

## Foreign Policy Analysis

Code: 101097  
ECTS Credits: 6

**2025/2026**

| Degree                                  | Type | Year |
|---|------|------|
| Political Science and Public Management | OT   | 3    |
| Political Science and Public Management | OT   | 4    |
| International Relations                 | OB   | 3    |

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## Teaching groups languages

You can view this information at the [end](#) of this document.

## Prerequisites

### Prerequisites

- This course does not have formal academic prerequisites. However, it is highly recommended that students possess a solid understanding of International Relations and Political Science.
- Students are expected to regularly consult a variety of media sources and stay informed about current developments in international politics. The ability to critically analyze diverse types of information and sources is essential.
- As most of the academic texts on foreign policy analysis that will be used in the course are in English or Spanish, a high level of reading comprehension in both languages is required.

## Objectives and Contextualisation

### Objectives and contextualization

Foreign policy can be defined as the set of official external actions undertaken by state representatives and other high-level diplomatic actors. Foreign policy decision-making is shaped by internal structures (such as citizens, political opposition, bureaucracies, and constitutional frameworks) as well as external dynamics (including the international system, global norms, treaties, international organizations, economic interdependence, and relations with other states).

Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) seeks to identify the material and ideational factors, both domestic and international, that influence the formulation and implementation of foreign policy decisions. It also aims to develop theoretical frameworks to explain these relationships.

This course introduces students to the foundational tools of FPA and offers insights into their application, with a primary focus on state actors within the contemporary international system.

The course has two main objectives:

- To provide a conceptual and theoretical framework, along with practical tools, for analyzing the various actors, factors, and contexts that shape foreign policies.
- To apply these analytical tools to a range of empirical case studies.

## Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Understand the origins and development of major theoretical approaches and conceptual tools in FPA.
- Analyze foreign policy and other internationally relevant public policies, focusing on both formulation and implementation.
- Identify and analyze key actors, as well as the political, institutional, economic, and social processes-at both domestic and international levels-that influence foreign policy.
- Comprehend the complexity of the international system in which foreign policy decisions are made.
- Evaluate foreign policy decision-making using a variety of analytical tools and apply these tools to case studies from different historical periods and world regions.
- Understand the key transformations affecting foreign policy today, with particular attention to developments in contemporary diplomacy.
- Reflect critically on the ethical and normative dimensions of foreign policy decisions.
- Identify and use relevant information sources for the study and analysis of foreign policies.

## Competences

### Political Science and Public Management

- Applying theoretical and analytical knowledge of International Relations to practical and professional cases, in particular to the areas of conflict and cooperation between actors.
- Arguing from different theoretical perspectives.
- Assessing specific distinctive aspects and conceptual and methodological instruments of the different tendencies and analytical approximations of International Relations.
- Demonstrating good writing skills in different contexts.
- Demonstrating they know theoretical tendencies and classical and recent analytical approximations of International Relations.
- Designing data collection techniques, coordinating the information processing and meticulously applying hypothesis verification methods.
- Distinguishing the discipline's main theories and different fields: conceptual developments, theoretical frameworks and theoretical approaches underlying the discipline's knowledge and different areas and sub-areas, as well as their value for the professional practice through concrete cases.
- Identifying sources of data and conducting bibliographic and documentary searches.
- Interpreting and applying English texts in an academic way.
- Managing the available time in order to accomplish the established objectives and fulfil the intended task.
- Producing and planning researches or analytical reports.
- Realising effective oral presentations that are suited to the audience.
- Synthesizing and critically analysing information.
- Using the main information and documentation techniques (ICT) as an essential tool for the analysis.
- Working autonomously.
- Working by using quantitative and qualitative analysis techniques in order to apply them to research processes.
- Working in teams and networking, particularly in interdisciplinary conditions.

### International Relations

- Analyse cases and phenomena in the international sphere and interpret different political texts using contemporary political theories.
- Analyse the behaviour of international actors, both state and non-state.
- Analyse the production and implementation of public policies related to the international sphere, in particular foreign policy and security and defence policy.

- Apply quantitative and qualitative analysis techniques in research processes.
- Identify data sources and carry out rigorous bibliographical and documentary searches.
- Identify the main theories of international relations and their different fields (international theory, conflicts and security, international politics, etc.) to apply them in professional practice.
- Produce and prepare the presentation of intervention reports and/or proposals.
- Students must be capable of applying their knowledge to their work or vocation in a professional way and they should have building arguments and problem resolution skills within their area of study.
- Students must be capable of collecting and interpreting relevant data (usually within their area of study) in order to make statements that reflect social, scientific or ethical relevant issues.
- Students must be capable of communicating information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
- Students must have and understand knowledge of an area of study built on the basis of general secondary education, and while it relies on some advanced textbooks it also includes some aspects coming from the forefront of its field of study.
- Use metatheoretical data to argue and establish plausible relation of causality and establish ways of validating or rejecting them.

## Learning Outcomes

1. Analyse public policies in specific countries, in particular foreign policies, and understand the traits of continuity and change in historical perspective.
2. Analyse the behaviour of different actors in the main topics and problems related to international security, international conflicts and the promotion of peace.
3. Apply different theories and focuses to the analysis of the main problems related to security, foreign policy and armed conflict and the promotion of peace.
4. Apply quantitative and qualitative analysis techniques in research processes.
5. Applying theoretical and analytical knowledge of International Relations to practical and professional cases, in particular to the areas of conflict and cooperation between actors.
6. Arguing from different theoretical perspectives.
7. Assessing specific distinctive aspects and conceptual and methodological instruments of the different tendencies and analytical approximations of International Relations.
8. Critically assessing the impacts of globalization in several areas: safety, environment, human rights, migrations and peace.
9. Demonstrating good writing skills in different contexts.
10. Demonstrating they know theoretical tendencies and classical and recent analytical approximations of International Relations.
11. Describing the international order: anarchy versus order, society of states and transnational society.
12. Describing the main characteristic elements of the international society as a whole (1945-2000).
13. Designing data collection techniques, coordinating the information processing and meticulously applying hypothesis verification methods.
14. Explaining the major approximations to the international relations (realism, transnationalism and structuralism).
15. Identify data sources and carry out rigorous bibliographical and documentary searches.
16. Identifying sources of data and conducting bibliographic and documentary searches.
17. Interpreting and applying English texts in an academic way.
18. Make a reasoned application of different contemporary political theories to phenomena related to international security, international conflicts, foreign policies of the main states and the promotion of peace.
19. Managing the available time in order to accomplish the established objectives and fulfil the intended task.
20. Produce and prepare the presentation of intervention reports and/or proposals.
21. Producing and planning researches or analytical reports.
22. Properly using the theory and concepts of international relations (traditions of Hobbesian, Grotian or Kantian thought).
23. Realising effective oral presentations that are suited to the audience.
24. Students must be capable of applying their knowledge to their work or vocation in a professional way and they should have building arguments and problem resolution skills within their area of study.

25. Students must be capable of collecting and interpreting relevant data (usually within their area of study) in order to make statements that reflect social, scientific or ethical relevant issues.
26. Students must be capable of communicating information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
27. Students must have and understand knowledge of an area of study built on the basis of general secondary education, and while it relies on some advanced textbooks it also includes some aspects coming from the forefront of its field of study.
28. Synthesizing and critically analysing information.
29. Use metatheoretical data to argue and establish plausible relation of causality and establish ways of validating or rejecting them.
30. Use tools for the analysis of foreign policies and apply them to real and simulated case studies.
31. Using the main information and documentation techniques (ICT) as an essential tool for the analysis.
32. Working autonomously.
33. Working by using quantitative and qualitative analysis techniques in order to apply them to research processes.
34. Working in teams and networking, particularly in interdisciplinary conditions.

## **Content**

### Contents

#### PART 1. INTRODUCTION.

Topic 1. Introduction to Foreign Policy Analysis.

Topic 2. Preliminary key concepts for the analysis of foreign policies.

#### PART 2. DOMESTIC LEVEL

Topic 3. Individuals in decision-making. Cognitive and psychological approaches.

Topic 4. Collective decision-making. Bureaucratic politics and organizational models.

Topic 5. Domestic culture. Ideas, values, and national identity.

Topic 6. Domestic politics, the media, and public opinion.

#### PART 3. BETWEEN THE INTERNATIONAL AND THE DOMESTIC

Topic 7. Two-level games. Domestic constraints in international negotiations.

Topic 8. Role theory. States as role players abroad.

Topic 9. Discourse and framing. Constructing meaning in foreign policy.

Topic 10. Workshop: Exploring games, roles, and discourses.

Topic 11. Feminist foreign policy.

#### PART 4. NEW PERSPECTIVES AND FUTURE CHALLENGES

Topic 12. Conclusions. Futures of Foreign Policy Analysis in a multipolar world.

## **Activities and Methodology**

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| Title  | Hours | ECTS | Learning Outcomes  |
|--|-------|------|--|
| <b>Type: Directed</b>  |       |      |  |
| Directed activities in the classroom with the support of ICT       | 45    | 1.8  | 2, 5, 3, 18, 6, 10, 12, 11, 14, 23, 16, 17, 28, 33, 22, 31, 7, 8                                     |
| Seminars and practical sessions in small groups                    | 10    | 0.4  | 2, 1, 5, 3, 18, 4, 6, 29, 10, 12, 11, 20, 14, 23, 16, 17, 28, 33, 22, 30, 31, 7, 8                   |
| <b>Type: Supervised</b>  |       |      |  |
| Debates, discussions and quizzes                                   | 5     | 0.2  | 2, 1, 5, 3, 18, 6, 9, 12, 11, 20, 14, 23, 17, 26, 28, 34, 22, 30, 8                                  |
| Tutorships for the preparation of essays, exams and group projects | 4     | 0.16 | 5, 10, 21, 19, 16, 17, 28, 32, 31, 7   |
| <b>Type: Autonomous</b>  |       |      |  |
| Student-led preparation of exams, seminars, debates, group project | 30    | 1.2  | 13, 21, 23, 19, 16, 17, 27, 26, 24, 25, 28, 33, 32, 34, 31   |
| Student-led study  | 50    | 2    | 2, 1, 5, 3, 18, 10, 12, 11, 13, 21, 14, 19, 16, 15, 17, 27, 26, 24, 25, 28, 33, 32, 22, 30, 31, 7, 8 |

The course consists of 6 ECTS credits, which implies a total commitment of 150 hours by the students. These are distributed as follows:

Guided activities. Activities in the classroom (or on line) with the presence of the teacher and which can consist of master classes (with the support of ICT and with the possibility of developing debates in a large group); seminars to discuss compulsory readings in smaller groups and in sessions more oriented at practical issues, in which case, problems and examples related to the course syllabus will be analyzed (also on line). For these sessions, mandatory readings will be assigned in advance. These activities represent approximately one-third of the total work required (55 hours).

Supervised activities. Activities carried out by the student outside the classroom, as outlined in a work plan designed and subsequently supervised and evaluated by the teacher. Likewise, during the course, students should read short articles about which they will be able to comment on the text and, in addition, participate actively in debates about the reading material. Also included are tutoring and other similar activities of course monitoring (15 hours).

Autonomous activities. All activities carried out by students on their own and in accordance with the requirements to successfully pass the course may include compulsory and additional readings, studying class notes, and other activities that complement the training achieved in this course. These activities represent half of the students' work time (90 hours).

The teaching methodology is adapted to this distribution of work and activities.

Annotation: Within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

## Assessment

### Continuous Assessment Activities

| Title                  | Weighting | Hours | ECTS | Learning Outcomes   |
|------------------------|-----------|-------|------|---|
| Final exam             | 30%       | 2     | 0.08 | 3, 18, 6, 29, 10, 9, 12, 11, 13, 21, 14, 19, 17, 28, 32, 22, 7, 8   |
| Group exercise         | 30%       | 2     | 0.08 | 2, 1, 5, 3, 18, 4, 6, 10, 9, 12, 11, 20, 14, 23, 19, 16, 15, 17, 27, 26, 24, 25, 28, 33, 34, 22, 30, 31, 7, 8 |
| Mid-term exam          | 30%       | 2     | 0.08 | 4, 6, 10, 9, 12, 11, 14, 19, 16, 33, 32, 22, 8  |
| Participation in class | 10%       | 0     | 0    | 2, 1, 5, 3, 18, 6, 10, 12, 11, 14, 23, 19, 16, 15, 17, 26, 24, 25, 28, 34, 22, 30, 7, 8                       |

The evaluation of this course consists of the following:

1. A midterm written exam covering Part 1 and Part 2 of the course program: 30% of the final grade.
2. A final written exam covering Part 3 of the course program: 30% of the final grade.
3. A group exercise: 30% of the final grade.
4. Continuous assessment: participation in class activities programmed by the teaching staff, such as debates, text commentaries, and quizzes, accounts for 10% of the final grade.

Important considerations: To pass the course, it is necessary to obtain a minimum grade of 5.0 in both the midterm exam and the final exam, and the weighted average final grade of the course must also result in a minimum grade of 5.0. If students fail to overcome the threshold in both written exams, they will be able to take part in a retake exam(s). The retake exam(s) will take place at the end of the semester, on the date scheduled by the Faculty for this activity.

The date of all evaluable activities will be announced with enough time in advance. This will allow students to prepare and complete all the assigned tasks.

If the student completes more than 60% of the activities to be evaluated, this cancels the possibility of receiving a grade of "NOT EVALUABLE".

#### Comprehensive evaluation

Students who have so requested in due time and form may participate in a single comprehensive evaluation (avaluació única) consisting of a written exam (60% of the grade) and two practical activities (40% of the grade). The content to be evaluated in the written section of this evaluation will be Part 1, Part 2, and Part 3 of the Teaching Guide (Syllabus) of the course, as well as the mandatory texts for each topic. The required texts will be those assigned for the 2025-26 academic year.

This comprehensive evaluation will take place at the end of the semester, on the day established by the Faculty for the final exam. To pass the comprehensive evaluation, it is necessary to obtain a minimum grade of 5. If the threshold is not met, the exams can be retaken on the date scheduled by the faculty for the retake exam. Please note, the practical activities of this comprehensive evaluation cannot be resubmitted.

The revision of the grades will follow the same procedure as for the continuous evaluation.

#### Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Restricted Use: In this course, the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies is permitted solely for specific purposes, such as brainstorming initial ideas, conducting initial information searches, correcting grammar and style, and translations. Students must indicate which parts of the work were generated using AI tools, identify the specific tools used, and include a critical reflection on the role and impact of these technologies in the learning and assessment process. Failure to disclose the use of AI will be considered a breach of academic

integrity. It may lead to a partial or total loss of marks for the activity, or other academic sanctions as applicable. We invite you to reach out to the lecturers if you have AI uses in mind that you are unsure will comply with the rules, so that we can give feedback in advance. If we determine that their usage exceeds the established boundaries, we may request that you redo some or all of the assignment to comply with the rules. Academic integrity and original work are essential for rigorous and honest learning. These principles not only ensure fair assessment but also promote critical thinking, intellectual autonomy, and ethical responsibility in academic work. All of these elements reinforce mutual trust and consolidate an academic community based on respect and honesty.

#### Plagiarism and cheating

Plagiarism and cheating are very serious offenses. These could result in a failing grade for the assigned task or exercise, or even lead to failure of the course.

Please review the "Guia sobre Com Citar i Com Evitar el Plagi" (in Catalan), prepared by the Facultat de Ciències Polítiques i de Sociologia: <https://www.uab.cat/doc/GuiaCitesiPlagiEstudiants>

Also, check the guides prepared by the Libraries Service of the UAB (Servei de Biblioteques):

- "How to cite and create your bibliography", available at:

<https://www.uab.cat/en/libraries/rcc/how-to-cite-prepare-bibliography>

- "Com citar i elaborar la bibliografia", available at: <https://www.uab.cat/ca/biblioteques/CCR/citacions-bibliografia>

- "Cómo citar y elaborar la bibliografía", available at:

<https://www.uab.cat/es/bibliotecas/ccc/citaciones-bibliografia>

## Bibliography

### Bibliography

The key textbooks for this course are:

- Alden, C., & Aran, A. (2017). Foreign policy analysis: new approaches (Second edition). Routledge.

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Relevant electronic books available at the website of UAB Libraries (list updated June 2025)

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General recommended bibliography on foreign policy

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- Alternatives
- American Journal of International Law
- Asia Pacific Review Asian Security

- Asian Journal of Political Science
- Australian Journal of International Affairs
- British Journal of Politics and International Relations
- Cambridge Review of International Affairs
- China Quarterly
- Chinese Journal of International Politics
- Cold War History
- Contemporary Southeast Asia
- Diplomacy and Statecraft
- Diplomatic History
- European Journal of International Law
- European Journal of International Relations
- European Union Politics
- Europe-Asia Studies
- Foreign Affairs
- Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA)
- Georgetown Journal of International Law
- Global Change, Peace & Security (Routledge)
- Harvard Asia Pacific Review International
- Harvard International Law Journal
- International History Review
- International Studies Perspectives (ISP)
- International Organization
- International Political Sociology
- International Politics
- International Relations
- International Relations of the Asia-Pacific
- International Security
- International Studies Quarterly
- International Studies Review
- International Theory
- Japanese Journal of Political Science

- Journal of Southeast Asian Studies
- The Journal of Asian Studies
- Journal of Contemporary China
- Journal of European Integration
- Journal of the History of International Law
- Journal of International and Area Studies
- Journal of Peace Research
- Journal of Strategic Studies
- Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society
- Journal of World History
- Latin American Politics and Society
- Millennium
- New Political Economy
- Peace Review a Journal of Social Justice
- Perspectives on Politics
- Regional Studies
- Review of International Studies
- Security Studies
- The China Quarterly
- The Hague Journal of Diplomacy
- The National Interest
- The Pacific Review (Routledge)
- The Review of International Political Economy
- The Review of Politics
- The Washington Quarterly
- World Politics

#### Reviews or Magazines covering Foreign Policy

- Global Politics
- The Economist
- Le Monde Diplomatique
- Der Spiegel

- [The Diplomat](#)
- [Politics East Asia](#)
- [Time](#)
- [World Politics Review](#)

Other resources:

- Foreign Policy online: <http://foreignpolicy.com/>
- e-International Relations (student-friendly resource pool, by D. Little):<http://www.e-ir.info/>
- University of California-Berkeley's website "Conversations with History", hosts interviews with leading IR theory scholars, such as Kenneth Waltz, John Mearsheimer, Stephen Krasner and Robert Keohane:  
<https://conversations.berkeley.edu>
- Theory Talks.org has a number of interviews with other prominent IR Scholars, including Barry Buzan:  
<http://www.theory-talks.org/>

## Software

Moodle, Office, PDF Readers.

## Groups and Languages

Please note that this information is provisional until 30 November 2025. You can check it through this [link](#). To consult the language you will need to enter the CODE of the subject.

| Name                       | Group | Language | Semester       | Turn          |
|----------------------------|-------|----------|----------------|---------------|
| (PAUL) Classroom practices | 1     | English  | first semester | morning-mixed |
| (TE) Theory                | 1     | English  | first semester | morning-mixed |