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Diplomacy Syllabi

School of Diplomacy and International  
Relations

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Fall 2024

## **DIPL 4101/5101 Research Project**

Assefaw Bariagaber Ph.D.

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**Course Syllabus (Fall 2024) -- Research Project (DIPL 4101/5101)**  
**School of Diplomacy and International Relations**  
**Seton Hall University**

Instructor: Dr. Assefaw Bariagaber

Virtual Office Hours (on Microsoft Teams):

Wednesdays and Thursdays, 6:00 pm – 7:00pm, and by APPOINTMENT at other times

Office: McQuaid 119

Mobile Telephone: 973-409-1145 (to be used if absolutely necessary); Email: bariagas@shu.edu

### **I. About the Course**

This course is designed to help students learn how to conduct research and present the findings both in oral and written form in academic and professional pursuits. To this end, the course focuses primarily on the production of knowledge, while at the same time recognizing that knowledge production requires the ability to critically analyze research scholars have produced. *The ultimate goal of this “capstone” course is to complete a well-written, strongly argued, and thoroughly documented research paper.*

The course includes both in-class and one-on-one meetings with the instructor, all in an effort to turn a general research problem/topic/issue into a researchable question, develop hypotheses, conceptualize and operationalize variables, locate data sources, and identify an effective research design. Students will make PowerPoint (PPT) presentations to formally present their research findings and to constructively critique one another’s presentations. The one-on-one meetings with the instructor will focus on the instructor’s feedback to students. In addition, articles published in reputable, peer-reviewed journals will be reviewed in class to learn how accomplished scholars communicate with the academic community.

It is hoped that, by the end of the semester, students should have acquired the ability to critically analyze published articles and reports, have an in-depth knowledge of a particular functional area and/or region of the world sufficient to contribute to the existing state of knowledge, and to demonstrate an understanding of the social science research process, including skills to collect, sort, and evaluate information.

Note: Students who intend to conduct interviews may have to seek approval from the Office of Institutional Research Board (IRB) located in the Presidents Hall, especially if the data collection procedure(s) involves risk to human subjects and if the findings are to be disseminated outside of the classroom. This is an issue which Seton Hall University, the State of New Jersey, and the Federal Government see with utmost concern, especially if the interview and any other data collection method involve more than “minimal risk” to the research subjects. Since research involving human subjects may not begin without the IRB approval, you need to see the instructor to file the necessary papers as soon as possible. Given the lengthy process and the time needed for IRB approval, it is important to seriously think about the feasibility of conducting research involving human subjects. Completion of the research on time may be hard to meet unless IRB approval is granted early in the semester.

### **II. Books**

#### **Recommended:**

Booth, W., Colomb, G., and J. Williams. *The Craft of Research* (4th edition). Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2016.

#### **Recommended**

Turabian, K. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (8<sup>th</sup> edition). Chicago and London, The Chicago University Press, 2013.

### **III. Course Grading**

The final course grade will be awarded according to the following scale:

1. A 2-3-page-long critical review and anatomy of each two articles published in reputable journals of your choice related to your research problem/issue -- 15%. [Submit as a single document attachment of the two articles, one following the other.]
2. Preliminary draft (of significant portion of the paper) --20%
3. PowerPoint presentation -- 20%
4. Final paper -- 35%
5. Participation -- 10%

Final course grade will be awarded according to the following scale:

92 - 100 = A  
89 - 91 = A-  
86 - 88 = B+  
82 - 85 = B  
79 - 81 = B-  
76 - 78 = C+  
72 - 75 = C  
69 - 71 = C-  
66 - 68 = D  
≤ 65 = F

#### *Remarks*

1. Class attendance and participation are important, as there may be important oral communication from the instructor. Participation will be measured in terms of the contribution a student makes to the richness of class discussions and the overall success of the course. Therefore, class attendance will be taken. Please note that this is an in-person course, and no student will be allowed to follow any class remotely.
2. The critical reviews of the two articles (of your choice) must be typed (font size = 12) and double-spaced with one-inch margins on all sides. The reviews must include what the research question is, hypothesis or argument advanced, the variables in the study and their conceptualizations/operationalizations, proposed design and analysis technique, the possible findings, and whether or not the author has provided a convincing answer/explanation/argument for the question.
3. Each student must seek approval of the research topic **before** starting the research process. The final research paper must be **firmly** based on the approved topic. Students may not change the topic and/or research questions, or risk getting zero. In case of an unavoidable need to make changes, the student must first secure the instructor's approval **before it is too late**.
4. The research/term paper must be roughly about 7,000 words in total, including the title, text, notes, bibliography, and tables; and typed, double spaced, one-inch margins on all sides; and font size of 12. Each student must make efforts to incorporate suggestions made during the individual meetings with the professor, and suggestions made by fellow students and the professor during the PPT presentation of the completed research/term paper. Please also remember that all sources in the bibliography must be cited in the text and all sources cited in the text must appear in the bibliography.
5. Each student must make PowerPoint class presentation of the completed research paper on the date indicated in the Course Schedule section below. The presentation must go beyond simple reading of the material in the PowerPoint presentation. Additional information will be communicated at a later date.
6. All work must be completed and submitted on **time**. You have 24 hours grace period to submit any written assignment; if not submitted by then, the instructor will deduct significant points or may decline to accept any project not handed in on time. In the event the instructor decided to accept a late submitted paper, the amount to be deducted will increase for each day after the grace period. No paper will be accepted if submitted five days after the due date, and that means zero points for that assignment.
7. Students must make their presentations according to schedule or risk getting zero, as it is virtually impossible to arrange a class session outside of those indicated in the course syllabus or to squeeze in student on another presentation date. I will try to accommodate students for legitimate reasons if I am informed early on. But once the presentation schedule is firmly set, **you have to make the presentation on that date**.
8. 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.

9. 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 financial aid and academic standing.
10. 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 <https://www.shu.edu/diplomacy/academic-conduct.cfm>. Resources for academic integrity are on the course Canvas site. In addition, students may not use Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools, such as ChatGPT. Any use of AI tools will be considered plagiarism.
11. 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, Monday-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-psychological-services/index.cfm>
12. Citation Formats -- 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 Canvas site.
13. It is important that students maintain high class etiquette.

#### IV. Course Schedule

##### Week 1(8/29) – in-class

Course syllabus

Introduction to the research process and how this course may be related to DIPL 3800

Approaches -- quantitative and qualitative

Brief discussion on important components of a research paper (in the social science tradition).

Getting to know you -- do you have a research problem or issue you would like to write a paper about? Do not worry if you do not have it at this time; that is what we will develop in this course.

##### For next Week:

Critically read each of the articles below and answer the following: what is the research problem/topic/issue? The question? Hypothesis/thesis? Variables and conceptualization? Design? Type of approach?

1. Vanhanen, Tatu. Domestic Ethnic Conflict and Ethnic Nepotism: A Comparative Analysis, *Journal of Peace Research*, 1999, 36: 55-73.
2. Jacobsen, Karen. Can Refugees Benefit the State? *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 2002, 40: 577-596.

Please use JSTOR or other SHU databases to locate the articles – if unable, ask SHU librarian or the instructor!!

##### Week 2(9/5): in-class -- **Identifying research questions, hypothesis/thesis, variables, and operationalization/measurements, etc.**

Detailed discussion of the two articles above – focus on the problem/issue, question, hypotheses, importance/significance, variable identification and operationalization, thesis statements, and research design (that is, what are the steps one takes in order to test/evaluate the hypothesis/thesis?)

**Week 3 (9/12) – in-class -- Identifying research questions,... (continuation)**

The structure of a (social science) paper

Example 1 – Government structure and political stability

Example 2 – System structure and interstate wars

**Week 4 (9/19) -- one-on-one meetings in my office with the first group of 8 students in alphabetical order by last name – max 20 minutes with each student.**

Please bring along with you a 2-page-long **Research topic description** and a **list of seven sources** (books, journal articles, government and international organization documents and databases) for discussion. What is the puzzle? Why is this topic interesting and important? Be prepared to discuss with the professor.

**Critical reviews of two articles due-date – submit at the start of the meeting**

**Week 5 (9/26) -- one-on-one meetings in my office with the second group of 7 students in alphabetical order by last name – max 20 minutes with each student.**

Please bring along with you a 2-page-long **Research Topic Description** and a **list of seven sources** (books, journal articles, government and international organization documents and databases) for discussion at the meeting. What is the puzzle? Why is this topic interesting and important? Be prepared to discuss with the professor.

**Critical reviews of two articles due-date – submit at the start of the meeting**

**Week 6 (10/3) – in-class**

Variables and Operationalization; Hypothesis/thesis; Research design

What are the variables in the study: Dependent and independent variables;

What are their measurements or conceptualizations/operationalizations?

What is the relationship between the dependent and independent variables? Positive? Negative?

What is the research design/strategy (that is, what are the steps I will take in order to test/evaluate your hypothesis/thesis?)

**Week 7 (10/10) – Student in-class presentation in reverse alphabetical order by last name -- About 8-minute PPT presentation briefly covering the following:**

Topic, research question, importance/significance, hypothesis/thesis, variables (DV and IV) and measurements/operationalizations, the cases you will use, if any, data sources, and the research design you plan to use.

**Weeks 8, 9, 10 (10/17, 10/24, 10/31) – No Formal classes will be held during these days.**

The instructor will hold one-on-one meetings with students on the dates indicated at 2:00-4:30pm, to discuss issues related to individual projects. Please remember, **each student is required to make an appointment** to meet with the professor on any project-related issue, including the progress of the research, **at least twice** (and hopefully more) during these dates. Record of meetings will be kept.

**Preliminary draft** (of significant portion of the paper) in hard copy – **10/17 due date**

**Week 11 (11/7) -- PPT presentation of research/term paper.** The first one-third of the class in alphabetical order by last name will each make their presentation for a maximum of 20 minutes, plus 3-5 minutes of Q/A. Students not presenting should provide constructive critiques (including praise) of the fellow students.

**Week 12 (11/14) – PPT presentation of research/term paper.** The second one-third of the class in alphabetical order by last name will each make their presentation for a maximum of 20 minutes, plus 3-5 minutes of Q/A. Students not presenting should provide constructive critiques (including praise) of the fellow students.

**Week 13** (11/20) – PPT presentation of research/term paper. The last one-third of the class in alphabetical order by last name will each make their presentation for a maximum of 20 minutes, plus 3-5 minutes of Q/A. Students should also be prepared to provide constructive critiques (including praise) of the fellow students.

**Week 14** (11/27) – Thanksgiving Day

**Week 15** (12/5) -- **Research paper due date.** Please submit the hard copy in my office (slide under the door) and email the electronic copy, as Word attachment, both by 4:30pm.