INR 3206 examines the way nation-states make their foreign policy. It is really people who occupy many different roles, of course, who actually make policy. This course will consider the international, domestic, and even interpersonal settings in which policymakers pursue their goals. Yet even knowing a good deal about the settings in which policy is made, and the goals policy makers hope to achieve, will not permit us to predict every foreign policy decision. Leaders "can't always get what they want," and analysts can't always predict what leaders will do. Indeed, policymakers often choose policies that, in retrospect, turn out to be unproductive or even damaging to their own (or their country's) interests. Nevertheless, this course will explore the ways that even seemingly irrational policies can often be explained in rational terms.

The first part of the course will explain what rationality means. The course then introduces a variety of ways the rationality assumption can be used to understand parametric choice in foreign policymaking. The second part of the course extends the metaphor of rationality to strategic problems of bargaining, negotiation, and coercion in foreign policymaking. Finally, the course concludes by challenging and extending the rationality assumption.

Course Requirements

Class Participation: Attendance and active participation in class is essential to success in this course — the exams will cover material presented in the lectures that may differ from the assigned readings. It is important to do the assigned readings before coming to class: from time to time, you may be asked to summarize the readings in class, and there may sometimes be a brief, unannounced quiz on the readings. In the event that a class must be cancelled, you are still responsible for the assigned readings. Do not assume that a class is cancelled unless so informed by your professor or by a university representative in person.

WARNING: many sessions in this class, especially those noted with an asterisk (*) on the syllabus, build on each other. It will be very difficult to catch up if you miss or are unprepared for one of these classes. Do not take this course if you cannot make the commitment to be present in class on all of these days. You have been warned.

Homework: Homework assignments will occasionally be announced in class. They will always be due at the beginning of the following class and will not be accepted at any other time. It is the responsibility of each student to be aware of these assignments; if you must miss a class, be certain to contact a classmate for the assignment. Late or incomplete homework assignments cannot be "made up," but your two lowest grades will be dropped.

Exams: The exams are cumulative and will cover the lectures, classroom discussions, and reading assignments from the first three parts of this course. We will discuss the format of the test in class before the exam. You will be permitted to take a make-up exam only in the event of illness or other serious extenuating circumstances.

Final Exercise: The final requirement for this course is to analyze and criticize a foreign policy problem using a formal rational model of policymaking such as those studied in this
course. This exercise consists of three parts. First, in approximately one page, you should describe a specific foreign policy decision made by some country other than the United States. Second, you should model the decision either parametrically or strategically and provide some evidence for the preferences on which your model is based (in approximately 1 page). Finally, third, you should explain what your model predicts and provide evidence for your model or an analysis of why the predicted outcome did not occur (in approximately two pages). This assignment must be typed and double-spaced with one-inch margins; pages must be stapled together and should not otherwise be bound or put in a folder. It should be about 4 pages long (and under no circumstances longer than 5 pages). Late papers will not be accepted.

Your grade will be determined on the basis of these course requirements as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Homework and Class Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam 1</td>
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<td>Exam 2</td>
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<td>Exam 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exercise</td>
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**Academic Integrity**

Be certain that you are familiar with the University's rules concerning academic misconduct as described in the Student Handbook. Plagiarism and other forms of cheating undermine the spirit of responsible inquiry on which the University relies. Cheating will result in severe penalties (which, according to University policy, may include a failing grade and/or expulsion from the University itself).

To avoid plagiarism, keep in mind that all references to someone else's ideas — whether a direct quotation or simply an indirect summary — must be properly cited. A "proper citation" should, at the very least, identify the author, the work, and the page number. Direct quotations must be placed in quotation marks.

**Textbooks**

The required texts for this course are:

2. Readings for INR 3206, "Foreign Policymaking" (from campus copy center).

Although it is not required, I recommend that you buy William Strunk and E. B. White's *The Elements of Style* (New York: MacMillan). It is an excellent and inexpensive guide to good writing. The answers to many stylistic questions can also be found in Kate Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press). Finally, FIU's English Department maintains a list of several online resources that are useful for writers (see http://www.fiu.edu/~english/writingres.html).

**Questions? Problems?**

You are always welcome to discuss this course or other academic issues with me during my office hours. I will also be happy to make an appointment for another time if you cannot see me during office hours. Don't hesitate to ask if you have any questions or problems.
Syllabus

1. **Tuesday, August 28**
   
   **Introduction**
   
   *Overview of course.*

2. **Thursday, August 30**
   
   NO CLASS MEETING (but remember to do the assigned reading, below)

   **The Nation and other Rational Actors**
   
   *How is foreign policy made? On whose behalf?*
   
   Dixit & Skeath, Chapter 1.
   Readings 1: Bueno de Mesquita, "Christopher Columbus and International Relations," pp. 23-37.

   **I. Rational Policymaking**

3. * **Tuesday, September 4**
   
   **Defining Rationality and Utility**
   
   *What is the difference between instrumental and value rationality? What is rational choice? What is expected utility? Do nations (or leaders) maximize utility?*
   
   Dixit & Skeath, Chapter 2.
   Dixit & Skeath, Appendix, pp. 163-177.

4. * **Thursday, September 6**
   
   **Parametric Choice, Weapons, and War**
   
   *What do nations want?*
   
   Readings 3: Bueno de Mesquita, "Planning the War Trap."
   Readings 4: Allison, "Why Did the Soviet Union Decide to Place Offensive Missiles in Cuba."

5. **Tuesday, September 11**
   
   **Parametric Choice and Trade**
   
   *How is the international trading system defined? Does it determine a state's opportunities?*
   
   Readings 5: Krugman, "Competitiveness: A Dangerous Obsession."
   Readings 6: Prestowitz, "Playing to Win."
   Readings 7: Thurow, "Microchips, Not Potato Chips."

6. **Thursday, September 13**
   
   **The Utility of Leaders**
   
   *What do national leaders want? How do they get it?*
   
   Readings 8: Lowi, "The High Cost of Winning."
7. **Tuesday, September 18**

The Utility of Advisors
*How do national leaders learn about their foreign policy options? Does the structure of their advisory group matter?*

Readings 9: Janis, "Escalation of the Vietnam War."

8. **Thursday, September 20**

The Utility of Organizations
*Does the military want what all bureaucracies want? Does it get it?*


9. * **Tuesday, September 25**

The "Public" Interest
*How does public opinion constrain foreign policy in electoral systems? How does the structure of the domestic political system matter?*

Dixit & Skeath, Chapter 14, pp. 481-489.

Readings 11: Risse-Kappen, "Masses and Leaders."

10. **Thursday, September 27**

MID-TERM EXAMINATION 1

II. Strategic Policymaking

11. * **Tuesday, October 2**

Game Theory
*What is a game? What is the difference between parametric and strategic decision making? How can a game be shown in sequential form? What is rational in such games?*

Dixit & Skeath, Chapter 2 (review)
Dixit & Skeath, Chapter 3.


12. * **Thursday, October 4**

Game Theory
*How can simultaneous-move games be shown in "strategic" form? What is an equilibrium? What is optimal? What is a dominant strategy?*

Dixit & Skeath, Chapter 4, pp. 79-93.

13. * **Tuesday, October 9**

Solving Games
*What is a Nash equilibrium?*

Dixit & Skeath, Chapter 4, pp. 93-99, 107-118.
14. * Thursday, October 11

Solving Games
Is the Nash equilibrium a good strategic "solution?"
Dixit & Skeath, Chapter 7, pp. 209-223.

15. * Tuesday, October 16

Strategic Choice and the Security Dilemma
Why does a self-help system lead to security dilemmas?
Readings 13: Craig and George, "Balance of Power, 1815-1914."

16. Thursday, October 18

Deterrence and the Security Dilemma
What is deterrence? What does it require? When will it be successful?
Readings 14: Craig and George, "The Cold War as International System."
Readings 15: Craig and George, "Deterrence."

17. Tuesday, October 23

Crises and "Chicken"
What is compellence (or coercive diplomacy)? Why do leaders sometimes risk disaster?
How can they avoid it?
Dixit & Skeath, Chapter 13.
Readings 16: Craig and George, "Coercive Diplomacy."

18. Thursday, October 25

Economics and Trading Dilemmas
How are economics and security connected? Why is it difficult to coordinate the production of "public goods?"
Dixit & Skeath, Chapter 11, pp. 356-362.
Dixit & Skeath, Chapter 17, pp. 550-560.

19. Tuesday, October 30

MID-TERM EXAMINATION 2

III. Complications, Refinements, and Problems

20. * Thursday, November 1

Repeated Games
How does repetition affect strategy?
Dixit & Skeath, Chapter 8 (skip appendix).

21. * Tuesday, November 6

Mixed Strategies
What is an equilibrium strategy in a repetitive game?
Dixit & Skeath, Chapter 5, pp. 124-132.
22. **Thursday, November 8**

*Mixed Strategies in Repeated Games*

*How can you keep your adversary guessing?*

Dixit & Skeath, Chapter 6, pp. 178-189.

23. **Tuesday, November 13**

*Multi-player Games*

*What is a collective action problem? How can collective action problems be solved?*

Dixit & Skeath, Chapter 11, pp. 362-377 (also review pp. 356-362).

24. **Thursday, November 15**

*The National Interest Redux*

*Does it matter if nations are not really unitary? What is the Condorcet paradox? The agenda paradox? The Arrow impossibility theorem?*

Dixit & Skeath, Chapter 14, pp. 462-474.

25. **Tuesday, November 20**

MID-TERM EXAMINATION 3

26. **Thursday, November 22**

THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY — UNIVERSITY CLOSED

IV. Ethics and Applications

27. **Tuesday, November 27**

*Ethics and Policymaking*

*What is the basis for an ethical theory of foreign policy?*

No assigned reading.

28. **Thursday, November 29**

*Ethics and Policymaking*

Readings 17: Craig and George, "Problems of Ethical and Moral Restraints on the Use of Force in Foreign Policy."

29. **Tuesday, December 4**

*Are Leaders Rational?*

*What do psychological theories say about the rationality of human decision making?*

Readings 18: Tetlock and McGuire, "Cognitive Perspectives on Foreign Policy."

30. **Thursday, December 6**

FINAL EXERCISE DUE

_Last class meeting_