

PLSC 342
International Organization

Eastern Michigan University
Department of Political Science

Fall 2017
MW, 11:00 a.m.-12:15 p.m., 419 Pray-Harrold

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Course Description:

World politics involves not only about 200 sovereign states but also over 250 intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and more than 8,500 nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). While some opinions suggest that international organizations make significant independent contributions to global governance by promoting cooperation and providing critical operational services, others see them merely as instruments of great power politics. Understanding the role of international organizations generates insight into how states and non-state actors manage common problems and issues in the context of globalization and international interdependence.

The objective of this course is to enhance your knowledge of international organizations and your ability to analyze and evaluate their contributions to global governance. To this end, the course examines the structures, decision-making processes, functions, and politics of international organizations while considering multiple ways in which they relate to sovereign states and other actors in world politics. After providing an introduction and presenting theoretical approaches to global governance and international organizations, the course addresses historical sources of international organizations. Next, the course focuses on the United Nations, regional organizations, as well as NGOs, networks, and social movements. Subsequently, the course gives you an opportunity to participate in a global governance conference dealing with peace and security, global economic governance, economic well-being and human development, as well as human rights and the environment. The course concludes with some thoughts about what global governance actors can do and cannot do and what future challenges global governance may encounter. Upon completion of the course, you will be able to:

- Understand and critically reflect on the diversity of actors and issues involved in the politics of international organizations in the context of global governance.
- Explain how different theoretical, historical, and institutional analytical approaches help to view and interpret the structures, decision-making processes, and politics of international organizations.

- Appreciate the variety and ethical implications of the institutions and policies involved in the politics of international organizations.
- Evaluate the extent to which international forces and human conduct interact in international organizations to form a basis for a global, or at least regional, community of shared values and objectives.
- Think about ways in which international organizations deal with such diverse issues as peace and security, global economic governance, economic well-being and human development, as well as human rights and the environment.

Course Structure:

Class meetings combine lectures and discussions. While lectures introduce and explain key concepts, ideas, arguments, and evidence, discussions address critical questions, problems, and issues identified during lectures. You are expected to be active participants in class discussions and contribute meaningfully to the explanation, evaluation, and application of the concepts and issues covered in the course. To this end, you are expected to read the assigned material and be well prepared for each class session.

In this class, we will have a global governance conference. In this conference, each of you will represent a country's government at the United Nations, formulating and defending a policy on a specific global issue as a member of one of five committees: (1) a peace and security committee, (2) a global economic governance committee, (3) an economic well-being and human development committee, (4) a human rights committee, and (5) an environment committee. Each country's policy will be reported in a global governance resolution.

Required Text:

In pursuit of the course objective, the following text is required:

- Margaret P. Karns, Karen A. Mingst, and Kendall W. Stiles, *International Organizations: The Politics and Processes of Global Governance*, 3rd edition, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2015. ISBN: 978-1-62637-151-4
https://rienner.com/title/International_Organizations_The_Politics_and_Processes_of_Global_Governance_3rd_edition

Course Requirements:

A midterm take-home exam, a global governance conference, and a global governance resolution will give you opportunities to demonstrate critical and analytical thinking by applying the material covered in class and in the readings.

Midterm Take-Home Exam: There will be a midterm take-home exam including about four double-spaced type-written pages of text as well as a title page and a reference list. Depending on quality, the exam will be worth up to 30 points. The exam will be available on Wednesday, November 1, and is **due on Monday, November 6**.

Global Governance Conference: Representing a country's government at the United Nations, each of you will make a policy presentation in a global governance conference. In your presentation, you will formulate and defend a policy on a specific global issue as a member of one of five committees: (1) a peace and security committee, (2) a global economic governance committee, (3) an economic well-being and human development committee, (4) a human rights committee, and (5) an environment committee. Please note that you are expected to address a specific global issue that is (a) of greatest concern to the government that you will represent and (b) of obvious relevance to the committee that you will be a member of. Depending on quality, a policy presentation will be worth up to 30 points, requiring a hard copy of an outline/set of PowerPoint slides to be submitted in class when the presentation is scheduled. Please note that there will be **no credit for a policy presentation without a hard copy of an outline/set of PowerPoint slides**. Please cite relevant sources and provide a list of references.

Policy presentations by members of the peace and security committee are **due on Monday, November 6, and Wednesday, November 8.**

Policy presentations by members of the global economic governance committee are **due on Monday, November 13, and Wednesday, November 15.**

Policy presentations by members of the economic well-being and human development committee are **due on Wednesday, November 15, and Monday, November 20.**

Policy presentations by members of the human rights committee are **due on Monday, November 27, and Wednesday, November 29.**

Policy presentations by members of the environment committee are **due on Monday, December 4, and Wednesday, December 6.**

Global Governance Resolution: Each country's policy presented in the global governance conference will be reported in a global governance resolution of about six double-spaced type-written pages of text in the format of a United Nations resolution. Examples of United Nations resolutions will be distributed in class. Depending on quality, the global governance resolution will be worth up to 30 points. The global governance resolution is **due on Monday, December 11.**

Both the global governance conference and the global governance resolution are expected to address the following questions:

- What specific global issue is of greatest concern to “your” country and why?
- What previous resolutions and/or actions by what global actors can be recalled in regard to the issue?
- What objective(s) does “your” country have with respect to the issue and why?
- What is “your” country’s policy to achieve its objective(s) with respect to the issue and how might “your” country collaborate with what other global actors to effectively achieve its objective(s)?

Please note that global actors include states, organs of the United Nations, regional organizations, as well as NGOs, networks, and social movements. Examples of states are the United States and Thailand. Examples of organs of the United Nations are the United Nations Security Council and the United Nations Economic and Social Council. Examples of regional organizations are the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Examples of NGOs, networks, and social movements are Human Rights Watch and Oxfam.

Class Attendance: Since class performance is strongly related to class attendance, I encourage you to attend class by awarding you up to 10 points for perfect class attendance.

Grading Scale:

Through the midterm take-home exam, global governance conference, global governance resolution, and class attendance, you can obtain a possible total number of 100 points, which are divided as follows:

Midterm Take-Home Exam: 30 points
Global Governance Conference: 30 points
Global Governance Resolution: 30 points
Class Attendance: 10 points

Your course grade will be based on your total number of points on the following scale:

95-100 A
90-94 A-
87-89 B+
83-86 B
80-82 B-
77-79 C+
73-76 C
70-72 C-
67-69 D+
63-66 D
60-62 D-
0-59 F

Course Schedule:

Week 1: September 6

Topic: Introduction to Global Governance and International Organizations

Reading: Karns, Mingst, and Stiles (Chapter 1)

Week 2: September 11 and September 13

Topic: Introduction to Global Governance and International Organizations (continued)

Reading: Karns, Mingst, and Stiles (Chapter 1)

Week 3: September 18 and September 20

Topic: Theoretical Approaches to Global Governance and International Organizations

Reading: Karns, Mingst, and Stiles (Chapter 2)

Week 4: September 25 and September 27

Topic: Historical Sources of International Organizations

Reading: Karns, Mingst, and Stiles (Chapter 3)

Week 5: October 2 and October 4

Topic: The United Nations

Reading: Karns, Mingst, and Stiles (Chapter 4)

Week 6: October 9 and October 11

Topic: The United Nations (continued)

Reading: Karns, Mingst, and Stiles (Chapter 4)

Week 7: October 16 and October 18

Topic: Regional Organizations

Reading: Karns, Mingst, and Stiles (Chapter 5)

Week 8: October 23 and October 25

Topic: Regional Organizations (continued)

Reading: Karns, Mingst, and Stiles (Chapter 5)

Week 9: October 30 and November 1

Topic: NGOs, Networks, and Social Movements

Reading: Karns, Mingst, and Stiles (Chapter 6)

Week 10: November 6 and November 8

Topic: Global Governance Conference: Peace and Security Committee

Reading: Karns, Mingst, and Stiles (Chapter 7); Individual Research

Week 11: November 13 and November 15

Topic: Global Governance Conference: Global Economic Governance Committee;
Economic Well-Being and Human Development Committee

Reading: Karns, Mingst, and Stiles (Chapters 8 and 9); Individual Research

Week 12: November 20

Topic: Global Governance Conference: Economic Well-Being and Human Development
Committee (continued)

Reading: Karns, Mingst, and Stiles (Chapter 9); Individual Research

Note: No classes on November 22!

Week 13: November 27 and November 29

Topic: Global Governance Conference: Human Rights Committee

Reading: Karns, Mingst, and Stiles (Chapter 10); Individual Research

Week 14: December 4 and December 6

Topic: Global Governance Conference: Environment Committee

Reading: Karns, Mingst, and Stiles (Chapter 11); Individual Research

Week 15: December 11

Topic: Roles of Global Governance Actors and Future Challenges to Global Governance

Reading: Karns, Mingst, and Stiles (Chapter 12)

Course Policy:

- Please note that the course schedule is subject to change.
- Late take-home exams, late global governance resolutions, or absence from the global governance conference will be accepted only in cases of documented medical or family emergencies.
- Incomplete grades will be given only for documented medical or family emergencies, and must be negotiated before final grades are due.
- Since I respect students' observance of religious holidays, nobody will be penalized or disadvantaged for missing class on such days.

- Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities will be available upon documentation provided by EMU's Disability Resource Center.
- International students need to make sure that they meet the requirements of their visas to study in the United States.
- I will work hard to help anyone who has to miss class due to illness, religious holidays, or unavoidable conflicts.
- I will try to offer extensive support in office hours and schedule appointments at other times for any student who is staying up-to-date but has questions. Conversely, I will give only basic guidance to a student who lets the course go for no important reason.
- I recommend that students take this class only if they are seriously committed to doing the course work.
- Academic dishonesty (including plagiarism and cheating) will not be tolerated and is prohibited by the EMU Code of Student Conduct. Academic dishonesty evident in any assignment will result in a score of zero for the assignment.
- Violations of the EMU Code of Student Conduct or the University's Safe Working and Learning Environment may result in sanctions up to removal from the course or expulsion from the university.

Course Resources:

- If you have questions or comments about class contents, please feel free to email me; please keep your questions and comments brief, precise, and to the point so you may obtain a response as quickly and effectively as possible.
- Additional course-related material and information will be posted through Canvas. For Canvas support, please click on "Help" in the bottom left corner of the Canvas website (<https://canvas.emich.edu/>).
- For university policies, procedures, and services, please see the EMU Student Handbook (<https://www.emich.edu/studenthandbook/index.php>).
- For one-on-one consultation on writing, please contact EMU's University Writing Center (<https://www.emich.edu/uwc>) by phone at 734-487-0694; the center's consultants also work in EMU's Academic Projects Center (<https://www.emich.edu/apc>), which offers drop-in consultation on writing, research, and technology-related issues, and which may be reached by phone at 734-487-2543.
- If you have questions concerning EMU's Bruce T. Halle Library (<http://www.emich.edu/halle/>) and its resources, please contact a librarian, by phone at 734-487-0020, or visit the on-line library services at <http://www.emich.edu/halle/askalibrarian.html>.
- For issues related to registration and enrollment, please contact EMU's Office of Records and Registration (<http://www.emich.edu/registrar/>) by phone at 734-487-4111.
- For institutional support for students with disabilities, please contact EMU's Disability Resource Center (<http://www.emich.edu/disabilities/>) by phone at 734-487-2470.

- For support related to multicultural issues, please contact EMU's Center for Multicultural Affairs (<http://www.emich.edu/cma/>) by phone at 734-487-2377.
- For academic advising, please contact EMU's University Advising & Career Development Center (<http://www.emich.edu/aac/>) by phone at 734-487-0400.
- For advising in political science, please contact the main office of EMU's Political Science Department (<http://www.emich.edu/polisci/>) by phone at 734-487-3113.