

# Diplomacy: Trips, Ships, and Tips

## Harris School of Public Policy - University of Chicago

**Instructor:** Saad Ansari

**COURSE OVERVIEW:** While the negotiating table of diplomacy has typically seated the military and economics as incentive-makers – with all their powers and perils - it seems the table has been tossed out for a wrestling ring. This state of affairs was long in the making. By its own admission, the U.S.’s statecraft powers gradually became more stove-piped despite “whole-of-government” initiatives over the past few decades. Between State and Defense, areas of responsibility decreasingly corresponded with areas of authority. Meanwhile, the world changed, as it always does – but the relationship between our powers and the nature of our strategic objectives are now unprecedentedly obscure.

Diplomats must master the crafts of strategy and negotiation – their toolkit includes hard and soft powers. This course is about understanding those tools, without which diplomats suffer from principal-agent problems, e.g. relying on “experts” to tell them what to do with regards to aircraft carriers, sanctions, counterthreat finance, transitional public security, etc.

Through the course, students should seek to extract transferrable lessons, one specialized skill, and the ability to navigate federal agencies for any future leadership role, especially in diplomacy, development, or defense. Critiquing is easy; producing is hard – students will also wrangle with diplomatic problems around Syria or North Korea through a simulation; if enough students are interested in “Track II” diplomacy, simulation may be substituted for an applied project.

**GOALS:** By the end of the class, students should generally and simulation-specifically have:

- An understanding of the topography of hard and soft tools in the U.S. government
- The practical ability to navigate the U.S. Government’s diplomatic machinery, especially the State and Defense pillars, as well as non-state resources useful for partnerships, technology, and “Track II” methods
- The confidence to develop and host a policy-producing simulation
- Research, writing, and one specialized skill used in final project (default: data analysis, but alternatives possible based on student interest, e.g. GIS, legal analysis, etc.)

Final project: A project of use to a think tank, media outlet, NGO, government agency, or a similar end-user using the proceeds of a student hosted simulation and term-long inquiry.

### ALL TOPICS

1. Traditional Diplomacy (via memoir literature) & Problems	6. Technology & Diplomacy
2. Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy + RESOURCES + Foreign Policy for America	7. Guest Lecturers on Professional Paths, plus “What Tools do Diplomats Have?”
3. Navigating “3Ds” – Diplomacy, Development, Defense, and Track II/Public-Private Partnerships. + Presidential Directives/Guidance	8. State vs. Defense in “National Security” strategy and budgets
4. Naval Power as Diplomacy’s Backbone	9. \$: Geoeconomics, Sanctions, CTF
5. Simulation I: Syria/North Korea	10. Simulation Read-Out; Final Project