POSC 328 Foreign Policy Analysis

Winter 2021

Remote Course, M,W 7:00- 9:30pm Central Time (in two sections)

Instructor: Greg Marfleet   Email: gmarfleet@carleton.edu

Office Hours on Zoom: M, W 11:30am - 1:00pm, Friday 7:30-9pm (appointment signup page)

ALL Class Meetings and Office Hours (on Zoom)

Course Description

In this course we examine some of the leading theoretical approaches to the study of foreign policy across a range of countries and issue areas. The goal of the course is to prepare students to critically evaluate the theoretical literature on foreign policy, to participate in a collaborative data generation project and to conduct their own research.

Foreign Policy Analysis is a sub-field of international relations which has received increased attention since the end of the Cold War. Critics observed that the (mostly structure-focused) dominant IR theories failed to predict or explain this profound transformation. Subsequently, the debate over the Democratic Peace, 9/11, Afghanistan, and US motivations for the invasion of Iraq have generated renewed interest approaches that emphasize actors (leader, state and regimes) over structures. Likewise renewed attention has been given to the role that domestic politics may play in international politics. The rising status of FPA was evidenced by the decision of the International Studies Association to support the creation of an eponymously titled new journal dedicated to this area of research.

Although the sub-field, like most sub-fields in political science and international relations, is a diverse set of research programs and theoretical approaches, FPA scholars share several common tendencies. First, they eschew ‘grand theory’ and broad systemic explanations of world politics in favor of mid-range explanations for the behavior of actors in international affairs. Second, they are generally suspicious of the simplifying assumption that states can be viewed as unified and/or rational agents. The rejection of these assumptions forces FPA researchers to ‘open the black box’ of the state as they seek explanations for events, choices and outcomes. This makes FPA is an inherently interdisciplinary sub-field as scholars must acquaint themselves with topics such as leadership, decision making, group dynamics, bureaucracies, institutional constraints on government, public opinion and the media (to name just a few). FPA draws on theories of human interaction and behavior in social psychology, organizational behavior, economic and sociology.

REMOTE LEARNING PLAN for 2021
I have opted to teach during the evening time slot opened by the College in response to covid. This later time more easily accommodates students in Pacific and Asian Time zones (apologies to students based in Europe)

Because the time slot from 7:00-9:30 is extra long it facilitates an approach to the seminar in two sections a Monday Group and a Wednesday Group. Each of these groups will meet for the FULL time on their respective days

The Daily Plan with the exception of Mid-term Break Week will be

7:00-7:50 Topic I - discussion of readings, short student reports

10 minute break

8:00 - 8:50 Topic II - discussion of readings, short student reports

10 minute break

9:00 - 9:30 Lab or Active Learning activity using Data, Analytic Software, etc.

Textbook: There is no text for this course. It will be article based. See citations and links in the weekly blocks below.

Assignments and Grading

Participation 20 pts [includes 10 points for Content Analysis Data Entry Effort and Weekly readings questions]

Mid-term Paper Proposal 15 pts

FP film Review 15 pts

Lab Report 15 pts

Final FP Research Paper 35 pts

Important Choices for Assignments

FP Film Review Choice
Choose one of the films we will watch during the term. You will be responsible for a 1000 word review response paper. This is an open topic but you should try to forge a link between your review and some of the reading or concepts from class. You will also participate in a film-review panel with your fellow writers on EITHER Wednesday of Mid-term break or during the final week of class.
3 January - 9 January
General Themes: Introduction, IR vs FPA, Comparative FP, Behavioral FP, Political Psychology and Decision Making Approaches

Topic: IR and Foreign Policy Analysis defining a subfield


Pre Lab Security Document Content Analysis Project
Q: Have the key security interests of states, articulated in their top level documents, changed as a result of emerging new security dialogs?

10 January - 16 January
General Themes: Power, Security, Hegemony

Topic Power and Capability

Wilson, J.L., 2015. Russia and China respond to soft power: Interpretation and readaptation of a Western construct. Politics, 35(3-4), pp.287-300. (link)


Topic: Conflict and FP


Lab 1
Q: Does prior history of militarized disputes make a country more national security oriented?

FP Film: China Power and Prosperity

17 January - 23 January
General Themes: Identities, Cultures & Roles

Topic: Role theory

Thies, C.G. and Breuning, M., 2012. Integrating foreign policy analysis and international relations through role theory. Foreign Policy Analysis, 8(1), pp.1-4. (link)


Topic: Culture, Identity and Security


Lab2
Q: Do allies tend to hold similar perspectives on the nature of security?

Alliance and Treaty Data and Security Documents

FP Film: Bitter Rivals

24 January - 30 January
General Themes: Leaders, Perceptions & Decision-Making

Topic: Leaders and cognition

Reading:


Topic: Leader Characteristics


Lab 3

Q: Can we measure differences between Leaders using at-a-distance, text analysis of speeches and rhetoric?

Introduction to Profiler Plus - Automated Text Analysis

FP Film: Putin's Revenge

31 January - 6 February
General Themes: Advisors, Bureaucracies & Legislatures

Topic: Small Groups/Advisors

Reading:
Maoz, Z. (1990) "Framing the National Interest: The Manipulations of Foreign Policy Decisions in Group Settings." World Politics, 43: 77-110. (J-stor )


Topic: Bureaucracies, Organizations and Institutions

Reading:

Lab 4
Q: Does the rhetoric of leaders coincide with national security orientation?

Working with Class-Generated Leadership Speech Text Data

FP Film: The War Behind Closed Doors

7 February - 13 February
Monday - Mid Term Break Week - No Monday Class

Wednesday All Students attend Wednesday

Proposal Paper Workshop,

FP Film Reviews [Part 1]

Security Document Content Analysis Coding Due

Suggested Readings for Paper Methodology

Read and incorporate some insight from at least two of these papers into your proposal plan.


14 February - 20 February
General Themes: Public Opinion, Interest Groups & Domestic Politics

Topic: Domestic Politics and Opposition


Topic Domestic Discontent and Diversionary conflict


Lab 5

Q: Do national security orientations reflect public opinion and shared societal values?

Public Opinion and Security Document Data - World Values Survey

FP Film: Trumps Trade War

21 February - 27 February
General Themes: Interests, Institutions & Alliances

Topic: Alliances


Topic: Economics Foreign Policy


Lab 6

Q: Do countries with a stronger human and global security orientation give more foreign aid?

National Aid Transfer Data and Security Document Data

FP Film: The World Without US

28 February - 6 March
General Themes: Critical Feminism & Constructivism

Topic: Social Construction


Topic: Feminism and FP


Lab 7

Q: Does a country's orientation toward the rights of women help to explain its security discourse?


FP Film: Shusenjo: Comfort Women and Japan's War on History

7 March - 13 March
Research Paper Presentations
FP Movie Reviews [Part 2]