

*Solving the World's Problems: Diplomacy and Decision-making
in International Politics*

Government 325

Wesleyan University

Spring 2009

Thursday 1:10-4
Room PAC 104
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I. Course Description

This course represents a hands-on approach to decision-making and diplomacy. It is designed to allow students to take part in diplomatic and decision-making exercises in the context of international political issues and problems. Important historical decisions will be evaluated and re-enacted. In addition, more current international problems that face nations today will be analyzed and decisions will be made on prospective solutions. Finally, various modern day diplomatic initiatives will be scrutinized and renegotiated. The class will essentially function as a working committee, considering a different problem or issue each week. Preparations for decisions and diplomatic bargaining will rely both on assigned readings as well as additional outside materials collected by the students. A significant part of the preparations and class activities will involve extensive team work.

II. Requirements

Final course grades will be based one paper on a subject to be announced, another paper and presentations on team projects, and class participation. Students will be asked to prepare a short position paper for each class. It is essential that you keep up with the readings so as to enhance participation, as well as avoid excess reading before assignments.

Grades will be assigned based on the following weights:

Participation	33%
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Paper 1	33%	Due on Week 7
Presentations	33%	Weeks 11-13

III. Readings

All the readings on this syllabus will be required and are on electronic reserve, except for the books recommended for purchase. The following books will be used extensively and are recommended for purchase:

Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*
 Robert Kennedy, *Thirteen Days*
 Michael Oldstone, *Viruses, Plagues and History*

IV. Course Outline

1. Introductory Class: Theories and Processes of High-level Decision-making and Diplomacy

Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*, Chapters 4,5,6,9,10

Russett, Starr and Kinsella, "Individuals and World Politics"

2. Revisiting the A-bomb Decision: Optimal Strategies for Concluding the Pacific War

William O'Neil, "The Destruction of Japan"

Melvyn Leffler, "Truman's Decision to Drop the Atomic Bomb"

Gar Alperovitz, "Hiroshima: Historians Reassess"

3. Revisiting the Cuban Missile Crisis: Effective Brinkmanship Strategies

Robert Kennedy, *Thirteen Days*

4. Development Diplomacy: Negotiations on Development in UNCTAD

Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom*, Chapters 1,2

Marguerite Robinson, *The Microfinance Revolution*, Chapter 1

5. Environmental Diplomacy: OECD and the Third World

Julian Simon, “The Infinite Supply of Natural Resources”

Garrett Hardin, “The Tragedy of the Commons”

Adil Najam, “The View from the South”

6. Strategies for Promoting Global Health

Laura Gaydos and James Veney, “The Nature and Etiology of Disease”

Michael Oldstone, *Viruses, Plagues and History*

Brian Doherty, “Who Cares? The World Health Organization Cares More about Its Own Life than the Lives of the Poor”

7. Nuclear Diplomacy

Michael Mandelbaum, *The Nuclear Future*, Chapters 2,3

8. Reforming the International Monetary Fund

Graham Bird, “The International Monetary Fund and Developing Countries”

Ismail-Sabri Abdalla, “The Inadequacy and Loss of Legitimacy of the IMF”

9. Policies for Embracing Globalization

Martin Wolf, *Why Globalization Works*, Chapters 3,4

Martin Khor, “The Global Economy and the Third World”

10. Building Institutions for Human Rights

Ziring, Riggs and Plano, *The United Nations*, pp. 326-345

Seyom Brown, *Human Rights in World Politics*, Chapters 1,2,5

11-13. Presentation of Team Projects

