INTERNATIONAL LAW AND THE UNITED NATIONS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course on *International Law and the UN* introduces students to the ways in which international law interacts with international politics. The course examines the origin, design, use and consequences of international law for a wide range of actors in the world politics. The main focus of the course, however, is on the United Nations and more specifically, on the role of the United Nations in the development and maintaining of international legal order.

Throughout the course, special attention will be paid to evaluating both the logic and evidence supporting various theories of commitments and compliance with international law, thus, strengthening students' understanding of states' policy decisions at the international arena. Furthermore, students will examine the role of the UN and its specific mechanisms in the formation, operation and enforcement of international law across variety of substantive issues including human rights, armed conflicts, fight against terrorism, environmental issues and economic affairs. Hence, this course is relevant and pivotal to both components of the MA Program – the UN and Global Policy. This course is unique as it offers a combination of theoretical approaches for a broader understanding of international legal order combined with research and practice on the involvement of the UN in addressing current and future issues in the world politics.

Upon completing the course the students will be able to:

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

**CLO 1:** Analyze the relationship between international law and international politics and how such interaction shapes international relations.

**CLO 2:** Evaluate the role and discuss issues of accountability of different actors, and specifically the United Nations in the international legal order.

**CLO 3:** Recognize and define terms and key concepts pertaining to international law and the UN mechanism and use international law as a framework to analyze international issues and disputes.

**CLO 4:** Assess the prospects and limits of international law and UN involvement for addressing current and future issues in world politics.

**CLO 5:** Examine the role of the UN and its particular mechanisms in the formation and operation of international law across variety of substantive issues including human rights, conflict resolution, fight against terrorism, environmental issues and economic affairs.
MODULE 1: INTRODUCTION – 1 week (July 6 – July 12, 2015)

MLO 1: Outline the historical development of international law and the UN;
MLO 2: Distinguish and define the sources of international law;
MLO 3: Identify and use resources for more effective reading, researching and understanding of international law materials;
MLO 4: Compare the role of different international actors in the development of international legal regime and discuss their accountability;

LESSON 1: Introductory Overview and Historical Development of the UN and International Law (July 6)

LO 1: Provide historical overview of the development of international law and discuss importance of international law nowadays;
LO 2: Recall the history of the UN and outline its current place and role in international politics;
LO 3: Review the UN Charter and the structure of the UN;
LO 4: Use various databases related to international law materials;

Video lecture (Monday, July 6)

Forum discussion (Introductions of participants) # 1

Forum discussion instructions are distributed

Referee report sign-up sheet and instructions are distributed

- Forum discussion # 1 Introduction of participants post (due 11:59pm, Tuesday, July 7)
- Forum discussion # 1 replies (due 11:59pm, Wednesday, July 8)

LESSON 2: Sources of international Law, Role of the UN in International Law making and Actors in International Legal politics (July 9)

LO 1: List, define and give examples of sources of international law;
LO 2: Explain how and by whom international law sources are created;
LO 3: Discuss the issue of hierarchy of norms in international law;
LO 4: Discuss the role of the UN in international law making;
LO 5: List various state and non-state actors in the international legal politics and discuss the issue of legal standing in international law;
LO 6: Identify the problems of accountability of non-state actors;
LO 7: Assess the efforts of the UN in strengthening the responsibility of non-state actors.
LO 8: Discuss the issues of accountability of the UN personnel;

1-st live meeting + Lecture (Thursday, July 9)

Quiz # 1 is posted

Small groups are assigned

Small group instructions are distributed

Research paper instructions are distributed

Lesson 3 referee report window opens (noon, July 9)

- Referee report sign up (due 11:59pm, Friday, July 10)
• Quiz # 1 (due 11:59pm, Sunday, July 12)

**MODULE 2: THEORIES OF COMMITMENTS – 1 week (July 13 – July 19, 2015)**

  MLO 1: Outline the demand for the international law regimes;
  MLO 2: Identify and describe the major theories of commitment;
  MLO 3: Explain institutional design of international treaties;

**LESSON 3: Understanding Commitment to International Treaties (July 13)**

  LO 1: Summarize theories of commitment;
  LO 2: Apply theories of commitment to specific cases;

Video lecture (Monday, July 13)

Lesson 3 referee report (optional)

Research Paper Outline

Lesson 4 referee report window opens (noon, July 13)

  • Lesson 3 referee report (due 2 pm, Monday, July 13)
  • Research paper outline (due 11:59pm, Wednesday, July 15)

**LESSON 4: Institutional Design of International Treaties (July 16)**

  LO 1: Review Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties;
  LO 2: Define RUDs and give examples;
  LO 3: Describe and apply the concept of legalization;

Video lecture (Thursday, July 16)

Forum discussion # 2

Quiz # 2 is posted

Lesson 4 referee report (optional)

Lesson 5 referee report window opens (noon, July 16)

  • Lesson 4 referee report (due 2 pm, Thursday, July 16)
  • Forum discussion # 2 post (due 11:59pm, Friday, July 17)
  • Forum discussion # 2 replies (due 11:59pm, Saturday, July 18)
  • Quiz # 2 (due 11:59pm, Sunday, July 19)

**MODULE 3: THEORIES OF COMPLIANCE – 1 week (July 20 – July 26, 2015)**

  MLO 1: Identify and describe the major theories of compliance;
  MLO 2: Discuss the level of state compliance with international law norms:
  MLO 3: Examine political, legal and social domestic forces stimulating/impeding compliance with international law;
  MLO 4: Evaluate effectiveness of enforcement mechanisms;

**LESSON 5: International and Domestic Sources of Compliance (July 20)**
LO 1: Summarize theories of compliance;
LO 2: Apply theories of compliance to specific cases;
LO 3: Discuss political regimes and compliance with international law;
LO 4: Identify other domestic forces stimulating (non) compliance;

Video lecture (Monday, July 20)

Research paper outline feedback is provided by instructor by email (Monday, July 20)

Lesson 5 referee report (optional)

Lesson 6 referee report window opens (noon, July 20)

- Lesson 5 referee report (due 2 pm, Monday, July 20)

LESSON 6: Enforcing International Law (July 23)

LO 1: Identify mechanisms of enforcement of international law;
LO 2: Read ICJ cases
LO 3: Discuss efficiency of sanctions using specific examples;
LO 4: Argue about enforcement powers of the UN SC;

2-nd live meeting + Lecture (Thursday, July 23)

Participation in this live meeting is required, not optional like in other two live meetings (this constitutes 5% of the total 35% of Research Paper grade)

Students will present their research paper outline during live meeting

Peer’s feedback is provided by students & instructor during live meeting

Forum discussion # 3

Quiz # 3 is posted

Lesson 6 referee report (optional)

Lesson 7 referee report window opens (noon, July 23)

- Lesson 6 referee report (due 2 pm, Thursday, July 23)
- Forum discussion # 3 post (due 11:59pm, Friday, July 24)
- Forum discussion # 3 replies (due 11:59pm, Saturday, July 25)
- Quiz # 3 (due 11:59pm, Sunday, July 26)

MODULE 4: INTERNATIONAL LAW REGIMES AND THE UN – 2.5 weeks (July 27 – August 12, 2015)

MLO 1: Review the process of formation of various international law regimes;
MLO 2: Identify and critically assess key UN mechanisms responsible for monitoring of various International law regimes and conflict resolution;
MLO 3: Discuss current trends and prospects for the development of international law regimes;

LESSON 7: International Human Rights Law (July 27)

Video lecture (Monday, July 24)
16:790:536

Group # 1 presentation

Forum discussion # 4

Lesson 7 referee report (optional)

Lesson 8 referee report window opens (noon, July 27)
  - Group # 1 presentation (due 09:00 am, Monday, July 27)
  - Lesson 7 referee report (due 2 pm, Monday, July 27)
  - Forum discussion # 4 post (due 11:59 pm, Tuesday, July 28)
  - Forum discussion # 4 replies (due 11:59 pm, Wednesday, July 29)

**LESSON 8: International Humanitarian Law (July 30)**

Video lecture (Thursday, July 30)

Group # 2 presentation

Forum discussion # 5

Lesson 8 referee report (optional)

Lesson 9 referee report window opens (noon, July 30)
  - Group # 2 presentation (due 09:00 am, Thursday, July 30)
  - Lesson 8 referee report (due 2 pm, Thursday, July 30)
  - Forum discussion # 5 post (due 11:59 pm, Friday, July 31)
  - Forum discussion # 5 replies (due 11:59 pm, Saturday, August 1)

**LESSON 9: International Law and Terrorism (August 3)**

Video lecture (Monday, August 3)

Group # 3 presentation

Forum discussion # 6

Lesson 9 referee report (optional)

Lesson 10 referee report window opens (noon, August 3)
  - Group # 3 presentation (due 09:00 am, Monday, August 3)
  - Lesson 9 referee report (due 2 pm, Monday, August 3)
  - Forum discussion # 6 post (due 11:59 pm, Tuesday, August 4)
  - Forum discussion # 6 replies (due 11:59 pm, Wednesday, August 5)

**LESSON 10: International Environmental Law (August 6)**

Video lecture (Thursday, August 6)

Group # 4 presentation
Forum discussion # 7

Lesson 10 referee report (optional)

Research Paper

Lesson 11 referee report window opens (noon, August 6)

- Group # 4 presentation (due 09:00 am, Thursday, August 6)
- Lesson 10 referee report (due 2 pm, Thursday, August 6)
- Forum discussion # 7 post (due 11:59pm, Friday, August 7)
- Forum discussion # 7 replies (due 11:59pm, Saturday, August 8)
- Research Paper (due 11:59pm, Sunday, August 9)

LESSON 11: Future of International Law (August 10)

3-rd live meeting + Lecture (Monday, August 10)

Lesson 11 referee report (optional)

Forum discussion # 8

- Lesson 11 referee report (due 2 pm, Monday, August 10)
- Forum discussion # 8 post (due 11:59pm, Tuesday, August 11)
- Forum discussion # 8 replies (due 11:59pm, Wednesday, August 12)

ASSIGNMENTS (high stakes):

- Research paper – 35% (outline 10%, presentation during the 2nd live meeting 5%, final version 20%)
- Referee reports/News reports/Treaty reports – 20%
- Small groups (formed in the beginning of the course, themes are distributed, work the whole semester until presentation during lessons 7-10) – 15%

ACTIVITIES (low stakes)

- Quiz (only for three modules = total 3 quizzes) – 10%
- Forum discussions (reply to instructor’s question, lessons 7-10 respond to small group’s questions, comment to two peer’s; forum discussion is due after class) – 20%

Preparation and Participation

This is online course which means all the lectures, assignments and activities are done online. Although most lessons are asynchronous (when teaching and learning is not done at the same time), there are three synchronous (when teaching and learning happens at the same time) live meetings. Live meetings (lesson 2, 6 and 11) are held online. This means that students do not need to be physically present on New Brunswick campus, but will be required to login to the live meeting feed on their computers using the link in Adobe Connect created by the instructor.
There is no separate grade for preparation and participation in the course. Preparation and participation will be evaluated on the basis of quantity and quality of student's online activities which includes regular signing in into the course Sakai webpage and timely submission of all written assignments. Instructor is able to monitor students’ activities on the course webpage as Sakai creates an electronic record of student participation in this course.

**Referee Report (20%)**

There will be no midterm exam for this class. However, starting from lesson 3, students have to submit a 2-3 page (double spaced) referee reports. Each student has to write 3 referee reports. For that, students will have to choose lessons for which they will write referee reports in the sign-up sheet. Referee report is due online on Sakai at 2 pm on the day of the lesson for which the report is written. Referee report instructions as well as suggested template for a referee report will be provided by the instructor in a separate handout. Referee report rubric is posted on Sakai.

**Quizzes (10%)**

There will be three multiple choice online quizzes (on modules 1-3) based on the assigned materials. Quizzes will be posted online on Sundays at noon and are due 11:59pm that Sunday. Once started, students will have to complete the quiz in 15 minutes. Students cannot retake quizzes. There is no quiz rubric as grading policy is embedded in the assessment instrument.

**Forum discussions (20%)**

Every week students will have to participate in forum discussions. This assignment consists of two parts: (1) answering a question and (2) posting forum responses to two peers. In total, students will participate in eight forum discussions throughout the course. For lessons 1-6, instructor will post questions at noon on Mondays and Thursdays, and students will have to respond to the questions by 11:59pm on Fridays and comment on two other students' responses by 11:59pm on Saturdays. For lessons 7-11, students will participate in forum discussions initiated by small groups, not the instructor. Forum discussion instructions will be provided by the instructor in a separate handout. Forum discussion rubric is posted on Sakai.

**Small Groups (15%)**

Students will be divided into small groups during lesson 2 and will have to work throughout the semester of their presentation. Small group work instructions will be provided by the instructor in a separate handout. Small group work rubric is posted on Sakai.

**Research Paper (35%)**

Each student is required to write one 15 page original research paper examining an aspect of international law. Details will be provided in a separate during lesson 2. Outline of the research paper and bibliography is due 11:59pm, Wednesday July 15 online on Sakai. Instructor will provide a feedback on students' outline. Students will have to present the outline of their research paper during the second live meeting on Thursday, July 23. During the live meeting students will receive feedback from their peers. Final research paper is due Sunday, August 9.

Any papers turned in after the due date will be penalized 10% per day, or any part thereof. Extensions are only available under the direst of circumstances, such as a documented illness or...
debilitating injury spanning much of the time when you could have worked on the assignment. Even in these exceptional cases, you are responsible for informing the instructor ahead of time, when circumstances permit, that an assignment will be late. Unnecessary delays in notification will disqualify students for an extension. Research paper rubric is available on Sakai.
### Preliminary Reading List

#### Lesson 1

**Required**


**Recommended**


#### Lesson 2

**Required**


**Recommended**


Lesson 3

Required


Recommended


Lesson 4

Required


Recommended

Lesson 5

Required


Recommended


Lesson 6

Required


Recommended


Lesson 7

Required


Recommended


Lesson 8

Required


Recommended


Lesson 9

Requires


Recommended


• UNODC. 2009. "FAQ on International Law Aspects of Countering Terrorism".


Lesson 10

Required


Recommended


Lesson 11

Required


Recommended