

Department of Political Science & International Relations
School of Humanities & Social Sciences
Nazarbayev University
Fall Semester, 2017

PLS 359:
United Nations

Class hours:	1200-1315 Hrs Tuesdays; Thursdays
Classroom:	8.305
Instructor:	Dr. Mwita Chacha
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Office hours:	Tuesdays & Thursdays: 14:30 - 17:30 Hrs; and strictly by appointment only

Description:

This course examines the history, structure, evolution, and function of the United Nations. It aims to provide students with a firm understanding of the UN, the premier international governmental organization. To do this, the course will examine theories of cooperation with reference to the UN, the key functions of the UN in security, human rights, and development, and some of the major challenges the UN faces in executing its functions. The course aims to enable students to critically assess the merits of the United Nations given its sometimes dismal performance record.

At the end of this course, students will be expected to have an in-depth knowledge of the United Nations and international cooperation. Specifically, the course has the following main learning objectives:

- Students will be able to present their ideas and the information in an appropriate format
- Students will be able to describe and interpret basic qualitative and quantitative data and evidence
- Students will know the foundational literature in study of international cooperation and United Nations
- Students will be able to synthesize arguments within the study of the United Nations
- Students will be able to make their own evidenced-based arguments
- Students will be able to listen to and be tolerant of different ideas

Disclaimer: Information, including deadlines, assignments, and reading materials outlined in this syllabus are subject to change.

PREREQUISITES

This is an upper level course involving a wide array of international relations readings. Students taking this course MUST have already taken Introduction to International Relations and Introduction to Comparative Politics. It is highly advisable to have taken Political Science Research Methods and Quantitative Methods prior to taking this course. Upper level courses such as International Political Economy, International Relations Theory, and European Integration Politics are HIGHLY recommended but not required prerequisites for this course.

REQUIRED READING MATERIALS

Main Text: *The United Nations in the 21st Century* by Karen A. Mingst, Margaret P. Karns, and Alynna J. Lyon [Abbreviation: **MKL**]

Other Text *International Negotiation in a Complex World* by, Brigid Starkey, Mark A. Boyer, and Jonathan Wilkenfeld [Abbreviation: **SBW**]

All readings for this course have been compiled in one folder for your convenience. The instructor will provide you with a link to the Dropbox folder.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS: PARTICIPATION

Students are expected to participate in class discussions which address assigned readings and issues pertinent to the topics scheduled for a given class period. This rule will be the key to your class experience, since best comprehension can only be facilitated through preparation before the class and active participation through in-class discussions. Completion of all assigned readings *prior* to the scheduled class will increase the benefits of class attendance and can serve as a good metric of your comprehension of the material. Both quantity and quality of participation will be evaluated. Distractions due to the use of cellular phones, computers, tablets, chatter, and napping/sleeping during class will adversely affect your participation points.

Please note:

1. Attendance **technically does not** count as participation, but will affect your participation points beyond two absences.
2. Participation will account for 10% of your grade.

Participation points will be based on the following general rubric:

- **8.5-10.0:** Student participates consistently at every class meeting, their comments show that they have read the material beforehand and/or their comment quality is very high.
- **6.0-8.5:** Student participates every other class meeting, their comments show that they have read the material beforehand and/or their comment quality is very high.
- **4.5-6.0:** Student participates every class meeting, but shows low comment quality (just talks for participation points). OR:
Student participates every other class meeting, their comment quality is satisfying.
- **3.0-4.5:** Student participates, but not regularly. However, they are clearly following the conversation and being thoughtful about it.
- **1.0-3.0:** Student participates but not regularly, seems distracted most of the time.
- **0:** Student has never participated.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS: READINGS POP QUIZZES

In the course of the semester I shall give ten (10) quizzes on the readings. These quizzes will each account for 1% of your grade (10% total). These brief quizzes are intended to assess the extent to which students keep up with readings and class discussions. These quizzes will be in the form of 2-5 questions on key points in the readings assigned in any given week. The quizzes will be on any of our meeting days, but it is most likely that quizzes will be administered on Thursdays. Keep in mind that there will be a quiz on the first week

COURSE EXPECTATIONS: EXAMS

There will be two (2) exams in the course each worth 20% of your grade. The first exam will be administered in Week 6, while the second exam will be administered during the finals week. Each exam should take approximately 2 hours. The exams will constitute two broad parts. Part 1 will ask you 15 questions to evaluate your grasp of core concepts covered in the course and your ability to synthesize and juxtapose readings covered in the course. Keep in mind some of these 15 questions will require you to answer in short-essay format. Part 2 will provide you with a choice of two essay questions out of which you will be expected to answer one of them. These essay questions will aim to evaluate the extent to which you can evaluate themes covered in the weeks preceding the exam.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS: ESSAYS

Students will be expected to write two (2) 1500-word essays aimed at analyzing the institutional design and functions of the United Nations. Each essay will be worth 20% of your grade.

The first essay will require students to draw on materials between Week 1 and Week 5 and write an evaluation of the effect of the UN's institutional design on key outcomes of the UN, particularly the effect of the UN on its member-states' behavior. Given the shortness of the essay, you will be expected to pick a particular aspect of the institutional design of the UN and not the entire UN System and evaluate, using the theoretical understanding of cooperation and bargaining that we will cover in these first weeks, how these features contribute to how the the UN operates.

For example, whereas the UN System is composed of five key organs, each has specific design features that affects the execution of the UN's mandate. Decision-making rules of the Security Council are quite different from those of the General Assembly, influencing the extent to which and how these two organs affect states. The powers of Secretariat differ from those of ECOSOC while the multitude of specialized agencies tied to ECOSOC and the UN more generally affect the realization of the UN's goals as laid out in the Charter. The task in this first essay is to demonstrate 1) an understanding of the particular design feature, 2) what theory tells us about such a design feature, and 3) how the design feature affects the operations of the UN with reference to particular effects on state action and behavior.

The second essay will require students to pick a specific issue-area that the UN deals with and critically assess the UN's approach to dealing with it. This second essay will require you to refer to material covered between Week 7 and Week 11 on broad issues that the UN addresses and challenges to the UN's operations. The expectation is that students will select a specific issue within these broad categories. For example, one of the UN's main aims is to ensure international peace and security. Yet within this issue, specific areas can be deciphered including terrorism, civil wars, coups, nuclear proliferation, among others. Students will be expected to 1) identify the issue and describe its importance to the realization of the UN's goals as outlined in the Charter. 2) describe the institutions in the UN that aim to address that particular issue and evaluate the extent to which these UN institutions have addressed the issue, and 3) reasons why the UN's success in realizing the issue is mixed (if at all) and what changes might be introduced to improve the UN's ability to realize better results.

The essays should be formatted in the following manner: text should be in 12-point Times New Roman Font, double-spaced with justified margins. Citations must adhere to the Chicago Style (as used in this syllabus). Keep in mind the 1500-word limit does not include references.

The first essay is due on Sunday, October 6 and the second essay is due November 17. Both essays are due at 2359 Hours and must be submitted via Moodle.

ACADEMIC HONESTY, ATTENDANCE, MAKE-UPS, & OTHER BUSINESS

Academic Honesty: Students are subject to Nazarbayev University's Student Code of Conduct. It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with academic regulations and procedures. In particular, familiarize yourself with the university's policy on plagiarism, and consult the instructor immediately if you do not understand what plagiarism is. I will NOT tolerate any instances of plagiarism and academic dishonesty.

Any and all instances of suspected academic misconduct will result in a failing grade in the assignment concerned in addition to other disciplinary action from University authorities, including withdrawal from the course with a failing grade (F).

What is **Plagiarism**? According to the University's Student Code of Conduct, Plagiarism is intentionally or carelessly presenting the work of another as one's own. It includes submitting an assignment purporting to be the student's original work, which has wholly or in part been created by another person. It also includes the presentation of the work, ideas, representations, or words of another person without customary and proper acknowledgment of sources. Plagiarism occurs when a person:

1. Directly copies one or more sentences of another person's written work without proper citation. If another writer's words are used, you must place quotation marks around the quoted material and include a footnote or other indication of the source of the quotation. This includes cut and paste from the internet or other electronic sources;
2. Changes words but copies the sentence structure of a source without giving credit to the original source, or closely paraphrases one or more paragraphs without acknowledgment of the source of the ideas, or uses graphs, figures, drawings, charts or other visual/audio materials without acknowledging the source or the permission of the author;
3. Submits false or altered information in any academic exercise. This may include making up data for an experiment, altering data, citing nonexistent articles, contriving sources, etc.;
4. Turns in all or part of an assignment done by another student and claims it as their own;
5. Uses a paper writing service, has another student write a paper, or uses a foreign language translation and submits it as their own original work.

University Attendance Policy: Students are expected to attend **ALL** classes. Attendance will be taken during each class period. You are entitled to two unexcused absences. However, if you miss class during quizzes, you will not be able to make-up for it and will lose all relevant points. Your attendance will influence your participation points. Any absences beyond the two unexcused absences (up to three) will result in a **loss of all participation points** (3.33 points per day). Each absence beyond this will result in a 5-point reduction in your final grade.

Make-up & Re-grading: Absolutely no make-up quizzes or exams will be administered. If you miss class during a reading quiz or exam without an iron-clad, documented reason presented no later than the day following the administered quiz or exam, the instructor will assume that you chose to forfeit the points awarded to those particular assignments. Only the following situations are excusable:

- 1) Serious illness (common colds and allergies do not count) documented by a visit to the physician and acknowledged by SHSS student affairs Office;
- 2) Hospitalization of an immediate family member (parents and/or siblings) also documented by a physician and a note from your parent;
- 3) A death in the family documented by a copy of the obituary and a note from your parent.

If you want a reading quiz or in-class exam re-graded, you have one week from the time it is returned to you to turn it in for a re-grade. No re-grading will be considered after this one week. The entire work will be re-graded. If you choose to do so, you must turn in, on a separate sheet of paper, a short typed memo describing why you think your grade should be changed. Note that the new grade may be higher, lower or equal to the original grade. There will be no re-grading of re-graded assignments.

For the final exam, students will have 48 hours to launch a re-grade request, documented in the same manner as reading quizzes.

Note Taking: You should take notes during the course of our class meetings. Any PowerPoint used in this course will be extremely limited and sparse. These notes will be useful as you prepare for your quizzes and exams and will help you comprehend material covered in this course.

ETIQUETTE

- You are expected to be in class on time and to remain in class for the entire 75 minutes. Late arrivals or leaving the classroom for more than five minutes will be considered absences.

- Cell phones must be turned off during all class sessions. No electronic devices will be allowed in class. (This includes computers). Any act contrary to this requirement will result in a total loss of all participation points (all 10%).
- Absolutely no make-up exams or quizzes will be administered in this course unless you have an iron-clad, documented reason for your absence.
- Absolutely no extra-credit assignments will be administered in this course.
- Tardiness in turning in assignments will not be tolerated. I will not accept nor grade assignments turned late.
- As International Relations students, I expect you all to keep up with global events that are relevant to this course. Class discussions will be motivated by some of these events happening around us.
- You will treat each other with respect. I will not tolerate any rudeness directed at your fellow classmates or myself. Such incidents will be reported to the Vice Dean for Academic Affairs for disciplinary action and the instructor may recommend your withdrawal from the course.
- While you are welcome to email me anytime about any issue you may be having in the class, please note that I will not respond to emails regarding information that is contained in this syllabus, grades, nor emails that fail to conform with proper salutation and email etiquette. When you write to your instructor you MUST address him using phrases such as, Dear Professor etc. You MUST use correct English in the email. Any emails that read like a text message WILL NOT receive a reply.
- I reserve the right to change this syllabus, including adding or subtracting readings, changing due dates, etc. but will give students ample warning in writing.

GRADING

Grading Scale:

A: 95-100	B+: 85-89.99	C+: 70-74.99	D+: 55-59.99	F: 0-49.99
A-: 90-94.99	B: 80-84.99	C: 65-69.99	D: 50-54.99	
	B-: 75-79.99	C-: 60-64.99		

Grading Components:

<i>Class Performance</i>	Participation	10%
	Quizzes	10%
<i>Exams</i>	Exam 1	20%
	Exam 2	20%
<i>Essay 1</i>		20%
<i>Essay 2</i>		20%
	Total	100%

IMPORTANT DATES:

Add/Drop Deadline	11/15 September.
Exam 1	10 & 12 October.
Withdrawal Deadline	20 October.
Essay 1 due	6 October.
Essay 2 due	17 November.
Exam 2	TBA.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

BACKGROUND & THEORY

WEEK 1

Tuesday, 5 September: Why do we have International Organizations?

Readings:

Abbott, Kenneth W., and Duncan Snidal. "Why states act through formal international organizations." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 42, no. 1 (1998): 3-32.

Thursday, 7 September: Why the United Nations

Readings:

MKL Ch. 1

U.N. Charter

WEEK 2

Tuesday, 12 September: Evolution of the UN

Readings:

MKL Ch. 2

Barnett, Michael N. "Bringing in the new world order: Liberalism, legitimacy, and the United Nations." *World Politics* 49, no. 4 (1997): 526-551.

Thursday, 14 September: The main actors in the UN

Readings:

MKL Ch. 3.

WEEK 3

Tuesday, 19 September: Designing international organizations

Readings:

Koremenos, Barbara, Charles Lipson, and Duncan Snidal. "The rational design of international institutions." *International Organization* 55, no. 04 (2001): 761-799.

March, James G., and Johan P. Olsen. "The institutional dynamics of international political orders." *International Organization* 52, no. 4 (1998): 943-969.

Thursday, 21 September: Designing the United Nations

Readings:

Rathbun, Brian C. "Before hegemony: generalized trust and the creation and design of international security organizations." *International Organization* 65, no. 2 (2011): 243-273.

WEEK 4

Tuesday, 26 September: Bargaining in International Organizations

Readings:

Fearon, James D. "Bargaining, Enforcement, and International Cooperation." *International Organization* 52, no. 2 (1998): 269-305.

Thursday, 28 September: Bargaining and its strategies

Readings:

SBW Ch. 3 & 4.

WEEK 5

Tuesday, 3 October: Power and international organizations

Readings:

Schneider, Christina J. "Weak States and Institutionalized Bargaining Power in International Organizations." *International Studies Quarterly* 55, no. 2 (2011): 331-355.

Thompson, Alexander. "Coercion through IOs: The Security Council and the Logic of Information Transmission." *International Organization* 60, no. 1 (2006): 1-34.

Thursday, 5 October: The Role of the United Nations

Readings:

Hammarskjöld, Dag. "Do we need the United Nations." *Address before the Students Association*. Copenhagen (1959): 364-374.

WEEK 6

Tuesday, 10 October: Midterm Exam Part 1

Thursday, 12 October: Midterm Exam Part 2

THE UN AT WORK

WEEK 7

Tuesday, 17 October: International Security I

Readings:

MKL Ch. 4.

Boutros-Ghali, Boutros. "An agenda for peace: Preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping." *International Relations* 11, no. 3 (1992): 201-218.

Thursday, 19 October: International Security II

Readings:

Beardsley, Kyle, and Holger Schmidt. "Following the flag or following the charter? Examining the determinants of UN involvement in international crises, 1945-2002." *International Studies Quarterly* 56, no. 1 (2012): 33-49.

WEEK 8

Tuesday, 24 October: Human Rights I

Readings:

MKL Ch. 6.

Evans, Gareth, and Mohamed Sahnoun. "The responsibility to protect." *Foreign Affairs* 81, no.6 (2002): 99-110.

Thursday, 26 October: Human Rights II

Readings:

Hug, Simon, and Richard Lukacs. "Preferences or blocs? Voting in the United Nations human rights council." *The Review of International Organizations* 9, no. 1 (2014): 83-106.

WEEK 9

Tuesday, 31 October: Economic Development I

Readings:

MKL Ch. 5.

Thursday, 2 November: Economic Development II

Readings:

Shaw, John D. *Sir Hans Singer: The Life and Work of a Development Economist*. Springer, 2002. (Ch. 21)

Toye, John. "Assessing the G77: 50 Years after UNCTAD and 40 Years after the NIEO." *Third World Quarterly* 35, no. 10 (2014): 1759-1774.

WEEK 10

Tuesday, 7 November: Human Security and Development I

Readings:

MKL Ch. 7.

Newman, Edward. "Human security and constructivism." *International Studies Perspectives* 2, no. 3 (2001): 239-251.

Thursday, 9 November: Human Security and Development II

Readings:

Paris, Roland. "Human security: Paradigm shift or hot air?" *International Security* 26, no. 2 (2001): 87-102.

CHALLENGES AND FUTURE OF GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

WEEK 11

Tuesday, 14 November: North-South Divide

Readings:

Therien, Jean-Philippe. "Beyond the North-South divide: The two tales of world poverty." *Third World Quarterly* 20, no. 4 (1999): 723-742.

Weiss, Thomas G. "Moving beyond North-South theatre." *Third World Quarterly* 30, no. 2 (2009): 271-284.

Thursday, 16 November: Institutional Conundrum

Readings:

Ruggie, John Gerard. "The United Nations and globalization: Patterns and limits of institutional adaptation." *Global Governance* 9 (2003): 301-321.

WEEK 12

Tuesday, 21 November: Reforming the UN

Readings:

Fasulo, Linda. *An Insider's Guide to the UN*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015. (Ch. 18).

Voeten, Erik. "Why no UN Security Council Reforms? Lessons for and from institutionalist theory." In *Multilateralism and Security Institutions in an Era of Globalization*, Dimitris Bourantonis, Kostas Ifantis, and Panayotis Tsakonas (eds.), (2007): 288 - 305, Routledge.

Thursday, 23 November: The future of global governance

Readings:

MKL Ch. 8.

Patrick, Stewart. "The Unruly World: The Case for Good Enough Global Governance." *Foreign Affairs* 93, no. 1 (2014): 58-73.