Suggested Reading List

Members of the U.S. Foreign Service must be well-informed and knowledgeable across many disciplines: current world and national affairs, economics, history, public affairs, and management, among others. And, since members of the Foreign Service 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.

Note: The inclusion or exclusion of specific materials on this list does not constitute an endorsement nor rejection by the U.S. Department of State of any particular title, author, or topic. Reading widely from a variety of viewpoints to understand arguments that support or run counter to U.S. policy or one’s own convictions helps diplomats be persuasive when encountering other perspectives.

Current Affairs

- Periodicals such as *The Economist, Time, The Atlantic, Forbes, The New Yorker, Fortune*
- Journals such as *The Foreign Service Journal, Foreign Affairs, and Foreign Policy*

English Usage


The Foreign Service and U.S. Foreign Policy

- Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training: [adst.org](http://adst.org)
• U.S. Department of State “Foreign Policy Classroom,” https://www.state.gov/foreign-policy-classroom/

• National Museum of American Diplomacy programs: https://diplomacy.state.gov/latest-programs/virtual-programs/


U.S. Government and Politics
• General primers on U.S. government structure and functions


**U.S. History, Society, Customs, and Culture**


**World History and Geography**


**Economics:**


**Mathematics and Statistics**


**Management and Leadership:**


**Communications:**


**Consular and Immigration**


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