INR 3303 examines the way countries make their foreign policy. It is really people occupying 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 policymakers 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. 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.

This course is not like other international relations courses. It will teach you to apply microeconomic (rational choice) models to the study of foreign policy, and also to appreciate the limitations of such models. This involves a little math. Although the math itself is not difficult, it is exacting, and some of the concepts are difficult (at least, at first). 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 policy making. 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 any 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: This course, unlike most other international relations courses, involves regular homework assignments. These will be announced or distributed in class (usually at the end of class) and will always be due at the beginning of the following class. Homework will not be accepted for a grade 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 lowest grade will be dropped.
Exams: The exams are cumulative and will cover all lectures, classroom discussions, and reading assignments. 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 documented illness or other serious extenuating circumstances. No books, notes, or personal electronic devices (cell phones, computers, mp3 players, etc.) may be used during exams. Exam dates are indicated on the syllabus. The final exam will be given during exam week (April 22-27).

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Homework and Class Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam 1</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam 2</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Numerical grades on these assignments are converted to a final letter grade in the following manner. For grades in the A range, 90-92 is an A-; 93 or greater is an A. For grades in the B range, 80-82 is a B-; 83-86 is a B; and 87-89 is a B+. Grades in the C range (70-72 = C-; 73-76 = C; 77-79 = C+) and D range (60-62 = D-; 63-66 = D; 67-69 = D+) are calculated in a similar manner. Numerical grades between 0 and 59 result in an F.

Academic Integrity

Be certain that you are familiar with the University’s rules concerning academic misconduct as described in the Student Handbook. Cheating undermines 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). Note that the Student Code of Conduct not only prohibits cheating, but also specifically prohibits allowing other students to cheat with your assistance or collusion. For more information on these policies, see the Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution website: [http://conduct.fiu.edu/](http://conduct.fiu.edu/).

Textbooks: The required texts for this course are:

2. Readings for INR 3303, “Foreign Policymaking” (via Blackboard Learn, on FIU eCampus website - [https://ecampus.fiu.edu](https://ecampus.fiu.edu)).

Some additional material that may be helpful for students in this course is contained on the eCampus website for this course (and also on the "student resources" page of my website: [http://www.fiu.edu/~kowert/students.html](http://www.fiu.edu/~kowert/students.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. An easy and reliable way to contact me is by sending email to kowert@fiu.edu.
Syllabus

1. **Tuesday, January 8**

   **Introduction**
   
   *Overview of course.*

2. **Thursday, January 10**

   **The State and other Rational Actors**
   
   *How is foreign policy made? On whose behalf?*
   
   Reading 1: Bueno de Mesquita, "Christopher Columbus and International Relations," pp. 22-34.

   **I. Rational Policymaking**

3. **Tuesday, January 15**

   **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 1.
   
   
   Reading 2: Bueno de Mesquita, "Christopher Columbus and International Relations," pp. 38-46.

4. **Thursday, January 17**

   **Parametric Choice, Weapons, and War**
   
   *What do nations want?*
   
   Reading 3: Bueno de Mesquita, "Planning the War Trap."
   
   Reading 4: Woodward & Balz, "At Camp David, Advise and Dissent".

5. **Tuesday, January 22**

   **The Utility of Leaders**
   
   *What do national leaders want? How do they get it?*
   
   Reading 5: Lowi, "The High Cost of Winning."

6. **Thursday, January 24**

   **The Utility of Advisors**
   
   *How do national leaders learn about their foreign policy options? Does the structure of their advisory group matter?*
   
   Reading 6: Janis, "Escalation of the Vietnam War."

7. **Tuesday, January 29**

   **The Utility of Organizations**
   
   *Does the military want what all bureaucracies want? Does it get it?*
   
   Reading 7: Levy, "Organizational Routines and the Causes of War."
8. * Thursday, January 31
   
   **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 16, pp. 639-645.

9. **Tuesday, February 5**

   MID-TERM EXAMINATION 1

   **II. Strategic Policymaking**

10. * Thursday, February 7
    
    **Game Theory**
    *What is a game? What is the difference between parametric and strategic decision making? What is the sequential form of a game? What is rational in such games?*
    Dixit & Skeath, Chapters 2-3 *(this is a lot to read - plan ahead!)*.

11. * Tuesday, February 12
    
    **Game Theory**
    *How can simultaneous-move games be shown in “strategic” form? What is an equilibrium? What is optimal? What is a dominant strategy?*
    Reading 8: Bueno de Mesquita, "Christopher Columbus and International Relations," pp. 46-55.
    Dixit & Skeath, Chapter 4, pp. 89-92, 97-104.

12. * Thursday, February 14
    
    **Solving Games**
    *What is a Nash equilibrium?*
    Dixit & Skeath, Chapter 4, pp. 92-97, 104-120.

13. * Tuesday, February 19
    
    **Solving Games**
    *Is the Nash equilibrium a good strategic “solution?”*
    Dixit & Skeath, Chapter 5, pp. 143-157.

14. * Thursday, February 21
    
    **Strategic Choice and the Security Dilemma**
    *Why does a self-help system lead to security dilemmas?*
    Reading 9: Craig and George, "Balance of Power, 1815-1914."

15. **Tuesday, February 26**

    **Deterrence and the Security Dilemma**
    *What is deterrence? What does it require? When will it be successful?*
    Reading 10: Craig and George, "Deterrence."
    Reading 11: Pollack, "Next Stop Baghdad?"
16. **Thursday, February 28**

   **Crises and "Chicken"**
   What is compellence (or coercive diplomacy)? Why do leaders sometimes risk disaster? How can they avoid it?
   Dixit & Skeath, Chapter 15.

17. **Tuesday, March 5**

   **Economics and Trading Dilemmas**
   How are economics and security connected? Why is it difficult to coordinate the production of "public goods?"
   Dixit & Skeath, Chapter 12, pp. 446-452.

18. **Thursday, March 7**

   MID-TERM EXAMINATION 2

   **III. Complications, Refinements, and Problems**

   March 11-15 — SPRING BREAK

19. * **Tuesday, March 19**

   **Repeated Games**
   How does repetition affect strategy?
   Dixit & Skeath, Chapter 11 (skip appendix).

20. * **Thursday, March 21**

   **Mixed Strategies**
   What is an equilibrium strategy in a repetitive game?
   Dixit & Skeath, Chapter 7, pp. 213-225.

21. **Tuesday, March 26**

   **Mixed Strategies in Repeated Games**
   How can you keep your adversary guessing?
   Dixit & Skeath, Chapter 7, pp. 226-239.

22. * **Thursday, March 28**

   **Multi-player Games**
   What is a collective action problem? How can collective action problems be solved?
   Dixit & Skeath, Chapter 12, pp. 452-487.

23. * **Tuesday, April 2**

   **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 16, pp. 615-639.
24. **Thursday, April 4**

   **Ethics and Policymaking**
   What is the basis for an ethical theory of foreign policy?
   No assigned reading.

25. **Tuesday, April 9**

   **Ethics and Policymaking**
   How can ethical theories be applied to foreign policy?
   Reading 12: Craig and George, "Problems of Ethical and Moral Restraints on the Use of Force in Foreign Policy."

26. **Thursday, April 11**

   **Are Leaders Rational?**
   What do psychological theories say about the rationality of human decision making?
   Reading 13: Tetlock and McGuire, "Cognitive Perspectives on Foreign Policy."

27. **Tuesday, April 16**

   **Speaking of Policy...**
   Does foreign policy really exist?
   Reading 14: Onuf, "Speaking of Policy."

28. **Thursday, April 18**

   **Last Class Meeting — Review for Final Exam**
   No assigned reading.

   **Exam Week: April 22-27**

   **Final Examination — Time/Date to be Announced**