

Model United Nations - PLSC 343-L5, CRN 14226

Fall 2017

Eastern Michigan University
T/Th 3:30-4:45 pm, 419 Pray Harrold

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Course Description

This course seeks to develop understanding of the problems of global governance, the functioning of the United Nations, and the interaction of divergent foreign policies at the international system level. Students will also learn about contemporary global issues of conflict and collaboration, and develop an appreciation of the wide diversity of perspectives on those issues. This is a chance to see the world as others perceive it outside the United States.

The course emphasizes experiential learning. Students work in groups to represent the positions of countries in debates on current issues in simulated United Nations sessions. As part of the course, students will participate in the American Model United Nations (AMUN) conference held in Chicago. The class will travel to Chicago from **Sat., Nov. 18 – Tues., Nov. 21, 2017** (right before the Thanksgiving break). The EMU class will form two country delegations representing Panama and Jordan. By examining global issues from the perspectives of these countries, students will gain insight into regional blocs, the North-South divide, and the changing post-Cold War international order. This course also offers a special opportunity to develop and practice the arts of negotiation, persuasion and multilateral diplomacy.

After returning from the conference, we will apply our skills in international problem-solving to a topical issue-area, which this year will be a Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) simulation on Colombia since the November 2016 peace accords.

Course Objectives

- **Content knowledge and skills:** Students will acquire extensive knowledge of the origins, development, and character of the United Nations as well as an understanding of its role in the international system. You will also become familiar with the contemporary foreign policy and international behavior of a specific nation, as well as a good understanding of critical global issues. You will become proficient in the rules and use of parliamentary procedure, and understand how simulations of the United Nations are organized and conducted. Model UN will also give you an understanding of the political workings of international institutions and global governance in general. You will develop your ability to construct arguments and present them persuasively to others. By the end of the semester, you will have acquired knowledge and skills necessary to organize and lead a small-scale simulation of the General Assembly, Security Council, or one of the other bodies of the UN.
- **LBC (Learning Beyond the Classroom):** Because of the experiential learning aspect of participating in the Model UN conference and representing another country, this course satisfies the “Learning Beyond the Classroom/International & Multicultural Experience” component (Area V/Group 5) of the EMU General Education requirements.

- **WI (Writing Intensive)**: This course will develop your skills in specialized research and in written communication strategies that are specific to international diplomacy and the discipline of political science. You will have the opportunity to develop and practice your writing in varied formats, including foreign policy **position papers**, **UN resolutions**, written **text of a speech**, and an **analytical essay** on UN diplomacy. The course satisfies the General Education/Writing Intensive requirement for the Political Science and International Affairs majors, because it addresses the following objectives:
 - Develop and employ successful, flexible writing and reading strategies that support sustained inquiry in a discipline.
 - Use writing strategies that achieve the purposes for writing and address the expectations of audiences within a disciplinary context.
 - Formulate research questions and employ strategies for researching and responding to questions.
 - Use discipline-specific genres to communicate information.
 - Understand conventions for communicating, disseminating, and interpreting information within a discipline.

Course Requirements

Attendance and participation

Students are required to participate fully (working individually and in teams) in preparing position papers and resolutions, and in simulated UN debate sessions and caucusing. This requires attending and participating in classes all semester, AND in all assigned sessions of the American Model United Nations (AMUN) conference in Chicago. Students are expected to work together as a team, which will include group meetings, **research sessions (every Thursday from 5:15-7:30 p.m. in Halle Rm. G-11)**, and practice simulations in addition to the regular class meetings.

****SPECIAL NOTE ON ATTENDANCE****: This is an experiential course that depends on the interaction of all students in the class. Attendance will be considered as part of the class participation component of the grade. Students who do not attend class conscientiously and participate actively may not be included in class travel to the Model UN conference, in which case they will be required to write a 10-page research paper. ***Three or more absences during the semester (without documentation of a medical or other emergency) will result in an F for the course.***

Assignments and Exams

Written requirements in preparation for the conference include writing two short country position papers on issues to come before the UN; two resolutions in the language and format of UN resolutions; and one general debate speech (which will also be orally presented in class). To assist you in preparing for the conference, you will also assemble and submit a three-ring binder of background information and documents on your country, its foreign policy, and the topics of your committee. During Oct. 17-24 you will also schedule an individual meeting with the instructors to present your research and your negotiating strategy, which will be part of your class participation grade; anyone who is not adequately prepared at that point will not be allowed to travel to the conference and will instead write a research paper. Requirements in the second half of the semester include a 3-5 page reaction paper assessing the conference (or a 10-page research paper for anyone who does not attend the conference), and an in-class final exam.

Required readings

It is essential that you complete all assigned readings before the class period for which they are assigned. Many assigned readings are in internet links embedded in this syllabus, or pdf files that have been uploaded to <https://canvas.emich.edu>, the location of the **course shell** which you should check regularly. The required text for the course is listed below and is available at any of the bookstores that serve the EMU campus, or through online booksellers.

Mingst, Karen A., Margaret P. Karns, & Alynna J. Lyon. *The United Nations in the 21st Century*, 5th ed. Boulder, CO: Westview, 2016. ISBN 978-0-8133-4964-0.

In addition to completing assigned readings, it is essential that you follow current world politics. Recommended news sources include The New York Times and The Washington Post; periodicals such as The Economist or The Nation; and news broadcasts such as the non-commercial Free Speech Radio News (<http://www.fsrn.org>); Democracy Now! at <http://www.democracynow.org>; National Public Radio (online at <http://news.npr.org> or hourly at WEMU, 89.1 FM); BBC news (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world> or broadcast on WUOM, 91.7 FM, 9:00-10:00 a.m. Mon.-Fri.); and Al Jazeera, <http://america.aljazeera.com/topics/topic/categories/international.html>.

Preparatory research

Much of the research on foreign policy positions, international issues, and UN information will require use of the Internet. We will help you get started by distributing links to key sources, beginning with basic information about the AMUN conference and overviews of the research process. (Here's one general resource to get you started: <http://bestdelegate.com/research>.) We will also offer suggestions for what types of information you should gather for your country, tips on topic research and finding sources, and links to United Nations documents and agencies, as well as guides to writing position papers, drafting resolutions, and giving speeches.

Early in the semester, you should go to the American Model UN web site – <http://www.amun.org> -- which contains important information about the conference we will be attending. You should download and print out the *2016 AMUN Rules and Procedures*, as well as the briefing material for your committee from the *Issues at AMUN 2016 Handbook*, <http://www.amun.org/handbooks>, once you have received your committee assignment.

In class we will review the techniques and sources for specialized research on the foreign policy positions of Panama and Jordan on specific issues. As you do this research, you should assemble all relevant information in a **large three-ring binder** that you can use in completing your assignments and at the conference.

Grades will be calculated as follows:

| Assignment | When | Percentage |
|---|--------------|------------|
| Participation (in class and conference) | All the Time | 20% |
| Three-Ring Binder (research materials) | Oct. 10 | 10% |
| Individual Meetings with Instructor | Oct 17-24 | - |
| 2 Position Papers (one-half page single-spaced for each topic) | Oct. 17 | 10% |
| 2 Resolutions (1-2 pp. each, written in UN format) | Nov. 2 | 10% |

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|---|-----------|-----|
| 1 General Debate Speech (outlining country's overall position on issues; 2 pp. written, plus 2 min. oral presentation) | Nov. 7-14 | 10% |
| Reaction Paper (on Model UN conference, 3-5 pp.) | Nov. 30 | 10% |
| Simulation (in class) | Dec. 5-12 | 10% |
| Final Exam | Dec. 14 | 20% |

Communications

You are responsible for regularly checking your EMU email account, where you may occasionally receive announcements and materials relevant to the class. If you prefer to use another email address, you should set up your EMU account to automatically forward to the other address.

Updates

Since the world of international diplomacy is constantly changing, readings and other course material and assignments are subject to change. Please check your EMU email regularly for updates.

Late Assignments and Makeup Exams

Late work will be reduced one letter grade per day, and missed exams or quizzes will receive a zero, unless there is a legitimate documented excuse. It is your responsibility to notify the instructor *before* the assignment due date or scheduled date of the exam.

Academic Dishonesty

Plagiarism – the unacknowledged use of the words or ideas of another person as one's own – is forbidden by the EMU Code of Student Conduct. You may access the Code online at: <http://www.emich.edu/policies/policy.php?id=124>. Any assignment that is plagiarized, even in part, will receive a score of zero, and may be referred to the EMU Office of Student Conduct. Similarly, cheating on exams is forbidden and will also result in a zero score on the exam. For more detailed information on what is **plagiarism and how to avoid it**, see: <http://guides.emich.edu/c.php?g=611337&p=4935583>

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS

PART I INTRODUCTION: MODELING MULTILATERAL DIPLOMACY

INTRODUCTION TO MODEL UNITED NATIONS

Th Sept. 7

- Johnson County Community College, "What is Model UN?," <http://blogs.jccc.edu/mun/sample-page/>

THE U.N. AND MULTILATERAL DIPLOMACY IN A CHANGING WORLD

T Sept. 12

- The United Nations in the 21st Century, Ch. 1
- Kerem Turunç, The Winning Delegate: An Insider's Guide to Model United Nations, Ch. 2, "How to Prepare," pp. 27-45

Th Sept. 14

- The United Nations in the 21st Century, Ch. 2

PART II THE U.N. AND GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

PRINCIPLES AND STRUCTURE OF THE UNITED NATIONS

T Sept. 19

- The United Nations in the 21st Century, Ch. 3

SECURITY & DISARMAMENT (GA 1st Committee, CSP-OPCW Conference of the States Parties of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons)

Th Sept. 21

- The United Nations in the 21st Century, Ch. 4
- Women's International League for Peace & Freedom (WILPF), "Gender and Disarmament,"
<http://wilpf.org/what-we-do/disarmament/gender-and-disarmament/gender-perspective/>

T Sept. 26

- UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), "Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) Publication,"
<https://www.un.org/disarmament/convarms/ieds2/>
- UNODA, "Chemical Weapons,"
<https://www.un.org/disarmament/wmd/chemical/>
- Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), "Genesis and Historical Development," <https://www.opcw.org/chemical-weapons-convention/genesis-and-historical-development/>

ECONOMIC & FINANCIAL ISSUES (GA 2nd Committee)

Th Sept. 28

- The United Nations in the 21st Century, Ch. 5
- UN Dept. of Economic & Social Affairs, "Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform: Disaster Risk Reduction,"
<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/topics/disasterriskreduction>
- Bretton Woods Project, "What Are the Main Concerns and Criticism about the World Bank and IMF?," London: 23 Aug. 2005,
<http://www.brettonwoodsproject.org/2005/08/art-320869/>
- Alex Evans, "Where are the Concrete Plans for Action in the Development Finance Deal?," The Guardian, 16 Jul. 2015,
<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2015/jul/16/where-are-concrete-plans-action-development-finance-deal>

SOCIAL & HUMANITARIAN ISSUES (3rd Committee and WSIS+10, World Summit on the Information Society +10)

T Oct. 3

- The United Nations in the 21st Century, Ch. 6
- World Bank, “Human Trafficking: A Brief Overview,” Social Development Notes No. 122 (Washington, D.C.: 2009),
http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTSOCIALDEVELOPMENT/Resource/s/244362-1239390842422/6012763-1239905793229/Human_Trafficking.pdf
- UNICEF, “The Rights to Safe Water and to Sanitation,” Current Issues No. 3, June 2014,
https://www.unicef.org/esaro/Current_Issues_Paper-The_Rights_to_Safe_Water_and_Sanitation.pdf

Th Oct. 5

- The United Nations in the 21st Century, Ch. 7
- Patrick Martin, “Meet WSIS+10,” Chicago: AMUN, 11 Apr. 2017,
<https://www.amun.org/meet-wsis10/>
- Geneva Internet Platform, “WSIS+10 Summary Report,” Digital Watch, 2015,
<https://dig.watch/sites/default/files/WSIS10SummaryReport.pdf>

SPECIAL TOPICS (GA Plenary)

T Oct. 10

- UNCTITF (United Nations Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force), “Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism,”
<https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/ctitf/en/plan-action-prevent-violent-extremism>
- Naz Modirzadeh, “If It’s Broke, Don’t Make it Worse: A Critique of the U.N. Secretary-General’s Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism,” Lawfare Blog, 23 Jan. 2016,
<https://www.lawfareblog.com/if-its-broke-dont-make-it-worse-critique-un-secretary-generals-plan-action-prevent-violent-extremism>

Th Oct. 12

- UN Peacebuilding Support Office, “The United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture,” Oct. 2010,
http://www.un.org/en/peacebuilding/pbso/pdf/pbso_architecture_flyer.pdf
- Center for International Peace Operations, “‘The Challenge of Sustaining Peace’: The Report on the Review of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture,” Berlin: 22 Feb. 2016,
<http://reliefweb.int/report/world/challenge-sustaining-peace-report-review-un-peacebuilding-architecture>

**** Research Binders due in class Tues., Oct. 10 ****

**** Individual meetings scheduled with instructors, Oct. 17-24 ****

**** Position papers due by class time on Tues., Oct. 17 ****

PART III STATES AND DIPLOMACY

Note on position papers (due Tues. Oct. 17): You will write a **position paper** for each topic on your committee, consisting of a succinct summary of the policy position of your assigned government on the topic. Position papers have a very specific purpose and format, described in Ch. 2 of the “Issues at AMUN” Handbook, <https://www.amun.org/handbooks/>; you can also find samples at <https://www.amun.org/sample-position-papers/>. The papers will reflect a distillation of all the research you have been doing up to this point and your ability to apply foreign policy analysis to the purposes of diplomacy. They are also an exercise in specialized writing for international relations within the political science discipline. You will be given quick feedback on the papers you turn in, and it is very important that you then **revise** the papers within a few days (we will let you know the deadline) so we can submit the final version to be posted on the AMUN website. If you are paired with another Representative on your committee, you may divide up the work of drafting the position papers any way you want, but you will both be responsible for the quality of content and format of the papers on both topics assigned for your committee.

FOREIGN POLICY: PANAMA, JORDAN, AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

T Oct. 17

- Kishan S. Rana, “The Diplomacy of Small States,” in 21st Century Diplomacy: A Practitioner’s Guide (London & New York: Continuum, 2011), pp. 61-74.
- Peter M. Sanchez, “Panama: The Limits of Sovereignty,” in Frank O. Mora and Jeanne A.K. Hey, eds., Latin American and Caribbean Foreign Policy (Lanham, MD: Roman & Littlefield, 2003), pp. 63-83.

POSITION PAPERS DUE TUES. OCT. 17

Th Oct. 19

- Ali E. Hillal Dessouki and Karen Abul Kheir, “Foreign Policy as a Strategic National Asset: The Case of Jordan,” in Bahgat Korany and Ali E. Hillal Dessouki, eds., The Foreign Policies of Arab States: The Challenge of Globalization (Cairo & New York: American University in Cairo Press, 2008), pp. 253-82.
- Curtis R. Ryan, “Jordanian Foreign Policy and the Arab Spring,” Middle East Policy, 21(1), Spring 2014, pp. 144-53.

MULTILATERALISM VS. HEGEMONY

T Oct. 24

- Phyllis Bennis, Calling the Shots: How Washington Dominates Today’s UN (N.Y.: Olive Branch Press, 2000), Chs. 1-3, pp. 1-75.

Th Oct. 26

- Richard Wike et al., “U.S. Image Suffers as Public Around the World Question Trump’s Leadership,” Pew Research Center, Global Attitudes and Trends survey, 26 June 2017, <http://www.pewglobal.org/2017/06/26/u-s-image-suffers-as-publics-around-world-question-trumps-leadership/>

- Richard Falk, “UN Under Siege: Geopolitics in the Time of Trump,” Global Justice in the 21st Century blog, 1 July 2017, <https://richardfalk.wordpress.com/2017/07/01/un-under-siege-geopolitics-in-the-time-of-trump/>

SIMULATION: USING INSTITUTIONAL RULES

T Oct. 31

- Turunç, The Winning Delegate, Ch. 6 (“Resolutions”), pp. 121-39
- Kishan S. Rana, “Drafting Resolutions,” 21st Century Diplomacy: A Practitioner’s Guide (London and New York: Continuum, 2011), pp. 302-13.

Th Nov. 2

- Turunç, The Winning Delegate, Ch. 3 (“Rules of Procedure”) & Ch. 5 (“The Committee”), pp. 47-76 & 91-120.

***** Resolutions due in class Thurs., Nov. 2 *****

*****General debate speeches presented in class, Nov. 7-14; written version due Nov. 14 *****

T Nov. 7

- AMUN Rules and Procedures (from 2017 Handbook, www.amun.org/handbooks)

Th Nov. 9

- Simulation Scenario (distributed in class)

THE ARTS OF DIPLOMACY

T Nov. 14

- Angie Drakulich et al., eds., A Guide to Delegate Preparation (N.Y.: UNA-USA, 2004), pp. 15-47

General debate speech/written version due Nov. 14

Th Nov. 16

- Courtney B. Smith, Politics and Process at the United Nations: The Global Dance (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2006), Ch. 9
- United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), Manual for UN Delegates (Geneva: UNITAR, 2011), selections.

**Travel to Chicago for American Model United Nations conference,
Sat. Nov. 18-Tues. Nov. 21**

Thanksgiving recess

PART IV UNITED NATIONS AND GLOBAL ISSUES

ASSESSING THE UNITED NATIONS

T Nov. 28

- The United Nations in the 21st Century, Ch. 8
- Min-Thu Pham, “Why UN Reform Remains an Elusive Goal,” in Irwin Arief, ed. A Global Agenda: Issues Before the United Nations 2011-2012 (N.Y.: UNA-USA, 2011), pp. 114-21.

**** Model UN reaction paper (3-5 pp.) due in class Thurs., Nov. 30 ****

Th Nov. 30

- Thomas G. Weiss, “Westphalia, Alive But Not Well,” Ch. 1 in What’s Wrong with the United Nations and How to Fix It (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2012), pp. 19-49.
- “Trump Urges UN Reform to Make U.S. Investment Worthwhile,” Reuters, 24 Apr. 2017,
<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-budget-un-idUSKBN17Q221>

SPECIAL TOPIC SIMULATION: POST-CONFLICT PEACEBUILDING IN COLOMBIA

T Dec. 5

- Chris Kraul, “Colombia has a Peace Accord, but Can it be Implemented?,” Los Angeles Times, 13 Mar. 2017,
<http://www.latimes.com/world/mexico-americas/la-fg-colombia-peace-outlook-2017-story.html>
- UN Mission in Colombia, “What You Need to Know about the UN Mission in Colombia,” n.d.,
https://colombia.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/version_web_en.pdf
- UN Peacebuilding Commission, “Mandate of the Peacebuilding Commission,”
<http://www.un.org/en/peacebuilding/mandate.shtml>

Th Dec. 7

- UN Security Council, “Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Colombia,” S/2017/252, 24 Mar. 2017,
https://colombia.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/s-2017-252_eng.pdf
- UN Peacebuilding Commission, “Country-Specific Configurations,”
<http://www.un.org/en/peacebuilding/countryconfig.shtml>

T Dec. 12

- Kimberly Curtis, “Peace is Breaking Out in Colombia,” UN Dispatch, 29 June 2017,
<https://www.undispatch.com/peace-breaking-colombia/>

**** Final exam Thurs. Dec. 14, 3:00-4:30 pm ****