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Diplomacy Syllabi

School of Diplomacy and International  
Relations

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Fall 2022

## **Senior Research Project/Diplomacy Honors Thesis Project**

Benjamin Goldfrank Ph.D.

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**School of Diplomacy and International Relations**  
**DIPL 4101AA/AB 5101AA/AB: Senior Research Project/Diplomacy Honors Thesis Project**  
**AA: Thurs, 11-1:30; AB: 2-4:30, Muscarelle Hall 208 (aka SH 208)**

Professor: Benjamin Goldfrank  
Student Hours: Wednesdays, 2-5:30, sign up here: [tinyurl.com/y4gptfxn](http://tinyurl.com/y4gptfxn) (or by appointment)  
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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 structure includes 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 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 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:

<https://www.shu.edu/student-life/upload/Student-Code-of-Conduct.pdf>

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

Resources for academic integrity are on the course Blackboard page.

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 the Chicago Manual of Style Author-Date citation format. The guidelines for this format are on the course Blackboard page. If you really prefer footnotes, fight me (\*joke\*).

Thursday, Sep 8 (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 in class for peer review, then Sep 9 via Blackboard if changes needed**

Bring a bibliography with at least 20 potential sources on your research topic or topics (if two topics, do 10 and 10). 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. Use proper format.

Thursday, Sep 15 – No class – optional individual meeting on Tues 9/13:

*Reading:* COR, pp. 105-140

*Assignment:* **Research Topic Descriptions – due via Blackboard**

Write two descriptions of research topics that you are considering, each a paragraph long. What's the puzzle? Why is it interesting and important? (This could be the same general topic but approached with a different research question and/or method; or it could be two distinct topics.)

Thursday, Sep 22 – Individual meetings today (or Wed 9/21):

Discussion of the bibliography, research question, and research strategy

*Reading:* COR, pp. 141-154

*Assignment:* **Annotated Bibliography – due at 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, journal articles, or datasets. Be prepared to discuss progress and future plans.)

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

Thursday, Sep 29 (class):

Assessing existing research

*Assignment:* **Preliminary Literature Review – due in class for group peer review; then Sep 30 via Blackboard if changes needed**

Write a three-page review of *at least* five articles *in academic journals or books* that directly relate to your research topic. The review should compare and contrast the articles, 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 show how your research question relates to one or more debates within the academic literature. Be prepared to present and discuss with your group.

Thursday, Oct 6 – no class – optional individual meetings on Tues 10/4 or Wed 10/5:

Work on next assignments

### **Friday, Dec 16: Final Paper Due (earlier is welcome)**

Final drafts are due by 2 p.m. An electronic copy should be uploaded to Blackboard and a hard copy placed in my mailbox.

(Pro tip: Ask a peer or the Writing Center to review your paper before turning in the final draft.)

Requirements:

- For DIPL 4101: 7,000 to 8,500 words total, including title, text, notes, bibliography, and tables (roughly 25-30 pages); for DIPL 5101: 9,000 to 11,000 words total, including title, text, notes, bibliography, and tables (roughly 33-40 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.

#### ***Quick Links for Class, Student Hours (& Sign-Up)***

Zoom Link for Class Meetings and Student Hours if they're virtual:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83535577463>

Sign up for Student Hours on Wednesdays (and a couple of Tuesdays) here:

<https://tinyurl.com/y4gptfxn>

(If none of the time slots available works for you, email me with a few alternative days/times.)

Sign up for Individual Meetings on Thursdays (when there's no class meeting) here:

11-1:30 (AA) <https://tinyurl.com/fnuru8qw>

2-4:30/5 (AB) <https://tinyurl.com/2p8dvwuy>