



College of Europe
Collège d'Europe



Natolin

ECTS CARD

STUDY PROGRAMME

European Interdisciplinary Studies, Natolin campus (Advanced Academic Master)

YEAR

2023-2024

COURSE TITLE

Weaponisation of Soft Power

SEMESTER

2

COURSE PROFESSOR(S)

BUHLER Pierre

ACADEMIC ASSISTANT(S)

NIZOWICZ Nicolas

COURSE TYPE

Compact Seminar

MAJOR(S)

EUW

ECTS CREDITS

no ECTS

TEACHING HOURS

8

INDIVIDUAL & GROUP STUDY TIME

TUTORIAL(S)

COEFFICIENT

not applicable

LANGUAGE(S)

EN

COURSE OBJECTIVE

This seminar aims to provide students with a comprehensive overview and understanding of the use and abuse by several authoritarian states of the tools originally meant to project soft power. The concept of soft power has been defined by Harvard scholar Joseph Nye, at the end of the Cold War, as the appeal of a country through the values it embodies, its culture and its foreign policy. Information being the main means to reach out in this regard, Nye nowadays analyzes "the deceptive use of information for hostile purposes as a type of hard power."

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

- knowledge on the use and potential misuse of soft power in foreign policies of states;
- based on a thorough examination of the existing practices, analysis of the objectives and strategies of four state actors (China, Russia, Turkey and Iran) and devising of defensive counter-measures;
- understanding of the conduct of foreign policies in a field loosely defined by the limbo between soft and hard power;
- looking at problems or situations from an original perspective.

RECOMMENDED PREPARATION

None.

TEACHING METHOD(S)

Lectures, discussion.

ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA

The compact seminar will be assessed on a 'pass/fail' basis through:

- an online closed-book multiple-choice test (80% of the mark) at the end of the final course session
15 minutes to answer 7 questions, and
- overall attendance (20% of the mark).

The weighted average of both assessment elements needs to be equal or greater than 50% for a student to pass the compact seminar.

Each student is entitled to re-taking the test once. The re-take test would account for 80% of the mark whilst overall attendance would account for the remaining 20%.

Since compact seminars carry no ECTS credits, the final result will be present on the transcript, but will have no impact on the student's final average, nor on the overall grade, nor on attaining the diploma.

COURSE CONTENTS

- Soft power: concepts, tools, practices, strategies, and objectives
- Media and propaganda
- From cultural diplomacy to the academic world and research: entryism without restraint
- Defensive tactics, offensive tactics and the battle of the narratives

COURSE MATERIALS (readings and other learning resources/tools)

Walker, Christopher. "The Authoritarian Threat: The hijacking of 'soft power'", *Journal of Democracy* 27 (1) (2016), 49–63.

Tyushka, Andriy, "Weaponizing narrative: Russia contesting Europe's liberal identity, power and hegemony", *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, DOI: 10.1080/14782804.2021.1883561

Nye, Joseph 'How Sharp Power Threatens Soft power; The Right and Wrong Ways to Respond to Authoritarian Influence'. *Foreign Affairs*, 24 January 2018.

Podcast: *How Sharp Power Threatens Soft Power*

Podcast: *Christopher Walker on Sharp Power as a Concept*

Podcast: *China's Sharp Power: A Conversation with Kevin Sheives and Jessica Ludwig*