



## **New Trends in Modern Statecraft: Comparative Russian and US Approaches**

Course offered by the [MGIMO School of Government and International Affairs \(SGIA\)](#)  
in the Spring 2021 Semester

*When: at 5:30 PM Moscow time every Thursday starting from 11 February*

*Where: Zoom, meeting credentials will be forwarded to participants upon registration. **Please contact course coordinators from your institutional email address to register for the course.***

*Lecturers: leading Russian and international scholars and practitioners specializing in foreign policy analysis, political risks, and business consulting*

*Course coordinators Dr. [Mikhail Troitskiy](mailto:m.troitskiy@my.mgimo.ru) (m.troitskiy@my.mgimo.ru) and Dr. [Maria Shibkova](mailto:m.shibkova@inno.mgimo.ru) (m.shibkova@inno.mgimo.ru)*

***This syllabus will be updated and provided to course participants upon registration***

The course is offered to undergraduate and graduate students at MGIMO as well as to a broader audience in partner institutions globally. Course sessions will be conducted by leading Russian and international experts on foreign policy analysis. The purpose of the course is to equip students with an additional angle of looking at international relations—the concept of statecraft. The course will analyze statecraft from three distinct perspectives. First, it will compare Russian and US approaches to and traditions of statecraft; second, it will focus on the use of new and emerging technology in statecraft; and, finally, it will offer food for thought about the consequences of new techniques of statecraft—mostly enabled by modern technology—for international security and US-Russia relations. The course is delivered by a stellar group of MGIMO University faculty, invited experts and practitioners—all of them known figures among the Russian and international expert community and the broader public.

The course is taught fully in English in collaboration with the Sam Nunn School of International Affairs, Georgia Institute of Technology (GT). Course participants will be given access to the recordings of the GT course sessions and will be asked to compare and discuss a lecture in the GT course with a lecture in the MGIMO course.

Each instructor will aim to speak for 50 to 60 minutes and leave enough time for discussion. Students are expected to read the required materials before the class. ***Throughout the course MGIMO and Georgia Tech students will be practicing statecraft using the online platform [statecraftsims.com](http://statecraftsims.com).***

In this course, we understand statecraft as purposeful activity in pursuit of a nation's foreign policy agenda. Statecraft is not strategy—a pathway to achieving pre-meditated objectives—but a pattern of action that a certain nation prefers to resort to when faced with a problem or opportunity in its foreign relations. This pattern includes a combination of instruments of choice, negotiation tactics, forms of preferred agreements and their implementation as well as the level of ambition in foreign policy.

According to the political economist Daniel Drezner, the concept of statecraft is ridden with a paradox: statecraft often generates resistance and blowback, complicating the actual achievement of desired outcomes and devaluing statecraft, because the targeted nation's resolve not to cave becomes stronger if it expects intensifying conflict with its adversary. And yet, nations seek to improve their means of statecraft and actively explore opportunities to expand the range of those means by harnessing new and emerging technology. Sometimes statecraft scares are generated: nations overreact while hedging against the risks of new technology being weaponized against them by their potential or actual adversaries. As a result, concerns about the possible use of an emerging impactful technology for statecraft purposes can poison relations between states, give rise to conflict narratives, and even lead to the escalation of existing disputes. The US-Russia relationship has been susceptible to statecraft scares over much of its post-Cold War history.

But how much are these scares warranted and unavoidable? Is new technology only giving a boost to offense, or can technological progress instead help to advance stability and cooperation? What is the actual promise that emerging technologies carry for statecraft? Are they strategic or tactical, that is, can they only be used for surprise maneuvers or for reassurance and other longer games as well? Can they make deterrence more effective?

Lecturers in this course will also seek to establish whether the United States and Russia have distinct preferences for means and patterns of statecraft and what these preferences may depend upon: national power, structure of the system, nature of relations with other nations, political regimes, etc.

**Required readings** are available in the Dropbox folder at <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/6g3f34yrjrg1rnf/AABRnlF4MNZoBjApzWfuFb8-a?dl=0> . **All course sessions are conducted on the record and will later be disseminated as discussion materials at MGIMO, Sam Nunn School and other institutions.**

Credit for the course will be given on the basis of attendance and participation in discussions (30 percent of the grade, no more than two classes may be missed), a short essay comparing a lecture in the GT Sam Nunn School of International Affairs course with a lecture in the MGIMO course (between 2,000 and 2,500 words, 30 percent of the final grade), and a final multiple choice test (40 percent of the final grade). Essay submission deadline is May 15. Essay topics and outlines are subject to approval by the course supervisors before April 1<sup>st</sup>.

## **Course Schedule**

Week 1 (**February 11**): Introduction to the Course: The Concept(s) of Statecraft  
**Mikhail Troitskiy, MGIMO University, Moscow; Jenna Jordan, Sam Nunn School of International Affairs, Georgia Tech, Atlanta GA**

How do states define and achieve their goals and conduct foreign policy? What is the analytical value of the concept of statecraft? What is the difference between statecraft analysis and foreign

policy analysis? Statecraft vs. strategy; statecraft and the security dilemma. In what domains does statecraft occur, and what are the mechanisms of statecraft available to states? Does it make sense to distinguish between national “traditions of statecraft”?

### *Required Reading*

Henrik Breitenbauch and Niels Byrjalsen, “Subversion, Statecraft and Liberal Democracy.” *Survival*, 61:4 (2019), 31-41.

Francis J. Gavin, “Thinking Historically: A Guide to Strategy and Statecraft,”  
<https://warontherocks.com/2019/11/thinking-historically-a-guide-for-strategy-and-statecraft/>

Mikhail Troitskiy, *Statecraft Overachievement: Sources of Scares in U.S. Russian Relations*, PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo 619, October 2019, <http://www.ponarseurasia.org/memo/statecraft-overachievement-sources-scares-us-russian-relations>

Безруков А. Многомерная война и новая оборонная стратегия // *Россия в глобальной политике*. 2014. № 4. <https://globalaffairs.ru/number/Mnogomernaya-voyna-i-novaya-oboronnaya-strategiya-17101> (skip if you do not read Russian)

Week 2 (**February 18**): Russian Tradition of Statecraft in an Historical Perspective: Lessons Learned ***Andrei Zagorski***, *Russian Academy of Sciences and MGIMO University, Moscow*

How to define a “Russian tradition” against the backdrop of repeated historic disconnects? Different objects and different patterns of the application of Russian statecraft then and now. How to select defining episodes to establish continuity in the Russian tradition of statecraft? Does technological innovation affect the statecraft tradition? What are the lessons that Russia has or could have learned and applied in its statecraft vis-à-vis other parties?

### *Required Reading*

Keir Giles, *Russia’s ‘New’ Tools for Confronting the West: Continuity and Innovation in Moscow’s Exercise of Power*, London: The Royal Institute of International Affairs, 2016,  
[https://www.academia.edu/23497505/Russia\\_s\\_New\\_Tools\\_for\\_Confronting\\_the\\_West\\_Continuity\\_and\\_Innovation\\_in\\_Moscow\\_s\\_Exercise\\_of\\_Power](https://www.academia.edu/23497505/Russia_s_New_Tools_for_Confronting_the_West_Continuity_and_Innovation_in_Moscow_s_Exercise_of_Power)

Richard Sakwa, “Greater Russia: Is Moscow out to subvert the West?” *International Politics* (2020)  
<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41311-020-00258-0> (open access).

### *Further Reading*

Ingmar Olberg, *Is Russia a status-quo power?* Ulpaper No 1, 2016.  
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/299513226\\_Is\\_Russia\\_a\\_status\\_quo\\_power/link/56fcf4d308ae3c85c0c8b046/download](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/299513226_Is_Russia_a_status_quo_power/link/56fcf4d308ae3c85c0c8b046/download).

Richard Sakwa, *Russia Against the Rest. The Post-Cold War Crisis of World Order*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017.

Alexander Sergunin, *Explaining Russian Foreign Policy Behaviour. Theory and Practice*, ibiem-Verlag, 2016. URL:

[https://pure.spbu.ru/ws/portalfiles/portal/28351678/explaining\\_Russian\\_foreign\\_policy.pdf](https://pure.spbu.ru/ws/portalfiles/portal/28351678/explaining_Russian_foreign_policy.pdf)

James Sherr, *The Militarization of Russian Policy*, Washington: Transatlantic Academy, 2017,

[https://www.academia.edu/34568065/THE\\_MILITARIZATION\\_OF\\_RUSSIAN\\_POLICY](https://www.academia.edu/34568065/THE_MILITARIZATION_OF_RUSSIAN_POLICY)

Dmitri Trenin, *Post-Imperium. A Eurasian Story*, Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2011, <https://carnegieendowment.org/pdf/book/post-imperium.pdf>

Andrei P. Tsygankov (ed.), *Routledge Handbook of Russian Foreign Policy*, London; New York: Routledge, 2018. URL:

[https://pure.spbu.ru/ws/portalfiles/portal/36894879/ROUTLEDGE\\_HANDBOOK\\_OF\\_RUSSIAN\\_FOREIGN\\_POLICY.pdf](https://pure.spbu.ru/ws/portalfiles/portal/36894879/ROUTLEDGE_HANDBOOK_OF_RUSSIAN_FOREIGN_POLICY.pdf)

Week 3 (**February 25**): IT and Cybersecurity in Statecraft

***Oleg Shakirov, PIR Center and MGIMO University, Moscow***

From the international relations perspective, information or cyberspace may be considered one of the domains where actors engage with one another while pursuing their interests. Its novelty, interconnectedness, ambiguity makes it an uncharted territory for states. It remains an open question what constitutes statecraft in this domain. States collectively define this through a) using cyber capabilities vis-à-vis one another; b) advocating and negotiating norms that should govern this domain; and c) shaping, inter alia through national regulation, the boundaries of cyberspace. By doing so states seek to decrease uncertainty inherent to cyberspace and more closely associate these activities with traditional statecraft.

#### *Required Reading*

Nye, Joseph, *Cyber Power*, Harvard Belfer Center, 2010, pp. 1-8,

<https://www.belfercenter.org/sites/default/files/legacy/files/cyber-power.pdf>

Kollars, Nina, Schneider, Jacquelyn, “Defending Forward: The 2018 Cyber Strategy Is Here,” *War on the Rocks*, September 20, 2018, <https://warontherocks.com/2018/09/defending-forward-the-2018-cyber-strategy-is-here/>

Chernenko, Elena, “Russia’s Cyber Diplomacy,” in: Popescu, Nicu, Stanislav Secieru (eds.), *Hacks, leaks and disruptions Russian cyber strategies*, EUISS, October 2018, pp. 43-49,

[https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/CP\\_148.pdf](https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/CP_148.pdf)

Tikk-Ringas, Eneken, *International Cyber Norms Dialogue as an Exercise of Normative Power*, ICT4Peace, 2017, <https://ict4peace.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Tikk-Normative-Power.pdf>

Griffiths, James, *Governments are rushing to regulate the internet. Users could end up paying the price*, CNN, April 8, 2019, <https://edition.cnn.com/2019/04/08/uk/internet-regulation-uk-australia-intl-gbr/index.html>

Week 4 (March 4): Regulating Emerging Technologies in Statecraft: Autonomous Systems, AI / Machine Learning, Big Data

[Alexander Vysotsky](#), *Head of International Public Policy, Yandex, Moscow*

Internet regulation and data governance in a very broad meaning are issues that attract growing attention in recent years. It's often difficult to draw clear divisions between different areas of the problem. Not to mix up AI, big data, uberisation, communications, social networks etc.

Recent World Economic Forum in Davos showed that these problems (together with ecology and climate change) shape the core of global discussion about the future.

Neither governments nor companies or civil society seem to have satisfactory ideas on how to regulate Internet and communications, how to reconcile such profound categories as freedom and security. And whether Internet will maintain its universal character.

More and more voices are heard that urge the societies about "big data" and AI. They say that soon enough controlling data will be crucial and enough to control behavior and economy – no matter where.

All these problems, as we understand, for sure have a clear international relations', security and statecraft dimensions.

Despite lack of clear vision about the future of cyberspace and negative political implications some initial steps can be and are already taken in the areas of de-anonymizing users, for example, and anti-trust regulations for digital platforms. Content moderation (in social networks or on platforms like YouTube) is also a very interesting area that is now controlled by the humans, but sooner or later, it seems, can be transferred to AI.

At our meeting we'll try to discuss the current status of the problems mentioned above, find common and different grounds in dealing with them in Russia and US and try to predict where can technology bring the statecraft.

#### *Required Materials*

Henry Kissinger, "How the Enlightenment Ends," *The Atlantic*. June 2018, <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2018/06/henry-kissinger-ai-could-mean-the-end-of-human-history/559124/>

Francis Fukuyama, *How to Make the Internet Safe for Democracy*, Australian Strategic Policy Institute, January 2020, <https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/how-to-make-the-internet-safe-for-democracy/>

Munich Security Conference: Conversation with Mark Zuckerberg. February 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GE0XT7E5dw4>

Yuval Noah Harari: How to Survive the 21st Century - Davos 2020. January 2020, <https://www.ynharari.com/yuval-noah-harari-how-to-survive-the-21st-century/>

Week 5 (March 11): Conflict Mediation in Statecraft (the post-Soviet case)

**Sergey Markedonov**, Senior Fellow, MGIMO Institute for International Studies

Week 6 (March 18): Subversion as a Temptation in Foreign Policy Statecraft

**Igor Istomin**, MGIMO University, Moscow and Harvard Davis Center, Cambridge MA

Interference in domestic affairs of other states runs contrary to the principle of sovereignty enshrined in international law. However, throughout history, states meddled in politics of their counterparts, trying to subvert their governments. Why did they do this? To what consequences? The existing literature provides several explanations, which associate interference with both strategic and ideological motivations. It also draws attention to the significant drawbacks of subversion. It rarely achieves actual regime change. It also mostly fails to convert opponents into faithful friends and allies. Moreover, in the long term, it often leads to the deterioration of relations. Nevertheless, interference often remains a temptation as it is usually cheap in blood, money and reputation.

#### *Required Reading*

Downes, A. B., & O'Rourke, L. A. (2016). "You can't always get what you want: Why foreign-imposed regime change seldom improves interstate relations. *International Security*, 41(2), 43-89.

Igor Istomin (2020). Anticipating the Adversary at the Backdoor: Perceptions of Subversion in Russian–American Relations. In: *Threats to Euro-Atlantic Security*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. (pp. 13-34).

William C. Wohlforth (2020). "Realism and great power subversion," *International Relations*, 0047117820968858.

Week 7 (March 25): Sanctions as Statecraft: A Russian Perspective

**Ivan Timofeev**, Russian International Affairs Council, Moscow

The purpose of the workshop is to demonstrate different dimensions of sanctions' efficiency as a foreign policy tool. While the literature on sanctions is full of skepticism on their use as a mean to change a target-country behavior, there are several domains where sanctions may be extremely functional. One of them - is the use of enforcement actions against international business. While sanctions are limited against states, they are capable to change behavior of the U.S. and foreign companies in order to comply with the U.S. sanctions' regulations. We will analyze how the "kitchen" of enforcement works. An empirical basis for the workshop is a database on the U.S. recent enforcement actions. We will learn why do companies violate the legislation, what does the U.S. government do to address the issue, what are the consequences for the companies and how do they change their behavior afterwards. This specific domain of sanctions' policy will be presented in the context of the overall theoretical and political debate on the use of sanctions in the international politics by the U.S, the E.U., Russia, China and other players.

#### *Required Reading*

Report of the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights, Human Rights Council Thirty-ninth session, 10–28 September 2018, <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G18/264/85/PDF/G1826485.pdf?OpenElement>

Cooper, Zack and Eric Lorber. 2016. Sanctioning the Dragon. *The National Interest*, March-April. P. 36-42.

Drezner, Daniel W. 2015. Targeted Sanctions in a World of Global Finance. *International Interactions*, 41: 755–764.

Timofeev, Ivan. 2019. Rethinking Sanctions Efficiency. Evidence from 205 Cases of the U.S. Government Enforcement Actions against Business. *Russia in Global Politics*, 8 October, <https://eng.globalaffairs.ru/number/Rethinking-Sanctions-Efficiency-20213>

Week 8 (**April 1**): Russia as an Actor in Multilateral Diplomacy  
**Anna Zakharchenko, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia, Moscow**

The lecture will focus on three main topics:

- 1 - Multilateral posture of Russian diplomacy. MFA and missions abroad – structure and responsibilities.
- 2 - Methods and instruments Russia uses in its multilateral diplomacy and as a member of the UN Security Council, OSCE, CSTO, CIS, EEU, SCO and BRICS. Current state of Russia-EU and Russia-NATO relations.
- 3 - Connectivity, e-diplomacy, new technologies, social media – the ways they are used by Russian diplomacy and whether they could be of use in multilateral diplomacy.

*Required Readings*

Foreign policy concept of the Russian Federation 2016  
[https://www.mid.ru/en/foreign\\_policy/official\\_documents/-/asset\\_publisher/CptlCkB6BZ29/content/id/2542248](https://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptlCkB6BZ29/content/id/2542248)

Grushko, Alexander. The end of multilateral diplomacy? Russian International Affairs Council.  
<https://russiancouncil.ru/en/analytics-and-comments/comments/the-end-of-multilateral-diplomacy/>

Lavrov, Sergey. Remarks and answers to media questions at a news conference on the results of Russian diplomacy in 2020 – remarks only. [https://www.mid.ru/en/foreign\\_policy/news/-/asset\\_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/4527635](https://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/news/-/asset_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/4527635)

Week 9 (**April 8**): Economic and Financial Statecraft in Russian Foreign Policy  
**Evgeny Nadorshin, Chief Economist, PF Capital Consultants, Moscow**

Week 10 (**April 15**): Military Force as a Means of Statecraft  
**Vasily Kashin, Higher School of Economics and Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow**

Military force is playing an increasing role in the current global politics which entered the phase of acute great power competition. Yet the level of military expenditure relative to GDP is much lower in most major economies of the world and the general level of military tension is still lower compared to the early 1980s when huge military formations were kept in constant combat readiness in Europe by both sides. The arms race between China and US is emerging with considerable contributions from some other players (Japan, South Korea, India, Russia and to certain degree Europe). The lecture

examines the trends in the current military rivalry between the major powers and its' effects on global politics and economy.

### *Required Readings*

Anthony H. Cordesman, *Evolving Strategies in the U.S.-China Military Balance*, Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2016, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/evolving-strategies-us-china-military-balance>

Sugiarto Pramono, "More Guns, Less Butter? China-U.S. Arms Race Behind Southeast Asia's Economic Boom," 2018, <https://www.worldscientific.com/doi/pdf/10.1142/S2377740018500070>

Week 11 (**April 22**): Energy and Natural Resources as Means of Statecraft  
**Sergey Golunov, IMEMO, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow**

Global energy policy is largely rational and is not shaped by ideology to a significant extent. The lecture will argue that Russia and the USA have more divergent than common energy-related interests: while Russia is a pronounced energy producer and seller, the U.S. policy is shaped more by the interests of consumption than production, such as keeping global oil prices sufficiently low. The lecture will discuss the means that Russia and the USA have (e.g. means to influence prices, transportation systems, and political and economic powers to be used for energy coalitions building) and the ways in which such means are used.

### *Required Reading*

Mohaptra, Nalin 'Energy Security and Russia's Foreign Policy,' CRP Working Paper Series, Working Paper no 11, *University of Cambridge*, May 2013, <https://www.crp.polis.cam.ac.uk/documents/working-papers/crp-working-paper-11-mohaptra-energy-security-russ.pdf>

*Oxford Energy Institute*, 'What's next for US energy policy?' *Forum*, 2017, Issue 111, <https://www.oxfordenergy.org/wpcms/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/OEF-111.pdf>  
Proedrou, Filippos 'Russian Energy Policy and Structural Power in Europe,' *Europe-Asia Studies*, 70 1 (2018), pp. 75-89.

Week 12 (**April 29**): Statecraft & Religion: the role of religious cults in politics  
**Christopher Korten, MGIMO University, Moscow**

Religion as an aspect of Statecraft is not an unknown concept but neither has it been covered in depth. This lecture will focus on the quasi-religious cults and brotherhoods, such as the Freemasons, and the political implications of Statecraft. It will look at the influence of these organizations, their international affiliations and the role they play in the development of Statecraft.

### *Required Reading*

Erik Andermo, Martin Kragh, Liliia Makashova, "Conspiracy Theories in Russian Security Thinking," *Journal of Strategic Studies* (January 31, 2020). PDF

Week 13 (May 6): US Statecraft Traditions

[Adam Stulberg](#), *Sam Nunn School of International Affairs, Georgia Tech, Atlanta GA*

Week 14 (May 13): US Perspectives on Cyber Statecraft

[Jenna Jordan](#), *Sam Nunn School of International Affairs, Georgia Tech, Atlanta GA*