



# Laurea / B.A. in Global Governance

Academic Year 2023-2024

Syllabus

**LITERATURE, STATECRAFT, WORLD ORDER**

**Nº OF SESSIONS: 8 for 16 hours**

**Lecturer: Fernando Gentilini,**

**Principal Adviser European Diplomatic Academy**

## Course Description

The course will focus on literature, statecraft and world order. It will try to demonstrate that geopolitics does not 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, leaders and autocrats of all times; 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 understand that the relationship between literature and statecraft is reciprocal: literature informs leaders whose actions may later become the stuff of literature;
- To learn more about how leaders and statesmen design their own mental maps and on how books impact this process;
- To get a better sense of why a political leader cannot renounce literature, if he/she wants to be creative and imaginative, and predict where the world is going.

## TOPICS

- Plurality of literary, cultural, religious backgrounds of world actors and political leaders;
- The examples of Alexander the Great, Augustus, Marcus Aurelius, Constantine, Charlemagne, the Arab Caliphs, Lorenzo de’ Medici, Richelieu, Catherine of Russia, Napoleon, Cavour, Bismarck, Queen Victoria, Mussolini, Lenin, Schuman, Monet, De Gaulle, Thatcher, Obama, Putin, Papa Francesco: the books they read and how these books have shaped their agendas;
- Study case: How the idea of a peaceful and united Europe was shaped by writers and books between the XVII and the XX centuries;
- Study case: The literary roots of current geopolitical crises/wars: Middle East, Russia/Ukraine, China/Taiwan.

## Teaching Method

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

## Textbook

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

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