

Political Science 551
The United Nations System

Monday and Wednesday, 1:30 – 3:18

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(or by appointment)

Course Description

This course begins with an overview of various theoretical perspectives on international relations generally and on the role of international organizations and law more specifically. We then examine the historical evolution of the United Nations and its precursors, and discuss the UN's structure and governance role in various areas, including international peace and security, human rights, development, and the environment. We also assess the weaknesses and strengths of the UN and its agencies and possibilities for reform. We then turn to the topic of globalization and the role of the UN, WTO and other international organizations. We conclude with a discussion of unilateralism versus multilateralism as alternative political strategies in the contemporary international system.

Course Requirements

Students are expected to attend every class session and to keep themselves updated on current events involving the UN and other international organizations (we will begin every Wednesday session with a discussion of relevant current events). Graded assignments include: two quizzes, a midterm exam, a final exam, and a 5-page paper on UN reform (due March 4). Detailed instructions on the paper assignment will be forthcoming in class. The quizzes and exams will test course readings as well as information covered during class sessions. Note that class lectures and discussion will often cover material that is not covered in the course texts, so receiving a good grade in this course requires that you attend class *and* do the readings.

The final grade will be determined as follows:

Midterm exam	30%
Final exam	30%
Paper	20%
Quiz 1	10%
Quiz 2	10%

Course Texts

The following required books are available at SBX:

- Karen Mingst & Margaret Karns, *The United Nations in the 21st Century*, 3rd Ed.
- Paul Diehl, ed., *The Politics of Global Governance*, 3rd Ed.

Academic Misconduct

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct (http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource_csc.asp).

Disability Services

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated, and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>.

COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS

January 5 – Introductory session

Readings:

Mingst & Karns, Chapter 1

January 7 – International Organizations: Trends and Concepts

Readings:

-Pevehouse, Nordstrom & Warnke, in Diehl

-Abbott & Snidal, in Diehl

January 12 – The Evolution of the United Nations

Readings:

-Thompson & Snidal, “International Organization,” pp. 692-98 (Carmen; or at <http://encyclo.findlaw.com/9800book.pdf>)

-Mingst & Karns, Chapter 2, pp. 17-22

January 14 – The Structure of the United Nations

Readings:

Mingst & Karns, Chapter 2, pp. 22-52

January 19 – No class; Martin Luther King, Jr., Day

January 21 – Actors and Decision-making in the UN System

Quiz #1

Readings:

Mingst & Karns, Chapter 3

January 26 – Actors and Decision-making in the UN System (cont.)

Readings:

Johnstone, in Diehl

January 28 – Peace and Security: Collective Security

Readings:

-Mingst & Karns, Chapter 4

-Miller, in Diehl

February 2 – Peace and Security: Peacekeeping

Readings:

Diehl, in Diehl

February 4 – Case Study: The Iraq Wars

Readings: Fareed Zakaria, “We Had Good Intel—The UN’s,” *Newsweek*, February 9, 2004 (Carmen; or through OSCAR)

February 9 – Midterm Exam

February 11 – Human Rights

Readings:

- Mingst & Karns, Chapter 6
- Natsios, in Diehl

February 16 – No Class

February 18 – Economic Cooperation and Development

Readings:

- Mingst & Karns, Chapter 5

February 23 – Human Security and the Environment

Readings:

- Mingst & Karns, Chapter 7

February 25 – Case Study: The Global Politics of Climate Change

Quiz #2

Readings:

- “Caring for Climate 2005: A Guide to the Climate Change Convention and the Kyoto Protocol” (Carmen; or at http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/publications/caring2005_en.pdf)

March 2 – The UN: Problems and Reform

Readings:

- Mingst & Karns, Chapter 8
- Alger, in Diehl

March 4 – Globalization and Its Effects

Paper Due

Readings:

None

March 9 – Case Study: WTO Dispute Settlement

Readings:

- Iida, in Diehl

March 11 – Unilateralism versus Multilateralism

Readings:

- Stephen Walt, “Taming American Power,” *Foreign Affairs* Sept./Oct. 2005 (Carmen; or through OSCAR)
- Ramesh Thakur, “The Responsibility to Protect,” In *The United Nations, Peace and Security* (Carmen)

March 18 (Wednesday)

Final Exam: 1:30 – 3:18