics impact US-Iranian relations in the early twenty-first century?’, ‘How did Nehru’s experience of colonial subjugation shape his ideas of non-alignment?’, ‘What are the effects of social media on foreign policy?’, and ‘Can small states be successful in their foreign policy and, if yes, under what conditions?’. These are just some examples. The main objective of the course is to introduce you to the many approaches one can take when trying to understand, explain, and analyse foreign policy processes and decision-making.

Learning outcomes

- A basic understanding of Foreign Policy Analysis and how it converges with and diverges from systemic IR theory.
- Familiarity with several theories and core concepts of Foreign Policy Analysis.
- Ability to distinguish between different levels of analysis and how each of these entails varying approaches to research.

- Ability to question rhetorical justifications for prominent foreign policy decisions that often are not the real reason why such decisions are made.
- Ability to apply a Foreign Policy Analysis theoretical framework to a case of choice or to write a critique of such a theoretical framework.

Students are expected to read extensively for this course. It is important that students read *all required materials* prior to the week for which they have been assigned.

A good textbook on Foreign Policy (from which we will be reading a few chapters) is Steve Smith, Amelia Hadfield, and Tim Dunne, *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases* (Oxford University Press).

While taking this course, it is a good idea to keep up to date with current international affairs so that you are able to connect the theories, approaches, and issue areas that we discuss with present-day developments and events. A great way of doing this is by closely following international news in major global newspapers (e.g. the *New York Times* or *The Guardian*) and regularly reading background analysis in publications such as *The Economist*, *Foreign Policy*, and *Foreign Affairs* among others. Podcasts can also be helpful. There are many great ones out there, but some suggestions are:

- *Global Dispatches: World News That Matters*.
- *The President's Inbox* – for a US perspective from the Council on Foreign Relations.
- *Mark Leonard's World in 30 Minutes* – for a European perspective from the European Council on Foreign Relations.

Assessment and grading

Attendance is mandatory, but students are allowed four absences (four LSs + four DSs). Missing more than four sessions (LS or DS) will result in a downgrading of your final grade for the course by one letter grade per absence. For example, a student who scored an A- for the course but misses five LS sessions will end up with a B+; if that same student misses six sessions, he/she will get a B; etcetera. There will be no exceptions to this rule, so use your allowed absences wisely (e.g., when you are sick).

Students will take a mid-term exam that covers weeks 1 to (and including) 7 that will be held in class on **Tuesday 19 March during regular lecture hours**. Consequently, there will be no lecture on 19 March.

The final assessment of the course will be in the form of a 2000-word essay in which you have two options. Either you apply one of the theoretical frameworks that we covered to a case of your choice, or you write a theoretical critique of one such framework. The submission deadline for the essay assignment is **Thursday 9 May at 23:59 pm**. Late submissions will not be accepted and result in an F grade for the assignment without exception.

Students should be aware that all essays will be checked for plagiarism and for use of AI writing tools such as ChatGPT and others using software specifically designed to detect either of these. Plagiarism or handing in writing that was done by AI instead of yourself will be reported to the Academic Integrity Committee and may result in a grade penalty or, in serious cases an F grade.

Finally, students are also required to hand in six 500-word-long creative memos (six memos out of a total of twelve weeks, namely weeks 2-14) that reflect on a/the reading(s) of that week. These memo submissions should not merely summarize the readings but express your thoughts on these. Did the reading stimulate you to think about something specific? Do you agree with its main points? Or do you perhaps have critique? Did the author leave out something important in your opinion? All of these (and more) are possible questions you could try and respond to in the memos. You have a lot of liberty in writing the memo. Make it reflective, creative, humorous, conversational. You decide!

Memos are due on the day prior to the first lecture of each week, that is, on Monday night at 23:59pm IST. Late submission will not be considered.

The course is graded as follows:

Lecture and Discussion Sessions participation	15%
Memo assignments	15%
Mid-term exam (19 March)	30%
End-term essay (9 May)	40%

Course plan:

Week 1 (22 January): IR Theory versus Foreign Policy Analysis

Required readings:

Kenneth Waltz (1959), *Man, the State, and War* (New York: Columbia University Press), Chapter 1.

Walter Carlsnaes (2016). 'Actors, structures, and foreign policy analysis,' in Smith, Steve, Amelia Hadfield, and Timothy Dunne, eds., *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases* (Oxford University Press), pp. 113-129.

Week 2 (29 January): The Rational Actor Model and alternative approaches

Required readings:

Graham T. Allison (1960), 'Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis,' *American Political Science Review*, 63(3), pp. 689-718.

Janice Gross Stein (2016), 'Foreign policy decisionmaking: Rational, psychological, and neurological models,' in Smith, Steve, Amelia Hadfield, and Timothy Dunne, eds., *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases* (Oxford University Press), pp. 130-146.

Week 3 (5 February): Misperception, lies, and (ir)rationality

Required readings:

Robert Jervis (2017), *How Statesmen Think: The Psychology of International Politics* (Princeton University Press), Chapter 5 'Signaling and Perception: Projecting Images and Drawing Inferences,' pp. 107-124.

John J. Mearsheimer (2011), *Why Leaders Lie: The Truth about Lying in International Politics* (Oxford University Press), Chapter 1, 'Introduction'.

James D Boys (2021), 'The unpredictability factor: Nixon, Trump and the application of the Madman Theory in US grand strategy,' *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 34(3), pp. 430-451.

Week 4 (12 February): Prospect Theory

Required readings:

Rose McDermott (1992), 'Prospect Theory in International Relations: The Iranian Hostage Rescue Mission,' *Political Psychology*, 13(2), pp. 237-263.

Kurt Weyland (1996), 'Risk Taking in Latin American Economic Restructuring: Lessons from Prospect Theory,' *International Studies Quarterly*, 40(2), pp. 185-208.

Recommended reading:

Jack S. Levy (1992), 'An Introduction to Prospect Theory,' *Political Psychology*, 13(2), pp. 171-186.

Week 5 (19 February): Role Theory

Required readings:

Holsti, K.J. (1970), 'National Role Conceptions in the Study of Foreign Policy', *International Studies Quarterly*, 14: 233-309. Read pp. 233-256 only.

Rikard Bengtsson, Ole Elgström, Conflicting Role Conceptions? The European Union in Global Politics, *Foreign Policy Analysis*, Volume 8, Issue 1, January 2012, Pages 93–108

Recommended reading:

Holsti, K.J. (1970), 'National Role Conceptions in the Study of Foreign Policy', *International Studies Quarterly*, 14: 233-309, rest of article.

Week 6 (26 February): Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy Analysis

Required readings:

Robert D. Putnam (1988), 'Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games,' *International Organization*, 42(3), pp. 427-460.

Graeme A.M. Davies (2011), 'Coercive Diplomacy Meets Diversionary Incentives: The Impact of US and Iranian Domestic Politics during the Bush and Obama Presidencies,' *Foreign Policy Analysis*, 8(3), pp. 313-331.

Week 7 (4 March): Military and Strategic Culture

Required readings:

Alastair Iain Johnston (1995), 'Thinking about Strategic Culture,' *International Security*, 19(4), pp. 32-64.

Elizabeth Kier (1995), 'Culture and Military Doctrine: France between the Wars,' *International Security*, 19(4), pp. 65-93.

Week 8 (11 March): MID-TERM BREAK

Week 9 (18 March): Operational Codes

TUESDAY 19 MARCH: MID-TERM EXAM

Required readings for 21 March lecture:

Alexander L. George (1969), 'The "operational code": A neglected approach to the study of political leaders and decision-making,' *International Studies Quarterly*, 13(2), pp. 190-222.

Stephen G. Walker (1990), 'The evolution of operational code analysis,' *Political Psychology*, 11(2), pp. 403-418.

Week 10 (25 March): Identity and Foreign Policy

Required readings:

Jelena Subotic (2011), 'Europe is a State of Mind: Identity and Europeanization in the Balkans,' *International Studies Quarterly*, 55(2), pp. 309-330.

Ted Hopf (2016), "Crimea is Ours": A Discursive History,' *International Relations*, 30(2), pp. 227-255.

Week 11 (1 April): Emotions and Foreign Policy

Required readings:

Karen E. Smith (2021), 'Emotions and EU foreign policy,' *International Affairs*, 97(2), pp. 287-304.

Manjari Chatterjee Miller (2013), *Wronged by Empire: Post-Imperial Ideology and Foreign Policy in India and China* (Stanford University Press), Chapter 1, 'Trauma, Colonialism and Post-Imperial Ideology,' pp. 7-34.

Week 12 (8 April): Public Opinion and the Media

Required readings:

Ole R. Holsti (1992), 'Public Opinion and Foreign Policy: Challenges to the Almond-Lippmann Consensus,' *International Studies Quarterly*, 36(4), pp. 439-466.

Matthew A. Baum and Philip B.K. Potter (2019), 'Media, Public Opinion, and Foreign Policy in the Age of Social Media,' *The Journal of Politics*, 81(2).

Week 13 (15 April): The Foreign Policies of Small States

Required readings:

Tom Long (2017), 'Small States, Great Power? Gaining Influence Through Intrinsic, Derivative, and Collective Power,' *International Studies Review*, 19(2), pp. 185-205.

Derek McDougall and Pradeep Taneja (2019), 'Sino-Indian Competition in the Indian Ocean Island Countries: the Scope for Small State Agency,' *Journal of the Indian Ocean Region*, 16(2).

Recommended readings:

Quintijn B. Kat (2021), 'Subordinate-State Agency and US Hegemony: Colombian Consent versus Bolivian Dissent,' *International Studies Review*, 23(1), pp. 140-163.

Diana Pancke (2012), 'Dwarfs in International Negotiations: How Small States Make Their Voices Heard,' *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 25(3), pp. 313-328.

Week 14 (22 April): Public Diplomacy and Foreign Policy

Required readings:

Joseph S. Nye (2008), 'Public Diplomacy and Soft Power,' *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 616(1), pp. 94-109.

Christopher Darnton (2020), 'Public Diplomacy and International Conflict Resolution: A Cautionary Case from Cold War South America,' *Foreign Policy Analysis*, 16(1), pp. 1-20.