

# SYLLABUS (RE-)DESIGN WORKSHOP

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"Education must begin with the solution of the teacher-student contradiction, by reconciling the poles of the contradiction so that both are simultaneously teachers and students."

(Paulo Freire)

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September 2022

# CONTENT

Backwards design syllabus

Goals and evaluation

Creating a comprehensive syllabus

# WELL-DESIGNED SYLLABI: A WIN-WIN TOOL

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Teachers with a more informative syllabus got better ratings and were seen to care about how their students learn. (Saville et al. 2010)

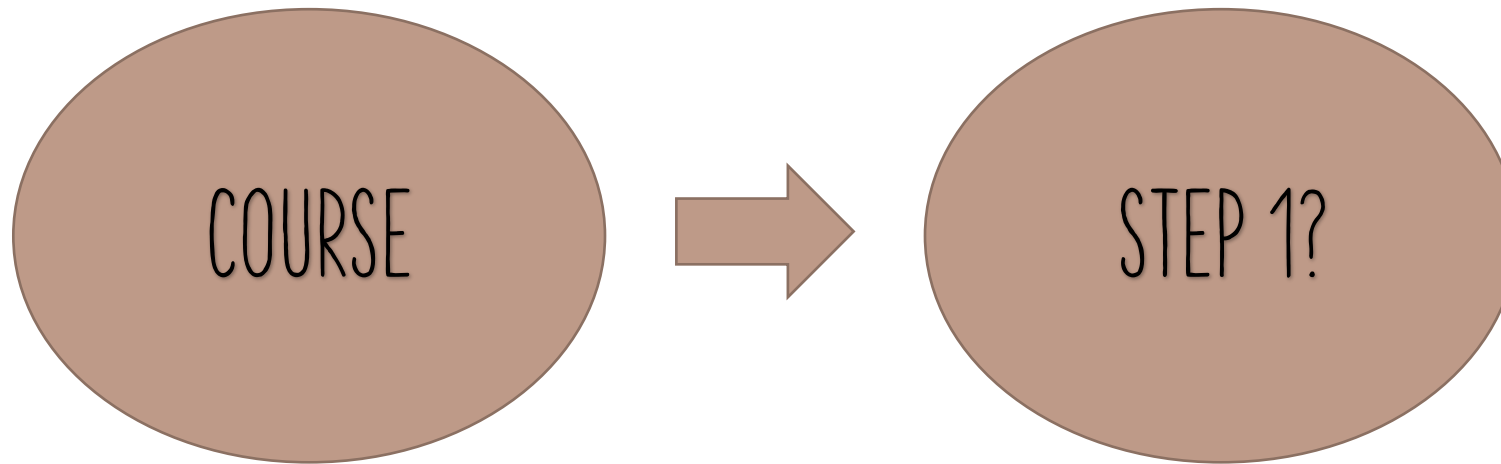
Students perceive well-preparedness and planning as core attributes of a "good professor" (Cruz et al. 2017)



PREDICTABILITY

# EXERCISE 1: DEVELOPING A NEW SYLLABUS - STEP 1

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# DIPLOMACY

Historical development: ancient, medieval, modern

Diplomacy after WWI

VCDR

VCCR

Public Diplomacy and Nation Branding

Multi-track diplomacy: celebrities and beyond

Diplomatic language

Diplomatic Protocol

Debate

1. What educational purposes should the school seek to attain?
2. What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes?
3. How can these educational experiences be effectively organized?
4. How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained?

(Tyler, 1949, p. 1)

# BISLA'S INSTITUTIONAL GOALS

Competences	University Mission element	Study Program Learning Outcomes
<p>1. <u>Academic:</u> 1a. Be able to successfully enrol and complete national and international graduate studies in broader social sciences and humanities.</p> <p>1b. Be able to design and implement individual and group academic research and projects.</p> <p>2. <u>Professional:</u> 2a. Work with local and national governments, international organizations, and political parties on the analysis and development of policies.</p> <p>2b. Work with non-governmental organizations, interest groups, media, educational institutions, etc. on identifying and addressing pressing social and political issues.</p>	<p>3a. Educating professionals for the 21<sup>st</sup> century knowledge economy.</p> <p>3b. Preparing students to become responsible local and global citizens.</p> <p>3c. Advocating moral and ethical standards reflecting the culturally and politically diverse world.</p> <p>3d. Promoting liberal arts approaches to teaching and learning with the emphasis on critical thinking and interdisciplinarity.</p>	<p><u>Subject-specific knowledge:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Define the subject and basic methods of the field, its place and relationships in the system of social sciences, (1b, 3a, 3d),</li> <li>•Recognize the way concepts, theories, categories, and methodological approaches are used to analyze ideas, actors, institutions, and behavior (1b, 2b, 3a),</li> <li>•Examine, evaluate, and engage critically with different interpretations of political events, trends, phenomena on national and global levels (2b, 3b, 3c),</li> <li>•Apply concepts, theories, and methods, to political ideas, actors, institutions, and behavior (1a, 1b, 2a, 2b, 3b).</li> </ul> <p><u>Subject-specific skills:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Identify topics for social science research and humanities inquiry (1a, 1b, 3a),</li> <li>•Use interdisciplinary approaches in the analysis of political phenomena, events, actors, ideas, institutions, and behavior(1b, 2b, ),</li> <li>•Apply quantitative and qualitative social science research methods (1b, 3a, 3d),</li> <li>•Be versed in non-discriminatory approaches in social sciences and humanities (2b, 3b, 3c, 3d),</li> <li>•Recognize issues of moral and ethical relevance for contemporary societies (2a, 2b, 3a, 3c),</li> <li>•Proficient use of the English language in academic and professional settings (1a, 3a).</li> </ul> <p><u>Transferable skills:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Develop a reasoned argument and exercise critical judgment (1b, 3d),</li> <li>•Producing academic papers at an advanced level (1a, 1b),</li> <li>•Communicating ideas efficiently through oral presentation and public speaking (3a, 3b, 3c),</li> <li>•Argue and debate effectively (3a, 3c),</li> <li>•Work independently, demonstrate initiative, self-organization, and time management (2a, 2b, 3a),</li> <li>•Gather, organize, and present evidence, data, and information from a variety of sources, ability to work with research data and databases (1b, 2a),</li> <li>•Be able to work in diverse teams (interdisciplinary, multicultural, and international) (2b, 3a, 3c),</li> <li>•Engage in constructive dialogue, ability to navigate and resolve conflicts (3a).</li> </ul> <p><u>Attitudes and values:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Promote liberal democratic values (3d),</li> <li>•Respect, promote, and defend human dignity and human rights (3c),</li> <li>•Encourage caring and responsible attitude towards self, others, and the world (3c),</li> <li>•Engage in debates and activities of civil society (2b, 3b),</li> <li>•Foster tolerance and empathy, and promote diversity (3a, 3c),</li> <li>•Being self-reflective of one own strengths, weaknesses, and needs.</li> </ul>



# BACKWARDS DESIGN SYLLABI

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What do we want our students to be able to do as a result of their learning in our course?

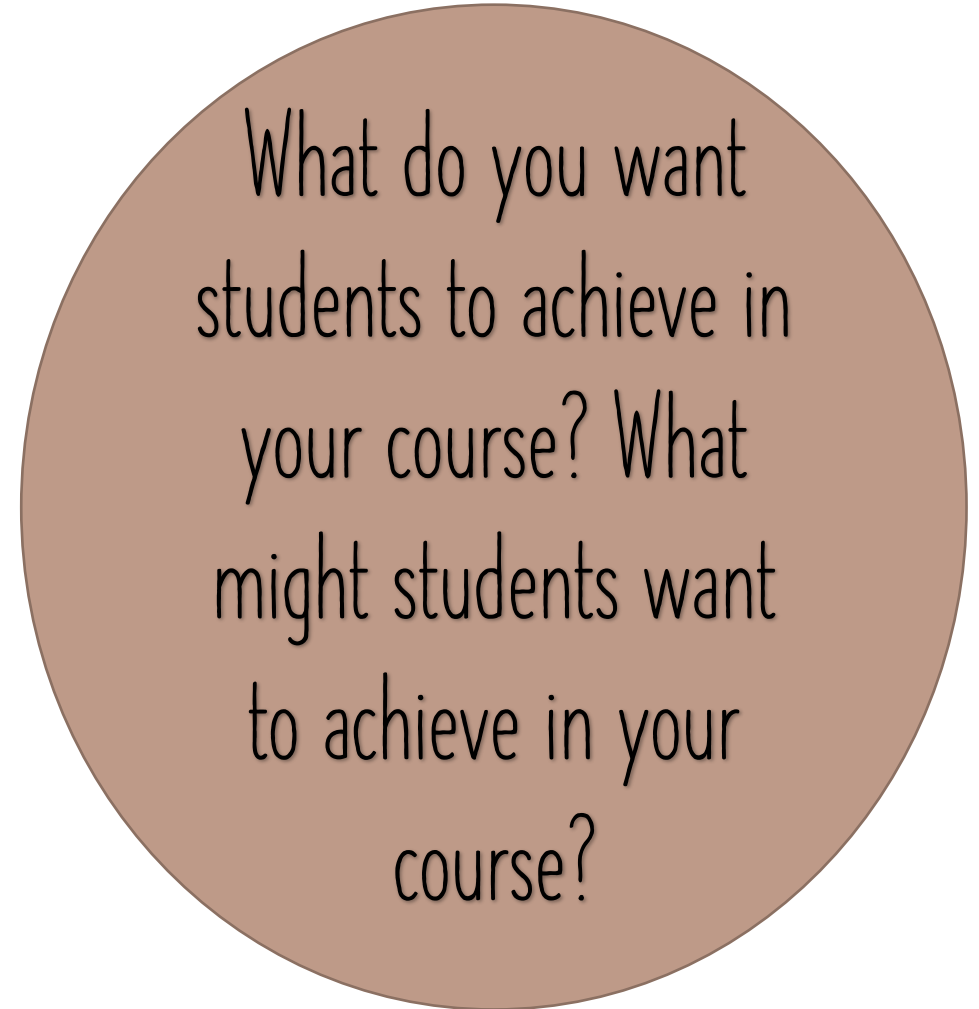
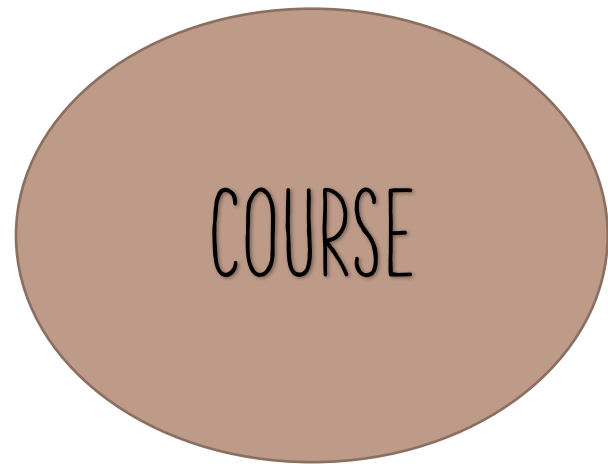
What outcomes do we, as teachers, expect them to achieve?

What goals might the students themselves have?

What does the department expect of us as well?

## EXERCISE 2: AN EXISTING COURSE

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"In most courses we are concerned about helping our students in a lifelong learning process; we want them to develop interest in further learning and have a base of concepts and skills that will facilitate further learning, thinking, and appreciation."

(McKeachie 2013, 8)

# DESCRIPTION VS AIMS/OUTCOMES: STEP 2

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What the course is about, and which topics will be covered

vs

what we (teachers and students) want from the course

# SYLLABI EXAMPLES / DISCUSSION

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## Course Objectives

The course aims to present the state of art of the debate in the area of diplomacy in theory and practice. This will be done on two levels: i) theoretical and conceptual, and ii) practical and applied. The practical part will be done through simulation of a key international body where students will be required to apply the knowledge learned in class, the rules of procedures of the concrete body, as well as to defend a country's position on a specific topic in the field of international relations. The main aim is to offer the appropriate tools for the professional and academic performance of the students, whether in the area of analysis of international relations and foreign policy or the direct application in the further career (in the State apparatus, the private sector, NGOs, etc.).

- Familiarizing students with the origins of some of the common practices in international relations and diplomacy
- Introducing students to the legal framework guiding the work of diplomats
- Introducing students to the multiplicity of tools and actors acting in the international level.
- Showing how IR can be studied and how international issues are addressed in the diplomatic level.
- Strengthening students public speaking and argumentative skills through their projects' presentation and a final debate (international organization simulation)

→ Vague; objectives not clearly stated

## EXERCISE 3: A LETTER TO YOUR STUDENTS



- Dear Class Letter: Take a few minutes to free-write a letter to your students—something that you might (not that you have to) put on the front page of your syllabus.
- Who are your students? Where are they in their lives? What do they aspire for? What challenges are they facing? What can this class give them, equip them with to face them? What work do you value from your students? What will you contribute (as the teacher)? What does success look like in your class? How (as the teacher) will you know when you've seen it? What is the students' collective role in constructing the course? How will you show care for your students? How will you show care for yourself?

# DEBRIEF

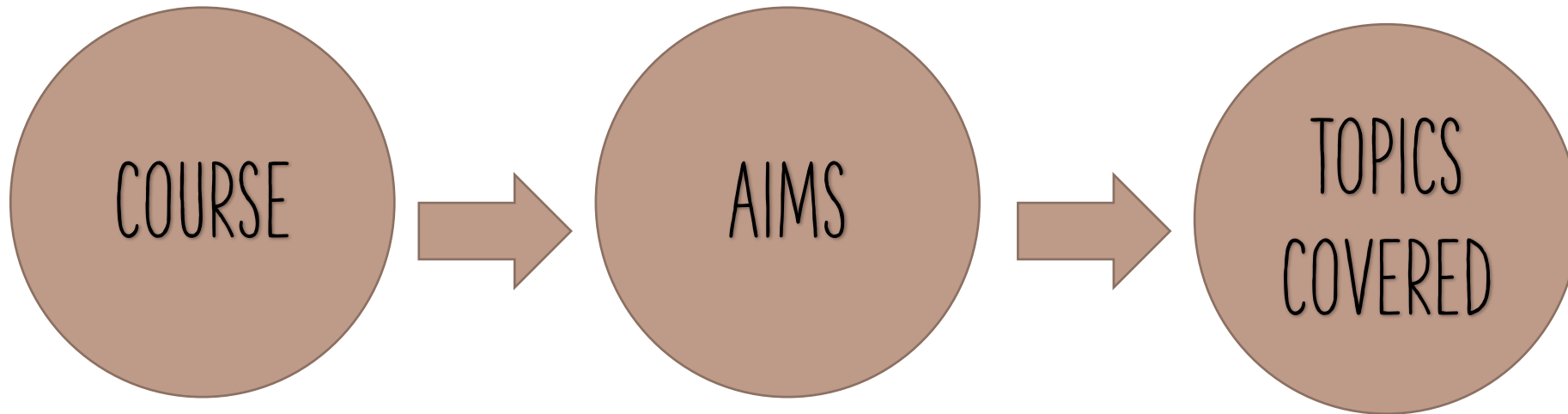
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- Select one sentence from your writing that you would like to share with your colleagues out loud—a sentence that you simply like or that you find most poignant about your course or your calling



# EXERCISE 4: TOPICS

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# DIPLOMACY



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Diplomacy after WWI

VCDR

VCCR

Public Diplomacy and Nation Branding

Multi-track diplomacy: celebrities and beyond

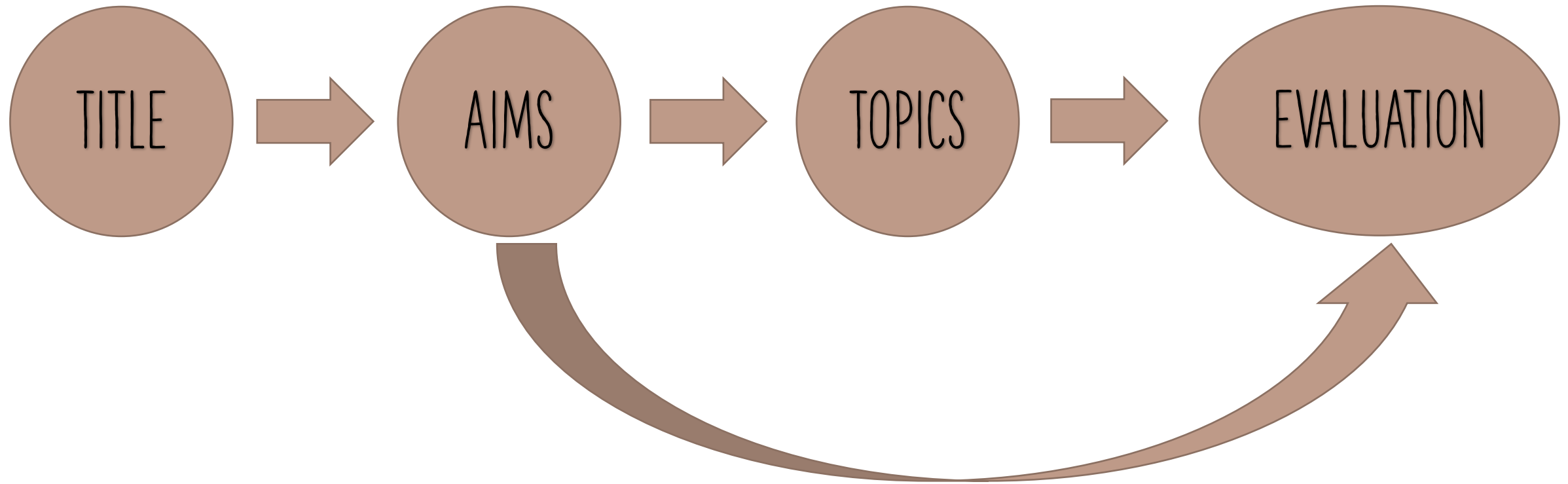
Diplomatic language

Diplomatic Protocol

Debate

# EXERCISE 4: CONNECTING THE AIMS TO THE EVALUATION PROCESS

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# AIMS/GOALS/OBJECTIVES AND STUDENTS' EVALUATION

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Example:

Goal: To develop students' critical thinking and argumentative skills

Evaluation: debates (Model United Nations) + position paper (written evaluation)

# SYLLABUS DESIGN CHECK LIST

Overview of the course

Students' learning objectives

Weekly topics

Materials (primary and secondary)

Requirements/Evaluation (connected to the objectives)

Policies

L. Dee Fink  
(2003)

“Designing for  
Significant  
Learning  
Experiences”

**INITIAL DESIGN PHASE: Build Strong Primary Components**

- Step 1. Identify important **situational factors**
- Step 2. Identify important **learning goals**
- Step 3. Formulate appropriate **feedback and assessment procedures**
- Step 4. Select effective **teaching/learning activities**
- Step 5. Make sure the primary components are **integrated**

**INTERMEDIATE DESIGN PHASE: Assemble the Components into a Coherent Whole**

- Step 6. Create a thematic **structure for the course**
- Step 7. Select or create an **instructional strategy**
- Step 8. Integrate the course structure and the instructional strategy to create an **overall scheme of learning activities**

**FINAL DESIGN PHASE: Finish Important Remaining Tasks**

- Step 9. Develop the **grading system**
- Step 10. De-Bug **possible problems**
- Step 11. Write the course **syllabus**
- Step 12. Plan an **evaluation** of the course and of your teaching

# BISLA MATRIX

PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES			
Core and Required Courses	Introduction to Social Science Research Methods	Introduction to International Relations	Bachelor Thesis Seminar
ECTS Credits	6	6	6
<b>ACTIVITIES</b>			
Research Methods	Content is the Methods		
Short writing Assignments	Weekly assignments	5 commented summaries	Weekly assignments
Longer writing assignment(s)	Research proposal		Detailed outline of the thesis
Team Projects			
Long-term Project(s)	Semester long project		Bachelor Thesis Proposal/2 deaft thesis chapters
Oral Presentation(s)	Research Project Presentation	Final exam	Mock defense of the thesis
In-class written assignments	In-class written assignments	6 seminar assignments	
Tests or Quizzes			
Community Engagement	Interviews, surveys, consultations, field observations		
<i>Subject specific knowledge</i>			
- Define the subject and basic methods of the field, its place and relationships in the system of social sciences, (link to competences and mission elements),	Introduced	Introduced	Evaluated
- Recognize the way concepts, theories, categories, and methodological approaches are used to analyze ideas, actors, institutions, and behavior	Evaluated	Introduced	Evaluated
- Examine, evaluate, and engage critically with different interpretations of political events, trends, phenomena on national and global levels (2b, 3b, 3c),	Introduced	Introduced	Used
- Apply concepts, theories, and methods, to political ideas, actors, institutions, and behavior.	Used	Evaluated	Evaluated

# RECOMMENDED LITERATURE

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- Freire, P. (2005). Pedagogy of the Oppressed. Continuum: New York, NY. Available at: <https://envs.ucsc.edu/internships/internship-readings/freire-pedagogy-of-the-oppressed.pdf>
- Gross Davis, B. (2009). Tools for Teaching. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Jossey-Bass: San Francisco, CA.
- Lipsky, S. A. (2011). A Training Guide for College Tutors and Peer Educators. Pearson: Boston, MA.
- McKeachie, W. J. and M. D. Svinicki (2013). Teaching Tips. 14<sup>th</sup> edition. Wadsworth Cengage Learning.
- Resnick, M. (2017). Lifelong Kindergarten. The MIT Press: Cambridge, MA.
- Tyler, R. (1949). Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction. The University of Chicago University Press: Chicago.