

Foreign Policy Workshop held on 18th and 19th April , 2019

April 17, 2019

Symbiosis School of International Studies (SSIS), Pune in collaboration with Brookings India, have jointly organised a two-day workshop on foreign policy formulation, on 18.03.2019 and 19.03.2019. The aim of the workshop was to unpack the debate around the topic and provide the audience with the opportunity to critically examine the important concepts and analyse the process of foreign policy formulation. The key resource persons were Mr. Dhruva Jaishankar (Fellow, Brookings India), Amb. (Retd.) Gautam Bambawale and Amb. (Retd.) Talmiz Ahmad.

The discussions revolved around the modern acts of diplomacy and the role foreign policy plays in today's nation building. The speakers touched upon tools to critically examine the determinants of the foreign policy formulation, to identify the stakeholders and to understand the evolution of foreign policy. The workshop thereby helped demystify the critical concepts that are involved in foreign policy formulation.

The introductory session, aptly named 'Demystifying Concepts' helped students understand the basic tenets of foreign policy and the historical crafting of India's foreign policy with special emphasis on Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi. The discussion extended further about the contemporary role of Narendra Modi's approach towards the foreign policy and how Donald Trump's America first slogan is having an impact on the global world. The second session was focussed on Indian strategic thought, where India's role in relation with its neighbours, allies and rivals was discussed. It also talked about the treaties, border disputes and challenges. The third session highlighted how policy research is different from academic research. The students were exposed to various primary and secondary data sources for policy research. On the second day, the students were given a hands on experience in framing a research question and also engage in a SWOT (Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats) analysis about their research problem. A modified world café method was used. The student groups presented their cases in front of the expert panel and the cases were further discussed in detail. Thus the workshop helped students to understand the theoretical concepts of the Indian Foreign Policy and taught them a framework of policy research.