



SYLLABUS

Foreign Policy and International Politics' Decision-Making Process

University year 2025-2026

1. Information regarding the programme

1.1. Higher education institution	Babeș-Bolyai University of Cluj Clu-Napoca
1.2. Faculty	Faculty of European Studies
1.3. Department	Department of European Studies and Governance
1.4. Field of study	International Relations and European Studies
1.5. Study cycle	Doctoral studies
1.6. Study programme/Qualification	Doctoral School International Relations and European Studies
1.7. Form of education	Full time

2. Information regarding the discipline

2.1. Name of the discipline		Foreign Policy and International Politics Decision-Making Process					Discipline code		SDR0001			
2.2. Course coordinator					Prof.dr. abil. Melania-Gabriela Ciot							
2.3. Seminar coordinator					Prof.dr. abil. Melania-Gabriela Ciot							
2.4. Year of study		1	2.5. Semester		1	2.6. Type of evaluation		E	2.7. Discipline regime		OP	

3. Total estimated time (hours/semester of didactic activities)

3.1. Hours per week	4	of which: 3.2 course	2	3.3 seminar/laboratory	2
3.4. Total hours in the curriculum	56	of which: 3.5 course	28	3.6 seminar/laborator	28
Time allotment for individual study (ID) and self-study activities (SA)					hours
Learning using manual, course support, bibliography, course notes (SA)					100
Additional documentation (in libraries, on electronic platforms, field documentation)					100
Preparation for seminars/labs, homework, papers, portfolios and essays					64
Tutorship					Var
Evaluations					Var
Other activities:					Var
3.7. Total individual study hours	264				
3.8. Total hours per semester	312				
3.9. Number of ECTS credits	11				

4. Prerequisites (if necessary)

4.1. curriculum	not the case
4.2. competencies	not the case

5. Conditions (if necessary)

5.1. for the course	Classroom, videoprojector
5.2. for the seminar /lab activities	Classroom, videoprojector

6.1. Specific competencies acquired ¹

Professional/essential competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C5.1 Identify the content and functioning of negotiation and decision-making processes; • C5.2 Correlate decision-making and negotiation methods with local, regional or national cultural specificities; • C5.3 Apply decision-making and negotiation methods under conditions of risk and decision-making uncertainty; • C5.4 Formulate and apply specific criteria to determine the relevance of decisions; • C5.5 Develop a coherent and integrated decision-making plan.
Transversal competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CT 2 Coordination of the implementation of a team project with the assumption of specific leadership roles; • CT 3 Implementation of a development plan through professional training, through the efficient and selective use of sources and resources for communication and continuous training (libraries, internet, databases, online courses, etc.).

6.2. Learning outcomes

Knowledge	<p>The student knows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the main theories and models of decision-making applicable in international relations. - the processes and techniques of negotiation and mediation in decision-making in bilateral and multilateral contexts. - the relevant actors (state and non-state) involved in the decision-making, negotiation and mediation processes.
Skills	<p>The student is able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - develop and evaluate decision-making strategies based on the geopolitical and cultural context. - communicate, listen actively and argue in negotiation situations. - apply mediation techniques to facilitate dialogue and resolve conflicts. - effectively use tools to analyze the interests and positions of the parties involved in a conflict.

¹ One can choose either competences or learning outcomes, or both. If only one option is chosen, the row related to the other option will be deleted, and the kept one will be numbered 6.

Responsibility and autonomy:	<p>The student has the ability to work independently to obtain></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - responsibly manage decision-making processes on behalf of an organization or institution. - develop a proactive attitude in addressing conflicts and promoting constructive dialogue. - assume the role of impartial facilitator in mediating disputes, respecting ethical and deontological principles. - formulate viable and balanced solutions in situations of crisis or international conflict.
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7. Objectives of the discipline (outcome of the acquired competencies)

7.1 General objective of the discipline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enriching knowledge regarding the decision-making process in foreign policy from a theoretical and practical point of view.
7.2 Specific objective of the discipline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training skills in using different decision-making models; • Developing communication skills in international negotiations; • Identifying the type of negotiation depending on the cultural specificity of the negotiating partner.

8. Content

8.1 Course	Teaching methods	Remarks
<p>Introduction: Fundamentals of decision-making in international relations</p> <p>The object and relevance of the study of decision in foreign policy.</p> <p>The relationship between decision, foreign policy and the international system.</p> <p>Levels of analysis: individual, state, systemic.</p> <p>The evolution of decision-making studies in political science and international relations.</p>	Academic lecture, collective dialogue	<p>Ciot, Melania-Gabriela, <i>Negocieri internaționale</i>, Cluj-Napoca, Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2022.</p> <p>Ciot, Melania-Gabriela (2014). <i>Negotiation and Foreign Policy Decision-Making</i>. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.</p> <p>Meerts, Paul, <i>Workbook on International Negotiations</i>, Netherlands Institute of International Relations "Cligendale", 2013.</p> <p>Puşcaş, Vasile, <i>România spre Uniunea Europeană. Negocierile de aderare (2000-2004)</i>, Iaşi, Institutul European, 2007.</p>
<p>General theories of decision-making</p> <p>Classical models: rational, organizational, bureaucratic, incremental</p> <p>Allison's model: Rational Actor, Organizational Process, Bureaucratic Politics.</p> <p>Contemporary criticisms and developments.</p> <p>Applications in foreign policy analysis.</p>	Academic lecture, collective dialogue	<p>Ciot, Melania-Gabriela, <i>Negocieri internaționale</i>, Cluj-Napoca, Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2022.</p> <p>Ciot, Melania-Gabriela (2014). <i>Negotiation and Foreign Policy Decision-Making</i>. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.</p>

Alternative Decision-Making Models (I) Cybernetic Model Prospective Theory Polyheuristic Theory	Academic lecture, collective dialogue	Ciot, Melania-Gabriela, <i>Negocieri internaționale</i> , Cluj-Napoca, Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2022.
Alternative decision-making models (II) Multiple flow model Psychological approaches - Groupthink - Counseling system - Cognitive approach Leadership styles and behavioral models. Comparative analysis: USA, China, Russia, EU.	Academic lecture, collective dialogue	Ciot, Melania-Gabriela, <i>Negocieri internaționale</i> , Cluj-Napoca, Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2022. Ciot, Melania-Gabriela (2014). <i>Negotiation and Foreign Policy Decision-Making</i> . Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
Decision-making institutions in foreign policy Main actors: government, president, parliament, ministries, intelligence services. Interinstitutional coordination and conflict. The role of advisors and think tanks. Institutional models in democracies and authoritarian regimes.	Academic lecture, collective dialogue	Jost T, Kertzer JD, Min E, Schub R. Advisers and Aggregation in Foreign Policy Decision Making. <i>International Organization</i> . 2024;78(1):1-37. doi:10.1017/S0020818323000280 Kaarbo, Juliet, and Cameron G. Thies (eds), <i>The Oxford Handbook of Foreign Policy Analysis</i> , Oxford Handbooks, Oxford Academic, 22 Feb. 2024), https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780198843061.001.0001 .
The internal dimension of decision-making Domestic politics and public pressures. Public opinion, media and social networks. Interest groups, political parties and NGOs. The internal-external political dilemma in decision-making.	Academic lecture, collective dialogue	Ciot, Melania-Gabriela, <i>Negocieri internaționale</i> , Cluj-Napoca, Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2022. Juliet Kaarbo, A., "Foreign Policy Analysis Perspective on the Domestic Politics Turn in IR Theory", în <i>International Studies Review</i> , Volume 17, Issue 2, June 2015, Pages 189–216, https://doi.org/10.1111/misr.12213 Hamilton, Daniel S., Tiilikainen, Teija Helena (editor/s), <i>Domestic determinants of foreign policy in the European Union and the United States</i> , Washington ; Helsinki : Center for Transatlantic Relations ; Finnish Institute of International Affairs, 2018 - https://hdl.handle.net/1814/70404
Decision-making in international organizations UN, NATO, EU – decision-making mechanisms and institutional negotiation. Multi-level coordination models. Interdependence and shared sovereignty. Case: EU decision-making in common foreign policy.	Academic lecture, collective dialogue	Reinalda, B., Verbeek, B., <i>Decision Making Within International Organisations</i> , London, Routledge, https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203694336 . Sommer, T., Tallberg, J., <i>Decision-Making in International Organizations: Actors, Preferences, and Institutions</i> , 2016, conference paper, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/

		302907044_Decision-Making_in_International_Organizations_Actors_Preferences_and_Institutions.
Idiosyncrasies in the decision-making process	Academic lecture, collective dialogue	Ciot, Melania-Gabriela (2014). <i>Negotiation and Foreign Policy Decision-Making</i> . Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing. Smith, C., <i>Personality in Foreign Policy Decision-Making</i> , (2020).
Crisis and Decision: Management of Critical Situations Decision under Time Pressure and Uncertainty. Models of International Crisis Management. Case Study: Cuban Missile Crisis / Ukraine Crisis / COVID-19 Pandemic. Lessons for Contemporary Decision Analysis.	Academic lecture, collective dialogue	Richardson JL. <i>Crisis Diplomacy: The Great Powers since the Mid-Nineteenth Century</i> . Cambridge University Press; 1994. Fischbacher-Smith, D. Foreign policy crises. In: Penuel, K.B., Statler, M. and Hagen, R. (eds.) <i>Encyclopedia of Crisis Management</i> . SAGE: Thousand Oaks, CA, USA, (2013).
Negotiation and diplomacy in the decision-making process Negotiation as a decision-making tool. Theories of negotiation: rational, behavioral, constructivist. Cases: the Iran nuclear deal, climate negotiations.	Academic lecture, collective dialogue	Ciot, Melania-Gabriela, <i>Negocieri internaționale</i> , Cluj-Napoca, Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2022. Meerts, Paul <i>Diplomatic Negotiation. Essence and Evolution</i> , Netherlands Institute of International Relations "Cligendale", 2015, pp. 251-262. Pușcaș, Vasile, <i>EU Accession Negotiations (A Handbook)</i> , Wien: Hulla&Co Human Dynamics, 2013, www.renanetwork.org/documents/wgroups/EU%20Accession%20Negotiations%20Handbook.rar , p. 13-20. Pușcaș, Vasile, <i>România spre Uniunea Europeană. Negocierile de aderare</i>
Comparative models of decision-making in foreign policy USA, China, European Union, Russia, Romania. Decision-making styles and institutional structure. The impact of political culture and strategic traditions. Comparative lessons for the analysis of complex decisions.	Academic lecture, collective dialogue	Zaidi, K., "Approaches to Decision Making in Foreign Policy: Literature Review", în <i>Journal of Political Science and International Relations</i> , 4(2):48, mai 2021, DOI: 10.11648/jipsir.20210402.14 . Zentall, Thomas R., Crowley, Philip H. (eds.), <i>Comparative Decision-Making</i> , Oxford University Press, 2013.
Contemporary Trends in Decision Making	Academic lecture, collective dialogue	Houghton, David Patrick „Decision-Making Approaches and Foreign Policy”, în <i>The</i>

<p>The Impact of Globalization, AI, and Digitalization on Decision Making. New Actors: Corporations, Transnational Networks, Social Movements. Emerging Models of Global Governance. Synthesis and Reflections for Doctoral Research: How Do We Study Decision Making Today?</p>		<p><i>Oxford Handbook of Foreign Policy Analysis</i>, Oxford University Press, 2024. Ortiz, Alvaro, Rodrigo, Tomasa, <i>Geopolitics, Geoeconomics and Risk: A Machine Learning Approach</i>, Cornell University, 14 octombrie 2025, https://www.arxiv.org/pdf/2510.12416.</p>
<p>Bibliography</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Allison, Graham T., & Zelikow, Philip (1999). <i>Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis</i> (2nd ed.). New York: Longman. Breuning, Marijke (2007). <i>Foreign Policy Analysis: A Comparative Introduction</i>. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. Ciot, Melania-Gabriela (2014). <i>Negotiation and Foreign Policy Decision-Making</i>. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing. Ciot, Melania-Gabriela, <i>Negocieri internaționale</i>, Cluj-Napoca, Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2022. Hermann, Charles F. (1990). <i>Changing Course: When Governments Choose to Redirect Foreign Policy</i>. <i>International Studies Quarterly</i>, 34(1), 3–21.. Hill, Christopher (2016). <i>Foreign Policy in the Twenty-First Century</i>. London: Palgrave. Hudson, Valerie M. (2014). <i>Foreign Policy Analysis: Classic and Contemporary Theory</i> (2nd ed.). Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield. Kaarbo, Juliet, and Cameron G. Thies (eds), <i>The Oxford Handbook of Foreign Policy Analysis</i>, Oxford Handbooks, Oxford Academic, 2024. Janis, Irving L. (1982). <i>Groupthink: Psychological Studies of Policy Decisions and Fiascoes</i> (2nd ed.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin. Levy, Jack S., & Thompson, William R. (2011). <i>Causes of War</i>. Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell. Neack, Laura (2018). <i>The New Foreign Policy: Power Seeking in a Globalized Era</i> (5th ed.). Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield. Snyder, Richard C., Bruck, H. W., & Sapin, Burton (2002). <i>Foreign Policy Decision-Making (Revisited)</i>. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 		
8.2 Seminar / laboratory	Teaching methods	Remarks
Analysis of decision-making processes based on traditional models (x2)	Case study, debate	Case studies presented by doctoral students
Analysis of decision-making processes based on alternative models (x2)	Case study, debate	Case studies presented by doctoral students
Idiosyncratic analysis of decision-making in a political-diplomatic case (x2)	Case study, debate	Case studies presented by doctoral students
Idiosyncratic analysis of decision-making in a case involving non-state actors (x2)	Case study, debate	Case studies presented by doctoral students
Idiosyncratic analysis of decision-making in crisis situations (x2)	Case study, debate	Case studies presented by doctoral students

Idiosyncratic analysis of individual decision making(x2)	Case study, debate	Case studies presented by doctoral students
<p>Bibliography</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ciot, Melania-Gabriela (2014). <i>Negotiation and Foreign Policy Decision-Making</i>. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing. 2. Ciot, Melania-Gabriela (coord.) (2018). <i>Negotiation and Decision-Making in the European Union</i>. Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană. 3. Goldstein, Judith, & Keohane, Robert O. (Eds.) (2020). <i>The Politics of Global Governance: International Organizations in an Interdependent World</i> (5th ed.). New York: Routledge. 4. Hill, Christopher, & Smith, Michael (Eds.) (2011). <i>International Relations and the European Union</i> (2nd ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press. 5. Kahneman, Daniel (2011). <i>Thinking, Fast and Slow</i>. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux. Hermann, Charles F., & Hermann, Margaret G. (1989). "Who Makes Foreign Policy Decisions and How: An Empirical Inquiry." <i>International Studies Quarterly</i>, 33(4), 361–387. 6. Mayer, Frederick W. (2010). <i>Narrative Politics: Stories and Collective Action</i>. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 		

9. Corroborating the content of the discipline with the expectations of the epistemic community, professional associations and representative employers within the field of the program

- After this course, students will be able to have a successful career in the field of international relations and diplomacy, having the skills necessary to carry out activities within non-governmental organizations, ministries, embassies or public and regional administrations.

10. Evaluation

Activity type	10.1 Evaluation criteria	10.2 Evaluation methods	10.3 Percentage of final grade
10.4 Course	participation in course activities, studying specialized bibliography	Oral	80%
10.5 Seminar/laboratory	participation in seminar activities, case presentation, debate	Colloquy	20%
10.6 Minimum standard of performance			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For admission: Presentation of a case study regarding a foreign policy decision and idiosyncratic analysis of that decision. 			

11. Labels ODD (Sustainable Development Goals)²

	General label for Sustainable Development, SDG 16, SDG 17							
								
								

Date:
01.10.2025

Signature of course coordinator

Signature of seminar coordinator

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Date of approval:

Signature of the head of Doctoral School

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² Keep only the labels that, according to the [Procedure for applying ODD labels in the academic process](#), suit the discipline and delete the others, including the general one for *Sustainable Development* – if not applicable. If no label describes the discipline, delete them all and write „Not applicable.”.



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