Документ подписан простой электронной подписью
Информация о владельце:
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Должность: Ректор
Дата подписания: 02.11.2026 15:59:07
Уникальный программный ключ:
ca953a0120d891083f939673078ef1a989dae18a

Federal State Autonomous Educational Institution of Higher Education
Peoples' Friendship University of Russia named after Patrice Lumumba
RUDN University

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES
educational division (faculty/institute/academy) as higher education programme developer

COURSE SYLLABUS

SOFT POWER AS FOREIGN POLICY TOOL: FORMS AND MECHANISMS
Course title

Recommended by the Didactic Council for the Education Field of:

41.04.04 Political Science
field of studies / speciality code and title

The course instruction is implemented within the professional education programme of higher education:

MA IN POLITICAL SCIENCE, POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS AND VALUES
higher education programme profile/specialisation title

2026

1. COURSE GOAL(s)

The goal of the course «Soft Power as a Foreign Policy Tool: Forms and Mechanism» is to provide theoretical foundations of soft power, its tools, forms of implementation, as well as analysing practical applications in various geopolitical contexts, including the Russian experience.

The course provides a comprehensive understanding of the concept of soft power, its role in contemporary international politics, as well as to develop skills in analysing and evaluating the use of this tool by states.

2. REQUIREMENTS FOR LEARNING OUTCOMES

Mastering the course «Soft power as foreign policy tool: forms and mechanisms» is aimed at the development of the following competences:

Table 2.1. List of competences that students acquire through the course study

Competence code	**Competence descriptor**	**Competence formation indicators** (within this course)
GC-5	Able to analyze and take into account the diversity of cultures in the process of intercultural interaction.	GC-5.1. Finds and uses information about the cultural characteristics and traditions of various social groups in social and professional communication; GC-5.2. Collects information on a given topic, taking into account ethnic groups and confessions that are most widely represented at the points where the research is being conducted; GC-5.3. Adheres to the principles of non-discriminatory interaction in personal and mass communication in order to fulfill professional tasks and strengthen social integration.
GC-6	Able to determine and implement the priorities of his own activities and ways to improve them based on self-assessment.	GC-6.1. Analyzes his resources and their limits (personal, situational, temporary, etc.) to successfully complete the task; GC-6.2. Distributes tasks into long-, medium- and short-term ones with justification of relevance and analysis of resources for their implementation.

3. COURSE IN HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

The course «Soft Power as a Foreign Policy Tool: Forms and Mechanism» refers to the elective component of (B1) block of the higher educational programme curriculum.

Within the higher education programme students also master other (modules) and / or internships that contribute to the achievement of the expected learning outcomes as results of the course study.

Table 3.1. The list of the higher education programme components/disciplines that contribute to the achievement of the expected learning outcomes as the course study results

Competence code	Competence descriptor	Previous courses/modules*	Subsequent courses/modules*
GC-5	Able to analyze and take into account the diversity of cultures in the process of intercultural interaction.	Research work during the semester; Culture and Identity in Russia; History of Religions in Russia; Ethics of Public Policy and Administration; Diversity and Governance: Civil Society, Religion, and Ethnicity**; Empire and Nationalism in Russia, the Soviet Union, Europe, and Asia**;	
GC-6	Able to determine and implement the priorities of his own activities and ways to improve them based on self-assessment.	Scientific and Research Work in the Semester;	Undergraduate Practice;

* To be filled in according to the competence matrix of the higher education programme.

4. COURSE WORKLOAD AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

The total workload of the course is 2 credits 72 academic hours.

Table 4.1. Types of academic activities during the periods of higher education programme mastering

Type of academic activities		Total academic hours	Semesters/ training modules			
				2		4
Contact academic hours		*34*				
Lectures (LC)		17				
Seminars (workshops/tutorials) (S)		17				
Self-studies		*20*				
Evaluation and assessment (exam/ passing/failing grade)		*18*				
Course workload	academic hours	**72**				
	credits	**2**				

* To be filled in regarding the higher education programme correspondence training mode.

5. COURSE CONTENTS

Table 5.1. Course contents and academic activities types

Course module title	Course module contents (topics)	Topics contents	Academic activities types
Module 1. Theoretical Foundations of «Soft Power»	Topic 1.1. Concept and essence of «soft power».	History of the term, Joseph Nye's concept, differences between «soft», «hard», and «smart» power. Resources of soft power: culture, ideology, foreign policy, economic attractiveness.	*LC, S*
	Topic 1.2. The role of «soft power» in the system of international relations.	Its place in international relations theory (liberalism, political realism, constructivism). Interrelation with public diplomacy, cultural diplomacy, and other instruments of influence.	*LC, S*
Module 2. Instruments and Forms of «Soft Power»	Topic 2.1. Cultural component of «soft power»	The role of culture, language, education, and science in soft power. Examples of influence through mass culture, academic exchanges, and promotion of the national language.	*LC, S*
	Topic 2.2. Political and informational instruments	The significance of political ideology and foreign policy. The role of mass media, digital technologies, and social networks. Soft power ratings and indices.	*LC, S*
	Topic 2.3. Economic and humanitarian aspects	Investment attractiveness, development assistance programs, humanitarian diplomacy, and work with diasporas.	*LC, S*
Module 3. Practical Application of «Soft Power»	Topic 3.1. Soft power of leading states	Analysis of strategies of Russia, the USA, the EU, China, and other countries. The role of institutions (e.g., Rossotrudnichestvo programs, USAID, Erasmus+, Confucius Institutes).	*LC, S*
	Topic 3.2. Russian soft power	Regulatory and legal framework (The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, The Concept of Humanitarian Policy Abroad). Instruments: educational programs, promotion of the Russian language, work with compatriots abroad.	*LC, S*
	Topic 3.3. Evaluating the effectiveness of soft power	Success criteria, problems, and limitations. Examples of successes and failures in promoting a positive image of states.	*LC, S*

* - to be filled in only for **full** -time training: *LC - lectures; LW - lab work; S - seminars.*

6. CLASSROOM EQUIPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS

Table 6.1. Classroom equipment and technology support requirements

Type of academic activities	**Classroom equipment**	**Specialised educational / laboratory equipment, software, and materials for course study** (if necessary)
Lecture	A lecture hall for lecture-type classes, equipped with a set of specialised furniture; board (screen) and technical means of multimedia presentations.	
Self-studies	A classroom for independent work of students (can be used for seminars and consultations), equipped with a set of specialised furniture and computers with access to the electronic information and educational environment.	

* The premises for students' self-studies are subject to **MANDATORY** mention

7. RESOURCES RECOMMENDED FOR COURSE STUDY

Main readings:

1. Political Reflection, Theory, and Methodology of Scientific Research. Political Science. Yearbook 2017 [Text]. - Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2017 - 383 p. - ISBN 978-5-8243-2120-3: 350.00.

Additional readings:

2. Nye, Joseph S., Jr. Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics. https://www.foreignaffairs.com/reviews/capsule-review/2004-05-01/soft-power-means-success-world-politics
3. Lebedeva, M., Kharkevich, M. Soft Power as Integration Resource in Russia's Foreign Policy. http://www.vestnik.mgimo.ru/en/razdely/international-relations/soft-power-integration-resource-russias-foreign-policy
4. Manners, I. The Normative Power Europe: The International Role of the EU. http://aei.pitt.edu/7263/1/002188_1.PDF

Internet sources

1. Electronic libraries (EL) of RUDN University and other institutions, to which university students have access on the basis of concluded agreements:

- RUDN Electronic Library System (RUDN ELS) http://lib.rudn.ru/MegaPro/Web
- EL "University Library Online" http://www.biblioclub.ru
- EL "Yurayt" http://www.biblio-online.ru
- EL "Student Consultant" www.studentlibrary.ru

- EL "Lan" http://e.lanbook.com/
- EL "Trinity Bridge"

2.Databases and search engines:

- electronic foundation of legal and normative-technical documentation http://docs.cntd.ru/
- Yandex search engine https:// www .yandex.ru/
- Google search engine https://www.google.ru/
- Scopus abstract database http://www.elsevierscience.ru/products/scopus/

*Training toolkit for self- studies to master the course *:*

1. The set of lectures on the course «International Migration: Political Values and Cultural Aspects»
2. The laboratory workshop (if any).on the course «International Migration: Political Values and Cultural Aspects»
3. The guidelines for writing a course paper / project (if any) on the course «International Migration: Political Values and Cultural Aspects»

* The training toolkit for self- studies to master the course is placed on the course page in the university telecommunication training and information system under the set procedure.

DEVELOPERS:

Assistan of the department of comparative politics	**Bogin S.V.**
position, department	name and surname

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