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Diplomacy Syllabi

School of Diplomacy and International
Relations

Spring 2019

The Washington Seminar on Global Policy Challenges

Ray Walser PhD

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The Washington Seminar on Global Policy Challenges
DIPL 3116

Seton Hall University School of Diplomacy
and International Affairs
Washington Program

Spring 2019

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This seminar-like course is focused on global challenges facing not just U.S. policy makers but statesmen, diplomats and citizens around the world. The primary focus will be upon the successes and failures encountered in global development in a period marked by numerous positives – overall reductions in violence, longer lives, poverty reduction, improved education – balanced against a daunting array of unresolved global challenges and threats, ranging from climate change and nuclear proliferation to ethnic conflict and international terrorism. Central to the ongoing the debate is reflection upon the ability of national leaders to preserve an international order that rises above mere anarchy and promotes peace, stability and mutual benefits. The course will examine cooperative efforts aimed at advancing shared interests, securing international cooperation and protecting the global commons. Particular attention will be paid to multilateral agreements and institutions in a period when both face considerable headwinds from the current leadership of the U.S.

Washington, D.C. is a very cosmopolitan, international city. Serious effort will be made to understand how the people who reside here, American and otherwise, are shaped by the international environment and how they in turn undertake to influence and shape developments on the global stage.

The course to the extent possible will be conducted in seminar form based on discussions, reflections, debates and interactions between the seminar leader and the students.

Where possible and pertinent, lectures, readings and seminar discussion will be supplemented with in-class discussion with policy practitioners and when possible with visits to centers of decision-making and influence that will include government offices, the Congress, think tanks, NGOs, multilateral and regional organizations and foreign embassies.

One caveat: No syllabus that sufficiently is dynamic and seeks to capture the tempo of change can be fixed in stone, especially in a period of rapid developments on the domestic and international scenes. The seminar leader reserves the right to alter readings and assignments and discussion topics in response to emerging policy challenges.

All readings will be available online or distributed in class.

Course Objectives

This course is intended to help students:

- Identify and investigate the major challenges and trends, positive and negative, shaping future global development.
- Relate the ways in which the structure and functioning of the international system – anarchic, hegemonic, communitarian – shape responses to an ever-widening array of national and transnational challenges.
- Analyze hotspots and flashpoints, examine crisis management scenarios and predict outcomes for some of the world’s most contentious issues.
- Prepare cogent policy analysis - written and verbal -presented in ways that support better understanding of the ways to tackle global challenges.

By semester’s end, students should demonstrate improved proficiency in collecting, sorting, and evaluating information; analyzing complex situations and synthesizing information; integrating a spectrum of advice and opinion in the analysis of a complex world; and strengthening effective oral and written skills.

Required readings:

Henry Kissinger. World Order. New York, 2015

William J. Burns. The Back Channel: A Memoir of American Diplomacy and a Case for Its Renewal. New York, 2019

Requirements & Grade Evaluation:

1. Assume you have been assigned to work on the staff of the National Security Council. You will therefore select a policy issue to track on a weekly basis during the course of the semester. The issue can be U.S. relations with a foreign country such as China or Russia, relations with a multilateral or similar body such as the United Nations or NATO, or U.S. policy on a specific topic such as Trade Agreements, Nuclear Proliferation or Cyberwarfare. This topic should constitute the foundation for a final presentation [to be discusses] at the end of the semester. [20%]

2. Each student will submit in the course of the semester, one of the following: a Presidential Daily Brief, a threat analysis, a policy options memo and an Op-ed. [25%]
3. An oral presentation of a policy maker review. [15%]
4. Two brief fact-based review quizzes. [10%]
5. A final policy paper presentation. [30%]

University Policy

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.

Academic Integrity & Dishonesty

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: <https://www.shu.edu/student-life/upload/Student-Code-of-Conduct.pdf> and <http://www.shu.edu/academics/diplomacy/academic-conduct.cfm>

Citation Formats (some version of the paragraph below)

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