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PSC 433.01: International Law and Organizations

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International Law & Organizations

Class Location: GBB 108
Meeting Time: TR 11:10-12:30
Website: <http://courseware.umt.edu>
CRN (Add/Drop): 33544

Instructor: Eric H. Hines
Office: Liberal Arts 349
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Law is the essential foundation of stability and order both within societies and in international relations ... Insofar as international law is observed, it provides us with stability and order and with a means of predicting the behavior of those with whom we have reciprocal legal obligations.

— U.S. SENATOR JAMES WILLIAM FULBRIGHT (1945-1974)

Course Description, Prerequisite, and Learning Objectives

This course analyzes the role international law and organizations play in the resolution of collective action problems in global politics, or *who gets what, when, and how* in international relations. Actors involved in global politics face a unique set of collective action problems that require institutions — *structures and mechanisms of social order and cooperation governing the behavior of a set of individuals* — like international law and organizations to resolve. Their effectiveness at resolving global collective action problems is heavily influenced by the ideational and historical context in which they operate. Therefore, students in this course will examine the ideas behind international organizations and law, their history, and the different institutional forms they take.

This course is highly informed by *institutionalism*, a set of theoretical approaches in international relations focusing on the role played by the structures of the international system in shaping social behavior and the need to study the history of institutions to understand why political actors behave as they do within different institutional contexts. The basic assumptions of this approach are summarized by the “five principles of politics” listed in the table above.

Five Principles of Politics
1. All politics is collective action.
2. Collective action is problematic.
3. Institutions help fix collective action problems.
4. Ideas matter.
5. History matters

Prerequisite: To enroll in this course, you must be at least a junior, and you must have taken PSCI 230/PSC 130 (Introduction to International Relations).

Learning Objectives

After completing this course, students will be able to:

- Describe the structure of international regimes and conduct a regime analysis;
- Explain the role of states, international law, intergovernmental organization, and nongovernmental organizations in the resolution of collective action problems;
- Evaluate and select competing solutions to global collective action problems from the perspective of different international political actors;
- Articulate and defend your own conception of the nature, effectiveness, and future of international governance;
- Explain key concepts to others both verbally and in writing;
- Generalize conceptual knowledge to new situations.

Learning Environment and Required Materials

I believe learning is using information to gain an understanding of how things work and how to make them better. This course employs several different pedagogical methods to create an effective learning environment where students will enhance their ability to:

- ask the right questions and frame good problems,
- acquire information and evaluate sources of information,
- critically investigate and solve problems,
- make choices among different alternatives,
- explain concepts to others both verbally and in writing and,
- generalize to new situations.

Instructional Methods

To provide students an opportunity to practice these skills, this course is conducted using a student-centered instructional strategy called *problem-based learning* in which students collaboratively solve problems and reflect on their experiences. At the beginning of the semester, students will be assigned to a *learning group* of 3-4 students. Each learning group will work together to complete five progressively more challenging problems described below. Cooperative learning is extremely effective in helping students to be successful in the classroom since it assures more active learning and teams working together can accomplish more together than individuals working alone.

Required Materials

There are two *required* textbooks available at the UC Bookstore:

Karns, Margaret P., and Karen A. Mingst. 2009. *International Organizations: The Politics and Process of Global Governance*, 2nd Edition. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner. ISBN: 9781588266989

Ku, Charlotte, and Paul F. Diehl. 2008. *International Law: Classic and Contemporary Readings*, 3rd Edition. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner. ISBN: 9781588266279

Course Requirements

Full details for all assignment are available on Blackboard under “Assignments.”

Library Research Assignment

Students will model the instructor’s expectations for research and problem solving by completing an assignment and attending a mandatory session in the Mansfield Library.

Learning Groups

Randomly assigned learning groups will work on a series of four progressively more challenging problems related to international law and organizations. Both textbooks will be useful for these assignments. For each problem, groups conduct an analysis of an international regime, develop a handout on the regime for the class using a template, present their regime analysis to the class in a 12-15 minute presentation, and draft a two-page policy memo on improving the effectiveness of the regime from the perspective of different political actors. The assignments are:

(1) *States*. Each learning group will be assigned an issue with an international regime and a state that has an interest in the regime. Groups will conduct a regime analysis and present their analysis to the class with a handout. The groups will also take on the role of a foreign policy advisor for their assigned state and draft a policy memo to the state’s leadership advising them on the proper relationship between the state and the regime.

(2) *IGOs*. Each learning group will be assigned an issue with an international regime. Groups will conduct a regime analysis and present their analysis to the class with a handout. The groups will also take on the role of an advisor to the leadership of an IGO in their assigned regime. They will draft a policy memo to the IGO’s leadership advising them on ways to increase the IGO’s effectiveness.

(3) *NGOs*. After being assigned an issue with an international regime, groups will conduct a regime analysis and present their analysis to the class with a handout. The groups will also take on the role of an advisor to the leadership of an NGO concerned with the issues involved with their regime and draft a policy memo to advising the NGO on how to increase the effectiveness of the regime and how to make the regime reflect the NGO’s preferences.

(4) *International Law*. Learning groups will be select a global issue governed by a significant piece of international law and conduct a regime analysis and present their analysis to the class with a handout. Groups will then draft a memo to the appropriate political actors advising them on the effectiveness of the law.

Final Policy Memo

Students will be individually assessed on their ability to articulate and defend their own

conception of the nature, effectiveness, and future of international governance in a final policy memo written to themselves. In it, they will identify their personal preferences about global governance, evaluate alternative ways they can contribute to its effectiveness, and make recommendations on how to achieve their goals.

Student Responsibilities

1. Students have the responsibility to attend class regularly and complete all assigned readings before coming to class.
2. Students have the responsibility to inform the instructor beforehand of any reasons why they are unable to attend class or complete an assignment on time.
3. Students have the responsibility to complete all assignments by the deadline given by the instructor.
4. Students have the responsibility to complete course requirements by the end of the semester. University policy on incompletes will be adhered to strictly.

Academic Misconduct Policy

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University.

All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at: <http://www.umd.edu/SA/VP/SA/index.cfm/page/1321>.

Statement On Disabilities

I strongly encourage students with documented disabilities to discuss with me appropriate accommodations. Because I am not qualified to make an assessment of your need for an accommodation or what accommodations are needed, if you have a disability and feel you need accommodations in this course please present me with a letter from Disability Services for Students (DSS), Lommasson Center 154 (243-2243), indicating the existence of a disability and the suggested accommodations.

Grading

Grades will be based on the work in learning groups as adjusted by peer evaluations (See below), the midterm exam, library research homework, and student's simulation policy memo, participation, and debriefing paper. Grades will be calculated on a 1000 point scale with grades are weighted as follows (Italicized grades are individual grades):

<i>Library Homework:</i>	<i>50 points</i>	Policy Memo #3:	100 points
Policy Memo #1:	100 points	Presentation #3:	50 points
Presentation #1:	50 points	Policy Memo #4:	100 points
Policy Memo #2:	100 points	Presentation #4:	50 points
Presentation #2:	50 points	<i>Final Memo Paper:</i>	<i>350 points</i>

The plus/minus grading system will be used with grades based on total points earned: A = 1000-930, A- = 929-900, B+ = 870-899, B = 830-869, B- = 800-829, C+ = 770-799, C = 730-769, C- = 700-729, D+ = 670-699, D = 630-669, D- = 600-639, F = < 600.

Peer Evaluations

To ensure individual accountability, students complete confidential peer evaluations on Blackboard after each group project (Each part of the regime analysis is evaluated together). Group members evaluate each other, but not themselves, by assigning a "shares" in the group's work. A fair contribution to the group's efforts is worth two shares. Students have an extra share to distribute to the group's MVP. Any additional shares awarded above the two share average must come at the expense of other group members serving as a deterrent for free riding.

A student's grade on an assignment will be raised or lowered if their average shares deviates from the two share average by more than half a share. Students cannot earn more than full credit for an assignment. The changes are listed in the table at right. Single outlying scores (both positive and negative) are discarded in the calculation of your average shares to limit the impact of individual personality clashes and randomness. Because of the MVP share, this system raises grades more often than it lowers them. Students who do not complete a peer evaluation for an assignment will receive an F for the assignment.

Average Shares	Grade Modification
< 0.5	No Credit
< 1.5	-1 Letter Grade
> 2.5	+1 Letter Grade
> 3.5	+2 Letter Grades

Course Schedule

I reserve the right to make changes to this schedule as the semester develops.

Date	Topic or Activity	Assignments
Jan 26	State of Nature Simulation; Syllabus	
Jan 28	Introduction to Five Principles of Politics	
Feb 2	The Challenges of Global Governance	Karns and Mingst, Ch. 1
Feb 4	Theory, Global Governance, and Regimes	Karns and Mingst, Ch. 2
Feb 9	The Foundations of Global Governance	Karns and Mingst, Ch. 3
Feb 11	Case Study: The United Nations	Karns and Mingst, Ch. 4
Feb 16	The Role of Regional Organizations	Karns and Mingst, Ch. 5
Feb 18	The Role of Nonstate Actors	Karns and Mingst, Ch. 6
Feb 23	The Role of States	Karns and Mingst, Ch. 7
Feb 25	Dilemma of Global Governance	Karns and Mingst, Ch. 12

Date	Topic or Activity	Assignments
Mar 2	Library Session: Practice Problem	Meet at Mansfield Library
Mar 4	Problem-based Learning & Policy Memos	
Mar 9	Meet Groups; Research Problem #1	Library Assignment Due
Mar 11	Discuss and Research Problem #1	
Mar 16	State Presentations	Problem #1 Due
Mar 18	State Presentations	
Mar 23	Discuss and Research Problem #2	
Mar 25	Discuss and Research Problem #2	
Week of March 30-April 1: Spring Break		
Apr 6	IGO Presentations	Problem #2 Due
Apr 8	IGO Presentations	
Apr 13	Discuss and Research Problem #3	
Apr 15	Discuss and Research Problem #3	
Apr 20	NGO Presentations	Problem #3 Due
Apr 22	NGO Presentations	
Apr 27	Discuss and Research Problem #4	
Apr 29	Discuss and Research Problem #4	
May 4	Law Presentations	Problem #4 Due
May 6	Law Presentations	
May 11	Final Exam Period: Final Policy Memo Due by 10:00 a.m.	