POL 3 - International Organization (2021-22)

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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 Naosuke Mukoyama examines international organizations in history with reference to international hierarchy and equality. A second stream, led by Alena Drieschova, focuses on recent debates about the state and future of the so-called liberal international order. 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**

Students will have access to a total of 25 or 26 lectures (depending on which track they choose) + one 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.

Students will submit a 2000-2500 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 attend (or watch/listen to the lectures) being 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.

***NOTE that this year lectures will be delivered in varying formats: most will be in person (some live-streamed), while a handful of times lecturers will prerecord them and make them available on Moodle. Please review the schedule below carefully for these details.

ALL LECTURES WILL BE RECORDED, whether in video/audio or audio-only, depending on the Lecture Capture capabilities of the rooms we have been allocated.

For the live-streamed lectures, check the POL3 Moodle for the Zoom link.

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 2020/2021 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? (MES)

*Thursday 7 October 2021, 11am, Arts School, Lecture Theatre A*

**LIVE-STREAMED LECTURE ON ZOOM and video uploaded to Moodle. For the Zoom link check Moodle**


Further Reading


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

*Tuesday 12 October 2021, 11am, Arts School, Lecture Theatre A*

**LIVE-STREAMED LECTURE ON ZOOM and video uploaded to Moodle. For the Zoom link check Moodle**


**Further Reading**


### 3. Hegemony and World Order (MES)

*Thursday 14 October 2021, 11am, Arts School, Lecture Theatre A*

**LIVE-STREAMED LECTURE ON ZOOM and video uploaded to Moodle. For the Zoom link check Moodle**


Further Reading


4. Achieving Co-operation under Anarchy: The Role of Power (GM)
Tuesday 19 October 2021, 11am, Arts School, Lecture Theatre A
NOT live streamed, but recorded and uploaded to Moodle


Further Reading


5. **Rational Institutionalism** (MES)

*Thursday 21 October 2021, 11am, Downing Site, Genetics, Biffen Lecture Theatre*

**LIVE-STREAMED LECTURE ON ZOOM and video uploaded to Moodle. For the Zoom link check Moodle**


**Further Reading**


**6. Whose Global Economy?** (MERol)

*Tuesday 26 October 2021, 11am, Arts School, Lecture Theatre A*

*NOT live streamed, but recorded and uploaded to Moodle*


**Further Reading**


**7. Constructivist Perspectives on International Institutions** (GM)

*Thursday 28 October 2021, 11am, Downing Site, Genetics, Biffen Lecture Theatre*

*NOT live streamed, but recorded and uploaded to Moodle*


**Further Reading**


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

*Tuesday 2 November 2021, 11am, Arts School, Lecture Theatre A*

**LIVE-STREAMED LECTURE ON ZOOM and video uploaded to Moodle. For the Zoom link check Moodle**


**Further Reading**


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

*Thursday 4 November 2021, 11am, Mill Lane Lecture Block, Room 9 – Mill Lane*


Further Reading:


Tuesday 9 November 2021, 11am, Arts School, Lecture Theatre A
NOT live streamed, but recorded and uploaded to Moodle


Further Reading


11. International Law (GM)

Thursday 11 November 2021, 11am, PRE-RECORDED, AVAILABLE ON MOODLE


Further Reading


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

Tuesday 16 November 2021, 11am, Arts School, Lecture Theatre A

NOT live streamed, but recorded and uploaded to Moodle


Further Reading


### 13. The Politics of International Peace Keeping (MES)

*Thursday 18 November 2021, 11am, PRE-RECORDED, AVAILABLE ON MOODLE*


**Further Reading**


14. Corporations and Global Governance (MErol)

*Tuesday 23 November 2021, 11am, Mill Lane Lecture Block, Room 9 – Mill Lane*


**Further Readings**


15. Transnational Crime and Policing the Globe (MES)

**Thursday 25 November 2021, 11am, PRE-RECORDED, AVAILABLE ON MOODLE**


Further Reading


16. NGOs and Civil Society in Global Governance (MES)

**Tuesday 30 November 2021, 11am, PRE-RECORDED, AVAILABLE ON MOODLE**
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 (GM)**

*Thursday 20 January 2022, 11am, Location TBD*


**Further Reading**


*Tuesday 25 January 2022, 11am, Location TBD*


**Further Reading**


- Some key readings on Compliance


**Recommended Readings:**


**20. From Global Governance to World Government?** (MES)
*Tuesday 1 February 2022, 11am, Location TBD*


**Further Reading**


**Here 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 Organizations in history: Between hierarchy and equality*

Taught by Dr. Naosuke Mukoyama

This stream investigates the history of international organizations with a particular focus on old and new forms of hierarchy that characterize them.

Even though decolonization marked the end of empires, and sovereign states officially share equal status, and this now constitutes a core principle of the international system, different types of hierarchies characterize international organizations. As in the case of the P5 at the United Nations Security Council, differences in members’ power and authority are often
translated into uneven membership arrangements. Old standards of civilization have been formally discarded after World War II, but new ordering criteria have been adopted by international organizations to evaluate states through the level of economic development, rule of law, respect of human rights, or democracy. These new and old logics of hierarchy reveal that despite inclusive principles and practices, the governance of international organizations can be unequal and exclusive.

This module investigates old and new forms of hierarchy that have characterized international organizations historically since the 19th century. In unearthing the coexistence of hierarchy and equality in international governance, this stream will also allow for the identification of the logic of continuity and change. Understanding past ideas and practices and looking at what effects they produced helps to comprehend current challenges that international organizations face.

Students taking this stream are expected to have an active interest in the history of international systems and in using history as a tool to understand current politics.

The module consists of five lectures and two accompanying seminar sessions. For each session, students are required to undertake the indicated readings. In the reading lists that follow, there are two kinds of readings. One is required readings; students are expected to come to class having done those readings. The other is further readings, which are included for students who may want to read further on the topic.

**Lecture 1: Introductory lecture – Emergence of international organizations: Imperial powers and the standard of civilization**
*Tuesday February 8, 2022, Time and Location TBD*

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

Keene, Edward (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 readings:**


**Lecture 2: Decolonization – United Nations and self-determination**
*Thursday February 10, 2022, Location TBD*


Further readings:


Seminar 1: Development in the post-colonial world
Tuesday February 15, 2022, Times and Locations TBD


Further readings:


Lecture 3: The Third World movement
Thursday February 17, 2022, Time and Location TBD


Further readings:


**Lecture 4: Regionalism**

*Tuesday February 22, 2022, Time and Location TBD*


**Further readings:**


**Lecture 5: Intervention and state-building – The role of the UN and great powers**

*Thursday February 24, 2022, Time and Location TBD*


Further readings:


Seminar 2: Hierarchies in international governance – Comparing the past and present
*Tuesday March 1, 2022, Times and Locations TBD*

In this seminar, students will have a final discussion on the overall themes of the course. Further instructions will be circulated closer to the time.


Stream 2
*The Liberal International Order and Its Potential Demise*
Taught by: Dr. Alena Drieschova

In contemporary International Relations theory there is much talk about the Liberal International Order, its crisis and its potential demise. Typically the Liberal International Order is conceived of as an American-led order that exposes Western values, such as democracy-promotion, free market capitalism, and the protection of human rights. Other scholars challenge the allegedly benign nature of this order and argue that it has always been built on coercion and unequal power dynamics. The focus of this stream is to shed a light on this liberal international order, the fundamental institutional architecture that is guiding international politics in the contemporary era, but that is also being challenged at a very fundamental level, be it by the rise of new actors who are not committed to liberal principles, such as China, populist movements from within core liberal states, or planetary limits, due to climate change, a loss of biodiversity and natural resource depletion.

The stream first defines what we mean by the term Liberal International Order, and analyses how the concept is being contested by IR scholars, who primarily challenge its allegedly benign nature. We will then focus on how the order emerged at the wake of the second world war. Some scholars analyse the global South’s active participation in setting up its institutional architecture. Others highlight the compromises between economic liberalism and social protection that formed the foundation for the order’s success. We will then study how the order has been operating through principles of multilateralism, the operation of liberal norms, and market principles, sometimes gone awry. Many of the tensions in the contemporary order are a direct result of how it has been operating. New emerging actors to the order felt excluded and humiliated, domestic actors marginalised. So has the Liberal International Order reached its end, or is it reformable?

**Lecture 1. Defining the Liberal International Order**
*Tuesday February 8, 2022, Time and Location TBD*


Recommended:


Lecture 2. The historical emergence of the Liberal International Order
Thursday February 10, 2022, Location TBD


Recommended:


Seminar 1: The myth of a Liberal International Order?
Tuesday February 15, 2022, Times and Locations TBD

Acharya, Amitav “‘Idea-shift: how ideas from the rest are reshaping global order”, Third World Quarterly 37(7): 1156-1170.


Lecture 3. Modes of Operation of the Liberal International Order
Thursday February 17, 2022, Time and Location TBD


Recommended:


Lecture 4. Tensions in the Liberal International Order
Tuesday February 22, 2022, Time and Location TBD


Recommended:


**Lecture 5. The Demise of the Liberal International Order?**

*Thursday February 24, 2022, Time and Location TBD*


Recommended:


**Seminar 2. The Future of International Order**  
Tuesday March 1, 2022, Times and Locations TBD


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**Stream 3**  
The NGO Sector in Global Governance  
Taught by: Ian Shields

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**

*Tuesday February 8th, 2022, Time and Location TBD*


**Further Reading**


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

*Thursday February 10, 2022, Times and Locations TBD*

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 15th 2022, Time and Location TBD*


Further Reading


The website for Amnesty International (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 17th, 2022, Time and Location TBD


Further Reading


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

Lecture 4. Can NGOs Build Peace Better?
Tuesday February 15, 2022, Time and Location TBD


Lecture 5. Case Study: NGOs and Africa
Tuesday February 22, 2022, Time and Location TBD

Abdulrahman, I., & Tar, U.A., Conflict Management and Peacebuilding in Africa: The Role of State and Non-State Agencies
Further Reading


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?
Thursday February 24, 2022, Location TBD


Further Reading


The UN Non-Governmental Liaison Service: *The United Nations, NGOs and Global Governance*


SEMINAR 2. Do NGOs Bring More Benefit or Harm to the International Order?
Tuesday March 1, 2022, Times and Locations TBD


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 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?

Supervision 2 Questions:

5. 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?

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

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

8. 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:

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

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

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

12. To what extent can firms and NGOs substitute for states in addressing global problems?

Supervision 4 Questions:

13. 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?
14. How do the laws of war work? To what extent can we assert that they are effective in curbing violence and why?

15. 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?

16. 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 2021**

Candidates should answer two questions

1. Has the proliferation of international organisations over the last 100 years made anarchy-centred theories like realism obsolete?

2. Is the United Nations Security Council an effective and legitimate guardian of international peace and security?

3. Are rationalism and constructivism compatible when it comes to explaining aspects of international organisation? In your answer, refer to concrete examples of organisations or laws.

4. To what extent do you agree that international law is what states make of it?

5. Can sovereign equality overcome power hierarchies in international organisations?

6. How can we explain that human rights law is both widely adopted yet unevenly applied by states?

7. Some have suggested the United States should lead a “League of Democracies” to defend contemporary global governance. Analyse the potential virtues and drawbacks of this idea.

8. Does international organisation keep up with changing times, or does it tend to stay the same? Explain why.

9. Does the increasing involvement of NGOs in global governance make solving pressing global problems harder or easier? Address with examples from at least two distinct issue-areas (e.g. international security; human rights; international political economy, etc.)

10. International organisations consistently favour peace and the rule of law, while states’ commitments to these goals is patchy. Does this mean that transferring more power from states to IOs would more effectively fulfill these goals?

11. Is the leadership of a hegemon more or less important in providing global public goods in 2021 than immediately after 1945?
12. Would the world’s poor be better off, worse off, or about the same, in a world without IOs?

13. How can the global governance of climate change be improved?

END OF PAPER