

Understanding Foreign Policy: the Diplomacy of War, Profit and Justice

LSE SUMMER SCHOOL

Globalisation has seen the growing interconnectedness of the world politically, socially, and economically. The relationship between states is therefore crucial. As a result, the answers to key questions such as what tools are available to states in their pursuit of foreign policy objectives and how are emerging powers challenging the international order are critical for leaders in government and researchers seeking to understand the role of foreign policy in diplomacy.

This course examines the key concepts and schools of thought in the study of foreign policy. Concentrating on the process of decision making, internal and external factors which influence foreign policy and the instruments available to foreign policy decision makers, the course will provide you with an understanding of the role and effect that foreign policy has on international politics.

During this highly topical and interactive course you will learn about the differing strategies that great powers and small states employ in achieving their aims; the foreign policy challenges posed by terrorism, rogue and failed states; and the significance of new foreign policy powers like China. Exploring these topics and their application in various countries you will discuss their relevance for international organisations and transnational actors.

Lectures: 36 hours

Classes: 18 hours

Assessment*: One examination and one essay

Typical credit**: 3-4 credits (US) 7.5 ECTS points (EU)

Key topics

How do states formulate and implement their foreign policy?

Does leadership make a difference in successful foreign policy?

Can national foreign policies ever be ethical?

What can states and international organisations do to prevent common threats like terrorism, nuclear proliferation and climate change?

Are democracies more likely to pursue aggressive foreign policies than dictatorships?

How are the foreign policies of emerging powers reshaping the practices, structure and institutions of the international system?

Programme Structure and assessment

This course is delivered as a combination of lectures, class discussions and readings. Due to the highly topical nature of the course, you are expected to actively engage and prepare the necessary readings in order to get the most out of the lively discussions in class.

This course is assessed through a mid-session essay (50%) and a final examination (50%). You will also be expected to complete an essay plan during the course. This plan will not contribute to your final grade but will help in preparation for the final essay.

Course outcomes

Identify the key concepts and schools of thought in the study of foreign policy.

Discuss what factors influence foreign policy making and the role of the state in its production.

Discuss how US and Chinese foreign policy goals are determined in a post-Cold War era.

Analyse how psychological factors play a role in determining the formulation of foreign policy objectives.

Identify what role the media plays in shaping public opinion on foreign policy issues.

Investigate the nature of the international system and the behaviour of states in it.

Discuss whether globalisation has facilitated transnational crime and terrorism.

Argue whether national foreign policies can be reconciled with international and universalist objectives.

Reading materials

Alden and Amnon Aran, *Foreign Policy Analysis: New approaches*, 2nd Edition, London: Routledge (2016).

S. Smith, Amelia Hadfield and Tim Dunne, eds., *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases*, 3rd Edition, Oxford UP (2016).

*A more detailed reading list will be supplied prior to the start of the programme