International Relations and Multilateral Diplomacy

INST3000 (3 credits / 45 hours)

Switzerland: International Studies and Multilateral Diplomacy

Description
From its base in Geneva, this course provides an in-depth examination of the evolving nature of diplomacy in contemporary international relations, characterized by a transition from a western hegemonic system towards multipolarity. It considers the impact of the profound changes affecting the contemporary international system on the concept of diplomacy and evaluates how the practice of diplomacy can be adapted to global, regional, and local levels. The course also examines the approaches of economic, environmental, and humanitarian diplomacy in the context of the Global Power Shift. It evaluates traditional and non-traditional approaches to diplomacy, assessing the strategies of both state and non-state actors as well as international and regional organizations. A major emphasis is put on the position of the UN system and the European Union in a multilateral diplomatic perspective.

Teaching incorporates in-class lectures and field visits to international organizations, government agencies and educational institutions based in Geneva, Brussels, and Paris. The course draws on the resources of leading academics and institutions, as well as insiders’ firsthand experiences. Required readings correspond to different course themes. Review and reflection sessions are organized on a regular basis to help students to synthesize and create connections among lectures, presentations, and readings.

Learning Outcomes
The International Studies and Multilateral Diplomacy course comprises 45 hours of instruction (3 credits). Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate the ability to critically assess the evolution of Multilateral Diplomacy in the Context of the Contemporary Global Power Shift;
- Comprehend the main processes of diplomatic negotiations;
- Analyze the impact of the current transition of the international system towards multipolarity on multilateral diplomacy;
- Comprehend and contrast different perspectives of state and non-state actors on International Relations;
- Analyze the main challenges that the UN System has to face in the 21st Century;
- Comprehend the main processes and factors impacting Humanitarian Diplomacy in the context of the evolving nature of conflicts in the 21st century;
- Analyze the evolving role of the European Union in Contemporary Diplomacy;
- Demonstrate the ability to critically assess the main aspects of Economic and Environmental Diplomacy.
Language of Instruction
The course is taught in English, but students will be simultaneously learning French and expected to engage community members in this language (to the best of their abilities) when the opportunity arises. Students are also expected to read the French press and academic articles in French related to the course.

Course Schedule
Students will be provided a detailed course schedule during orientation on the program. Please be aware that topics and excursions may vary to take advantage of any emerging events, to accommodate changes in our lecturers’ availability, and to respect any changes that would affect student safety. Students will be notified if this occurs.

Module 1: Contemporary Multilateral Diplomacy in the Context of the Global Power Shift: Processes and Strategies
This module seeks to examine the main aspects, functions and strategies of contemporary multilateral diplomacy in the context of the Global Power Shift.

Session 1: Global Power Shift and Emerging Multipolarity
This module seeks to examine the different aspects of the contemporary Power Shift and its impact on the transition of international system from western hegemony to multipolarity.

Required Readings:


Background Reading:

Session 2: Multilateral Diplomacy and the Iranian Nuclear Question in Emerging Multipolarity
The objective of this session is to examine the processes of Multilateral Diplomacy in the context of the Iranian nuclear negotiations.

Required Readings:

**Background Reading:**

**Session 3: Digital Diplomacy: Main Aspects, Risks & Challenges**
The objective of this session is to discuss the influence of Digital Technology on the evolution of Contemporary Diplomacy.

**Required Readings:**

**Background Reading:**

**Module 2: Humanitarian Diplomacy**
This module seeks to present the main components of International Humanitarian Law and its role in armed conflicts. It aims at discussing the strategies and challenges of Humanitarian Diplomacy in the contemporary world system.

**Session 1: ICRC: International Humanitarian Law and Humanitarian Diplomacy**
Students will learn about the mission and the strategies of the ICRC and will acquire knowledge about the fundamentals of International Humanitarian Law and Humanitarian Diplomacy.

**Required Readings:**

**Session 2: International Humanitarian Law and Armed Non-State Actors in Contemporary Conflicts**
This session deals with the problems related to the promotion and application of International Humanitarian Law in contemporary conflicts, characterized by the growing implications of Armed Non-State Actors.
**Session 3: Field Visit to the ICRC Museum**

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Museum's permanent exhibition "The Humanitarian Adventure" offers students a unique opportunity to learn more about the history and current challenges of humanitarian action.

**Required Reading:**


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**Module 3: Multilateral Negotiation Exercise**

This negotiation exercise provides an opportunity for students to develop negotiation skills and better understand multilateral negotiations techniques and processes. The negotiation simulation will be prepared in small groups during two workshops under the guidance of an expert in international negotiations.

**Sessions 1-3: Multilateral Negotiation Exercise: Introduction and preparatory workshops**

These sessions seek to explain the objectives, the structure, and the main aspects of multilateral negotiations. After an introduction to Multilateral Negotiation, students will be assigned different roles and tasks to prepare the negotiation simulation exercise.

**Required Readings:**


**Session 4: Multilateral Negotiation Exercise**

Students participate in the negotiation exercise according to their assigned roles and seek to find some common grounds to explore potential diplomatic solutions for the problems presented in the case study.
Session 5: Review and Reflection Session
This session seeks to review and discuss the main themes of Modules 1, 2 and 3, including the critical assessment of the required readings (divided into two sessions).

MIDTERM EXAM

Module 4: The Evolving Role of Europe in the context of the Global Power Shift. Study trip to Brussels and Paris
This module seeks to examine the role of the European Union in the emerging multipolar system and its diplomatic strategies in the context of the contemporary Global Power Shift. Students will attend in Geneva an introductory lecture on European Integration process and then, during their stay in Brussels, students will attend lectures at the European Union headquarters.

Session 1: The European Integration Process from the Beginning to Brexit
This session aims to present and discuss the historical and political backgrounds of the European Integration Process.

Required Reading:

Session 2: Field Visit to the EU Commission: European Union as an Actor in Contemporary Diplomacy
This session seeks to critically assess the evolving role of the European Union in the emerging multipolar system.

Required Readings:

Background Reading:

Session 3: Review and reflection session
This session seeks to review and discuss the main themes of Module 3, including the critical assessment of the required readings.

Module 5: Development Diplomacy and Multilateral Organizations
This module aims at discussing the main aspects and contemporary evolution of Development Diplomacy. It seeks as well to examine the role and strategies of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in multilateral economic relations.

Session 1: Development Diplomacy in the 21st Century
This session seeks to discuss the main characteristics of Development Diplomacy on different levels by taking into consideration the changing context of the Multilateral System in the 21st century.

Required Readings:

Session 2: WTO, Diplomacy and Trade
This session presents the main functions of the World Trade Organization in the management of the multilateral trade system.

Required Reading:

Background Reading:

Module 6: Environmental and Economic Diplomacy
This module aims at examining the increasing influence of economic and environmental factors on diplomatic processes, on bilateral, regional and multilateral levels.

Session 1: Environmental Diplomacy
This session seeks to present the main factors that impact environmental diplomacy in its political, legal, and diplomatic contexts.
Required Reading:

Session 2: Field visit to the Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the WTO and EFTA: Economic Diplomacy: The Swiss Approach
Students learn about the objectives and the main processes of economic diplomacy and its role in enhancing the power position of states in contemporary international relations, with a focus on Swiss foreign policy.

Required Reading:

Background Reading:

Session 3: Review and reflection session
This session seeks to review and discuss the main themes of Modules 4, 5 and 6, including the critical assessment of the required Readings.

FINAL EXAM

Evaluation and Grading Criteria

Description of Assignments:
Midterm, final exams, and participation constitute the course requirements. In all exercises, students are asked to reflect analytically and to integrate the briefings, lectures, readings, as well as review sessions.

Midterm Exam (35%):
Students have to respond to two essay questions related to modules 1, 2 and 3. Required length for the answer to each essay question is 2 pages (total of 4 pages). Students can consult the IRMD syllabus to see the bibliography, and the program calendar. But it is not an open book exam: students cannot use their notes, the required readings or other materials. Students are encouraged to integrate lectures, briefings and readings.

Final Exam (45%):
Students must respond to two essay questions related to modules 4, 5 and 6. Recommended length for each essay question is 2½-3 pages (total of about 5-6 pages). Students can consult the IRMD syllabus to see the bibliography, and the program calendar. But it is not an open book exam: students cannot use their notes, the required readings or other materials. Students are encouraged to integrate lectures, briefings and readings.

**Oral Presentation (10%)**: Students are required to make a 5-minute oral presentation (followed by a 5-minute question/answer period) on a topic related to the course during one of the review and reflection sessions.

**Participation (10%)**: Attendance, punctuality, interest in the subject, discussion, questions, and completion of Reading assignments are absolutely essential for passing the International Relations and Multilateral Diplomacy Course.

**Assessment:**
- Midterm Exam 35%
- Final Exam 45%
- Oral Presentation 10%
- Participation 10%

**Grading Scale:**
- 94-100% A Excellent
- 90-93% A-
- 87-89% B+
- 84-86% B Above Average
- 80-83% B-
- 77-79% C+
- 74-76% C Average
- 70-73% C-
- 67-69% D+
- 64-66% D Below Average
- below 64 F Fail

**Expectations and Policies**
- **Show up prepared.** Be on time, have your readings completed and points in mind for discussion or clarification. Complying with these elements raises the level of class discussion for everyone.
- **Have assignments completed on schedule, printed, and done accordingly to the specified requirements.** This will help ensure that your assignments are returned in a timely manner.
- **Ask questions in class.** Engage the lecturer. These are often very busy professionals who are doing us an honor by coming to speak.
- **Comply with academic integrity policies** (no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical).
- **Respect differences of opinion** (classmates’, lecturers, local constituents engaged with on the visits). You are not expected to agree with everything you hear, but you
are expected to listen across difference and consider other perspectives with respect.

Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad Student Handbook for policies on academic integrity, ethics, warning and probation, diversity and disability, sexual harassment, and the academic appeals process.

Disability Services: Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Disability Services at disabilityservices@sit.edu for information and support in facilitating an accessible educational experience. Additional information regarding SIT Disability Services, including a link to the online request form, can be found on the Disability Services website at http://studyabroad.sit.edu/disabilityservices.