University of Gdańsk

Subject card

Subject name and code	Decisions in international relations, PG_00179117		
Field of study	Criminology		
Date of commencement of studies	October 2025	Academic year of realisation of subject	2025/2026
Education level	Bachelor's studies	Subject group	
Mode of study	full-time studies	Mode of delivery	e-learning
Year of study	1	Language of instruction	Polish Polish
Semester of study	1	ECTS credits	2.0
Learning profile	academic	Assessment form	credit
Conducting unit	Faculty of Social Sciences -> Rector		
Name and surname of lecturer (lecturers)	Subject supervisor	dr hab. Agnieszka Bógdał-Brzezińska, prof. UG	
	Teachers	dr hab. Agnieszka Bógdał-Brzezińska, prof. UG	

Lesson types

Lesson type	Lecture	Tutorial	Laboratory	Project	Seminar	SUM
Number of study hours	30.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	30

E-learning hours included: 30.0

eNauczanie source addresses:

Moodle ID: 13002 Decyzje w stosunkach międzynarodowych
https://mdl.ug.edu.pl/course/view.php?id=13002

Learning activity and number of study hours

Learning activity	Participation in didactic classes included in study plan	Participation in consultation hours	Self-study	SUM
Number of study hours	30	2.0	18.0	50

Subject objectives

Familiarizing students with the procedures and conditions of decision-making processes undertaken by various participants in international relations.
Explaining the differences between a procedure and a decision-making process.
Explaining the differences between administrative and political decisions.
Explaining the differences between procedures within international economic relations involving transnational corporations and decision-making processes at the interstate level in international organizations and integration communities.
Indicating the specificity of decision-making processes in international relations involving individuals, institutions, states, and international organizations.

Learning outcomes

Course outcome	Subject outcome	Method of verification
	- the student is able to: recognize and name international decision-making processes - relate international decision-making processes to the theories learned - distinguish between decision-making centers: national and international - identify the role of an individual as an international decision-maker, explain who an international official is - present decision-making mechanisms in international decision-making collectives as groups (groupthik) - recognize decision-making procedures in international corporations, international organizations	[SW5] implementation of a problem task [SU1] oral statement/conversation/ discussion [SK1] oral statement/conversation/ discussion [SK5] implementation of a problem task

Subject contents

I. The essence of the decision
a. Praxeological. Projection of The Fog of War document and discussion - what this course is for.
b. Ontologically. Decision (event) or deciding (process) - that is, how to define an object. Man or institution, individual or group - how to define a decision-maker.
c. Epistemological. Strictly or humanistically - that is, the place of the problem of decision making in the spectrum of sciences. Descriptive or prescriptive - that is, whether the function of decision-making theory is to indicate what it is or should be like. Paradigmatic or idiosyncratic - that is, how useful theories of MS science are in explaining and understanding decision-making, and what alternatives are there.
d. Analytically. Structure or agent, micro or macro - that is, with overt and hidden effects of selecting the level of analysis for decision making research. Statistics and models or case studies - i.e. the results of formal, quantitative and qualitative methods in the analysis of decision making.
II. Unit deciding
a. Rational approaches. Nominal features of rational thinking and choice in the rational actor model (RAM). Categories of utility and expected utility and their maximization; bayesism. Application of RAM: game theories - categories of Nash equilibrium, Pareto allocation efficiency; sequential games - theory of movements; strategic interaction (Schiller).
b. Cognitive views. Limited rationality (Simon) - maximization versus satisfaction. Psychology and neurobiology and the decision-making properties of the human body; consistency of judgments, attitude to risk, cognitive complexity and contra-current thinking, memory and analogical thinking (Khong), psychophysical condition and emotions and decision-making abilities. The analysis of individual decisions: the rules of selecting the objects of analysis, content analysis and (de) coding (Hermann, George) and psychobiography (Barber, Post). Heuristics and cognitive errors.
c. Hybrid shots. Cybernetic Theory (Steinbrunner); prediction theory (Tversky, Kahnemann); polyheuristic theory (Minz, Geva).
III. Group decision making
a. Structures of small decision-making groups, the role of a leader and others (e.g. mind guard, devil's advocate, delegate), selected techniques for managing the decision-making process in a small group (e.g. leadership style, group composition, agenda control, problem formatting, manipulation of information). Dynamics of small decision groups - groupthink (Janis) and newgroup (Stern) syndromes, their manifestations and consequences for decision making. A group in crisis decision making. Comparison of the way a small internal, international and supranational group is decided (EU casus).
IV. Institutional decision making
a. Bureaucratic. The role of bureaucracy in making decisions. Institutional Identity: Essentialization, "Homosexual Reproduction" and "Cohort Effects". Properties of vertical decision-making processes from problematization to implementation - inertia, logic of appropriateness and standard operating procedure (SOP). Information flow channels. Inter-bureaucratic rivalry - the so-called turf wars. The decision as a result.
b. Cultural. Understanding culture in the context of decision-making analysis: as a closed system of meanings and as a source of preferences, valuations, heuristics and ready-made decision schemes. Historical, cultural and ideological narratives about one's own international role and decision making. Cultural dimensions (Hofstede) and regularities in a given population in the sphere of decision making. Examples of the influence of cultural idiosyncrasies on the differences in decision-making methods.
c. Internal versus international and supranational. Two-level game (Putnam) and multi-level management (Marx). Multidimensional taxonomies of participants - techniques for scaling their importance for decision making. Role of political parties and pressure groups, media (CNN effect and decision-making), civil society and other internal, international and transnational actors. On the iceberg: official structures and decision-making practice in the European Union - intra- and interinstitutional (Commission procedures, co-decision, comitology).

Prerequisites and co-requisites

Assessment methods and criteria

Subject passing criteria	Passing threshold	Percentage of the final grade
	0.0%	0.0%

Recommended reading	Basic literature	Graham T. Allison Essence of decision: explaining the Cuban missile crisis; Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1971 PISM II39734; 2nd Edition: London: Longman, 1999 Marijke Breuning Foreign Policy Analysis: a comparative introduction.; New York, Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2007 PISM II90032 Valerie M. Hudson Foreign policy analysis: classic and contemporary theory; Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007 PISM II87487 Ziemowit J. Pietraś - Decydowanie polityczne; Warszawa-Kraków: PWN, 2000 Steve Smith et al (ed.) Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases; New York: Oxford University Press, 2008
	Supplementary literature	Bruce Bueno de Mesquita An Expected Utility Theory of International Conflict, American Political Science Review, 74(4), December 1980 PISM PII247 http://schoolwires.henry.k12.ga.us/437520530889460/lib/437520530889460/Beuno_de_Mesquita_2.pdf Daniel L. Byman, Kenneth M. Pollack Let Us Now Praise Great Men: Bringing the Statesman Back In, International Security, 25(4), 2001 http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/files/bymanetalvol25no4.pdf Walter Carlsnaes Handbook of International Relations; London: Sage, 2003 PISM III24858 Jerzy Ciechański Teorie podejmowania decyzji w polityce zagranicznej; Polski Przegląd Dyplomatyczny 1/2006 Jacek Czaputowicz Teorie stosunków międzynarodowych: krytyka i systematyzacja; Warszawa: PWN, 2008 Irmtraud N. Gallhofer, Willem E. Saris Foreign Policy Decision-Making: a qualitative and quantitative analysis of political argumentation; Westport: Praeger, 1996 PISM II82335 Irmtraud N. Gallhofer, Willem E. Saris Collective choice processes: a qualitative and quantitative analysis of foreign policy decision-making; Westport: Praeger, 1996 PISM II82856 Alexander L. George Presidential decision-making in foreign policy: the effective use of information and advice; Boulder: Westview, 1980 PISM II57222 Nehemia Geva, Alex Mintz (ed.) Decision-making on war and peace: the cognitive-rational debate; Boulder: Lynn Rienner, 1997 PISM II84325 Patrick J. Haney Organizing for Foreign Policy Crises. Presidents, Advisers and the Management of Decision Making; Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002 Paul t Hart, Erik K. Stern, Bengt Sundelius (ed.) Beyond groupthink: political group dynamics and foreign policy-making; Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1997 PISM II85794 Robert Jervis Perception and misperception in international politics; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965 PISM II48058 Yueng Foong Khong Analogies at war: Korea, Munich, Dien Bien Phu and the Vietnam Decisions of 1965; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992 Google Books Bahgat Korany How foreign policy decisions are made in the Third World: a comparative analysis; Boulder, London: Westview, 1986 PISM II85731 Alex Mintz (ed.) Integrating cognitive and rational theories of foreign policy decision making; New York, Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002 PISM II87450 Richard E. Neustadt, Ernest R. May Thinking in time: the uses of history for decision makers; New York & London: The Free Press, 1986 PISM II85846 Robert D. Putnam Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games; International Organization, 42(3), Summer, 1988 http://hpeb08.files.wordpress.com/2008/08/putnam.pdf Christian Reus-Smit, Duncan Snidal (ed.) The Oxford Handbook of International Relations; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008 PISM III25462 Herbert Simon Human Nature in Politics: The Dialogue of Psychology with Political Science American Political Science Review, 79(2), June 1985 PISM PII247 http://users.polisci.wisc.edu/schatzberg/ps855/Simon1985.pdf Paweł Soroka Teorie podejmowania decyzji w amerykańskiej nauce o stosunkach międzynarodowych; Warszawa: COM SNP, 1987 PISM II55263 Jonathan B. Stein From H-bomb to Star Wars: the politics of strategic decision-making; Lexington & Toronto: Lexington Books, 1984 PISM II53989 Stephen G. Walker Role theory and foreign policy analysis; Durham: Duke, 1987 PISM II85515 Thomas C. Wiegele Leaders under stress: a psychophysiological analysis of international crises; Durham: Duke, 1985 PISM II85755 Steve A. Yetiv Explaining Foreign Policy: U.S. Decision-Making & the Persian Gulf War; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004

	eResources addresses	
Example issues/ example questions/ tasks being completed	1. Decision Theory: Basic Issues. How Much Management Knowledge Is Applied to International Decisions? 2. What is the Role of the Individual in International Decision-Making? 3. What is Group Think and How Often Does It Apply to International Decisions? 4. Are Business Decision-Making and Political Decision-Making the Same in International Relations? The Case of Donald Trump 5. Do International Institutions and Organizations Make Decisions?	
Work placement	Not applicable	

Document generated electronically. Does not require a seal or signature.