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Diplomacy Syllabi

School of Diplomacy and International  
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Spring 2023

## **DIPL 6311 NA Masters Research Project**

Benjamin Goldfrank Ph.D.

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**School of Diplomacy and International Relations: Spring 2023**  
**DIPL 6311NA: Masters Research Project**  
**Tuesdays, 5-7:10, Muscarelle Hall 208 (SH 208)**

Professor: Benjamin Goldfrank

Student Hours: Tues, 11-12; Thurs, 3:30-5:30 (in person or Teams), & by appointment

Student Hours Sign-Up: [tinyurl.com/GoldfrankStudentHours](https://tinyurl.com/GoldfrankStudentHours)

Office: McQuaid Hall 112

Phone: 973-275-2095

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

**Course Summary:**

This course is designed to help students learn research, writing, and presentational 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 Masters Research Project. The course includes both class and individual meetings. The first weeks focus on helping students turn their research interests into a research puzzle, find and use sources, develop hypotheses, conceptualize variables, and identify an effective research design. The next weeks mix class and individual meetings with the professor to help students shape their particular projects, with a focus on writing and revising. During the last week the students present their research findings.

**Expectations and Grading:**

All class meetings are mandatory. Individual meetings are mandatory unless otherwise noted. Students should come to meeting prepared to present their assignments to their colleagues and the professor.

The final grade will be determined as follows:

- Short writing assignments: 10%
- Participation: 10%
- Preliminary draft: 20%
- Oral presentation: 20%
- Final draft: 40%
- Op-Ed: Extra credit

**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-Codc-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\*).

### **Late or Incomplete Assignments**

Students who anticipate not being able to complete an assignment on time should inform me as soon as possible. Please communicate. Late assignments without communication will receive lower grades.

### **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, Wednesday-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 Readings:**

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>)

Stephen Van Evera. 1997. *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

You can also request a free copy of SPSS or STATA for your home computer from IT here: [Software Request](#).

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

\*Note: Any assignments may be turned in early, and *if you plan to use your research design from DIPL 6310, please let me know and make an appointment with me to go over it.*

### **Weeks 1-2: Class Meetings**

#### **Tuesday, January 24 (class):**

Course overview and choosing a topic

Finding, using, and citing sources

Identifying research questions and puzzles

Hypotheses, variables, thesis statements, causal claims, and research design

Tuesday, January 31 (class):

Students present research topics; peer review preliminary bibliographies

*Suggested Reading:* COR (*Craft of Research*), pp. 33-140, 271-274

*Assignment:* **Research Topic Description with Preliminary Bibliography – due in class for peer review, then Thursday, Feb. 2 if changes needed**

Bring a one-paragraph description of your research topic. What's the question or puzzle? Why is it interesting and important? (Or, how is it relevant for policy and for theory?) The paragraph should be accompanied by a bibliography with at least 15 potential sources on your research topic. If you are unsure about your topic, you can write a paragraph on each of two topics (if two topics, do 8 sources on each). 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 Chicago Author-Date format.

**Week 3: Individual Meetings**

Tuesday, February 7 (individual):

Discussion of the research question, bibliography, and research strategy

*Suggested Reading:* COR, pp. 141-154

*Assignment:* **Nothing due (work on next assignments)**

**Weeks 4-6: Class Meetings**

Tuesday, February 14 (class):

Assessing existing research

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

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 to the class (five minutes maximum, no slides).

Tuesday, February 21 (no class – optional individual meetings):

Work on next assignments (pick up preliminary literature review if so desired)

Tuesday, February 28 (class):

Thesis statements and research strategies

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

Write and present a two-page thesis statement and research strategy to the class in a 4-5 minute presentation (no slides) that includes how the thesis relates to the state of the debate regarding your topic and what strategy you will use to assess your argument, including what cases you will examine, how you will operationalize variables, and what data sources you will use.

**\*\*\*\*Spring Break (No Class on March 7)\*\*\*\***

**Weeks 7-8: Optional Individual Meetings**

Tuesday, March 14 and Tuesday March 21 (optional individual meetings):

Discussion of research progress if needed

*Suggested Reading:* COR, pp. 173-213

**Week 9: Class Meeting**

Tuesday, March 28 (class):

Presenting research in public and making revisions

*Assignment:* **Preliminary draft – due in class for peer review; then March 29 with any changes needed via hard copy and Blackboard**

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, an outline of the rest, and a bibliography.

**Weeks 10-13: Individual meetings**

Tuesday, April 4 (mandatory); Tuesdays, April 11, 18, and 25 (optional):

Discussion of ways to strengthen the preliminary draft

*Suggested Reading:* COR, pp. 214-268

**Week 14: Last Class Meeting**

Tuesday, May 2 (class):

Student presentations

*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 10-12 minutes long and include slides. Students should also be prepared to provide constructive critiques (including praise) of their fellow students.

**Wednesday, May 10: Final Paper Due (earlier is welcome)**

Final drafts are due by 12 p.m. An electronic copy must be uploaded to Blackboard and a hard copy placed in my mailbox.

Requirements:

- 8,000-10,000 words total, including title, text, bibliography, and tables (roughly 30 pages; if you have regression tables, they count for more words)
- 12-pt font, double spaced, one-inch margins
- Must incorporate suggestions from the individual meetings with the professor, from the oral presentation, and from comments on prior drafts
  - Must include a memo in which you outline all of the changes that you have made since the rough draft. In particular – how have you responded to my comments?
- Must include appropriate citation method (Chicago Author-Date)
- All sources in the bibliography must be cited in the text and all sources cited in the text must be in the bibliography; Bibliographies should include at least 20 sources

#### Extra Credit:

- If you would like to do so, you may submit an op-ed summarizing your findings (800-word maximum), also due by May 10

#### More Important Notes:

##### **Student Resources**

Library Resources: Walsh library staff can be reached through one of the following avenues:

- To make a research and reference appointment, (for help with finding peer reviewed articles and books) please click here: [Research and Reference Appointments](#)
  - Diplomacy's library liaison is Michael Murphy ([michael.murphy3@shu.edu](mailto:michael.murphy3@shu.edu))
- To make a data services appointment (for help with finding and analyzing data), please click here: Data Services Appointment Form
  - Diplomacy's data specialist is Samah Alshrief ([samahfarisk.alshrief@shu.edu](mailto:samahfarisk.alshrief@shu.edu))
- Please review these additional library resources:
  - Graduate Services Guide (General for all programs): <https://library.shu.edu/gradservices/home>
  - Diplomacy Graduate Online Research Guide: <https://library.shu.edu/diplomacy-remote>
  - Research Data Services Department: <https://library.shu.edu/data-services>
  - 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.