POLS686: Seminar in International Relations: International Organizations

Department of Political Science
Northern Illinois University

Spring 2018
Thursday, 3:30-6:10pm
DuSable Hall 464

Instructor: Dr. Aarie Glas
Office: Zulauf Hall 412
Office Hours: T 2-4pm, R 1-3pm, and by appointment
Email: aglas@niu.edu

I. Overview

This course examines international organization and International Organizations – how international relations are structured and why, and a number of inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations themselves. In doing so, it offers a theoretically informed and empirical rigorous engagement with a number of important debates in International Relations, including: the interaction of domestic and international politics; the potential for and limits of inter-state cooperation; the role of ‘power’ in the international arena; and the possibilities and sources of change in – or of – the international system.

The course is (roughly) structured over three parts. Part I surveys major strands of IR theory that comment on questions of international order and organization. Part II turns to inter-state cooperation by examining inter-governmental organizations themselves (the United Nations, European Union, Association of Southeast Asian Nations, and African Union). Part three, briefly, turns our attention to sub-state and trans-national actors.

Two issues to note: First, this course is necessarily selective. Notably absent is a focus on international economic or financial institutions (i.e. the Bretton Woods Institutions). This is a reality of the tension between brevity and rigor in any graduate course. It also reflects an interest in complementarity with POLS684, Political Economy of International Relations, which will be offered in Fall 2018. Second, this is an advanced graduate seminar in IR. It assumes students have a solid foundation in IR theory. While we will make use of three seminars to engage with IR theory directly, this should build on competency rather than find it. Students are encouraged to review materials assigned within POLS690 (International Relations Theory) in advance of this course where possible, and/or survey recommended readings as the course progresses.
II. Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students will:

- Understand major debates in IR regarding the structure, order, and organization of the international system and the importance of various actors;
- Be familiar with a number of specific international organizations;
- Be confident and rigorous with their engagement of IR literature concerning the key debates surveyed in the course, and;
- Undertake serious scholarly research on empirical and theoretical debates concerning international organization and IOs.

III. Grade Distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight (points)</th>
<th>Due:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Class participation</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>On-going</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Weekly summaries</td>
<td>(10x1): 10</td>
<td>On-going</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Seminar Presentations</td>
<td>(10x2): 20</td>
<td>Writing Workshop, Seminar 9 or 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Major Research Essay</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Draft</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Four (4) days before Writing Workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. Final</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Seminar 13</td>
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</tbody>
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IV. Requirements

Half of course requirements relate directly to the weekly seminars and their readings: participating in seminars, leading seminars, and providing weekly summaries. Half of the course requirements stem from the components of a major student-driven research essay.

1. Class Participation: Students are expected to attend having read and reflected upon *all* the required readings each week in advance of our Seminars. Students are required to engage actively and thoughtfully in discussions each week and to consistently demonstrate reflection on our readings. Participation assessment will reflect the quality and consistency of contributions to our course.

Participation will also reflect engagement and level of contributions within the writing workshops (see below).

2. Weekly Summaries: Students are required to submit ten (10) weekly summaries (for Seminars 2-8 and 11-13). Weekly Responses should reflect on *all* the required readings for the week. They need not be terribly detailed, but should highlight the core arguments and some key examples or illustrations used across the required readings. Responses must be one (1) page single-spaced (1 inch margins, size 12 font). Responses are due by the conclusion of each relevant Seminar. *No late Responses are accepted* for any reason. Weekly Responses will be assessed on the following four-tiered scale:

- 0.00/1 = inadequate
- 0.50/1 = adequate
- 0.75/1 = good
- 1.00/1 = excellent
Expectations will be outlined in our first seminar, but keep in mind that cogent synthesis of the core of the argument(s) and corresponding evidence will be valued. The intention of this assignment is to incentivize reflection on readings provide for concise and well-written summaries which will aid in your ability to satisfy course requirements (i.e. participation and the Essay) and assist with research design and/or Field Exams outside of the bounds of the course.

3. Seminar Presentations: Students are required to lead two (2) seminars over the course of the semester alone or in pairs, depending on student enrolment over the semester. Presentations are comprised of three aspects: (1) a 20-30 minute presentation highlighting the core elements of the required readings of that week and linkages to other aspects of the course where appropriate; (2) responding to questions related to the presentation, and; (3) offer at least four important questions for the class, the discussion of which they will lead for the remainder of the class. The latter two elements may blur, but students should be prepared to discuss the readings in detail, expand upon points raised during their presentation, and lead the subsequent discussion in the seminar. Please note: discussion questions are due at 4pm the day before the relevant seminar, to be uploaded to the course Blackboard web page. All students must review and come prepared to discuss these questions and beyond.

4. Major Research Essay: Students are required to write (and present within a workshop) a major research essay on a topic related to the course of their choice. Students are encouraged to speak to me in office hours early (and as often as you like) as they refine their topic and develop a clear, argumentative thesis that enables them to draw on relevant literature as they see fit. The paper may be largely theoretical, or largely empirical. However, it must be argumentative rather than descriptive. Students must make a clear and cohesive argument relying on a breadth of literature from within and beyond the course as they see fit.

The intention of this assignment is to allow for levity to explore topics related to course material that align with your own research interests, and to produce a cohesive and polished essay that may be a forerunner for a conference paper or component in a larger dissertation or other research project.

The Major Research Essay will be produced vis-à-vis two assignment submissions: **A. Essay Draft (& Presentation):** Students are required to provide a draft version of their major research essay to be presented and discussed with their colleagues in one of two Writing Workshops as determined by lottery. The Draft Essay needs to articulate the core components of the essay and should be a polished piece of writing which you will endeavor to expand upon in substance and refine in polish for the final version. The Draft Essay should be not more than 2,500 words, excluding references. Do not exceed the limit. The Draft Essay is due electronically to the course Blackboard web page by 4pm on the Sunday before the Workshop. Students will prepare a 10-15 minute informal presentation on their paper which will precede and ground the discussion in the Workshop.
Students will respond to questions raised by class, and together we will attempt to refine and discuss the preliminary draft.

**B. Final Essay:** Students are required to provide a final version of their essay which is no more than 6,000 words, excluding references.

Further details of the Essay assignment will be provided within Week 3 of the course via Blackboard and discussed in class. Details of the Writing Workshops will be provided by Week 5, dependent on potential fluctuations in course enrollment.

**V. Assessment**

Details of expectations will be provided in advance of each assignment orally in class or via separate documents on Blackboard where appropriate. Students are encouraged to speak to me in office hours about assessment practices, preferences, recommendations, and the like as you see fit.

All assignments will be scored out of their weight in the course as noted (above). **Final Course Grades** (alphabetic) will be calculated based on the distributions of points:

| 93+ points | A | 77-79 | C+ |
| 90-92     | A-| 74-76 | C  |
| 87-89     | B-| 70-73 | C- |
| 84-86     | B | 67-69 | D+ |
| 80-83     | B-| 60-66 | D  |
|           |   | <60   | F  |

**VI. Submission of Assignments**

All course assignments are required in hardcopy unless noted otherwise above (e.g. the Draft Essay). All assignments must be double-sided, stapled, and clearly presented. Student names, student numbers, course code, and Instructor name should be clearly visible on a title page or header, and page numbers are required. All submitted work must be clearly and formally cited and a bibliography provided for all assignments except for Weekly Responses where no bibliographies are required.

**Late assignments** will be not accepted and thus will be scored a zero, except in exceptional extenuating circumstances (e.g. a medical emergency) as determined by the Instructor.

**Extensions** and accommodations may be possible for documented medical or family emergencies or when agreed to with me, well in advance of a due date. Wherever possible, speak to me as early as possible in the semester to discuss complications or requests for accommodation. Leniency in this regard may be possible. However, it is more likely weeks in advance of a due date than the week of or after a due date has passed. Note that no accommodation is guaranteed and students are expected to plan ahead to complete all written work on or before the relevant due date.
VII. Course Materials

There are no required course texts. We will primarily be utilizing journal articles accessible online through the Library or other institutions as appropriate. However, a number of texts are used within the course in part and may be useful as preliminary readers beyond:


Students concerned about their competency with IR theory are recommended to familiarize themselves, at very least, with the following: Christian Reus-Smit and Duncan Snidal (2008), *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations*. Oxford University Press.

VIII. A Note on Seminar Readings

Weekly Seminar readings are divided into *required* and *recommended* readings in the below Seminar Plan (required readings are not labeled). The required readings are just that: required. Students must have accessed, read, and reflected on them prior to each week’s discussion.

Most required readings are drawn from journal sources that are available electronically through the NIU library. Required readings that are not available electronically will left on reserve in the Library or provided electronically through the course Blackboard page, when copyright permits. It is up to students to ensure they access these readings in a timely and efficient manner. This may require coordination with other students in the course or accessing the readings well in advance of specific Seminars, so please do not leave readings to the last minute.

The recommended readings are suggestions for further reading. Many will help inform course assignments and students’ own research beyond the course.
IX. Office Hours

Office Hours will be held weekly (as noted on page 1). These are drop-in times and all students are always welcome to attend to discuss anything related to the course, or anything else you feel that I could potentially help with. No RSVP is required. Students are encouraged to visit as often as they like. If you cannot meet during this period, please email me well in advance to arrange an alternative time, and I am sure I can accommodate your schedule.

X. Email Contact

I will (try to) answer questions by email when appropriate. Please use the course code somewhere in the subject line and ensure you make use of your official NIU email address for all communications. Those two requirements help ensure that emails are received and read in a timely manner. A 24-48 hour turnaround time should be anticipated, so please do not leave questions to the last minute.

Substantive questions regarding course materials and discussions or concerns or questions about the assignments are best discussed in Office Hours and not by email. Alternatively, please feel free to raise questions at the onset of our Seminars for the benefit of all your colleagues in the course. As a rule of thumb, if a question or a welcomed response is longer than three or so sentences, it is likely a topic to chat about in Office Hours or in our Seminars.

XI. Our Space and Issues of Accessibility

Together, we will foster a comfortable, engaging, and accessible scholarly environment. All students should feel welcome to attend and speak freely in our Seminars and in Office Hours. To this end we will approach this course as colleagues, and we will treat each other with respect and dignity at all times.

NIU, and myself as your Instructor, are committed to making reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities. If any disabilities may impact on coursework or other academic requirements, please notify both your Instructor and the Disability Resource Center (Tel. 815-753-1303) on the fourth floor of the Health Services Building as soon as possible, and within the first two weeks of the start of this course. If you would rather not speak to your Instructor, note that the Disability Resource Center can assist students in making appropriate accommodations with Instructors discretely.

If you have any concerns about the course or your ability to access or engage with the course material or our discussions – at any point throughout the semester – please also feel free to contact me by email or speak to me in person, whenever. I will happy to assist as best as I am able. I am also happy to raise any issues or concerns you may have on your behalf with the Department or NIU directly.
XII. Preferred Names and Pronouns

Class rosters and University data systems are provided to faculty with the student’s legal name and legal gender marker. As an NIU student, you are able to change how your preferred/proper name shows up on class rosters. This option is helpful for various student populations, including but not limited to: students who abbreviate their first name; students who use their middle name; international students; and transgender students. As your Instructor, I am committed to using your proper name and pronouns.

We will take time during our first class together to do introductions, at which point you can share with all members of our Seminar what name and pronouns you use, as you are comfortable. Additionally, if these change at any point during the semester, please let me know and we can develop a plan to share this information with others in a way that is safe for you.

Should you want to update your preferred/proper name, you can do so by looking at the following guidelines and frequently asked questions:
http://www.niu.edu/regrec/preferredname/index.shtml
http://www.niu.edu/regrec/preferredname/preferrednamefaq.shtml

XIII. Academic Integrity

Students are expected to have read and to abide by NIU’s Student Code of Conduct (http://www.niu.edu/conduct/student-code-of-conduct).

This course will take academic misconduct seriously. All work submitted must be original submissions and students’ own in full. While graduate students should be entirely familiar with issues of academic (dis)honesty, please take NIU’s Online Tutorial on Academic Integrity to re-familiarize yourself if you have doubts or concerns (http://www.niu.edu/ai/students/) and/or speak to me in Office Hours.

Any student in this course found to have plagiarized (accidentally or otherwise) the work of another individual (including, but not limited to other students and from existing scholarship) will receive a failing grade in this course and may be subject to additional sanctions by the University. If you have any questions throughout the course relating to academic practices, academic integrity, and issues of plagiarism please speak to me and/or consult the links noted above.

Note: With the above in mind, please ensure that all drafts, preliminary work, and research notes, as well as all graded and returned course assignments, are retained until course grades are finalized by the Registrar. As your Instructor, I may request to review either draft or finalized material at any point during the course and/or discuss student assignments in person.
XIV. Seminar Plan:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seminar No.</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seminar 1.</td>
<td>January 18</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminar 2.</td>
<td>January 25</td>
<td>Anarchy and Order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminar 3.</td>
<td>February 1</td>
<td>Institutions and Rationality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminar 4.</td>
<td>February 8</td>
<td>Institutions and Ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminar 5.</td>
<td>February 15</td>
<td>Institutional Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminar 6.</td>
<td>February 22</td>
<td>The United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seminar 7.</td>
<td>March 1</td>
<td>Intervention, Peacekeeping, and R2P</td>
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<td>Seminar 8.</td>
<td>March 8</td>
<td>Regions, Regional Organizations, and Europe</td>
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<td>…</td>
<td>March 15</td>
<td><em>No Class – Spring Break</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminar 9.</td>
<td>March 22</td>
<td>Writing Workshop I</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seminar 10.</td>
<td>March 29</td>
<td>Writing Workshop II</td>
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<tr>
<td>…</td>
<td>April 5</td>
<td><em>No Class – Dr. Glas away for ISA</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Seminar 11.</td>
<td>April 12</td>
<td>The Association of Southeast Asian Nations</td>
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<td>Seminar 12.</td>
<td>April 19</td>
<td>The African Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seminar 13.</td>
<td>April 26</td>
<td>International Non-Governmental Organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminar 14.</td>
<td>May 3</td>
<td>Global Civil Society &amp; Towards a World Government (?)</td>
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Note: topics and readings may be subject to change at the discretion of your Instructor. Any change to the required readings will be posted at least seven (7) days prior to the relevant Seminar. Any change in the above schedule (e.g. the cancellation or rescheduling of a Seminar) will be noted as soon as possible by your Instructor.
XV. Detailed Seminar Plan

PART I. Theorizing Order, Organization, and Power

Seminar 1. Introduction

Read the Syllabus in Full


Recommended


Seminar 2. Anarchy and Order


**Recommended**


**Seminar 3. Institutions and Rationality**


Recommended


Seminar 4. Institutions and Ideas


Recommended


PART II. IGOs

Seminar 5. Institutional Design & Compliance


Recommended


**Seminar 6. The United Nations**


**Recommended**


Seminar 7. Intervention, Peacekeeping, and R2P


Recommended


Seminar 8. Regions, Regional Organizations, and Europe


Recommended


**Seminar 9. Writing Workshop I.**

*Details to follow*

**Seminar 10. Writing Workshop II.**

*Details to follow*

**Seminar 11. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations**


**Recommended**


**Seminar 12. The African Union**


**Recommended**


**PART III. Beyond & Below States**

**Seminar 13. International Non-Governmental Organizations**


**Recommended**


Seminar 14. Global Civil Society & Towards a World Government (?)


Recommended


