Laurea / B.A.
in Global Governance

Academic Year 2025-2026
Workshop Syllabus
LITERATURE, STATECRAFT, WORLD ORDER
№ OF SESSIONS: 8 for 16 hours Lecturer
Fernando Gentilini, diplomat and writer

Course Description
The course will focus on literature, statecraft and world order. It will try to demonstrate that geopolitics doesnot explain everything, and that myths, traditions and literature are equally important to understand "how the world really works". We will focus on books that have inspired kings, queens, statesmen and autocrats of alltimes; and on how these books have shaped their thinking. We will try to respond to the question whether contemporary leaders still consume literature, as well as what kind of literature, and discuss whether the restoration of literature as a tutor for statecraft is still a possibility in today's world.

Learning Outcomes
To learn more about how leaders and statesmen design their own mental maps and on how books impactthis process;
To get a better sense of why literature, especially Classics, can help us to understand today's world and to predict where it is going.

TOPICS
Plurality of literary, cultural, religious backgrounds of world actors and political leaders;
The examples of Alexander the Great, Augustus, Catherine of Russia, Bismarck, Schuman, Trump, Xi, Putin: the books they read and how these books have shaped their agendas;
Study case: How the idea of Europe was shaped by writers and books through the centuries;
Study case: The literary roots of geopolitical crises/wars in Middle East, Russia/Ukraine, China/Taiwan.
Study case: Colonialism explained by Classics: Chinua Achebe, Joseph Conrad, Edward Said.
Study case: China, US, Russia, Europe. Geopolitics and Tradition in a world of changes

Teaching Method
Students will attend lectures, followed by class debates to give them the opportunity to actively discuss the issues raised. Class exercises and discussions will allow students to better exchange on specific topics.

Textbook
Charles Hill, *Grand Strategies, Literature, Statecraft, and World Order*, Yale University Press, 2010.

E-mail
gentilinifernando@outlook.it