

An Introduction to the United Nations: Theory, Institutions, Processes and Policies

- **Instructor: Dr. Jean-Marc Coicaud**
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- **Meeting time : Monday 6:00-8:40**

Course Description:

This course aims to guide students towards a comprehensive understanding of the foundations and operations of the United Nations. Students will develop and apply sound thinking to the normative and policy debates which surround the organization by examining the UN through its historical, theoretical and practical processes and dimensions. The course starts with an introduction to international multilateralism and the move of international society away from the League of Nations to the establishment of the UN. It then surveys the nature and influence of the UN—in conjunction with understanding its international legal underpinnings—as an institution for public policy and norm setting in the areas of security, human rights, peacekeeping and development. The course will also cover the internal workings of the UN as a bureaucracy and its operational and structural challenges.

Course Requirements:

This course is designed as a seminar and requires student attendance and participation as mandatory. Attendance is the responsibility of the student. If a student has an absence they are expected to contact the instructor prior to the missed class. If a student is absent more than three classes s/he will be unable to earn credits for the course. Students must read all assigned literature prior to each class and be prepared to discuss the materials both voluntarily and when called upon. Students will be graded based on the following:

- I. **Class Participation:** Active participation by students is required in class. This includes contributions to in-class discussions and presentations. It will account for 30% of students final grade
- II. A final research paper of 4,000 words is required to be submitted at the end of the semester on **Monday December 1**. It may address any topic covered in the course. Students must submit a draft of the paper prior to the final on **Monday November 10**.

Session I: The session will introduce the relevance of the course for graduate students, highlight its main aspects and indicate how they will be tackled.

Overall presentation of the course

- **Introduction of the students enrolled in the course**

- **Describing the overall logic of the course**

- **Practical Issues**
 - **Course participation**
 - **Paper**
 - **Grades**

Session II: History of Multilateralism before the UN

Readings

- Anghie, Antony “Colonialism and the birth of international institutions: the Mandate System of the League of Nations” in *Imperialism, Sovereignty and the Making of International Law* (Cambridge University Press, 2005)

- Burkman, Thomas W. *Japan and the League of Nations: Empire and World Order, 1914-1938* (University of Hawaii, 2007)

- Ikenberry, G. John *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order After Major Wars*, Chapters 4 and 5, (Princeton University Press, 2000)

- MacMillan, Margaret *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World* (Random House, 2003)

Session III: From the League of Nations to the United Nations

Readings

- Ikenberry, G. John *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order After Major Wars* (Princeton University Press, 2000)

Session IV: The UN Charter: Principles and Institutions

Readings

- United Nations Charter (United Nations, 1945) available at <https://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/>
- Alvarez, Jose “UN Treaty Making Conferences” in *International Organizations as Lawmakers* (Oxford University Press, 2005)

Session V: International Law and the UN

Readings

- Alvarez, Jose “Revisiting the Development of International Law Through the Political Organs of the UN” in *International Organizations as Lawmakers* (Oxford University Press, 2005)
- Cassese, Antonio *International Law in a Divided World* (Clarendon Press, 1990)
- Coicaud, Jean-Marc “Toward the International Rule of Law,” in *Beyond the National Interest: The Future of UN Peacekeeping and Multilateralism in an Era of U.S. Primacy*. (United States Institute of Peace, 2007)

Session VI: Collective Security: Institutions, Processes and Policies

Readings

- Coicaud and Arndt “The Weak International Support for Human Security in Countries in Crisis: The cases of Humanitarian Interventions, Development, and the Environment,” in Saul Takahashi (ed.), *Human Rights, Human Security, and State Security: The Intersection* (Praeger Publishers, 2014)
- Claude, Inis Jr. “Collective Security as an Approach to Peace” in *Swords into Plowshares: The Problems and Progress of International Organization*, 4th edition (New York: Random House, 1971)

- Evans, Gareth “Cooperative Security and Intra-state Conflict,” *Foreign Policy*, issue 96 (1994): 3-20
- Hurd, Ian *After Anarchy: Legitimacy and Power in the United Nations Security Council* (Princeton University Press, 2007)

Session VII: Development: Institutions and Policies

Readings

- *Agenda for Development*, Report of the Secretary-General Boutros-Boutros Ghali, (United Nations, 1995)
- Chowdhury, and Sundaram (eds.) *Is Good Governance Good for Development? The United Nations Series on Development* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2012)

Session VIII: Human Rights: Institutions, Norms and Policies

Readings

- Coicaud, Jean-Marc “INGOs as Collective Mobilization of Transnational Solidarity: Implications for Human Rights Work at the United Nations,” in Bell and Coicaud (eds.), *Ethics in Action: The Ethical Challenges of International Human Rights Non-Governmental Organizations* (Cambridge University Press, 2007)
- Coicaud, Jean-Marc “The Structure of International Politics and the Dilemmas of Solidarity,” in *Beyond the National Interest: The Future of UN Peacekeeping and Multilateralism in an Era of U.S. Primacy*. (United States Institute of Peace, 2007)
- Teitel, Ruti G. *Humanity’s Law* (Oxford University Press, 2011)

Session IX: The Question of Democracy in the UN Context

Readings

- Boutros-Ghali, Boutros, *An Agenda for Democratization*, (United Nations, 1996)
- Coicaud, Jean-Marc “Deconstructing International Legitimacy,” in Charlesworth and Coicaud (eds.) *Fault Lines of International Legitimacy* (Cambridge University Press, 2010)

Session X: The Responsibility to Protect

Readings

- Boutros-Ghali, Boutros, *An Agenda for Peace*, Second Edition (United Nations, 1995)
- Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, *The Responsibility to Protect*, (International Development Research Centre, 2001)
- High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges, and Change *A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility* (United Nations, 2004)

Session XI: The UN as a Bureaucracy

Readings

- Coicaud, Jean-Marc “The United Nations and Its Shortcomings as an International Bureaucracy,” in *Beyond the National Interest: The Future of UN Peacekeeping and Multilateralism in an Era of U.S. Primacy*. (United States Institute of Peace, 2007)
- Coicaud, Jean-Marc “International Organizations as a Profession and Distribution of Power,” in Andrés Solimano (ed.), *The International Mobility of Talent: Types, Causes, and Development Impact* (Oxford University Press, 2007)
- Otto, Dianne “The Security Council’s Alliance of Gender Legitimacy: The Symbolic Capital of Resolution 1325,” in Charlesworth and Coicaud (eds.) *Fault Lines of International Legitimacy* (Cambridge University Press, 2010)

Session XII: The UN: Data and Global Policy

Readings

- Coicaud and Tahri “National Knowledge and Global Governance: The Case of Statistical Data,” in *Global Policy Journal* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2014)
- Coicaud, Jean-Marc and Zhang Jin “The OECD as a Global Data Collection and Policy Analysis Organization: Some Strengths and Weaknesses” in *Global Policy* (London, Wiley Blackwell, Vol. 2. Issue 3, October 2011)

Session XIII: Reforming the UN

Readings

- Held, David *Democracy and the Global Order: From the Modern State to Cosmopolitan Governance* (Polity Press, 1995)
- Weiss, Thomas G. *What’s Wrong with the United Nations and How to Fix It* (Polity Press, 2008)
- Wermuth-Trenkov, Calin *United Nations Justice: Legal and Judicial Reform in Governance Operations* (United Nations University Press, 2009)
- Report of the Secretary-General’s High-level Panel on “Threats, Challenges and Change” (United Nations, 2004)

Session XIV: The Future of the UN

REVIEW