

Laurel Rapp

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Experience

Department of State | Deputy Director, Secretary of State's Policy Planning Staff | Jan. 2024-Jan. 2025

- Led team of seasoned, diverse civil and foreign service officers, political appointees, and academic fellows charged with defining and advancing Secretary Blinken's policy and diplomatic priorities and aligning them with the Department's resource, posture, and institutional plans.
- Shaped the team's research, writing, and public speaking focus.
- Managed the team's budget, staff recruitment, performance, and career development.
- Built and leveraged relationships with academic and research institutions to inject rigor, new ideas, and alternative perspectives into the Department's policy development efforts.
- Participated in dozens of policy planning dialogues with wide range of partners, including in U.S. delegations to Brazil, Ethiopia, France, Germany, India, South Africa, and UK; led engagements at UN; regularly engaged diplomatic counterparts, Congressional staff, and media.
- Oversaw initiatives that foster debate and innovation, including the Dissent Channel, the Policy Ideas Channel, the Secretary's Open Forum speaker series, and the Secretary's Foreign Affairs Policy Board.
- Taught courses at the Foreign Service Institute on U.S. foreign policy priorities, the National Security Strategy, and fostering constructive dissent.

Department of State | Member, Secretary of State's Policy Planning Staff | Oct. 2021-Dec. 2023

- Authored Secretary Blinken's strategy to reinvigorate U.S. leadership at the United Nations and other multilateral institutions, resulting in an affirmative vision for the UN's future, the President's push on UN Security Council reform, launch of an advanced multilateral training curriculum, and new partnership to second U.S. diplomats to UN agencies.
- Developed major policy frameworks to reshape U.S. strategy towards "hedging states".

Senate | Foreign Relations Committee Fellow | Jan.-Dec. 2020

- Served as a foreign policy expert on Europe, South & Central Asia, focusing on transatlantic alliances, the U.S.-India relationship, and civil society partnerships.
- Authored draft legislation to strengthen NATO and U.S.-European relations, Central Asian human rights.
- Regularly engaged senior experts, offered original analysis of external research and policy papers.

Department of State | Senior Advisor, UN Political Affairs Office | June 2018-Dec. 2019, Jan-Oct. 2021

- Oversaw assessments of United Nations civilian missions, produced recommendations for missions' mandates, budgets, and operations, including closure of UN peacekeeping mission in Haiti, rightsizing of UN presence in Afghanistan and Iraq, and streamlining UN mandate in Libya.
- Led U.S. engagements with UN senior leadership, including permanent UN Security Council members.

Department of State | Special Assistant, International Organization Affairs | July 2016- April 2018

- Advised the Assistant Secretary on policy, programs, and personnel decisions at the UN.
- Supervised team of three staff assistants charged with coordinating written products, verbal briefings, and interagency engagement across a bureau of 150 people in Washington, D.C. and six foreign missions.
- Oversaw the planning and allocation of over \$5.5 billion in annual contributions to UN.

Department of State | Special Assistant, Office of the Deputy Secretary | June 2015- July 2016

- Organized and staffed official visits to Bahrain, France, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, and Turkey; supported the Deputy Secretary's meetings with prime ministers, parliamentarians, civil society leaders, and keynotes.
- Led special projects for the Deputy Secretary, with a focus on civilian harm in armed conflict and humanitarian and refugee assistance.

Department of State | Oman, Bahrain, and Gulf Economic Desk Officer | Aug. 2011-June 2015

- Designed U.S. policy to condition arms sales on human rights reforms in Bahrain.
- Authored analysis on impact of oil pricing on Gulf budgets, foreign investment, and regional integration.
- Briefed Congress, businesses, academics, think tanks, and press on U.S. assessment of Bahrain reforms.

White House National Security Council | Special Assistant, Acting Director | April-August 2012

- Provided policy recommendations to the National Security Advisor on North Africa, with a focus on assistance to Arab Spring countries, Libyan elections, and the Western Sahara UN peacekeeping mission.

The OneVoice Movement | International Education Program Director | Aug. 2009-July 2011

- Directed U.S. and Canada university programming on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, reaching 6,000 students; delivered remarks to over 150 universities on the conflict.
- Authored leadership training manual for Israeli, Palestinian, and North American youth leaders.
- Managed program coordinator and two interns, raised \$200,000 in grant funding.

Université Mohamed V Morocco | Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar | Sept. 2006-June 2007

- Designed, conducted, and published field research on voting attitudes and gender in Rabat, Morocco.
- Co-hosted major conference series on political Islam and democracy, bringing together 150 youth participants from the United States and Morocco, Jordan, and Egypt; secured funding.

Education

Harvard Kennedy School of Government | M.A. in Public Policy

- Authored thesis on “Energy Prospects for Jordan: Markets, Technologies, and Political Considerations.”
- Served as course assistant for “Successes and Challenges in Modern Diplomacy.”

Brown University | B.A in International Relations

- Served as research assistant to professors on counterterrorism and European political violence.

Leadership Activities and Honors

Selectee, Syracuse University National Security Studies Management course (2023)

Superior Honor Award, State Department (2022)

Task Force, Transforming the State Department, Truman National Security Project (2020-2021)

Fellow, Brookings Institution Legislative Affairs Program (2020)

Superior Honor Award, State Department (2013)

Foreign Language Skills

French (Advanced)

Modern Standard Arabic (Intermediate)

Moroccan Arabic Dialect (Intermediate)

Italian (Intermediate).