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Diplomacy Syllabi

School of Diplomacy and International  
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Spring 2021

## DIPL 4101/5101 AA Senior Research Project/Diplomacy Honors Thesis Project

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*Seton Hall University*

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**School of Diplomacy and International Relations**  
**DIPL 4101AA/5101AA: Senior Research Project/Diplomacy Honors Thesis Project**  
**Tuesdays, 2:00 – 4:30 p.m. via Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87413256499>**

Professor: Benjamin Goldfrank

Student Hours: Wednesdays, 2:00–5:30, or by appointment; sign up here: [tinyurl.com/y4gptfxn](https://tinyurl.com/y4gptfxn)

Office: McQuaid Hall 112, but student hours here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86868225269>

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Email: [benjamin.goldfrank@shu.edu](mailto:benjamin.goldfrank@shu.edu)

Course Summary:

This course is designed to help students learn research, writing, and oral communications skills that they can apply to all academic and professional pursuits. The ultimate goal is to complete a well-written, strongly argued, and thoroughly documented Senior Research / Honors Thesis Project. The course is structured to include both class and individual meetings. The first several weeks mix class and individual meetings with the professor to focus on helping students turn their research interests into a research puzzle, find and use primary and secondary sources, develop hypotheses, conceptualize variables, identify an effective research design, and present their ideas professionally in public settings. The next several weeks help students shape their particular projects, with a focus on writing, revising, and providing effective feedback to fellow students. During the last weeks, the students formally present their research findings and constructively critique one another's presentations.

Expectations and Grading:

Students should come to class meetings prepared to discuss the readings and to present their assignments to their colleagues and the professor. Students should come to each of the individual meetings with the professor prepared to present and discuss their assignments.

The final grade will be determined as follows:

- Short writing assignments: 15%
- Participation: 15%
- Preliminary draft: 15%
- Oral presentation: 20%
- Final draft: 35%

Important Notes:

**Academic Integrity**

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will be reported to the administration, and may result in a lowered or failing grade for the course and up to possible dismissal from the School of Diplomacy. See university and school standards for academic conduct here:

<http://www.shu.edu/offices/student-life/community-standards/community-standards.cfm>

<http://www.shu.edu/academics/diplomacy/academic-conduct.cfm>

Resources for academic integrity are on the course Blackboard page.

((From another era, but keeping for future use when things get better: Use of electronic devices for non-class purposes is not appropriate during class time. It distracts other students and the professor and will result in a lowered grade.))

## **Citation Style**

Papers should utilize one of the Chicago Manual of Style citation formats: Author-Date (highly preferable) or Notes and Bibliography. The guidelines for these formats are on the course Blackboard page.

## **Late or Incomplete Assignments**

Students who anticipate not being able to complete an assignment on time should inform me as soon as possible. Absent communication, failure to complete an assignment on its due date will result in a grade penalty by one-third letter grade per day (i.e., an A assignment turned in one day late is an A-, two days late a B+, etc.) except in cases of medical/family emergency or COVID-related issues. See COVID Ground Rules.

## **COVID Ground Rules**

We're in a global pandemic. These are scary times. If you tell me you are struggling or anxious, I will understand. No judgment. If you have to miss a class, need extra help, or more time on an assignment, please let me know and I will work with you. You do not owe me personal information about your health (mental or physical) or living circumstances. If I can't help you, I may know someone who can. There are lots of campus resources (both virtual and in-person) available; please use them. More than ever, communication is key this semester, so I have extended student hours. I will try my best and I hope you will be able to try your best as well. I will cut you some slack, provided you communicate with me. And I expect you to cut me some slack, too.

## **CAPS**

As part of our commitment to the health and well-being of all students, Seton Hall University's Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) offers initial assessments, counseling, crisis intervention, consultation, and referral services to the SHU community. The CAPS office is located on the second floor of Mooney Hall, room 27. Appointments can be made in-person or by calling 973-761-9500 during regular business hours, Tuesday-Friday, 8:45 a.m. - 4:45 p.m. In case of a psychological emergency, call CAPS (973-761-9500) at any time to speak to a crisis counselor. For more information, please visit:

<https://www.shu.edu/counseling-psychologicalservices/index.cfm>

## **Disability Services Statement**

It is the policy and practice of Seton Hall University to promote inclusive learning environments. If you have a documented disability you may be eligible for reasonable accommodations in compliance with University policy, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and/or the New Jersey Law against Discrimination. Please note, students are not permitted to negotiate accommodations directly with professors. To request accommodations or assistance, please self-identify with the Office for Disability Support Services (DSS), Duffy Hall, Room 67 at the beginning of the semester. For more information or to register for services, contact DSS at (973) 313-6003 or by e-mail at [DSS@shu.edu](mailto:DSS@shu.edu).

## **Suggested Reading (available at the SHU Bookstore):**

Wayne Booth, Gregory Colomb, Joseph Williams, Joseph Bizup, and William FitzGerald,  
*The Craft of Research* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2016) 4<sup>th</sup> Edition.

(Also available at SHU library: <https://library.shu.edu/c.php?g=1105958&p=8063823>)

## Course Meetings, Readings, Assignments, and Due Dates:\*

\*Note: Any assignments may be turned in early

### **Weeks 1-3: Class and Individual Meetings**

#### Tuesday, Feb 2 (class):

Course overview and choosing a topic  
Finding, using, and citing sources

#### Tuesday, Feb 9 (class):

Identifying research questions and puzzles  
Hypotheses, variables, thesis statements, causal claims, and research design  
*Reading:* COR (*Craft of Research*), pp. 33-104, 271-274

*Assignment:* **Preliminary Bibliography – due before class**

Upload a bibliography with at least 20 potential sources on your research topics. This should help you to determine if there is enough information about your topic/s to continue with it or choose one of two. All sources should be academic books, journal articles, or primary materials such as government documents or institutional databases.

#### Tuesday, Feb 16 (individual meetings):

*Reading:* COR, pp. 105-140

*Assignment:* **Research Topic Descriptions – due before meeting**

Write two descriptions of research topics that you are considering, each a paragraph long. What's the puzzle? Why is it interesting and important? Be prepared to present the descriptions to the professor.

### **Week 4: Individual Meetings**

#### Tuesday, Feb 23:

Discussion of the bibliography, research question, and research strategy

*Reading:* COR, pp. 141-154

*Assignment:* **Annotated Bibliography – due before meeting**

Bring a bibliography with at least 10 annotated sources. Below each of these 10 sources describe the article's key points and how they relate to your research in 3-4 sentences. Do not simply use the article's abstracts; use your own words. All sources should be academic books or journal articles. Be prepared to discuss progress and future plans.

### **Weeks 5-7: Class and Individual Meetings**

#### Tuesday, March 2 (class):

Assessing existing research

*Assignment:* **Preliminary Literature Review – due before class**

Write a three-page review of *at least* five articles *in academic journals* that directly relate to your research topic. The review should compare and contrast the readings, stressing the major arguments presented, the evidence used, the type of analysis employed, limitations, and areas of contention between the authors. Most importantly, the review should propose how your research question relates to one or more debates within the academic literature. Be prepared to present the review to the class.

Tuesday, March 9 (individual meetings):

Thesis statements and research strategies

*Assignment:* **Thesis Statement / Research Strategy – due before meeting**

Write a two-page thesis statement and research strategy that includes how the thesis relates to the state of the debate regarding your topic and what strategy you will use to assess your causal claims, including what cases you will examine and what data sources you will use.

Tuesday, March 16 (class):

Thesis statements and research strategies

*Assignment:* **Thesis Statement / Research Strategy – due before class**

Present a revised thesis statement and research strategy to the class in a 3-5 minute formal presentation that includes how the thesis relates to the state of the debate regarding your topic and what strategy you will use to assess your causal claims, including what cases you will examine and what data sources you will use.

**Weeks 8-9: Individual meetings**

Tuesday, March 23 and Tuesday, March 30:

Discussion of the introduction and outline (and research progress at subsequent meetings)

*Reading:* COR, pp. 173-213

*Assignment:* **Introduction and Outline – due before meeting**

Bring a detailed 3-7 page introduction and outline. The introduction should not be more than 4 pages and should include the research puzzle, the policy &/or theoretical importance of the question/topic, the thesis statement (or set of hypotheses), and the plan for the paper. The outline should briefly describe the main points (and, preferably, the sources to be used) in each section.

**Week 10: Class meeting**

Tuesday, April 6:

Presenting research in public and making revisions

*Assignment:* **Preliminary draft – due in class for peer review; then April 7**

The preliminary draft should be *at least* 4,000 words and should include *at least* the introduction, the literature review section, some analysis of cases and data, and an outline of the remaining pages.

**Weeks 11-12: Individual meetings**

Tuesday, April 13, and Tuesday, April 20:

Discussion of ways to strengthen the preliminary draft

*Reading:* COR, pp. 232-268

## **Weeks 13–15: Class Meetings**

Tuesday, April 27, Tuesday, May 4, and Tuesday, May 11:

Student presentations

*Reading:* COR, pp. 214-231.

*Assignment:* **Oral Presentation and Constructive Critique**

Students should come prepared to present their research, including the puzzle, thesis statement, findings, and conclusions. Presentations should be 10-15 minutes long. Students should also be prepared to provide constructive critiques (including praise) of their fellow students.

## **Wednesday, May 19: Final Paper Due (earlier is welcome)**

Final drafts are due by 4:30 p.m. An electronic copy should be uploaded to Blackboard; if you can, a hard copy placed in or sent to my mailbox would be incredibly kind.

Requirements:

- For DIPL 4101: 7,000 to 9,000 words total, including title, text, notes, bibliography, and tables (roughly 25-30 pages); for DIPL 5101: 10,000 to 12,000 words total, including title, text, notes, bibliography, and tables (roughly 35-45 pages)
- Typed, double spaced, one-inch margins
- Must incorporate suggestions from the individual meetings with the professor and from the oral presentation
- Must include appropriate citation method, and all sources in the bibliography must be cited in the text

More Important Notes:

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

By the end of the semester, students should have acquired in-depth knowledge of a particular functional area and/or region of the world and knowledge and understanding of the social science research process. Students should also have developed the skills to: collect, sort, and evaluate information; analyze complex situations and synthesize information; integrate different fields of study in analysis of a complex world; and communicate effectively in oral and written form.

### **Potentially Useful Websites**

Seton Hall Library Resource Guides: <https://library.shu.edu/subject-guides>

### **Policy on Incompletes**

Incompletes will be given only in exceptional cases for emergencies. Students wishing to request a grade of Incomplete must provide documentation to support the request accompanied by a Course Adjustment Form (available from the Diplomacy Main Office) to the professor before the date of the final examination. If the incomplete request is approved, the professor reserves the right to specify the new submission date for all missing coursework. Students who fail to submit the missing course work within this time period will receive a failing grade for all missing coursework and a final grade based on all coursework assigned. Any Incomplete not resolved within one calendar year of receiving the Incomplete or by the time of graduation (whichever comes first) automatically becomes an “FI” (which is equivalent to an F). It is the responsibility of the student to make sure they have completed all course requirements within the timeframe

allotted. Please be aware that Incompletes on your transcript will impact academic standing.