Carleton College  
POSC 206 Tools of National Power: Economic Statecraft  
Spring 2021

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Virtual Office Hours: By appointment in advance on Thursdays at 9-10:30pm and Fridays at 8:30-10:00am (Central Daylight Time)

Course Description

This third, Tools of National Power course seeks to build off the earlier segments that looked at military and political instruments of statecraft by considering the tools of foreign economic policy, including trade, assistance, and sanctions. It will examine foreign economic policies by which the United States and other countries advance their national interests. Through short presentations, discussion of historical and current examples, and student-led reviews of case studies, class participants will consider the tools of international economic power and influence, how they are used, and their efficacy and appropriateness in different contexts. While this is a stand-alone class and students are not required to take the two previous courses, those who enrolled in one or both of those earlier segments are encouraged to make use of and build upon insights they gained on best uses of the all the instruments of national power.

During the spring 2021 term, the course instructor is serving abroad on assignment for the US government and so must conduct all aspects of this class virtually. Class will convene online at 7:30-9:30 pm, Central Daylight Time (CDT), on Mondays, May 10, 17, 24, and 31, 2021. Note that internet breakdowns and/or a crisis in Afghanistan might create issues. The instructor will endeavor to contact students in a timely manner if that occurs. Each class will include a short discussion on developments and issues in Afghanistan and US-Afghan relations.

Learning Outcomes

Successful students will become familiar with tools of economic statecraft, including international economic institutions and policy issues; what is economic power and how it is used; how effective economic tools have been and what accounts for differences in outcomes; and how policymakers think about using economic, as opposed to political or military instruments, to advance national aims. They should get an understanding of how foreign economic policy is made; trade policy, trade agreements, and the choices states make in concluding them; the substance, effectiveness, and limitations of economic sanctions; foreign aid and economic
support as instruments of influence and impact; and how foreign policy, economic and other priorities come together with respect to energy and climate change. Class participants should emerge familiar economic statecraft, including how policymakers weigh foreign policy considerations against domestic political and economic priorities.

**Textbook & Materials**

Week-by-week reading and video assignments are posted under the course heading in Moodle. *Note that page numbers in the syllabus correspond to actual page numbers used in underlying documents, not pages created by a pdf or similar file.* Supplemental, but not required reading suggestions for those wishing to delve further into specific topics appear below and will be added upon later. No textbooks are required for this course.

**Attendance, Participation, and Late Work**

Students are required to log into all synchronous online sessions on time and for the full, two-hour duration of each class, to have read the assigned reading prior to each session, and to participate fully (speak up, ask questions, etc.). *Participation accounts for 20% of the class grade:* the instructor will provide feedback on students’ participation throughout the class. Those who must miss all or part of a class session should advise the instructor in a timely manner. Failure to adhere to these requirements will affect the grades awarded.

**Case Studies**

Student groups of about five will present in class on case studies relevant to each of the course’s topics. Group presentations should be 15-20 minutes, leaving time for discussion among the class and broader lessons learned. Prepared case studies for the groups to read and draw from are listed below and appear in Moodle. (Class participants are encouraged to skim case studies to which they are not assigned, but this is not required.) A separate note will assign students to groups and describe expectations for what presentations should aim to accomplish. *Case study presentations account for 20% of the class grade.*

**Research Assignment**

Students will be responsible for submitting a research paper. It should consider how, in two different circumstances, the United States or another country or set of countries applied or are applying economic tools of statecraft to achieve national objectives. Further guidance and potential topic ideas will be provided separately and discussed when the class meets. Those who took part in segments one and two of Tools of National Power may expand their focus to look holistically at the combined application of military, political, and economic instruments of influence, but this is not a requirement. Research papers should describe the circumstances and problems being addressed, assess what instruments of statecraft are being or were used and why, and consider effectiveness in achieving the desired outcome and what accounts for that. Papers should be 10-15 pages in length, double-spaced, with standard margins, free of spelling, grammar, and formatting issues, and preferably in an accessible word processing program.
Highly-graded papers will comprehensively and insightfully deal with the substantive issues and be well-written and presented.

To assist in the development and preparation of these research papers, students should inform the instructor by Friday, May 14 as to their proposed topics. By Thursday, May 20, they should provide a one-page proposed outline and statement of tentative main ideas and a bibliography/research list that will be graded and will account for 10% of the class grade.

Research papers are due Tuesday, June 1. They account for the 50% of the class grade.

Students who need more time due to finals, requirements in other classes, or other reasons can request, at any time before June 1, a later due date prior to, at the latest, 11:59pm CDT on June 7. Papers submitted after the due date or requested alternative will be penalized and could result in a failing grade. Grading standards:

- A: Excellent: well-researched and complete substance
- B: Good, with substantive omissions
- C: Fair-to-poor: many major substantive issues, inadequate research, and/or overwhelming writing problems
- D: Unserious and sloppy

Instructor Response

The instructor, who lives temporarily in Afghanistan, has no office or office hours on the Carleton campus. During the period of the course, he will endeavor to make himself available to talk – e.g., via phone, WhatsApp, Signal, Zoom, etc. – on Thursdays at 9-10:30pm and Fridays at 8:30-10:00am (CDT) and at other times by arrangement (Kabul is 9½ hours ahead of CDT.) Students should send an email well in advance to set up a call.

Week 1: Course Introduction and Trade Policy – May 10, 2021

⇒ Class is online at 7:30-9:30pm, Monday, May 10, 2021.

Objectives

- Introductions.
- Review course objectives, content, and requirements.
- Understand the institutions of international trade, trade policy, and how the United States organizes trade policymaking.
- Assess key current trade issues.
- US dilemma in Afghanistan.

Video

- US economic pressure before Pearl Harbor,
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9p8z1A3TsxU.
Reading


Assignment: Students should advise the instructor via email no later than Friday, May 14 regarding their research paper topics. A few sentences will suffice.

Week 2: Sanctions Policy, Application, and Impact – May 17, 2021

⇒ Class is online at 7:30-9:30pm, Monday, May 17, 2021.

Objectives

- Complete trade policy via a case studies – student groups 1 and 2 present and discuss.
- Understand sanctions, including how and why policymakers turn to sanctions.
- Assess what makes for effective sanctions and what can be unintended consequences.
- Consider current issues in sanctions policy.
- Afghanistan: sanction and impact.

Reading


• Secretary Pompeo’s Statement on the Political Impasse in Afghanistan, March 23, 2020.


Case Studies on Trade (groups 1 & 2 present and discuss)


Additional Optional Reading


Assignment: In preparation for their research paper assignments, students should provide via email to the instructor by Thursday, May 20 (a) a one-page proposed outline and statement of tentative main ideas and (b) a bibliography/research list. This will be graded and accounts for 10% of the class grade.

Week 3: Foreign Assistance, Conditionality, and Foreign Policy – May 24, 2021

⇒ Class is online at 7:30-9:30pm, Monday, May 24, 2021.

Objectives

• Complete sanctions via a case studies – student groups 3 and 4 present and discuss.
• Consider foreign aid policies and strategies of the United States and others – including humanitarian, development, rule of law/democracy, and security-related assistance.
• Assess how foreign aid and official financing are used for influence and to what effect.
• Afghanistan: aid conditionality.
Video


Reading


Case Studies on Sanctions (groups 3 & 4 present and discuss)


Week 4: Geopolitics of Energy & Climate Change and Conclusions – May 31, 2021

⇒ Class is online at 7:30-9:30pm, Monday, May 31, 2021

Objectives

- Complete assistance via a case study – student group 5 presents and discusses.
- Understand the geopolitics of energy.
- Assess how and why countries use energy as a tool in foreign policy – and use foreign policy tools (political and military) to advance energy security.
• Consider geopolitical and statecraft issues associated with climate change.
• Review and conclusions.

Reading


• Biniaz, Susan, “‘Multilateralism,’ Climate Change, and the (Greater Metropolitan) Paris Agreement,” 21st Century Diplomacy: Foreign Policy is Climate Policy, Wilson Center & Adelphi


Video


Case Studies on Assistance (group 5 presents and discusses)


Assignment: Research papers are due via email to the instructor Tuesday, June 1 (or by a date up to June 7, per request submitted to the instructor prior to June 1).