

## VALT1561 China's Rise, Diplomacy and the Future of International Relations

**Course credits:** 6 ECTS

**Instructor:** Prof. Mikael Mattlin ([mikael.mattlin@utu.fi](mailto:mikael.mattlin@utu.fi))

### Course information

#### General description and learning objectives

The course *China's Rise, Diplomacy and the Future of International Relations* utilizes the classical board game *Diplomacy* (a negotiation simulation), as a teaching platform. However, game-play options and win rules have been expanded for teaching purposes, to allow for teaching a broader variety of International Relations (IR) theories, and to more accurately reflect current international relations. Students will learn about international relations and diplomacy, as well as about the history of IR as an academic discipline. The course melds discussions of IR history, topical current issues in international relations and discussions about the future, with a particular emphasis on how China's rise impacts world politics.

Students are active participants in knowledge-creation, and a variety of learning methods are employed throughout the course: lecturing, game negotiations, independent reading, regular small group discussions, online discussions, learning diary etc. In particular, students will get to 'act' the foreign policy decision-maker and diplomat, by negotiating their way through the *Diplomacy* game. After successful completion of the course, students should have gained a broad overview of international relations (both real-world and academic theories), the role of diplomacy in it, and how China's rise affects world politics.

A detailed course syllabus will be provided to registered students in advance of the course.

Substitution: The course substitutes for the whole AKV2 Ulkopoliitikka ja diplomatia (and, if necessary, any of the units AKV3–AKV5).

Maximum participation: 16 students

Registration: Due to the nature of the course, pre-registrations for the course are binding and class attendance is compulsory. Deadline for course registration: 14 September 2020. Places are filled in order of registration.

## Substitute assignments for absences

If you need to be absent from a lecture (2 h) for pressing reasons, please inform the teacher about this in advance. To make up for the absence, you should complete a substitute assignment and return it to the designated Moodle folder. The substitute assignment should be written on the small group topic(s) of the week of your absence (available in the course slides). If you are absent 2 h, then the assignment should be approximately 500-600 words, if 4 h, then 1,000-1,200 words.

## Course schedule (example)

Wed 28 October 14:15–15:45  
 Wed 4 November 10:15–11:45  
 Wed 4 November 14:00–16:00 (game)  
 Wed 11 November 10:15–11:45  
 Wed 11 November 14:00–16:00 (game)  
 Wed 18 November 10:15–11:45  
 Wed 18 November 14:00–16:00 (game)  
 Wed 25 November 10:15–11:45  
 Wed 25 November 14:00–16:00 (game)  
 Tue 1 December 10:15–11:45  
 Tue 1 December 14:15–15:45 (feedback session)

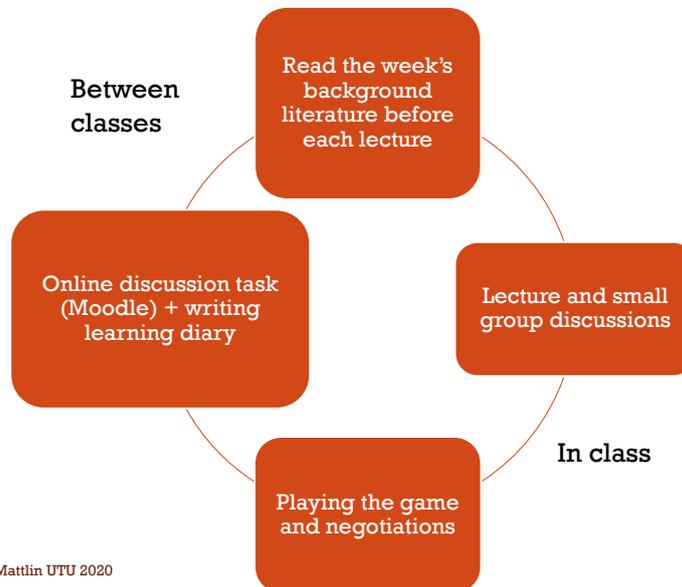
## Course grading

|   |      |
|---|------|
| Activity and performance in class (incl. small group discussions) | 25 % |
| Weekly online discussions (on the Moodle learning platform)       | 25 % |
| Performance in the game and related negotiations *                | 25 % |
| Learning diary  | 25 % |

\* For details on grading of performance in the game, please see:

Mattlin, Mikael (2021) "Anarchy is What Students Make of It: Playing Out Wendt's Three Cultures of Anarchy," *Journal of Political Science Education*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15512169.2020.1861457>

## WEEKLY CYCLE: INTEGRATED LEARNING



Doc. Mikael Mattlin UTU 2020



### Course syllabus instructions

Below you will find the course syllabus, first together with the complete bibliographic information in alphabetic order (p. 4), and then divided by study week (p. 5). The readings consist of key sections from classical books and textbooks, as well as important recent research articles. The selection of texts is based on the principle 'quality over quantity', i.e., by reading and thoroughly discussing this relatively limited selection of academic texts, you should learn quite a lot.

Please note that the reading list is compulsory. Each week's reading needs to be completed before that week's classes. Course readings will be actively discussed in class and online (on Moodle), and you are expected to make good use of it also in your learning diary. Hence, you will quickly fall behind the learning pace and other students if you do not read the literature. Because there is no final exam or essay for this course, evaluation of how well you have read and comprehended the literature takes place continuously throughout the course: in class and during small group discussions, in online discussions and in the learning diary.

The compulsory syllabus comprises just under 500 pages of text, so it is good to start the reading process early. In addition to the compulsory course syllabus, there is also optional additional reading material related to some of the online discussions. All the books and articles should be available through the university library system. However, please note that because there may be a limited number of book copies available, so please do not hold a book for long. Instead, alternatively a) read the sections and promptly return the book, or b) copy relevant sections, or c) recycle books among yourselves.

## Course syllabus (bibliography)

- Berridge, Geoff R. (2005) *Diplomacy. Theory and Practice*, 3. ed. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 27–87.
- Bull, Hedley (1977 [2002]) *The Anarchical Society. A Study of Order in World Politics*, 4th ed. New York: Columbia University Press (chapter 5).
- Farrell, Henry & Abraham L. Newman (2019) "Weaponized interdependence. How global economic networks shape state coercion," *International Security* 44 (1): 42–79.
- He Kai & Huiyun Feng (2013) "Xi Jinping's operational code beliefs and China's foreign policy," *The Chinese Journal of International Politics*, 6: 209–231.
- Hudson, Valerie (2014) *Foreign Policy Analysis. Classic and Contemporary Theory*, 2nd ed. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 39–72.
- Keating, Vincent Charles & Jan Ruzicka (2014) "Trusting relationships in international politics: No need to hedge," *Review of International Studies* 40: 753–770.
- Kissinger, Henry (1994) *Diplomacy*. London: Simon & Schuster, 167–245.
- Lai, Christina (2018) "Acting one way and talking another: China's coercive economic diplomacy in East Asia and beyond", *The Pacific Review* 31 (2), 169–187.
- Lebow, Richard Ned (2010) *Forbidden Fruit. Counterfactuals and International Relations*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 29–102.
- Lee Ji-young (2017) *China's Hegemony. Four Hundred Years of East Asian Domination*. New York: Columbia University Press, 27–55.
- Putnam, Robert (1988) "Diplomacy and domestic politics: The logic of two-level games," *International Organization* 42(3): 427–460.
- Sørensen, Camilla T. N. (2015) "The significance of Xi Jinping's "Chinese Dream" foreign policy: From "Tao Guang Yang Hui" to "Fen Fa You Wei," *Journal of China and International Relations*, 3 (1): 53–73.
- Wendt, Alexander (1999 [2010]) *Social Theory of International Politics*, 13th ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 246–312.

## Weekly reading schedule

### **Week I (28 Oct) Introduction** (84 pages)

Wendt: chapter "Three cultures of anarchy", pp. 246–312

+ *Diplomacy* -board game rules (18 pages)

### **Week II (4 Nov) The diplomatic negotiation process** (91 pages)

Berridge: chapter 2 "The Art of Negotiations", pp. 29–87

Putnam: article "Diplomacy and domestic politics: The logic of two-level games," pp. 427–460

### **Week III (11 Nov) Does history rhyme?** (78 pages)

Kissinger: chapters 7–9 "A political doomsday machine: European diplomacy before the First World War" & "Into the vortex: The military doomsday machine", "The new face of diplomacy: Wilson and the Treaty of Versailles", pp. 167–245

### **Week IV (18 Nov) Geopolitics and balance of power** (70 pages)

Bull: chapter 5 "The balance of power and international order", pp. 97–121

Lee: chapter "Understanding the tribute system", pp. 27–55

Lai: article "Acting one way and talking another: China's coercive economic diplomacy in East Asia and beyond", pp. 169–187

### **Week V (25 Nov) Political decision-makers and political psychology** (72 pages)

Hudson: chapter 2 "The individual decisionmaker: The political psychology of world leaders", pp. 39–72

He & Feng: article "Xi Jinping's operational code beliefs and China's foreign policy," pp. 209–231.

Keating & Ruzicka article: "Trusting relationships in international politics: No need to hedge," pp. 753–770.

### **Week VI (1 Dec) The challenge of rising powers: Counterfactuals and weaponized interdependence** (101 pages)

Lebow: chapters "Counterfactual thought experiments" & "Franz Ferdinand found alive: World War I unnecessary", pp. 69–133

Farrell & Newman: article "Weaponized interdependence. How global economic networks shape state coercion," pp. 42–79.

## Small group discussion topics (in class)

At the end of the first lecture, the class is divided into four-person small groups alphabetically. With the ideal number of students (16) that means four groups. Students will sit in their own small group throughout the course. During each class session, there will be 1–2 small group discussions lasting 10-15 mins each, depending on the topic. Discussion topics vary each year, but they are usually a combination of topics arising from the literature (course syllabus), game events and topical real-world situations in world politics.

## The *Diplomacy* Game

The basic *Diplomacy* game rules can be found here: <https://avalonhill.wizards.com/rules>  
Please familiarize yourself well with the game rules prior to the commencement of the game.

### General instructions for the game

The game is played in class, following a regular lecture session, with a lunch break in-between. Each game session lasts for two hours.

Game master: the course instructor

Game duration: typically at least three full 2-hour sessions is required (max. four).

### Modifications to game-play for this course

- Three strategies to play and win the game (*Domination, Rank Order, Zone of Peace*)
- Team play in two-person teams (three-person teams are also possible)
- Peace mediators (1–2)

*For further details on modifications to game-play, please see:*

Mattlin, Mikael (2021) "Anarchy is What Students Make of It: Playing Out Wendt's Three Cultures of Anarchy," *Journal of Political Science Education*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15512169.2020.1861457>

Mattlin, Mikael (2018) "Adapting the DIPLOMACY board game for 21<sup>st</sup> century International Relations teaching," *Simulation & Gaming* 49 (6): 735–750.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1046878118788905>

## Online discussions (on Moodle) <sup>1</sup>

### First online discussion: The security dilemma in North Korea

According to Realists (in International Relations), the security dilemma has been a timeless scourge of national leaders. The notion goes back all the way to Thucydides, who famously pondered the question in relation to the Peloponnesian War. In some Realists view, it is a tragedy of international relations that when states seek to enhance their own sense of security, they often increase the insecurity of other states. At worst, they may end up accidentally waging war, due to misinterpretations.

*Ponder this topic in relation to the North-Korean situation.*

Additional reading material:

Bowden, Mark (2017) "How to Deal with North Korea," *The Atlantic*, July/August issue. Available at: <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2017/07/the-worst-problem-on-earth/528717/>

Catchcart, Adam (2017) "Reading Trump Tweets in Pyongyang," *Foreign Policy*, September 5. Available at: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2017/09/05/reading-trump-tweets-in-pyongyang/>

### Second online discussion: Why has the Chinese Civil War never formally ended?

The brutal Civil War in China in the late 1940s between the Communists (CCP party) and the Nationalists (KMT party), has never been ended with a formal peace treaty. The 'Taiwan issue' is a legacy of this unsettled conflict, as the remnants of the Republic of China continue to exist in Taiwan as a *de facto* state formation, albeit not widely internationally recognised as an independent sovereign state. Recently, the situation between the two sides has again become very tense.

*Discuss the question in light of what you know about diplomatic negotiations (Berridge, Putnam) and the conflict itself.*

Additional reading material:

Saunders, Philipp C. and Scott L. Kastner (2009) Bridge Over Troubled Water? Envisioning a China-Taiwan Peace Agreement," *International Security* 33 (4): 87–114. Available at: <https://www.mitpressjournals.org/doi/abs/10.1162/isec.2009.33.4.87>

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<sup>1</sup> Note the online discussion topics change every year, and partly depend on topical issues in world politics.

### **Third online discussion: China's rise now compared to Germany's rise then**

Does history rhyme? In other words, do you see any parallels in China's rise now to Germany's rise in the late 19th century and early 20th century? If so, what kind of parallels?

*How should we handle China's rise?*

Additional reading material:

Kelly, Robert E. (2014) "Comparing China and the Kaiser's Germany (part 1): Similarities," *The Interpreter*, 12 March, The Lowy Institute. Available at: <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/comparing-china-and-kaisers-germany-part-1-similarities>

Kelly, Robert E. (2014) "Comparing China and the Kaiser's Germany (part 2): Differences." *The Interpreter*, 13 March, The Lowy Institute. Available <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/comparing-china-and-kaisers-germany-part-2-differences>

### **Fourth online discussion: Do sanctions work?**

*Do sanctions work as foreign policy tools? Why (not)?*

Please also provide empirical examples to back up your argument.

### **Final online discussion: Trust in international relations**

As the saying goes, trust is difficult to build, but easy to lose. In international relations this dilemma is exacerbated because of the state of anarchy.

*Ponder the functions that trust plays in international relations from various perspectives, and also consider ways to enhance trust.*

Preferably back your arguments with empirical/historical examples, or references to relevant literature.

## LEARNING DIARY

- The main purpose is to promote your own learning process, secondarily forms part of the evaluation
- Ways to write: *chronological, thematic, mixed* (be creative!)
- Include reflections on how your thinking about the course content has evolved during the course
- Combine course readings, discussions during lectures and online, as well as insights from game play and negotiations
- **Approximate length: ca 4000 words**
- **Start writing early, return by 18 December 2020**

