Global Theory and History Learning Goals

Global Theory and History concentrators will examine the “big ideas” that preoccupy the policy-maker and the scholar of international relations. For example, the program will pose and attempt to answer such questions as are alliances dead, what is the meaning and significance of “hegemony” and has it ever existed in the central international system, how do international political economy and security meet in a fuller understanding of foreign policy, will nuclear proliferation face constructive limits, and is major war obsolete or inevitable? By looking at the large questions of international relations the student obtains a holistic understanding of world politics. As tools to help understand these questions, knowledge of both theory and history is made comprehensible to the concentrator in this program. Students will leave with a better grasp of both policy-making and policy analysis.

Learning Objectives:

1. Students will be able to identify the big questions that have perturbed the diplomat and policy-maker since the origin of the modern state system;
2. Consider how international political economy underpins security policy and international political strategy;
3. Exhume matters of culture, religion, and media relations as they affect foreign policy making;
4. Examine the issues that daily confront statecraft in fashioning an overview of how policy ought to be shaped and explicated;
5. Draw upon the ideas of scholars of international relations and of historians to determine how both mistakes and constructive solutions have affected decision-making;
6. Use case studies, theoretical argument, historical and empirical evidence, and pragmatic judgment to deal with some of the thorniest problems ever faced in statecraft; and
7. Pull all of this analysis together to make sense out of future world order.