

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION

Political Science 447, Winter 2024
Portland State University
ONLINE COURSE

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Description

The international system has been called an “anarchical society”—anarchic because there is no authority above that of individual states; a society because state behavior is nevertheless influenced by norms, laws, and institutions that states create for themselves. Yet among scholars there is a great deal of debate over the real importance of international rules and institutions and the degree of order they bring to the society of states. And among policymakers in the United States and elsewhere there is disagreement over the extent to which governments ought to be constrained by rules and institutions in the conduct of their foreign policies.

The course examines the myriad ways in which states have brought order and organization to their international conduct, with special emphasis on the functions and activities of formal international institutions. We will cover general purpose organizations, like the UN and (increasingly) the EU, as well as those with more specialized functions, like NATO (security), the WTO (trade), the IMF and World Bank (finance and development), WHO (global health), and the ICC (criminal justice). These organizations are the creations of states, but we will also look at nongovernmental organizations, like Greenpeace and Human Rights Watch. Such organizations, as well as many less formal transnational networks, are the creations of private actors, but designed to serve the global public good.

This is a required course for the [international development option](#) in political science.

Learning Objectives

- **Understanding the Structure and Role of International Organizations:** Students will learn about the basic structure and functions of major international organizations, including the United Nations, European Union, NATO, WTO, IMF, World Bank, WHO, and ICC. This objective will also cover the role of these organizations in the international system and their impact on state behavior and international relations.
- **Exploring the Influence of International Norms and Laws:** This objective focuses on the influence of international norms, laws, and institutions on state behavior. Students will examine

how these elements contribute to the order and organization of international relations, despite the anarchical nature of the international system.

- **Analyzing the Debate on the Effectiveness of International Organizations:** Students will critically engage with scholarly debates regarding the effectiveness and importance of international rules and institutions. This includes understanding different perspectives on how much order these organizations bring to the society of states and the degree to which they should influence national foreign policies.
- **Evaluating the Role of Non-Governmental Organizations and Transnational Networks:** The course will delve into the impact of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and transnational networks, such as Greenpeace and Human Rights Watch. Students will analyze how these entities, created by private actors, contribute to the global public good and interact with formal international institutions and states.

Readings and Lectures

For each module, there are assigned reading and "lectures." The lecture are actually relatively brief write-ups of lecture topics I deliver in the on-campus version of this course, sometimes with screenshots from PowerPoint presentations. As is true of on-campus lectures, they are intended to highlight the most important lessons to be drawn from the module. The link in Canvas will take you to a PDF file, which you may then download or read online. There are generally two lectures per week, occasionally three, and each runs 2-4 pages. Lectures for each module will be posted by the start of the week.

All assigned readings are available online; there are no books to purchase for the course. Unless an assigned reading is accompanied by a link, it is available online from the PSU library. You must retrieve these readings (mostly journal articles) by logging into the [PSU library website](#) and locating and downloading the article from one of the library's full-content subscription services. Where a link is provided, it will open a new window in your browser and take you to the reading on the Web. A few readings are stored on the Canvas website, in which case a link is also provided so you can view the PDF in your browser or download it.

Quizzes

You will take three quizzes in this course, each consisting of 10 to 15 multiple-choice questions. Quiz A covers material covered in modules 1-3; Quiz B, modules 4-6; and Quiz C, modules 7-10. Each quiz is timed for 45 minutes and will be available to take anytime from Thursday noon through Sunday midnight of the weeks 3, 6, and 10. You may consult your notes or downloaded course material while you are taking the quiz.

Class Project

The [class project](#) involves students assuming the role of an international organization (IO) in post-conflict Gaza, focusing on humanitarian relief, stabilization, and reconstruction. The backdrop is the ongoing Israel-Hamas war, but the project is based on the hypothetical scenario of a ceasefire, the

withdrawal of Israeli military forces, and the introduction of international peacekeeping forces ensuring stability. Students, working in pairs, are tasked with two key deliverables:

- *White Paper* (10 pages): This report should include an executive summary, a detailed analysis of the current situation in Gaza, clearly defined objectives, identification of key stakeholders and partners, a comprehensive action plan with timelines and resource allocation, and an analysis of potential challenges and risk management strategies.
- *Public Outreach Slide Deck* (10 slides): Students will create a presentation aimed at informing the public or stakeholders about their organization's efforts in Gaza. This should cover similar content to the white paper but be tailored for effective public communication, including clear messaging, cultural sensitivity, storytelling, and a mechanism for feedback and response.

The project spans the entire term, with specific deadlines for [choosing preferred IOs](#), settling on a work plan, and final deliverables, all of which are to be submitted on Canvas. The assignment emphasizes practical application of knowledge in international relations, focusing on real-world challenges in post-conflict recovery and the role of international agencies in such contexts.

Grading

Your course grade is based on your quiz scores (50 percent) and your project grade (50 percent). To get your quiz grade, I add the scores for your three quizzes and then use a curve based on the distribution of quiz scores for the entire class. I use your curved quiz grade *only if it is an improvement* relative to the standard grading distribution -- that is, 90-100% = A, 80-90% = B, etc. I do it this way because I don't want to penalize students if the course material wasn't communicated as effectively as I had hoped.

Courtesy, Conduct, and Resources

Academic dishonesty. Students are responsible for being familiar with the PSU [Code of Student Conduct and Responsibility](#), especially the section concerning academic misconduct -- that is, plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty. If you are unsure of the definition or consequences of academic misconduct, please consult with me.

Use of Generative AI tools. Using tools to check and correct your own writing (built-in spelling and grammar checkers or third-party tools like Grammarly) is different from using generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools to create content or structure in response to your prompts (like ChatGPT). In your work for this course, use of the first sort of tool is encouraged, while use of the second sort of tool is subject to the following limitations. Using generative AI to complete written assignments, including examinations, is not permitted. However, you may use these tools to study, help conduct research, or brainstorm ideas and argument. The use generative AI tools outside these parameters qualifies as [academic misconduct](#). If you are uncertain about the allowable use of generative AI in the course, please consult with me in advance.

Discrimination. PSU's policies require faculty members to report any instance of sexual harassment, sexual violence, or other forms of prohibited discrimination. If you would rather share information about these experiences with an employee who does not have these reporting responsibilities and can

keep the information confidential, please contact a confidential advocate (503.725.5672 or [online](#)) or another confidential employee listed on the sexual misconduct resource [webpage](#).

Disabilities. If you have, or think you may have, a disability that may affect your work in this class and feel you need accommodations, contact the [Disability Resource Center](#) to schedule an appointment and initiate a conversation about reasonable accommodations. The [PSU CARES](#) Team, hosted by the Dean of Student Life, is available to consult with you regarding any issues of students in distress, including sexual misconduct.

WEEKLY READING SCHEDULE

8-14 Jan **Anarchy and Global Governance**

- Stephen Krasner, *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy* (Princeton University Press, 1999), chap. 1. (Canvas)
- James Rosenau, "Governing the Ungovernable: The Challenge of a Global Disaggregation of Authority." *Regulation and Governance* 1 (March 2007): 88-97.
- Campbell Craig, "The Resurgent Idea of World Government." *Ethics and International Affairs* 22 (Summer 2008): 133-142.

15-21 Jan **Global IOs: The League of Nations and the UN**

- Paul Kennedy, *The Parliament of Man: The Past, Present, and Future of the United Nations* (Vintage, 2007), chap. 1. (Canvas)
- John Gerard Ruggie, "The United Nations and Globalization: Patterns and Limits of Institutional Adaptation." *Global Governance* 9 (July-September 2003): 301-321.
- Ramesh Thakur and Thomas G. Weiss, "United Nations 'Policy': An Argument with Three Illustrations." *International Studies Perspectives* 10 (February 2009): 18-35.

22-28 Jan **Collective Security: UN Security Council**

- Ian Hurd, "The Myths of Membership: The Politics of Legitimation in UN Security Council Reform." *Global Governance* 14 (April-June 2008): 199-217.
- United Nations, *United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Principles and Guidelines* (United Nations, 2008), chaps. 1-3. ([web](#))
- Alex J. Bellamy, "The Responsibility to Protect- Five Years On." *Ethics and International Affairs* 24 (Summer 2010): 143-169.

29 Jan - 4 Feb **NATO and European Security**

- Alexandra Gheciu, "Security Institutions as Agents of Socialization? NATO and the 'New Europe'." *International Organization* 59 (Autumn 2005): 973-1012.
- Michael Cox, "Beyond the West: Terrors in Transatlantia." *European Journal of International Relations* (June 2005), pp. 203-233.
- Renee de Nevers, "NATO's International Security Role in the Terrorist Era." *International Security* 31 (Spring 2007): 34-66.

5-11 Feb **Regional Organization and Integration: European Union**

- David Mitrany, "The Functional Approach to World Organization." *International Affairs* 24 (July 1948): 350-363.
- Mark A. Pollack, "Theorizing the European Union: International Organization, Domestic Polity, or Experiment in New Governance?" *Annual Review of Political Science* 8 (June 2005): 357-398.
- Amitai Etzioni, "The Community Deficit." *Journal of Common Market Studies* (March 2007): 23-42.

12-18 Feb **Law and Justice: International Courts and Humanitarianism**

- Philippe Kirsch, "The Role of the International Criminal Court in Enforcing International Law." *American University International Law Review* 22 (2007): 539-547.
- Christine H. Chung, "The Punishment and Prevention of Genocide: The International Criminal Court as a Benchmark of Progress and Need." *Case Western Reserve Journal of International Law* 40 (2007): 227-242
- Jamie Mayerfeld, "Who Shall Be Judge? The United States, the International Criminal Court, and the Global Enforcement of Human Rights." *Human Rights Quarterly* (February 2003): 93-129.

19-25 Feb **Economic Governance: The WTO**

- Susan Esserman and Robert Howse, "The WTO on Trial." *Foreign Affairs* (January/February 2003): 130-140.
- Amrita Narlikar, "New Powers in the Club: The Challenges of Global Trade Governance." *International Affairs* 86 (May 2010): 717-728.

26 Feb - 3 Mar **International Development: Bretton Woods Institutions**

- Ngaire Woods, *The Globalizers: The IMF, the World Bank, and Their Borrowers* (Cornell University Press, 2006), chaps. 1-3. (Canvas)
- Jean-Philippe Therien and Vincent Pouliot, "The Global Compact: Shifting the Politics of International Development?" *Global Governance* 12 (January-March 2006): 55-75.
- Eric Helleiner "A Bretton Woods Moment? The 2007-2008 Crisis and the Future of Global Finance." *International Affairs* 86 (May 2010): 619-646.

4-10 Mar **Global Environmental and Health Regimes**

- Oran R. Young, "The Architecture of Global Environmental Governance: Bringing Science to Bear on Policy." *Global Environmental Politics* (February 2008): 14-32.
- Liliana B. Andonova, Michele M. Betsill, and Harriet Bulkeley, "Transnational Climate Governance." *Global Environmental Politics* 9 (May 2009): 52-73.
- Jeremy Youde, *Global Health Governance* (Polity Press, 2012), chaps. 1-2. (Canvas)

11-17 Mar

Global Civil Society

- Mary Kaldor, "The Idea of Global Civil Society." *International Affairs* (May 2003): 583-593.
- Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Cornell University Press, 1998), chap. 1. (Canvas)
- Diane Stone, "Global Public Policy, Transnational Policy Communities and their Networks." *Policy Studies Journal* 36 (February 2008): 19-38.

This syllabus is available online at web.pdx.edu/~kinsella/ps447w24.pdf. Last updated on 8 Jan 2024.