

**Marine Corps War College**  
***Diplomacy and Statecraft***

**Diplomacy and Statecraft Course Overview**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** The Diplomacy and Statecraft (DS) course explores the “D” in DIME, albeit with a heavy focus on political-military and security issues. The course is chiefly aimed at competition with two great power rivals – China and Russia. The DS course includes study of nuclear issues, such as the Nuclear Posture Review, the modernization of the US nuclear triad, nuclear weapons strategy, deterrence strategy, and arms control. Historical case studies illuminate (and pair with) a brief look at theoretical and methodological approaches to diplomatic and security policy. These “foundational” seminars foster the development of analytical techniques that will be applied during the rest of the year, and perhaps in future jobs.

Consistent with the DS focus on Great Power Rivalry, seventy percent of our “country studies” deal with China and its periphery (including the Indo-Pac) and with Russia and Eurasia. That said, we do examine several important adversaries, allies, and neutrals that fall outside the peer competitor focus. Iran, Israel, India, and Mexico are examples.

The DS course has two equal halves. One half consists of seminars, practical applications, and historical case studies spread over the academic year. The other half consists of a year-end capstone event: the OCONUS field studies, with one student/faculty group headed to Asia and the other to Europe.

The DS course objective is less the accumulation of facts, though that is important, and more the development of the ability to use that data to forge new or revised policies, analyses, and insights, and to channel those fresh perceptions into policy recommendation or political-military advice memos and oral briefs.

Why study diplomacy and statecraft? An obvious reason is to advance American national interests while maintaining peace. But, additionally, diplomatic history, statecraft, and foreign policy analysis greatly benefit the strategic leader and soon-to-be warfighter. Of many possible examples, here are two. First, such study informs the assessment of the current and likely behavior of allies, adversaries, and neutrals in the run up to war and during combat itself. What are the perceptions and biases of their leadership? Can we accurately estimate the strength of their will? What military actions (or non-actions) of ours will most impact their decision-making? Are they likely to blindside us as the Japanese did at Pearl Harbor and the Nazis did by striking France in 1940 through the Ardennes blitzkrieg? Etc.

Second, when combat starts, the course of the fighting has already been significantly shaped. Is it not better to configure force structure, buy the right arms, make the right contingency plans, fully understand the enemy, build alliances, and undertake foreign basing before combat begins, and build those measures on a broad and deep assessment of all factors that affect warfighting?

The DS course engages all four of MCWAR’s program outcomes, most directly Program Outcome #1, to “serve as critical and creative thinkers, able to frame ambiguity, evaluate information and arguments, ask the right questions, challenge assumptions, and find creative solutions to the challenges of a complex and dynamic security environment” and Program Outcome #2, to “serve

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as military strategists, able to apply the framework of ends, ways, means, and risk; evaluate the integration of all instruments of national power; and evaluate the utility (and limitations) of employing force or the threat of force in the pursuit of political objectives.” The DS course gives heavy weight to four Special Areas of Emphasis for Academic Year 2020-21 Professional Military Education: Great Power Rivalry; Operations in the Information Environment; Strategic Deterrence in the 21st Century; and the Ability to Write Clear and Concise Military Advice Recommendations.

**DIPLOMACY AND STATECRAFT LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

1. Evaluate past, present, and likely future policy and security environments and decision-making contexts using analytical frameworks, techniques, and lenses such as cognitive process, culture, etc.
2. Formulate new or revised policy objectives (ends) and policy actions (ways and means) for strategic-leaders and decision-makers, using appropriate instruments of national power.
3. Evaluate possible second-and-third order effects, demonstrating judgment of risk and uncertainty.
4. Assess leadership and decision-making in a dynamic joint, intergovernmental, interagency, and multinational environment.

**TEACHING METHODOLOGY AND LESSONS:**

1. **Socratic Seminars.** Seminars taught by DS faculty will be “Socratic” with substantial pre-class preparation through readings, videos, and brief writing assignments. For a typical DS teaching day, expect several hours of preparation followed by a two or three-hour seminar. Nearly all seminars taught by DS faculty will be broken into Gold and Scarlet seminar groups.

A modified seminar form is a discussion/Q&A with an “outside” speaker (or several speakers) at Quantico or at the speaker’s institution. The speaker will make a presentation while taking questions and comments. Again, students will spend several hours preparing for seminar. Seminars with “outside” speakers are generally conducted with Gold and Scarlet merged into one group.

2. **DS Assessments** include short papers in the fall and spring, and evaluation of seminar participation in the fall and spring. Both papers will be foreign policy analysis memos with policy recommendations. No research will be necessary; adequate information will be acquired during DS seminars and discussions (and their associated preparation time).

3. **OCONUS Field Studies.** The capstone of the Diplomatic and Statecraft course is late-May international travel, with half the class traveling to Asia and the other half to Europe. Each group will visit two or three countries, including visits to the relevant US embassies, foreign and defense ministries, military staffs, think tanks, universities, and cultural sites. After the trips, each group will present (synthesize) key judgments and trip observations. In this post-trip briefing, students will create advice and recommendations for revising or re-inventing US diplomacy and security policy with respect to the countries visited and the region.

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4. **Sequence of Instruction.** The DS course begins with several “foundational” seminars that explore some of the theoretical and analytical underpinnings of the DS course, drawing on historical case studies to illuminate the theoretical insights. The first seminar of the year is 8252, The Atomic Bombings of Japan: A Grand Strategy Analysis. This seminar will make the concepts of seminar number two (8211, International Relations Theory) easier to digest using real-world examples from the a-bombs case study. We will then interleave another case study (8254, The Cuban Missile Crisis) with an exploration of decision-making paradigms (8201, Deciphering Foreign Policy Decision-making) that help explain the missile crisis. In the practical application associated with 8213, Analytical Techniques for Decision-makers, we “place” Quds force commander, General Suleimani to assess the “Placement” technique. Throughout the DS course, we will often couple real world case studies with theory and practical application. With our investigation of the atomic bombings, we will commence that practice.

Topics are subject to change due to guest speaker availability and current events. Although these changes will be flagged, check the MCWAR calendar regularly for updates.

<b>DIPLOMACY AND STATECRAFT LIST OF CLASSES</b>	
8252	The Atomic Bombings of Japan: A Grand Strategy Analysis
8211	International Relations Theory with Practical Application
8254	The Cuban Missile Crisis
8208	Evolving Strategy toward Afghanistan 2001 to the Present
8201	Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis
8213	Analytical Techniques for Decision-makers Practical Application – “PLACEMENT” PRAC APP”
8205	The Department of State and Embassies and Country Teams
8207	The Department of State Field Study – FIELD STUDY to the State Department
8206	The United Nations and International Security (Indian Mission Field Study) – FIELD STUDY to Indian Mission to the UN (in NYC)
8255	Nuclear Weapons Modernization
8256	Nuclear Weapons Strategy and Deterrence: Nuclear Posture Review
8210	Iran: Nuclear Issues, Proxy Terrorism, Internal Politics
8203	Comparative Politics
8299A	Fall Assessment – 1500 word policy memo on a nuclear issue
8257	Robert McNamara and the Fog of War
8202	Operations in the Information Environment/Strategic Communications/Public Diplomacy Practical Application
8209	Israel and Middle East Security
8222	Mexico: Migration, Trade, and Internal Politics
8251	The Road to Pearl Harbor: US-Japan Relations, 1921-41
8216	Africa Mega-Trends including China in Africa
8227	North Korea and Security Issues in Northeast Asia
8226	The US-Japan Alliance
8228	China: Internal Politics and Leadership Trends
8229	Chinese Foreign Policy
8231	The South China Sea Dispute
8232	The People’s Liberation Army (PLA)
8225	US Policy Toward East Asia Field Study – FIELD STUDY to the State Department
8299B	Spring Assessment – 1500 word policy memo on North Korea
8234	India and Security Issues in Asia and the Indian Ocean
8250	The Origins of the Cold War, 1941-1950
8237	NATO and European Security
8236	The European Union

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8235	Turkey: Alliance Politics, Internal Politics, and Regional Security
8238	Russia: Putin and Internal Politics
8239	Russia: Foreign and Security Policies
8246	European and Asian OCONUS Field Studies
8248	European and Asian Post-OCONUS Field Study Briefs
<b>Assessments</b>	
8299A	Diplomacy and Statecraft Fall Assessment (early November )
8299B	Diplomacy and Statecraft Spring Assessment (late February or early March)

5. **Summary Course Hours.** All hours are approximate and subject to change. See individual lesson cards for specific hours.

Lecture	Seminar	Practical Application	Field Study	Exam	PSPT	Total
	62.5	11	82		201	356.5

**ASSESSMENT MEASURES:** Student grades will be calculated as follows:

- Student seminar contribution (20% fall, 20% spring)
- 1500-word analysis/recommendation memo (25%) (Due mid-November)
- 1500-word analysis/recommendation memo (35%) (Due mid-March)

**STUDENT COURSE EVALUATION:** The College is very attentive to what many educators call “Institutional Effectiveness” – that is, how well we are achieving our objectives. Critiques allow the students to register – anonymously – views on the methodology and program outcomes of each segment of the course. All participants are required to contribute their constructive criticisms and their suggestions for improvements. Critiques are electronically tallied, studied by faculty, including members engaged in courseware revision, and eventually archived for use in future institutional research.