

Foreign Policy Analysis: A Case-Based Approach to Strategic Analysis

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General Information

Foreign policy decisions, like any other decisions presidents make, are products of the pulls and pushes of domestic and international actors whose capabilities, tastes, as well as stakes compete to determine the policy outcomes. These decisions are, thus, strategic: actors, to maximize their own welfare, broadly consider the expected responses from their allies and rivals alike - domestic or foreign - and they do so under different strategic considerations. To teach the implications of various strategic settings for decision-making processes, the first seven weeks of the course offer an introduction to the toolbox of analytic techniques that are essential for understanding, analyzing, predicting, and eventually engineering policy choices in international politics. You can think of these tools as a foreign policy analyst's "how to" manual, which include spatial models, the median voter theorem, win sets, expected utility calculations, and non-cooperative game theory.

The second seven-week part of the course will cast you as advisors on the hardest decisions any political leader has to make. Using the analytical tools you mastered in the first part of the course, you will advise presidents in deciding how they should act in the face of crises such as Trump's withdrawal from Iranian nuclear deal or another crisis quietly brewing in the waters surrounding Cyprus on natural gas exploration and drilling. What counterbalancing measures should the relevant actors take?

Throughout this part of the course, you will engage in red-teaming, write short strategic options memos as well as detailed case studies to inform policy-making with a model-based approach.

Who should take this course?

This course is designed primarily for International Relations concentrators as a requirement.

Course Requirements

The course consists of two parts:

Part I: Analytical Tools for Foreign Policy (Week 2-Week 9)

This part of the course will be lecture based and requires active participation on your side. You are required to come to class prepared (have read the entire course content and complete the assignments) for a pass grade. You will be given problem-sets on the tools you are exposed to and required to write a one-and-a half page reaction paper¹ for the course readings before you come to the class and submit it on Canvas.

Part II: Policy Analysis using Mini-Cases (Week 10-Week 14)

In the second part of the course, you will write two strategic options memos, one reaction paper and present one-mini case study. One mini-group (co-presented by 2 people) will serve as the discussion leaders as they present their mini-case study to the president. Mini-case studies as well as the strategic options memos should be submitted by Sunday evening of the assignment week.

- **Mini Case Study:** Mini case presenter leads the discussion. Students discuss different alternatives available and make their case why their proposals present the best option. This will be based on their prediction of the events as well as based on the academic literature, and a piece of convincing data. Following the course, mini-case study presenters rewrite the strategic memo based on the in-class discussion and re-submit this piece as the final version. You will be graded based on your initial mini-case study (50 percent of the item grade), defending your own position – discussion leading (40 percent of the item grade) and the quality of the final mini-case outcome (10 percent of the item grade).
- **Case Reaction Papers:** Each week we will have one Mini-case study by two people, two reaction papers to the case study and two strategic memos that will

¹For detailed strategies on how to write reaction papers, see <http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/rwc/handouts/the-writing-process-1/invention/Writing-a-Response-or-Reaction-Paper>

compete with the mini-case study. You will write one case reaction paper and engage in theoretical, empirical, and ethical evaluations of the mini case study.

- **Strategic Options Memos:** For our class, you will be drafting two one-page strategic options memos. For a well-written strategic options memo, see the end of this syllabus.

Grading

Part 1: Analytical Tools for Foreign Policy

- Problem-sets (20% of final grade)
- Reaction papers for weekly readings (20% of final grade)

Part 2: Policy Analysis using Mini-Cases

- One co-authored detailed mini-case study (30% of final grade)
- One mini-case reaction paper(10% of final grade)
- Two strategic options memos (20% of final grade).

Required Books

- Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce. 2013. *Principles of International Politics: War, Peace, and World Order*. 5 edition. Los Angeles: CQ Press.
- Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce. 2010. *The Predictioneer's Game: Using the Logic of Brazen Self-Interest to See and Shape the Future*. Random House Trade Paperbacks.
- Waltz, Kenneth N. 1959. *Man, the State, and War: A Theoretical Analysis*. Columbia University Press.
- Schelling, Thomas C. 1960. *The Strategy of Conflict*. Harvard University Press.
- Allison, Graham and Philip Zelikow. *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*. Addison-Wesley, 1999.

Prerequisites

There is no mathematical prerequisite to take the course. Please come to class prepared as others will be counting on you (and you on them). If you don't understand something, that's perfectly fine. I will figure it out and make sure no one is left behind. The lectures and discussions are to be conducted in English. However, I am well aware that each one of us has different levels of experience with English. Please have peace of mind for your mistakes, or asking for assistance when you cannot remember a word. If you don't understand something, that's again perfectly fine. We will figure it out and make sure no one is left behind. I encourage you to come to my office hours throughout the semester. If my stated office hours are impossible for you to visit, then please email me.

Course Canvas Site & Discussion Board

You will receive course relevant communication from the our Canvas Site, including your assignment, course slides, announcements, and questions from your peers. I recommend you to use the discussion board actively for questions of general interest. If you believe your question is not of general interest, you can come over during my office hours or send me an email at omerorsun@istanbul.edu.tr. The instructions to sign up for Course Canvas Site are as follows:

1. Use the link: <https://canvas.instructure.com/courses/1428428>
2. Enter your email address and choose "I am a new user".
3. Write your full name
4. You will receive a confirmation email. In this email click on "Click here to finish the registration process".
5. Create Password.
6. Time Zone: Istanbul
7. Confirm and Finish.

Academic Honesty

Honesty and trust are important to all of us as individuals. Students and faculty adhere to the following principles of academic honesty in our university:

- Individual accountability for all individual work, written or oral: Copying from others or providing answers or information, written or oral, to others is **cheating**.
- Providing proper acknowledgement of original author: Copying from another student's paper or from another text without written acknowledgement is **plagiarism**. All work for this course is expected to be original. You must not "recycle" a paper previously written for another class.
- Study or project group activity is effective and authorized teamwork: Unauthorized help from another person or having someone else write one's paper or assignment is **collusion**.

Cheating, plagiarism, and collusion are serious offenses resulting in an F grade and disciplinary action. Whether intentional or not, improper use of materials can be considered a violation of academic honesty. Information on documentation styles is available here:

<http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/index.html>.

Schedule

The following is the schedule of the semester

Lecture 1	18 Sept	Foundations of Foreign Policy Analysis
Analytical Tools for Foreign Policy		
Lecture 2	25 Sept	Spatial Models for Analyzing Foreign Policy Decisions
Lecture 3	2 Oct	Spatial Models: Applications
Lecture 4	9 Oct	Strategic Models for Analyzing Foreign Policy Decisions
Lecture 5	16 Oct	Strategic Models: Applications
Lecture 6	23 Oct	Crisis Bargaining
Lecture 7	30 Oct	Crisis Bargaining: Applications
Policy Analysis using Mini-Cases		
Lecture 8	6 Nov	Predicting Foreign Policy Outcomes
Lecture 9	13 Nov	Predictive Tools: Applications on Brexit and World War I
Lecture 10	20 Nov	Case Study: Iran Nuclear Deal
Lecture 11	27 Nov	Case Study: US Withdraws from the Iran Deal
Lecture 12	4 Dec	Case Study: Qatar Crisis
Lecture 13	11 Dec	Student Case Study Presentations
Lecture 14	18 Dec	Revision

Detailed Schedule

Week 1: Foundations of Foreign Policy Analysis

- Waltz, Kenneth N. 1959. *Man, the State, and War: A Theoretical Analysis*. Columbia University Press. Introduction and Conclusion (30 Pages)
 - Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce. 2003. *Principles of International Politics*. Foundations of International Relations pp. 15-20.
 - Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce. 2013. *Principles of International Politics*. Introduction
 - Zelikow, Philip. "Foreign Policy Engineering: From Theory to Practice and Back Again," *International Security*, Spring 1994, pp. 143-171, [29pgs] focus on pp. 155-171
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Analytical Tools for Foreign Policy

Week 2: Spatial Models for Analyzing Foreign Policy Decisions

- Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce. 2013. *Principles of International Politics*. Chapter 3
- Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce. 1988. "The Contribution of Expected Utility Theory to the Study of International Conflict." *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*. 18: 629-652.
- Bueno De Mesquita, Bruce. 1985. "The War Trap Revisited: A Revised Expected Utility Model." *American Political Science Review* 79(1): 156-177.

Week 3: Spatial Models: Applications

***Homework Due:** Problem-set hard-copy submission required

- Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce. 2010. *The Predictioneer's Game* Chapter 1-7.
 - Putnam, Robert. (1988). Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Game. *International Organization*. Vol. 42, No. 3. pp. 427-460.
 - Conceição-Heldt, Eugénia da, and Patrick A. Mello. 2017. "Two-Level Games in Foreign Policy Analysis." *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*. (34 Pages)
 - Tetlock, Philip E. *Expert Political Judgement*
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Week 4: Strategic Models for Analyzing Foreign Policy Decisions

***Reaction Paper Due:** Online submission at Canvas

- Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce. 2013. *Principles of International Politics*. Chapter 4 (138-164)
 - Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce. 2010. *The Predictioneer's Game* Chapter 8-end.
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Week 5: Strategic Models: Applications

***Homework Due:** Problem-set hard-copy submission required

Week 6: Crisis Bargaining

***Reaction Paper Due:** Online submission at Canvas

- Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce. 2013. *Principles of International Politics*. pp.166-175, 206-229, 206-229.
- Learning from Schelling's 'Strategy Of Conflict' by Roger B. Myerson available at <http://home.uchicago.edu/rmyerson/research/stratofc.pdf>

Recommended Readings: Don't graduate before you read these articles.

- Fearon, James. "Rationalist Explanations for War." *International Organization*. 49:3 (Summer 1995): 379-414.
 - Fearon, James. "Domestic Political Audiences and the Escalation of International Disputes" *American Political Science Review*. 88:3 (Sept 1994): 577-592.
 - Schultz, Kenneth A. 1998. "Domestic Opposition and Signaling in International Crises." *American Political Science Review* 92(4): 829-844.
 - Katagiri, A., Min, Eric. 2019. The Credibility of Public and Private Signals: A Document-Based Approach. *American Political Science Review*, 1-17.
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Week 7: Crisis Bargaining: Applications

***Homework Due:** Problem-set hard-copy submission required

Policy Analysis Using Cases

Week 8: Predicting Foreign Policy Outcomes

***Reaction Paper Due:** Online submission at Canvas

- Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce. 2003. *Principles of International Politics*. Chapter 18 - A Predictive Model of International Affairs
 - Schneider, G., Gleditsch, N. P., Carey, S. (2011). Forecasting in International Relations. *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, 28(1), 5–14.
 - *Forecasting the Future of Iran Implications for U.S. Strategy and Policy* Eric Jesse
 - Bueno De Mesquita, Bruce. 1985. “The War Trap Revisited: A Revised Expected Utility Model.” *American Political Science Review* 79(1): 156–177.
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Week 9: Predictive Tools: Applications on Brexit and World War I

***Homework Due:** Problem-set hard-copy submission required

- Modeling Collective Decision-Making Processes with the KAPSARC Toolkit for Behavioral Analysis
 - An introduction to the KAPSARC Toolkit for Behavioral Analysis (KTAB) using one-dimensional spatial models
 - Multidimensional Bargaining Using KTAB by Ben Wise, Leo Lester and Brian Efrid
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Week 10: Practice Case: Iran Nuclear Deal

Required Readings:

- Allison, Graham (1969). Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis. *American Political Science Review*, 63(3), 689-718.
- Reveron, Derek S. and James L. Cook. “From National to Theater: Developing Strategy,” *Joint Force Quarterly*, July 2013. (6p)
- May, Ernest and Philip Zelikow. *The Kennedy Tapes: Inside the White House During the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Belknap Press, 1997), pp. 542-549.

Required Videos: The following videos are from HarvardX: HKS211.2xCentral Challenges of American National Security, Strategy, and the Press 2015.

- Conceptual Framework: American National Interests (13m)
 - Conceptual Framework: Three Models (5m)
 - Conceptual Framework: Strategic Option Memos (15m)
 - Practice Case: Welcome and Introduction
 - Practice Case: Iran, "Olympic Games," and Instruments of American Power in International Relations (110 minutes)
 - Part 1: National Security Council Briefing (21m)
 - Part 2: Red Lines (18m)
 - Part 3: U.S. Covert Strategies and the Press (21m)
 - Part 4: U.S. Perspective (20m)
 - Part 5: Red Teaming (6m)
 - Part 6: Iran's Perspective (12m)
 - Part 7: Israel's Perspective (13m)
 - Netanyahu on Iran Nuclear Deal: <https://www.c-span.org/video/?444882-2/prime-minister-netanyahu-iran-nuclear-agreement>
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Week 11: Case Study 1: US Withdrawal from the Iran Deal

***Homework Due:** Strategic Options Memos and Student Presentations

Week 12: Qatar Crisis

***Homework Due:** Strategic Options Memos and Student Presentations

- "Arab States Issue 13 Demands to End Qatar-Gulf Crisis | Qatar News | Al Jazeera."
- "Qatar Crisis: One Year on, What's Changed?" The National. (January 8, 2019).
- "Qatar Crisis: Saudi Arabia Insists Gulf Country Must Meet Its Demands 'Soon.'"

- “Saudi-Led Bloc to Continue Qatar Boycott after ‘negative’ Response to Demands | News | DW | 05.07.2017.”
- “The Year that was: Timeline of the Blockade on Qatar | Qatar Today.”
- “Timeline of Qatar-GCC Disputes from 1991 to 2017 | Qatar | Al Jazeera.”
- “Qatar Protests ‘unreasonable’ Ultimatum from Neighbors | DW | 24.06.2017.”
- “What Is the Qatar Crisis? | DW | 21.07.2017.”
- “What Is Oman’s Stance on the Qatar-Gulf Crisis?”

Week 13: Student Case Study Presentations

***Homework Due:** Mini case study report submission and presentation

Week 14: Revision

Example of a Well-Written Strategic Options Outline

To: Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu

From: Senior Adviser Kamil Demir

Re: Outstanding Issues Surrounding the Nuclear Deal and U.S.A.'s Decision to Withdrawal

Issue: Iran's intention to produce a nuclear bomb is an existential threat to the state of Israel. In addition to that, according to intelligence reports and nuclear science experts Iran is at a level to produce its first bomb within 9 months. In this regard, our administration must prevent this from happening immediately. Relevant National Interests: Vital: Ensuring Israel's existence. Extremely Important: Ensuring Israeli allies' survival. Important: Preventing nuclear proliferation in the Middle East region.

Analysis: Existential threat which aims Israel has been growing day by day due to the nuclear enrichment program of the Iranian Regime. Apparently, Iranian side has no intention to give up its nuclear program and it is using nuclear treaty to gain more time until it reaches to such a nuclear capability.

Operational Objectives: 1) Preventing Iranian nuclear program immediately. 2) Elimination of Iranian knowhow technology and experience to keep them away from the continuation of the program. 3) Gaining support of U.S.A., European Union and region countries to achieve above mentioned objectives.

Strategic Options:

1. **FASTEST ROAD TO THE ULTIMATE GOAL:** Attack Iranian Regime and destroy nuclear facilities. Pros: Shortest and the most exact path ensures us about non-continuation of the nuclear program ever again. And if we take a hard blowback from the Iranian Side U.S.A cannot risk her biggest ally in the region and intervene to the situation. Cons: Could cause a nuclear leak and a hard blowback from the Iranian regime.
2. **MY ENEMY'S ENEMY IS MY FRIEND:** Instead of directly involving in a clash find and fund proxies to destabilize Iran. Aim its ethnic and sectarian fragmentation. Pros: Allows us to reach our wanted position without getting a material blowback. Cons: Could inflame a regional tension and cause nuclear technology get into terrorist groups.
3. **CHOKER THE ROGUE:** Mobilise world public opinion as well as Gulf Countries against Iranian Regime, place the toughest embargo of the history accordance with USA and UN until they change their course and let IAEA inspectors to inspection. Pros: Let us use the power of international community instead of shoulder all the burden with the lowest cost. Cons: Slows the progress but cannot totally destroy the experience and knowhow technology Iranians gained.

Recommendation and Implementation: I recommend number 1: FASTEST ROAD TO THE ULTIMATE GOAL. Other options might be useful too but Iranians could continue their program from where they leave any moment they want. When implementing this option, we will need to gain support of world public opinion and region countries' support to legitimize our actions through the Iranian fear. In this regard, using Jewish Diaspora throughout the world and warning states about Iran's intention to have nuclear tipped ballistic missiles could strengthen our hand.

Outline of Public Address: (I) We do not want a regional tension and a nuclear proliferation in the region. (II) Iran's nuclear tipped continental ballistic missiles pose a great danger not only to region countries but also the countries in other continents.