

POLS 480: International Law and Organizations

Instructor: Dr. Rebecca Steffenson

T,TH 3:30-4:45 DuSable Hall 276

Office hours: T,TH 10:30-12:00 and by appointment

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COURSE OBJECTIVE

In this course we will explore the role of international law as a framework for cooperation, and determine how states and non-state actors participate in global governance through international organizations. The expectation is that by course end you be able to develop well constructed arguments about global issues which are supported by both theories of international law and international relations and that these arguments will be demonstrated through the use of practical case studies. These case studies should shed light on the ways that international organizations have managed (or not) issues of global and regional security, human rights, criminal justice, resource management, health, trade and economic development, and voluntary and involuntary migration. Although this course focuses primarily on the institutions of the United Nations, we will compare the UN system where applicable to other international organizations such as the World Trade Organization and the European Union. Questions we will seek to answer include:

- How does international relations theory help us understand why states engage in international cooperation through formal and informal organizations?
- Do the functions of international organizations shift under unilateral, bilateral, or multilateral world views?
- How do the lenses used by international lawyers and political scientists to analyze global governance differ?
- What contribution do states, non-state actors, and international organizations make to processes of global governance?
- What enforcement mechanisms exist for international law?
- What do recent events in international affairs tell us about the scope and limits of international organizations, international law, and state sovereignty?
- What predominant lines of thought are likely to affect the future reform of international organizations?

READING MATERIAL

Weiss and Daws (2007) The Oxford Handbook on the United Nations, Oxford University Press

Other REQUIRED reading will be posted on Blackboard under 'course documents'.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

WRITTEN WORK will determine a significant portion of your grade in this course. Papers which are incoherent due to improper use of grammar will automatically fail. Students are encouraged to take advantage of the University Writing Center <http://uwc.niu.edu> <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=12184757237> This is an upper level political science class. Your essays should consist of well organized and analytical answers. If you have questions about writing for political science you may find the online guide from Georgetown University useful: http://www9.georgetown.edu/faculty/kingch/Writing_PolSci_Essay.htm Graded assessment in this course will be based on the following:

LATE ASSIGNMENTS will be penalized by 1 letter grade per day. This penalty will only be waived in EXCEPTIONAL circumstances, such as those which would require a student to be absent for an extended period (such as hospitalization) or an unforeseen emergency (such as a death in the family). You should contact me as soon as such circumstances arise and recognize that you will be asked to verify your excuse with documentation. I will not consider common illness such as a cold, a headache, or the flu (even with a doctor's note) to be grounds for an extension on any assignments. **I DO NOT EXCEPT LATE FINAL EXAMS** except in cases where students can demonstrate grounds for an incomplete.

ATTENDANCE POLICY: Attendance is not mandatory, but poor attendance will be reflected by a low participation grade. If you have a legitimate reason for needing to be absent: email to me beforehand!

CLASSROOM DECORUM: Please set your cell phones to vibrate, resist the urge to text message, and refrain from private conversations while both the instructor and your classmates are speaking. Debate is encouraged and expected in this course and everyone's opinion will be respected. Consistent disruptive behavior will negatively affect your participation.

GRADED ASSESSMENT:

- 1. Class Participation 15%** Discussion will be a substantial portion of this course. Participation grades will be split into three categories.
 - 'Responsive and substantive' in class discussion 10%. In order for participation to be substantive it must be consistent, relevant, informed by lecture or reading material and delivered respectfully.
 - 'Discussion starter' presentations 2.5% I will randomly choose students to start class discussions. Thus you should come to class prepared to ask a question relevant to the reading. If you are absent or not prepared to start the discussion you will lose participation points. Students who have a valid reason for being absent will not lose participation points. You must, however, inform me before the class.
 - 'Online participation' through Blackboard or facebook 2.5%. Have you seen an interesting article that relates to course discussion? Have a comment or question? Post it! Online participation will be divided into four categories: regular (2.5%), occasional (1.5%) rare (.5%) and never (0%).
- 2. Take home essay questions 15%** You will need to answer three take home essay questions throughout the term. In order to receive high marks you will need to develop well organized and conceptual responses to the questions which are supported by scholarly arguments and factual information. To do this you will need to cite specific scholars from the books and use factual case study information both from the assigned reading and from current news sources.

Question 1. Compare and contrast the analytical frameworks used by international relations and legalization scholars to explain the role and function of international organizations.

Question 2: Discuss 'delegation' in the United Nations system by comparing the roles played by the Principal Organs (General Assembly, the Secretariat and the Security Council).

Question 3: Has the principle of state sovereignty shifted since the UN Charter was drafted?
- 3. Case Study Briefings 10%** Later in the term, you will be asked to apply your knowledge of the UN to case studies which demonstrate how effective the UN is at maintaining security, peacekeeping, and exercising justice. You will need to prepare a short case study brief on an assigned topic, which will be presented in class. The number of briefings will be determined by

the size of the class. Your grade for this assignment will be based on your ability to answer key questions raised in lectures and course readings related to your topic.

- 4. Essay 25%** Essays should be 8-10 pages double spaced, including **at least 5 academic citations** (journal articles, books, or working papers are acceptable) and a bibliography. You can also use required reading and media sources (but these do not count towards your required sources). Essay topics should address the legitimacy and effectiveness of two different principal organs or international organizations in one policy area or one international organization or principal organs in multiple policy areas. Essays need to have a clear thesis, have a clear analytical framework, be well organized, and well written. Topics should be discussed with me (either in person or via email) before 3.19.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: The NIU Undergraduate Catalog states that ‘Students are considered to have cheated if they copy the work of another during an examination or turn in a paper or an assignment written whole or in part by someone else. **Students are guilty of plagiarism, intentional or not, if they copy materials from books, magazines or other sources without identifying or acknowledging those sources or if they paraphrase ideas from such sources without acknowledging them.**’ Plagiarism will be reported to the Department of Political Science and students will be subject to further action by university judicial proceedings. My policy is to fail students caught plagiarizing for the entire course.

- 5. Take home final exam 35%** The final exam will consist of 1 comprehensive essay questions designed to incorporate material covered from the beginning to the end of this course. You will need to develop conceptual arguments supported by theoretical and faculty information. Your answers should reference material covered in class discussion, case study briefings and the assigned reading. Referencing media stories and additional information from the discussion board will earn you extra points.

I will not be handing out a study guide at the end of the course. Therefore you will need to TAKE NOTES! You are also advised to pay attention to the announcements and additional materials on Blackboard. I will give comments to students who write outlines for the final exam essays prior to the last day of class.

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE WEBSITE Students are strongly encouraged to consult the Department of Political Science web site on a regular basis. This up-to-date, central source of information will assist students in contacting faculty and staff, reviewing course requirements and syllabi, exploring graduate study, researching career options, tracking department events, and accessing important details related to undergraduate programs and activities. To reach the site, go to <http://polisci.niu.edu>

UNDERGRADUATE WRITING AWARDS The Department of Political Science will recognize, on an annual basis, outstanding undergraduate papers written in conjunction with 300-400 level political science courses or directed studies. Authors do not have to be political science majors or have a particular class standing.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, NIU is committed to making reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities. Those students with disabilities that may have some impact on their coursework and for which they may require accommodations should notify the Center for Access-Ability Resources (CAAR). CAAR will assist students

in making appropriate accommodations with course instructors. It is important that CAAR and instructors be informed of any disability-related needs during the first two weeks of the semester.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE (Please note: I will not rush through topics. If more time is needed on any particular topic, the schedule will be amended accordingly. Students should check Blackboard regularly for announcements).

<u>1.13</u>	<u>1.15 Topic: History of the UN:</u> <i>Weiss and Daws:1</i>
<u>1.20 Balance of Power in the International Order</u> <i>Kagan & Ruggie articles (online)</i>	<u>1.22 International Organizations in Theory</u> <i>Weiss and Daws: 2-4</i>
<u>1.27 IR v IL</u> <i>Goldstein et al Legalization And World Politics</i> <i>Slaughter: IL and IR Theory</i>	<u>1.29 The Security Council/General Assembly</u> <i>Weiss and Daws: 5-6</i> <i>Essay Question 1 Due</i>
<u>2.3 Secretariat and Secretary General</u> <i>Weiss and Daws: 9-10</i>	<u>2.5 International Court of Justice</u> <i>Weiss and Daws: 11</i>
<u>2.10 Bretton Woods Institutions</u> <i>Weiss and Daws: 13</i>	<u>2.12 ECOSOC and Regional Groups</u> <i>Weiss and Daws: 7-8, 12</i>
<u>2.17 Civil Society, Private Sector and Media</u> <i>Weiss and Daws: 14-16</i>	<u>2.19 Disarmament and Terrorism</u> <i>Weiss and Daws: 17, 24</i>
<u>2.24 Case Studies</u>	<u>2.26 Peaceful settlement of Disputes</u> <i>Weiss and Daws: 18,20</i>
<u>3.3 19 Peacekeeping Operations</u> <i>Weiss and Daws: 19, 21</i>	<u>3.5 Case Studies</u>
<u>3.10 Spring Break</u>	<u>3.12 Spring Break</u>
<u>3.17 Humanitarian Intervention</u> <i>Weiss and Daws: 22</i> <i>Essay Questions 2 and 3 Due</i>	<u>3.19 Post Conflict Peace building</u> <i>Weiss and Daws: 23</i> <i>ESSAY TOPICS DUE</i>
<u>3.24 International Courts</u> <i>Weiss and Daws 26</i>	<u>3.26 Case Studies</u>
<u>3.31 Humanitarian Action and Human Security</u> <i>Weiss and Daws 27</i>	<u>4.2 Human Trafficking</u> <i>Weiss and Daws 8, 35</i>
<u>4.7 Norms, Children, Minorities</u> <i>Weiss and Daws 25,28,29,30</i> <i>ESSAYS DUE!!!</i>	<u>4.9 Coordinating Economic and Social Affairs</u> <i>Weiss and Daws 32</i>
<u>4.14 Human Development</u> <i>Weiss and Daws 37</i>	<u>4.16 Health and Infectious Disease</u> <i>Weiss and Daws 33</i>
<u>4.21 Natural Resource</u> <i>Weiss and Daws 34</i>	<u>4.23 Democracy and Good Governance</u> <i>Weiss and Daws 26,40</i>
<u>4.28 UN Reform</u> <i>Weiss and Daws 38-39</i>	<u>4.30 FINAL EXAM DUE</u>