



Course information 2018–19

IR2137 Foreign Policy Analysis

The study of foreign policy is referred to as foreign policy analysis, and its focus is the intentions and actions of (primarily) states aimed at the external world and the response of other actors (again, primarily states) to these actions. This course is not designed to give students detailed exposure to the changing foreign policies of any particular country, though of course students will have many opportunities to learn about the foreign policies of major, middle and small powers through the reading material. It is aimed at giving students the tools to analyse, interpret and, ultimately, understand the dynamics of foreign policy generally so that they might apply these to their study of the role of states in international affairs.

Prerequisite

If taken as part of a BSc degree, the following course must be passed before this course may be attempted:

IR1011 Introduction to international relations

Aims and objectives

The aim of this course is to:

- introduce students to the central concepts in foreign policy analysis;
- develop students' comparative skills of analysis of differing foreign policies in practice;
- promote critical engagement with the foreign policy analysis literature and enable students to display this engagement by developing their ability to present, substantiate and defend complex arguments.

Assessment

This course is assessed by a three-hour unseen written examination.

Learning outcomes

At the end of the course and having completed the essential reading and activities students should be able to:

- ✓ identify and critically assess the processes involved in foreign policy decision making
- ✓ discuss the contexts, pressures and constraints with which foreign policy makers have to deal
- ✓ contrast and compare the strength of theoretical approaches used in foreign policy analysis.

Essential reading

Alden, C. and A. Aran, *Foreign Policy Analysis – New Approaches* (London: Routledge 2017) 2nd edition.

Smith, S., A. Hadfield and T. Dunne, *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases* (Oxford: OUP 2012) 2nd edition.

For full details of additional essential readings, please refer to the reading list.

Students should consult the appropriate *EMFSS Programme Regulations*, which are reviewed on an annual basis. The *Regulations* provide information on the availability of a course, where it can be placed on your programme's structure, and details of co-requisites and prerequisites.

Syllabus

This is a description of the material to be examined. On registration, students will receive access to the online course, which provides a framework for covering the topics in the syllabus and directions to the essential reading.

This course examines the key concepts and schools of thought in foreign policy analysis, concentrating particularly on the process of decision making, the internal and external factors which influence foreign policy decisions, the instruments available to foreign policy decision makers and the effect of changes in the international system on foreign policy. The course combines a discussion of these theories with their application to selected countries in the North, the South, international organisations and transnational actors.

The principal themes to be addressed by the course are:

- the role and relevance of foreign policy in the era of globalisation
- how different theoretical approaches to FPA shape our understanding of foreign policy
- the role of leadership, the bureaucracy and interest groups in setting the state's foreign policy agenda
- what challenges democratising states face in constructing a new foreign policy
- the scope for affecting change in the international system by non-state actors.