POL 3 - International Organization (2020-21)

Paper Convener: Dr. Giovanni Mantilla

Lecturers:  
Core:  
Giovanni Mantilla  
Jason Sharman  

Streams:  
Maja Spanu  
Kari De Pryck  
Ian Shields  

Supervisors:  
Giovanni Mantilla  
Jason Sharman  
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Aims

POL 3 (International Organization) aims to expand students’ knowledge and understanding of co-operation and conflict in the global system as introduced in POL 2. It does so by focusing on co-ordinated attempts to address global problems, on the many forms such co-ordination takes, and the role of power in these processes.

The course has the following objectives:

- to develop students’ understanding of the main theoretical approaches to the study of co-operation and conflict in international politics.
- to provide students with a basic grasp of the core purposes and functions of global governance institutions and actors (such as the United Nations, World Trade Organization and World Bank, and various non-state actors, such as Non-Governmental Organizations and private regulatory organizations).

Paper Description

How can international organizations (IOs) help to address the range of global security, economic, human rights and other problems we face today? How is power exercised over, within and by IOs? The course will analyze the major international institutions with the purposes of (a) developing students’ understanding of how the current system of global governance has evolved, (b) encouraging students to consider whether and how current patterns of international co-operation solve problems, and (c) inviting students to assess the extent to which these processes entrench or reduce power differentials in world politics.

At the theoretical level, the course will introduce students to competing perspectives on IOs, variously conceived as functional instruments of states in general and/or great powers in particular, or culturally empowered bureaucratic actors with interests and agency of their own.

At the empirical level, the course will explore how co-operation problems in areas of international security, trade and finance, international law and human rights are addressed by states, IOs and other international actors, including NGOs and private actors.

Course Structure
The paper is divided into three main parts. Lectures and supervisions in the first survey major theoretical and conceptual debates in International Relations relating to processes of international organization. It begins by examining the demand for institutionalized co-operation in world politics, before analyzing how co-operation is possible under anarchy. Next, it introduces the major theoretical approaches to the study of international institutions.

The second part focuses on practices of institutionalized co-operation among states and non-state actors in different areas of global politics, from international security and the law of war, to human rights, international law, trade, and financial regulation. This section of the paper further develops and applies the theories and concepts already introduced.

The third part consists of thematic streams that encourage students to explore more specific aspects of contemporary international governance in greater depth. Each stream consists of five or six lectures and two small-group seminars. One stream, taught by Maja Spanu examines international organizations in history with reference to international hierarchy and equality. A second stream, led by Kari De Pryck, focuses on the international governance of climate change. The third stream, taught by Ian Shields, considers the role of non-state actors in global politics.

Students will choose ONE stream. A brief description of each stream along with a list of lecture topics and readings can be found towards the end of this paper guide.

**Learning Aims**

POL 3 aims to help students develop a theoretical as well as practical understanding of the major institutions that govern contemporary global affairs, the nature of the problems these institutions strive to solve, and the causes and consequences of the strategies adopted to address these problems. After completing the course, students should be able to articulate the leading theoretical explanations within the field of International Relations for why international organizations and other actors involved in global governance exist, how they operate, and how they influence the behaviour of both states and non-state actors. Come exam time, students should be able to apply a range of theoretical arguments to analyse cases of international co-operation and conflict.

**Teaching and Assessment**

All lectures for the academic year 2020-21 will be recorded and made available online via Moodle on the date that they are scheduled. Students will have access to a total of 25 or 26 recorded lectures (depending on which track they choose) + one recorded revision lecture for the course as a whole. In addition, they will have two group seminars, and four supervisions plus one revision supervision over the course of the academic year.

Supervisions are designed to allow in-depth discussion of the major themes and topics introduced in lectures in a small-group setting. Given the circumstances of the COVID pandemic, supervisions will be held in person or online in accord with university and college policies.

Students will submit a 2000-3000 words essay in advance of each supervision. The list of questions for each of the four supervisions can be found at the end of this course guide. Supervisors are free to either assign an essay question for you, or give you freedom to choose. Please follow your supervisor’s lead. The supervisions will take place around weeks 3, 5 and 8 in Michaelmas term and week 2 in Lent term, with the revision supervision in Easter.

The seminars will support the specialized streams, and are designed to help students grasp and reflect upon the broader themes introduced in the lectures and assigned readings for each track and relate those to the knowledge they have acquired in the core part of the course.
(lectures 1-20). This will in turn help prepare students for the final exam, which will feature questions that invite students to draw on knowledge gained throughout the course as a whole (as opposed to focusing on distinct weekly topics) in answering thematic questions. Seminars will be taught primarily through structured debate and discussion. There is no essay requirement for the seminars, but students may be asked to prepare ahead of seminars to discuss specific themes or questions.

Preparation for Lectures and Seminars

In order to get the most out of the paper, students are strongly encouraged to view the lectures having fully prepared, that is, having completed the required readings for each lecture. The lectures and readings are designed to complement each other. A list of supplementary readings is provided for each lecture topic to enable students to broaden and deepen their knowledge of individual topics.

Assessment

Assessment will be by written examination in Easter Term. Students will be given three (3) hours to answer two (2) questions. Questions will be thematic, being designed to encourage students to draw on and combine their knowledge of several lecture topics. A list of exam questions from the 2019/2020 exam is supplied at the end of this paper guide.

Readings

Below you will find a list of preparatory readings, grouped into two categories. The first category contains a few classic or important background texts in the field of IO and IR. The second category is general textbooks on International Organization that you may wish to consult to gain a basic understanding of what types of IOs are out there and how they operate. The weekly readings consist predominantly of journal articles and book chapters, which will generally be available electronically from the University Library’s e-journal resources or e-books provisions.

BACKGROUND TEXTS


RECOMMENDED TEXTBOOKS


1. International Organization before International Organizations? (JCS)

*Thursday 8 October 2020*


**Further Reading**


2. Achieving Co-operation under Anarchy: The Role of Institutions (GM)

*Tuesday 13 October 2020*


**Further Reading**


**3. Hegemony and World Order (JCS)**

**Thursday 15 October 2020**


**Further Reading**


4. Achieving Co-operation under Anarchy: The Role of Power

Tuesday 20 October 2020


Further Reading


5. Rational Institutionalism (GM)

Thursday 22 October 2020


Further Reading


6. Whose Global Economy? (ICS)

Tuesday 27 October 2020


**Further Reading**


7. Constructivist Perspectives on International Institutions (GM)

**Thursday 29 October 2020**


**Further Reading**


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8. Making Poverty History? Development and Foreign Aid (JCS)

*Tuesday 3 November 2020*


**Further Reading**


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9. From Crisis to Crisis: Regulating Global Finance (JCS)

*Thursday 5 November 2020*


**Further Reading:**


*Tuesday 10 November 2020*


**Further Reading**


11. International Law (JCS)

Thursday 12 November 2020


Further Reading


12. Taming Violence in World Politics: The Laws of War

Tuesday 17 November 2020


Further Reading


13. The Politics of International Peace Keeping (GM)

Thursday 19 November 2020


Further Reading


14. Corporations and Global Governance (JCS)

Tuesday 24 November 2020


Further Readings


**15. Transnational Crime and Policing the Globe (JCS)**

*Thursday 26 November 2020*


**Further Reading**


**16. NGOs and Civil Society in Global Governance (GM)**

*Tuesday 1 December 2020*

Keck, Margaret and Kathryn Sikkink (1998) *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Cornell University Press), Chapters 1 and 3.


**Further Reading**


**Lent Term**

**17. Outside In: International Sources of Domestic Policies (JCS)**

*Thursday 21 January 2021*


**Further Reading**


*Tuesday 26 January 2021*


**Further Reading**


- Some key readings on Compliance


- Human Rights Compliance


*Thursday 28 January 2021*


University Press).

**Recommended Readings:**


**20. From Global Governance to World Government? (JCS)**

*Tuesday 2 February 2020*


**Further Reading**


** There follows a separate lecture/reading list for each of the three specialized stream, which will comprise lectures 21-26. Each stream will also feature two seminars. Students can ONLY follow seminars for ONE stream **
Stream 1
International Organisations in history: between hierarchy and equality
Taught by Dr. Maja Spanu

This module investigates the formation, production and reproduction of old and new forms of hierarchy that characterise international organisations.

Even though empires have formally ended and sovereign equality now constitutes a core principle of the international system, different types of hierarchies characterise the everyday functioning of international organisations. As the case of the P5 at the Security Council attests, differences in members’ power and authority create uneven membership arrangements. Old standards of civilisation, of racial and ethnic superiority have been formally discarded after World War II yet new ordering criteria have been adopted by international organisations to evaluate states whether through lenses of economic development, rule of law, respect of human rights and democratic advancement. These new and old logics of hierarchy reveal that despite inclusive principles and practices, governance of international organisations can be both hierarchical and exclusive.

This track investigates old and new forms of hierarchy that have characterised international organisations historically and theoretically, from the end of the 19th century until today. In unearthing the coexistence of hierarchy and equality in international governance the track will also allow for the identification of logics of continuity and change historically. Understanding past ideas and practices, looking at what predicted and unforeseen effects they produced helps comprehending current challenges that international organisations face.

This track assumes that students have an active interest in the history of the international system and in using history as a tool to elucidate current politics.

The module consists of five lectures and two accompanying seminar sessions. For each session, students are required to undertake the indicated readings. The final seminar will be structured around two different types of in-class exercises. Instructions will be circulated closer to the time.

Lecture 1: Introductory Lecture - A World of Empires and Great Powers: international governance at the turn of the twentieth century
Thursday February 4, 2021

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

Glenda Sluga (2013) “The International Turn” (Chapter 1) in Internationalism in the Age of Nationalism, University of Pennsylvania Press, 11-44

Further readings:


Tuesday Feb 9th 2021


Further readings:


Seminar 1: International Governance at the League of Nations (1919-1946):
hierarchies of race, ethnicity and civilisation
Group 2: Tuesday Feb 9th, 12-13.30
Group 4: Tuesday Feb 9th, 16-17.30


Further readings:


**Lecture 3: International Financial Institutions, Economic Governance and the Post-colonial World**

*Thursday Feb 11th, 2021*


**Further readings:**


Prakash Sinha (1965) “Perspective of the Newly Independent States on the Binding Quality of International Law” in *The International and Comparative Law Quarterly* 14(1): 121-131


**Lecture 4: International Organisations, Liberalism and the Use of Force (MS)**

*Tuesday Feb 16th, 2021*


**Further readings:**

Ian Clark (2007) “Legitimacy and Consensus” (Chapter 10) in *Legitimacy in International Society*, Oxford University Press, 192-206

**Lecture 5: International Protectorates, Peacekeeping and Monitoring Operations: the UN’s liberal internationalism after the Cold War (MS)**

*Thursday Feb 18th, 2021*


**Further readings:**


**Seminar 2: Hierarchies in international governance: comparing past and present**

*Group 2: Tuesday March 2, 12-13.30
Group 4: Tuesday March 2, 16-17.30*

The seminar will be structured in two parts. The first and longest part will be held in the form of a “trial” asking students to take and defend specific positions on a core question that will bring together the various themes of the course. The second part of the seminar will consist of a final discussion on the overall themes of the course.

**Instructions for the trial will be circulated closer to the time.**

**Reading**

Stream 2
International Governance of Climate Change (TBC)
Taught by: Dr. Kari De Pryck

Climate change has become one of the major challenges of the 21st century. Although climate change has been addressed through international agreements and negotiations for almost thirty years, states have failed to significantly reduce global greenhouse gas emissions. Why is it so difficult to agree on and implement a political response to climate change? What have thirty years of international negotiations achieved? Who helps and who hinders such an agreement? And finally, how would an ambitious and just climate agreement look like?

This stream focuses on the international negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and beyond. It introduced the origins, evolution and future of these negotiations, examine the various types of state and non-state actors involved in the negotiations, their interests, strategies and roles and identify major milestones but also stumbling blocks of the process.

The module consists of five lectures and two accompanying seminar sessions. Candidates will be encouraged to read three introductory readings that contextualise theoretically and historically the construction of the international climate regime. For each session, students are required to undertake the indicated readings. Seminars are mainly structured around an in-class debate and require preparation. Instructions will be circulated closer to the time.

Background Readings


Lecture 1. Climate change – the construction of a global issue
Thursday February 4th, 2021


Further readings:

Lecture 2 – The UNFCCC – from Kyoto to Paris
Tuesday Feb 9th, 2021


Further readings:


Seminar 1 – Coalitions in the UNFCCC

Group 3 Tuesday Feb 9th, 16-17.30
Group 5: Monday Feb 8th, 16-17.30


+ Read the articles below according to the coalition that was assigned to you

**ALBA and AILAC:**


**AOSIS:**


**European Union:**


**African Group**


Hoste, J.-C. (2010). Where was United Africa in the Climate Change Negotiations? *Africa Policy Brief #2, EGMONT Royal Institute for International Relations*.

**G77:**


**OPEC / Saudi-Arabia**


**BASIC:**


**Umbrella Group / USA**


**Lecture 3 – The IPCC – the emergence of an international science diplomacy**

*Thursday Feb 11th, 2021*


Further readings:


**Lecture 4 – Beyond the UNFCCC - the regime complex for climate change**  
*Thursday Feb 16th, 2021*


Further readings:


**Lecture 5 – The effectiveness of the climate regime**  
*Thursday Feb 18th, 2021*


Further readings:


**Seminar 2 – Coalitions in the UNFCCC**  
*Group 3: Tuesday March 2nd, 16-17.30*

*Group 5: Wednesday March 3rd, 16-17.30*

Prepare a short position paper from the coalition assigned to you, in light of the scale up of the climate ambitions to be discussed in 2020 (COP26)
Within the international order, non-state actors—including non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other private charity organizations—are playing an increasingly important role. These organizations are subject to far less regulation than state actors, but in many ways act in a state-like manner: they form alliances but are in competition with each other; they represent interest groups (as, arguably, do states) but seek to remain largely separate from state control; they can act alongside the United Nations, but are not permanently represented in either the General Assembly or the Security Council.

This series of 6 lectures and 2 seminars will explore the NGO sector and examine how it fits into the state-centric international order. After an introductory lecture exploring how NGOs have become such major players on the international stage, the lectures will then consider whether NGOs are more effective than states (by examining the issue of Human Rights), or less effective (Development). Whether NGOs can build effective peace will be considered next, followed by a case study of NGOs in Africa before concluding with a broad review of whether NGOs are undermining or reinforcing issues of global governance. The two allied seminars will ask whether NGOs are intrinsically Western and whether NGOs bring more benefit or harm to the international order.

Learning objectives
- Identify the role that NGOs play within the International Order
- Explain the effectiveness of NGOs in certain areas and their limitations in others
- Compare the role of NGOs in rebuilding individual States with the efforts of bodies more officially representative of International Organizations, and identify the advantages and disadvantages of both approaches
- Identify the extent to which the NGO sector represents a new direction for the International Order itself.
- Explain why tensions exist within the broader NGO sector, and how this might limit their broader effectiveness.

This track assumes students are familiar with the basic of the NGO sector. Recommended introductory readings on the NGO sector are:


**Lecture 1. Setting the Scene: The Rise (and Rise) of the NGO**

*Thursday February 4th, 2021*


**Further Reading**


**SEMINAR 1. Are NGOs Intrinsically Western?**

*Group 1: Friday February 5, 2021*

*Group 6: Monday February 8, 2021*

da Silva Themudo N., *Managing the Paradox: NGOs, Resource Dependence and Organizational Independence* [http://etheses.lse.ac.uk/2679/](http://etheses.lse.ac.uk/2679/)

**Further Reading**

Henderson, S., *Importing Civil Society: Foreign Aid and the Women's Movement in Russia* [https://www2.gwu.edu/~ieresgwu/assets/docs/demokratizatsiya%20archive/08-1_Henderson.PDF](https://www2.gwu.edu/~ieresgwu/assets/docs/demokratizatsiya%20archive/08-1_Henderson.PDF)

**Lecture 2. A More Effective System: NGOs and Human Rights?**

*Tuesday Feb 9th, 2021*


**Further Reading**


*The website for Amnesty International ([https://www.amnesty.org.uk](https://www.amnesty.org.uk)) is also well-worth reading for up to date issues surrounding Human Rights from an NGO perspective.*

**Lecture 3. A Less Effective System: NGOs and Development?**

*Thursday February 11th, 2021*


**Further Reading**

UNESCO: *The Role And Impact Of NGOs In Capacity Development*

Gemmill, B., & Bamidele-Izu, A., The Role of NGOs and Civil Society in Global Environmental Governance
http://environment.yale.edu/publication-series/782.html

Literacy Watch: The Role of NGO’s in Education Development
http://www.aiaber.net/ejournal/vol24212/P2.pdf

Lecture 4. Can NGOs Build Peace Better?
Tuesday February 16, 2021

Peinado, M. P., The Role of NGOs and the Civil Society in Peace and Reconciliation Processes

Committee for Conflict Transformation Support, The Role of NGOs, Local and International, in Post-war Peacebuilding

Lecture 5. Case Study: NGOs and Africa
Thursday February 18, 2021

Abdulrahman, I., & Tar, U.A., Conflict Management and Peacebuilding in Africa: The Role of State and Non-State Agencies
http://archive.londonmet.ac.uk/dass-research/metranet.londonmet.ac.uk/library/z17794_3.pdf

Uzuegbunam, A.O., NGOs, Conflict and Peacebuilding in Nigeria

Further Reading

Chabal, P., Africa: The Politics of Suffering and Smiling (Zed Books Ltd, London, 2009) – Chapters 1, 2 and 4

Easterly, W., The White Man’s Burden (Oxford: OUP, 2006) – Chapters 2, 3 and 5

The Conversation: The Role Of NGOs In Africa: Are They A Force For Good?
http://theconversation.com/the-role-of-ngos-in-africa-are-they-a-force-for-good-76227

Lecture 6. The NGO Sector: Undermining or Reinforcing Global Governance?
Tuesday February 23rd, 2021


Further Reading


**SEMINAR 2. Do NGOs Bring More Benefit or Harm to the International Order?**

*Group 1: Monday February 25th, 16-17.30*

*Group 6: Wednesday March 3rd, 16-17.30*


Supervision Essay Questions

Supervision 1 Questions:

1. How does the assumption of anarchy affect the prospect of international cooperation? Compare and contrast how Realists, Liberals and Social Constructivists theorise anarchy and its consequences.

2. Select and compare two of the main theoretical approaches discussed in the lectures and readings for this course. According to these approaches, why and how do states cooperate?

3. Barnett and Duvall argue that, "Since E.H. Carr, Realists have tended to treat power as the ability of one state to use material resources to get another state to do what it otherwise would not do. The tendency of the discipline to gravitate toward realism's view of power leads, ironically, to the underestimation of the importance of power in international politics." Evaluate this argument by discussing how other forms of power influence international politics.

4. How important is US leadership for global governance? Is the US still capable of playing the role of hegemon?

5. What lessons do historical instances of solving international co-operation problems provide us with today?

Supervision 2 Questions:

6. To what extent are international organizations the answer in preventing or responding to crises like the Great Depression of the 1930s or the financial crisis from 2007?

7. Can international organizations defend and advance the interests of the poor, weak and marginalized? As a general rule, do they?

8. What explains UN Security Council decision-making on military intervention? Why do states resort to it?

9. Has the United Nations since 1945 helped reduce the incidence of violence in world politics? In what areas has it proven more or less effective and why?

Supervision 3 Questions:

10. Would the international trading system be more or less fair if the current system of global trade governance were abolished?

11. How can governmental and non-governmental international organizations become autonomous from states? Is such autonomy good or bad?

12. Does the rise of cross-border crime represent an example of the declining power of states or the increasing scope of their authority?

13. To what extent can firms and NGOs substitute for states in addressing global problems?
14. Do international rules and international organizations undermine democracy within states?

**Supervision 4 Questions:**

15. Does human rights law make a difference to respect for human rights globally? How can be best conceptualize and observe the impact of human rights law?

16. How do the laws of war work? To what extent can we assert that they are effective in curbing violence and why?

17. Is international law a restraint on power politics or a creature of it? In general, how do different theories approach the operation of international law?

18. How do international courts and tribunals shape the conduct of states and non-state actors? What factors explain their relative success or failure in doing so?

**POL3 Exam Paper 2020**

1. How might the Prisoner’s Dilemma explain financial crises?

2. Is it rational to cooperate under anarchy?

3. If a new state gained independence in 2020, what are the most important ways that this new state might be shaped by international organizations?

4. If the membership of the United Nations Security Council were to change, would we have a more peaceful world?

5. Does the scepticism of the current US government towards international organizations disprove the argument that international organizations favour the interest of the most powerful states?

6. Many international organizations and laws were originally created to address interstate conflict, yet now civil war is much more common than war between states. Given this change, have international organizations and laws lost their relevance?

7. How do the pathologies of intergovernmental organizations compare to those of NGOs?

8. Are realism and constructivism compatible when it comes to explaining aspects of international organization? In your answer, refer to concrete examples of organizations or laws.

9. Are human rights a norm of world society, a voluntary choice of states, or something else? How might any such distinction matter?

10. To what degree has international politics changed from being ruled by power in the past to being ruled by law at present?
11. Are intergovernmental organizations better than nonstate actors at solving economic problems?

12. How can experts influence global governance? Do they?

13. Have international organizations dismantled or sustained global inequalities?

END OF PAPER