College of Europe / Collège d'Europe
Brugge | Natolin

ECTS CARD

COURSE OBJECTIVE

The concept and practice of public diplomacy have undergone significant and continuing change as the nature of relations between states and peoples have evolved dramatically in recent years. This compact seminar will address the impact of new technologies on political organisation and political decision-making within states, hence also on the practice of diplomacy between states and other entities. It will examine the nature of soft power, and the differing ways in which states and other actors attempt to bring effective influence to bear on government policy and public attitudes in rapidly morphing societies. It will consider the role of disinformation and cyber warfare. Students will engage with the issues in small group exercises designed to replicate the challenges faced by foreign and other ministries, and by non-government actors.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this course, the student will be able to

- Understand better the concept and practice of public diplomacy

- Engage coherently in the discussion of the challenges facing government and non-government actors alike in this field

- Apply the lessons learnt about effective influencing to improve real-world political decision-making and action

RECOMMENDED PREPARATION

No specific preparation required. Participants might wish to keep abreast of open source commentary on current international issues which will form the basis of the exercises.

See 'Course Materials' below for a short selection of optional recommended reading.

TEACHING METHOD(S)

Seminar, discussion and practical exercises

ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA

This is a non-assessed course which requires full attendance and active participation.

COURSE CONTENTS

Introduction to the program, participants and course director

The impact of ICT on everything : an examination of changes in economic, social and political organization, and consequently on diplomacy

The evolving concept of soft power: exercise and seminar on how the notion of 'attraction' as policy and practice has changed

Collaborative power and network diplomacy: an examination of the changing domestic and international environment in which diplomacy is conducted, and how public diplomacy has (or hasn't) adapted to it

Designing policy: an exercise in which participants, working in small groups representing different categories of international actor formulate an approach to achieving their influencing goals on a core issue.

Report: selected rapporteurs present briefly the conclusions of their discussions, providing an opportunity to compare differences in approach

Session 2

Disinformation and cyberpower: an examination of new challenges to the diplomacy of engagement in post-truth public discourse

Trouble-shooting: an exercise in which participants, working in new groups, consider damage limitation measures in response to a campaign of disinformation

Report: selected rapporteurs briefly present the responses they have devised

Strategic foresight: an introduction to the methodology of strategic foresight

Imagining the future: an exercise in which participants, working in new groups, consider elements of continuity and change in a core issue of international affairs, and what new public diplomacy may emerge from it

Course debrief and evaluation.

COURSE MATERIALS (readings and other learning resources/tools)

Instructions for exercises will be distributed during the course

There is no required reading for this compact seminar. From the gigantic outpouring of resources on public diplomacy, this small selection might be of interest:

Manuel Castells*; Networks of Outrage and Hope: Social movements in the Internet age (second edition, 2018)*

Nicholas Cull; *Public Diplomacy: Foundations for global engagement in the digital age (2019)*

Tom Fletcher; *The Naked Diplomat: Understanding power and politics in the digital age (2016)*

Joseph Nye; *Soft Power: The means to success in world politics (2004), The Future of Power (2011)*

Sergio Rizzo and Gian Antonio Stella; *La Casta (2007)*

Henry Timms and Jeremy Heimans; *New Power: How it's changing the 21st century, and why you need to know (2018)*

The Soft Power 30 Report

The most exhaustive and helpful online library of recent books, articles and blogs in the field of public diplomacy is the PD Hub, an indispensable resource (largely, though not exclusively, American) compiled by the Center on Public Diplomacy at the University of Southern California. And within it, '*Bruce's List*', Bruce Gregory's Latest Must-Reads in Public Diplomacy, itself a must-read.