

THE FOREIGN SERVICE GROUP

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Ms. Julie Kavanagh

“Observations from a Practitioner”

Our speaker suggests the following reading list, which is the Department of State’s Suggested Reading List to prepare for a Foreign Service career:

Foreign Service Officers must be well-informed and knowledgeable across many disciplines: current world and national affairs, economics, history, public affairs, and management, among others. And, since Foreign Service Officers represent the United States to the world, they must also possess an insightful understanding of American society and culture. This breadth of knowledge is usually gathered gradually over time. The best foundation is a solid education and a personal life-habit of reading, learning, and expanding one’s understanding of the world.

Given this breadth, it is difficult to provide a definitive reading list that will prepare a person for the Foreign Service selection process, and for a Foreign Service career. Nonetheless, the reading list below illustrates the kinds of books and readings that can set you in the right direction.

Current Affairs

Periodicals such as U.S. News and World Report, The Economist, Time, The Atlantic, Newsweek, Forbes, The New Yorker

A major daily newspaper such as The Wall Street Journal, New York Times, Washington Post, Los Angeles Times

Journals such as Foreign Affairs and Foreign Policy, and The New York Review of Books

English Usage

Chicago Manual of Style: The Essential Guide for Writers, Editors, and Publishers, 16th ed., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010. ISBN: 0226104206

Strunk, W., Jr. and White, E.B. *The Elements of Style, 4th ed.*, Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1999. ISBN: 020530902X

United States (culture, foreign policy, history, politics)

Ambrose, Stephen E., and Douglas Brinkley. *Rise to Globalism: American Foreign Policy since 1938*. New York: Penguin, 2011. ISBN: 0142004944

Davidson, J.W., et al. *Nation of Nations: A Narrative History of the American Republic, 6th ed.*, Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2007. ISBN: 0073406848

Feagin, J.R. and Feagin, C.B. *Racial and Ethnic Relations, 9th ed.*, Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2011. ISBN: 0205024995

Goldstein, J.S. and Pevehouse, J.S. *International Relations, 10th ed.*, New York: Pearson Longman, 2011. ISBN: 97205059577

Hirsch E.D, Kett, J.F., and Trefil, J. *The New Dictionary of Cultural Literacy, 3rd ed.*, Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 2002. ISBN: 0618226478

Jentleson, Bruce W. *American Foreign Policy: The Dynamics of Choice in the 21st Century*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2010. ISBN: 0393933571

Morgan, William D., and Charles Stuart. Kennedy. *American Diplomats: The Foreign Service at Work*. New York: IUniverse, 2004. ISBN: 0595329748

Norton, M.B., et al. *A People and a Nation: A History of the United States, 9th ed.*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2011. ISBN: 0495915256

Paterson, Thomas G. *American Foreign Relations: A History*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2009. ISBN: 0547225695

Rosati, J. *The Politics of United States Foreign Policy, 5th ed.*, Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning, 2010. ISBN: 0495797241

Woloch, N. *Women and the American Experience, 5th ed.*, Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2011. ISBN: 0073385573

World History and Geography

Acemoglu, Daron, and James A. Robinson. *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity, and Poverty*. New York: Crown Business, 2012. ISBN: 0307719219

Atlas of the World, 12th ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004. ISBN: 0195221478

Best, Antony. *International History of the Twentieth Century and Beyond*. London: Routledge, 2008. ISBN: 0415438969

Craig, A.M., et al. *The Heritage of World Civilizations, 7th ed.*, combined vol. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2006. ISBN: 0131926233

Diamond, Jared. *Guns, Germs and Steel*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1999. ISBN: 0393317552

Diamond, Larry Jay. *The Spirit of Democracy: The Struggle to Build Free Societies throughout the World*. New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2009. ISBN: 0805089136

Ferguson, Niall. *Civilization: The West and the Rest*. New York: Penguin, 2011. ISBN: 9780143122067

Gilbert, Martin. *A History of the Twentieth Century*. New York: W. Morrow, 1997. ISBN: 006050594X

Mishra, Pankaj. *From the Ruins of Empire: The Revolt against the West and the Remaking of Asia*. London: Allen Lane, 2012. ISBN: 1250037719

Area Studies

Bose, Sugata, and Ayesha Jalal. *Modern South Asia: History, Culture, and Political Economy*. New York: Routledge, 2004. ISBN: 0415169526

Coll, Steven. *Ghost Wars: The Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan, and bin Laden, From the Soviet Invasion to September 10, 2001*. New York: Penguin Press, 2004. ISBN: 0143034669

Gelvin, James L. *The Arab Uprisings: What Everyone Needs to Know*. New York: Oxford UP, 2012. ISBN: 019989177X

Gordon, April A., and Donald L. Gordon. *Understanding Contemporary Africa*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2013. ISBN: 1588268470

Judt, Tony. *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945*. New York: Penguin, 2006. ISBN: 0143037757

King, Charles. *The Ghost of Freedom: A History of the Caucasus*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010. ISBN: 0195392396

Rosefielde, Steven, and Stefan Hedlund. *Russia since 1980: Wrestling with Westernization*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2009. ISBN: 0521613841

Rubin, Barnett R. *Afghanistan from the Cold War through the War on Terror*. Oxford University Press, 2013. ISBN: 0199791120

Rumer, B. and Zhukov, S. *Central Asia: The Challenges of Independence*. Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1998. ISBN: 0765602547

Schell, Orville, and John Delury. *Wealth and Power: China's Long March to the Twenty-first Century*. New York: Random House, 2013. ISBN: 0679643478

Shambaugh, David L. *China Goes Global: The Partial Power*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2013. ISBN: 0199860149

Yergin, Daniel. *The Quest: Energy, Security and the Remaking of the Modern World*. New York: Penguin, 2012. ISBN: 0143121944

Consular and Immigration

Carens, Joseph H. *Immigrants and the Right to Stay*. Cambridge, MA: MIT, 2010. ISBN: 0262014831

Joppke, Christian. *Citizenship and Immigration*. Cambridge, U.K.: Polity, 2010. ISBN: 0745642357

Kanstroom, Dan. *Deportation Nation: Outsiders in American History*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2010. ISBN: 0674046226.

Martin, David A., and Peter H. Schuck. *Immigration Stories*. New York: Foundation, 2005. ISBN: 158778873X

Motomura, Hiroshi. *Americans in Waiting: The Lost Story of Immigration and Citizenship in the United States*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, Inc. 2006. ISBN: 0195163451

Takaki, Ronald T. *A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America*. New York: Back Bay and Little Brown, 2008. ISBN: 0316022365

Economics and Public Policy

Hall, R.E. and Papell, D.H. *Macroeconomics: Economic growth, fluctuations, and policy. 6th ed.*, New York: W.W. Norton, 2005. ISBN: 0393975150

Mankiw, G. *Principles of Microeconomics, 6th ed.*, Mason, OH : Thomson South-Western, 2012. ISBN 0538453044

Murray, Williamson, Richard Hart. Sinnreich, and Jim Lacey. *The Shaping of Grand Strategy: Policy, Diplomacy, and War*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2011. ISBN: 0521156335

Rushefsky, M.E. *Public Policy in the United States: At the Dawn of the Twenty-First Century, 4th ed.*, Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 2008. ISBN: 978976561663

Shultz, G.P. and Dam, K.W. *Economic Policy Beyond the Headlines, 2nd ed.*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998. ISBN: 0226755991

Management and Human Behavior

Gerrig, R.J. *Psychology and Life, 20th ed.*, Boston: Pearson, 2013. ISBN: 0205859135

Gladwell, Malcolm. *Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking*. Publisher: Back Bay Books; Reprint edition (April 1, 2007). Language: English. ISBN: 0316010669.

Gleitman, H., Gross, J., and Reisberg, D. *Psychology, 8th ed.*, New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2011. ISBN: 0393932508

Griffin, R.W. *Fundamentals of Management: Core Concepts and Applications, 6th ed.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 2012. ISBN: 0538478756

Moorhead, G. and Griffin, R.W. *Organizational Behavior: Managing People and Organizations, 10th ed.*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 2012. ISBN: 0538478136

Schneider, S., and Barsoux, J., *Managing Across Cultures, 2nd ed.*, Harlow, England; New York: Financial Times Prentice Hall, 2003. ISBN: 027364663X

Twomey, D.P. *Employment Discrimination Law: A Manager's Guide: Text & Cases.* 6th ed., Mason, OH: Thomson/South-Western, 2005. ISBN: 0324271301

Public Affairs and the Media

Dominick, J.R. *The Dynamics of Mass Communication: Media in the Digital Age, 11th ed.* Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2010. ISBN: 0073378887

Houston, B. (eds) *The investigative reporter's handbook: a guide to documents, databases, and techniques, 5th ed.*, Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2009. ISBN: 0312589972

Itule, B.D. and Anderson, D.A., *News Writing and Reporting for Today's Media, 7th ed.* Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2006. ISBN: 0072981091

Morrison, T., and Conaway, W. A. *Kiss, Bow, or Shake Hands. 2nd ed.* Avon, MA: Adams Media, 2006. ISBN: 1593373686

Osborn, M., and Osborn, S. *Public Speaking, 9th ed.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2012. ISBN: 0205912257

Samovar, L.A. Porter R.E., and McDaniel, E.R. eds. *Intercultural Communication: A reader, 13th ed.* Belmont, CA: Thomson/Wadsworth, 2011. ISBN: 0495898317

Ting-Toomey, Stella, and Leeva C. Chung. *Understanding Intercultural Communication.* New York: Oxford UP, 2012. ISBN: 019973979X

Computer Applications

Parson, J.J., and Oja, D. *New Perspectives on Computer Concepts: Comprehensive. 15th ed.* Boston: Thomson/Course Technology, 2012. ISBN: 1133190561

Sammons, M.C. *The Longman Guide to Style and Writing on the Internet, 2nd ed.* Longman, 2007. ISBN: 020557629X

Apps

DOSCareers Mobile App, Available at the App Store, Google Play

THE FOREIGN SERVICE JOURNAL

For additional reading, The Foreign Service Journal recommends:

Shawn Dorman, Excerpts from *Inside a U.S. Embassy, Third Edition*.
<http://www.afsa.org/inside-us-embassy>

William J. Burns, "[10 Parting Thoughts for America's Diplomats](https://foreignpolicy.com/2014/10/23/10-parting-thoughts-for-americas-diplomats/)," *The Foreign Service Journal*, October 23, 2014. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2014/10/23/10-parting-thoughts-for-americas-diplomats/>

Raymond Smith, "[Understanding Russian Foreign Policy Today](http://www.afsa.org/understanding-russian-foreign-policy-today)," *The Foreign Service Journal*, December 2016. <http://www.afsa.org/understanding-russian-foreign-policy-today>

Justin Lifflander, "[Four Centuries and Three Decades of Russian Thinking](http://www.afsa.org/four-centuries-and-three-decades-russian-thinking)," *The Foreign Service Journal*, December 2016. <http://www.afsa.org/four-centuries-and-three-decades-russian-thinking>

Timothy C. Lawson, "[Communications Behind the Iron Curtain](http://www.afsa.org/communications-behind-iron-curtain)," *The Foreign Service Journal*, December 2016. <http://www.afsa.org/communications-behind-iron-curtain>

Chas Freeman, "[Nixon Goes to China](http://www.afsa.org/1970s-nixon-goes-china)," *The Foreign Service Journal*, March 2014. <http://www.afsa.org/1970s-nixon-goes-china>

Winthrop G. Brown, "[The Art of Negotiation](https://www.afsa.org/foreign-service-journal-july-1968#page=16)," *The Foreign Service Journal*, July 1968. <https://www.afsa.org/foreign-service-journal-july-1968#page=16>

Jonathan B. Bingham, "[The U.S. China, and the U.N.](http://www.afsa.org/foreign-service-journal-february-1972#page=18)," *The Foreign Service Journal*, February 1972. <http://www.afsa.org/foreign-service-journal-february-1972#page=18>

Amanda Erickson and Julie Vitkovskaya, "[How the Diplomatic Fight Between Russia and the U.S. Unfolded](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2017/09/01/heres-how-the-diplomatic-tit-for-tat-between-russia-and-the-u-s-unfolded/?utm_term=.b4b208619755)," *The Washington Post*, September 5, 2017. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2017/09/01/heres-how-the-diplomatic-tit-for-tat-between-russia-and-the-u-s-unfolded/?utm_term=.b4b208619755

John W. Bowling, "[How We Do Our Thing: Crisis Management](http://www.afsa.org/foreign-service-journal-may-1970#page=21)," *The Foreign Service Journal*, May 1970. <http://www.afsa.org/foreign-service-journal-may-1970#page=21>

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For additional reading, our members suggest:

American Statecraft: The Story of the U.S. Foreign Service, J Robert Moskin, St Martin's Press, 2013, 913 pgs

American Diplomacy Revised & Expanded, Robert J. Ferrell, W. W. Norton & Company, 1969, 930 pgs

The Back Channel: A Memoir of American Diplomacy and the Case for Its Renewal, William J. Burns, Random House, 2018, 501 pgs

The Big Book of Answers Revised & Updated, edited by Kevin S. Hile, Visible Ink Press, 2017, 710 pgs

Diplomat's Dictionary, second edition, Chas. W. Freeman, Jr., United States Institute of Peace, 2009, 338 pgs

Peace They Say: A History of the Nobel Peace Prize, Jay Nordlinger, 2012, 459 pgs

The Ambassadors from Ancient Greece to Renaissance Europe: The Men who Introduced the World to Itself, Jonathan Wright, Harcourt Inc., 2006, 374 pgs

Department of State, United States of America, Office of the Historian; 202-512-1800

Search: About the Foreign Relations of the United States Series

Search: People

Search: Ebooks (history_ebooks@state.gov)

The Meaning of the 21st Century, James Martin, Riverhead Books, 2007, 497 pgs

The Silent Language, Edward T Hall, Doubleday, 1959

SIPA's The Journal of International Affairs, vol. 72 #1, "The Fourth Industrial Revolution," 2019, 170 pgs

Understanding Global Cultures: Metaphorical Journeys through 17 Countries, Martin J. Cannon, Sage Publications, 1994, 375 pgs

BARNES & NOBLE

BOOKSELLERS

Barnes & Noble – Arboretum (Austin, Texas) suggests:

Abramson, Jill. *Merchants of Truth: The Business of News and the Fight for Facts*. 2019, Simon & Schuster, 544pp

Ambrose, Stephen E. and Douglas G. Brinkley (editors). *Rise to Globalism: American Foreign Policy Since 1938, Ninth Revised Edition*. 2010, Penguin, 592pp

Axelrod, Alan. *100 Turning Points in American History*. 2019, Rowman & Littlefield, 392pp

Burns, William J. *The Back Channel: A Memoir of American Diplomacy and the Case for Its Renewal*. 2019, Random House, 512pp

Farman, Jason. *Delayed Response: The Art of Waiting from the Ancient World to the Instant World*. 2018, Yale University Press, 232pp

Farrow, Ronan. *War on Peace: The End of Diplomacy and the Decline of American Influence*. 2018, W.W. Norton, 432pp

Jacoby, Susan. *The Age of American Unreason in a Culture of Lies*. 2018, Knopf Doubleday, 400pp

Kerry, John. *Every Day is Extra*. 2018, Simon & Schuster, 640pp

Perlstein, Rick. *Before the Storm: Barry Goldwater and the Unmaking of the American Consensus*. 2009, PublicAffairs, 704pp

Perlstein, Rick. *Nixonland: The Rise of a President and the Fracturing of America*. 2009, Scribner, 896pp

Sasse, Ben. *Them: Why We Hate Each Other – and How to Heal*. 2018, St. Martin's Press, 288pp

Steil, Benn. *The Marshall Plan: Dawn of the Cold War*. 2019, Simon & Schuster, 624pp

Wright, Lawrence. *God Save Texas: A Journey Into the Soul of the Lone Star State*. 2014, Knopf Doubleday, 368pp