Course Description & Learning Aims

This seminar explores a variety of theoretical approaches to the study of norms, institutions, law, and organizations in world politics with an emphasis on the development of contemporary research programs and their usefulness for helping us understand and explain current issues in global governance.

Students are encouraged to critically examine how world politics are organized between states, between states and non-state actors, and among non-state actors in the absence of state involvement. To do so, we start by considering basic conceptual and theoretical questions in the study of international organization: How do we define its key terms? What is its trajectory? Who are its makers and shapers? What are the effects and limits of international institutions, norms, and law?

Having addressed these foundational questions, the course proceeds to analyse the operation and effectiveness of international institutions and organizations in two crucial issue areas: international security and human rights. We also explore the role of non-state actors, such as International Non-Governmental Organizations and advocacy networks in global politics.

Beyond theory, throughout the course we will keep a watchful eye on issues pertaining to history and research design. Do we agree with the way in which particular scholars have chosen to define and explore a specific problem? Have they historicized it correctly, critically, and sufficiently? Are their research designs appropriate and effective? Are we convinced by the empirical evidence they use? If not, how could we collect more complete evidence and devise stronger research?

Mode of Teaching and Assessment

This course is taught as an advanced graduate discussion seminar, primarily designed for those who have already taken introductory courses in international relations. It will consist of 14 two-hour discussion-based seminars with no accompanying lectures. However, students are welcome to attend the undergraduate lecture series in International Organization (POL 3) which is co-taught by Dr. Giovanni Mantilla and Prof. Jason Sharman.

It is imperative that students come to the seminar ready to engage in constructive debate with others about the topic of discussion. Staying silent is strongly discouraged.

Student Presentations

Students will be expected to make two presentations during the course period. For the first 7 substantive class sessions (starting on October 16th), two or three students will be asked to lead class discussion through a brief reflection (an essay of 2-3 double-spaced pages) on the required readings for the week, and by formulating two-three critical questions related to their reflection and the readings.
The papers are meant to be *analytical* and *critical*, not simply summaries of the readings. Presenters’ questions are meant to provoke debate among class participants, so be sure to think about them in those terms. Each presentation should last no longer than 10 minutes to allow for discussion.

For the remaining class sessions, starting around week 9 (i.e. Lent Term), one or more students will present a hypothetical research proposal, taking into account their own research interests but also the course material covered so far and the readings assigned for the day on which they are presenting. This does not have to be a research project that the student(s) intend to actually embark on, but may be purely hypothetical. Presenters should as a minimum consider the following questions: What would make for an interesting and timely research question on a topic arising from the weekly readings? How might this question best be addressed/studied? Using what general theories, methods and evidence? Each set of presenters will be offered a consultation before their presentation to discuss their ideas and iron out any problems.

Dr. Mantilla will explain these activities further on the first class session and students will have the opportunity to sign up for them that day as well.

**Importantly**, students responsible for presenting during a given class session are expected to circulate via email to all class participant their brief reflection paper (with their discussion questions) and their hypothetical research proposal by **Tuesday 3pm**, that is, the day before they are scheduled to lead discussion.

**Examination**

Final assessment will be by a 5,000 words research essay. Students will write one practice essay in preparation for the final essay, with an option of re-submitting a revised version of the practice essay in response to initial feedback should they so wish.

**Preparation for Weekly Seminars**

Students that enroll in this course commit to coming well prepared to the weekly sessions, having read, as *a minimum, all the required readings*. A range of additional, supplementary readings are also listed in the course guide.

**Readings**

Assigned readings are available electronically either from the University Library’s e-journals and e-books provisions or as scanned pdfs provided by Mill Lane Library. In addition to the Required Readings for each week, the syllabus also lists ‘Further Readings’. These are intended for students who wish to explore a weekly topic in further depth and may be useful for essay writing.

Please be aware that this syllabus is subject to change. Students will be alerted to any changes in advance.
**PREPARATORY SUMMER READING**
(these works should be treated as core readings if you have not read them before)


**RECOMMENDED TEXTBOOKS**


For a detailed list of weekly readings, read on…
1. **Introductory Session: Presentation of Syllabus, Introductions, Expectations, Goals. October 16.**

2. **Thinking Theoretically and Historically about International Organization, Institutions, and Order. October 23rd.**

**Required:**


Edward Keene (2002) “Order in Contemporary World Politics, Global but Divided” (Chapter 5) in *Beyond the Anarchical Society: Grotius, Colonialism and Order in World Politics*, Cambridge University Press, 120-144.


**Further reading:**


3. **The Political Origins and Dynamics of International Rules, Norms, and Institutions. October 30.**

**Required:**


**Further reading:**


Required:


Further Reading:


5. **The Power and Influence of International Rules: Compliance. November 13.**

**Required:**


Further Reading


Required:


Further Reading:


Required:


Further Reading:


Required:


Further Reading:


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9. **Non-State Actors and Networks in International Institutions. January 22.**

Required:


**Further Reading:**


10. **Regulating the Resort to Violence in World Politics (I): The UN Security Council. January 29.**

**Required:**


**Further Reading:**


11. **Regulating the Resort to Violence (II): Peacekeeping and Intervention. February 5.**

**Required:**


**Further Reading:**


Required:


Further Readings:


**Required:**


**Further reading:**


**Required:**


Further Reading:


