

Georgia Institute of Technology
Sam Nunn School of International Affairs
Fall 2026

INTA 2803: Diplomacy
Class Time: MW 11:00-12:15
Classroom: Ford L1125

Instructor:

Dr. Mikulas Fabry
Office location: Habersham 152
Tel.: (404) 385-6883
E-mail: mfabry@gatech.edu
Office hours: by appointment, Mondays 3:00-5:00 PM

Course Description:

This course introduces students to the practice of diplomacy — the management of international relations through representation, reporting, communication, and negotiation. The course will do so in two parts. Part I will outline the fundamentals. It will examine the evolution of diplomatic practice from early statecraft to contemporary multilateral diplomacy, the roles of diplomats representing states and international organizations, and the impact of globalization, technology, and public opinion on diplomacy today. Part II will ask students to build on insights from Part I and to deepen and expand them by participating in a collaborative Diplomacy Lab research project, “Mapping China’s Middle East Diplomacy at the UN Security Council.” The Diplomacy Lab is a partnership between the US Department of State and select universities that addresses the research needs of US foreign service professionals.

The course has the following intended learning outcomes:

1. Students will demonstrate familiarity with different perspectives on the role of diplomacy in international affairs.
2. Students will show the ability to explain the role of different institutional actors in diplomacy.
3. Students will be able to analyze important diplomatic issues in world politics.

Required and Recommended Texts:

The following book is required:

Nicholas Kravov (ed.), *Diplomatic Tradecraft* (Cambridge University Press, 2024)

It is available for purchase in the GT Barnes & Noble Bookstore. It is also reserved in the GT Library. Other readings will be available directly online or on Canvas/Files.

Diplomacy Lab Project:

Project Name	Mapping China's Middle East Diplomacy at the UN Security Council
Bureau of the US Department of State	International Organization Affairs
Project Description	<p>As a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and second-largest contributor to the UN regular budget and peacekeeping budget, China views the UNSC as a key tool for its diplomacy and international credibility, including on conflict resolution, sanctions, and counterterrorism. President Xi Jinping elaborated on this in an October 2021 speech, saying, "China has faithfully fulfilled its responsibility and mission as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, stayed true to the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, and upheld the central role of the United Nations in international affairs."</p> <p>China is also the largest troop contributor of the permanent five UNSC members, including over 450 troops in UNIFIL (Lebanon) as of December 2025, and a 2024 report by the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission assessed that China's participation in UN peacekeeping helped bolster the People's Liberation Army's image and provide its troops with overseas military experience. China has expanded its bilateral diplomatic engagement in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) in recent years, positioning itself as an alternative mediator to Western actors and a vital economic, development, and security partner for regional states. Recent examples include China's brokering of Saudi-Iranian rapprochement in March 2023 and its hosting of Palestinian factions in Beijing in July 2024. These bilateral efforts have not necessarily translated into greater leadership at the UNSC. For the United States, a better understanding of China's approach to the MENA region at the UNSC (including Israeli-Palestinian affairs, Syria, Lebanon, Iran, Yemen, Libya, and Western Sahara) could enable the United States to confront a new era great power competition and advance</p>

	<p>the 2025 National Security Strategy goal of preventing adversarial powers from dominating the Middle East. This project will analyze open-source information on China's public positions on MENA issues at the UNSC from 2018 to present, including voting records, explanations of vote and other statements during Council meetings, press statements, speeches by senior Chinese officials, and official Chinese government or CCP commentary. Students will examine how China's positions have changed over time, identify patterns in China's rhetoric, examine how China's positions align with or diverge from other permanent UNSC members (with a particular focus on Russia), and assess how China's approach varies by issue area. The research will provide actionable insights into China's MENA diplomacy at the UNSC and inform U.S. strategy.</p>
<p>Final Product Format</p>	<p>Students should produce a 15 to 20-page research paper (not including works cited), as well as a separate policy memorandum no longer than five pages long that summarizes key findings from the research and includes strategic recommendations for U.S. policymakers on how this research can inform U.S. diplomacy at the UN. Students are encouraged to use data visualization as part of the research paper.</p>

Course Assignments, Due Dates, and Grading:

Two closed-book in-class exams (25 % each)

Class participation (10%) + Extra credit for outstanding class contributions up to 5%

Diplomacy lab project (40%) – in-class presentation (10%) and brief final paper (30%)

Grading Scale:

Your final grade will be assigned as a letter grade according to the following scale:

A 90-100%

B 80-89%

C 70-79%
D 60-69%
F 0-59%

Class Absence and Penalty Policy:

Class absence is justified only for documented medical or family emergencies, or for other cases approved by the GT Office of the Dean of Students. Diplomacy Lab papers will be penalized by 10% per day unless a valid justification for missing the due date/time is provided before the due date/time.

Academic Integrity:

Georgia Tech strives to foster a community founded on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest ethical standards. For information on Georgia Tech's Academic Honor Code, please visit catalog.gatech.edu/policies/honor-code/ or catalog.gatech.edu/rules/18/.

Final reports submitted on Canvas will be screened for plagiarism via Turnitin, which now also checks for AI-generated content. Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarizing on an assignment will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, which will investigate the incident and determine an appropriate penalty.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services at (404) 894-2563 or <http://disabilityservices.gatech.edu/> as soon as possible to make an appointment to discuss your special needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Please also email me as soon as possible so that I know of your learning needs.

Additional Student Resources:

The Center for Academic Success (success.gatech.edu) offers a variety of academic support services to help students succeed academically at Georgia Tech (e.g., tutoring, peer-led study groups, study skills, writing lab). The Division of Student Life (studentlife.gatech.edu) in the Office of the Dean of Students offers resources and support for all students in the Tech community. The Counseling Center (<http://counseling.gatech.edu/>) offers free mental health services, as well as stress management and wellness workshops, to all currently enrolled students. They are located at Smithgall, Suite 210, and offer virtual and in-person resources.

Communications Policy:

As your official GT email is the only way the instructor can reach you outside the classroom, you are responsible for checking it **daily**. You are also asked to **enable all** course-related notifications on Canvas.

Outline of Classes and Readings:

[N.B. The schedule is subject to revision; I will provide ample notice.]

Introduction

Part I:

What is Diplomacy?

Diplomatic Skills and Virtues

Historical Evolution of Diplomacy: From Ancient to Modern State Systems

Diplomacy in the Modern System of States

Institutions: The Foreign Ministry, Embassies, and Consulates

Diplomatic Protocol, Privileges and Immunities

Diplomatic Communication and Reporting

Diplomatic Negotiations

Multilateral Diplomacy

Public Diplomacy

Economic Tradecraft and Commercial Diplomacy

Health and Science Diplomacy

Future of Diplomacy

Part II: Diplomacy Lab Project