

Department of Political Science & International Relations  
School of Humanities & Social Sciences  
Nazarbayev University  
Fall Semester, 2018

PLS 359:  
United Nations

<b>Class hours:</b>	1030-11.45 Hrs Tuesdays & Thursdays
<b>Classroom:</b>	8.307
<b>Instructor:</b>	Dr. Mwita Chacha
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<b>Office hours:</b>	Mondays, Wednesdays & Thursdays: 14:00 - 16:00 Hrs.

**Description:**

This course examines the history, structure, evolution, and function of the United Nations. It aims to provide students with a firm understanding of the UN, the premier international governmental organization. To do this, the course will examine theories of cooperation with reference to the UN, the key functions of the UN in security, human rights, and development, and some of the major challenges the UN faces in executing its functions. The course aims to enable students to critically assess the merits of the United Nations given its sometimes mixed performance record.

The course will use United Nations simulations to elaborate on how the international system operates within the structural environment of international institutions and law. This simulation experience is expected to inculcate in students an awareness of how international diplomacy and negotiation works. At the end of this course, students will be expected to have an in-depth knowledge of the United Nations and international cooperation. Specifically, the course has the following main learning objectives:

- Students will be able to present their ideas and the information in an appropriate format
- Students will be able to describe and interpret basic qualitative and quantitative data and evidence
- Students will know the foundational literature in study of international cooperation and United Nations
- Students will be able to synthesize arguments within the study of the United Nations
- Students will be able to make their own evidenced-based arguments
- Students will be able to listen to and be tolerant of different ideas

**Disclaimer: Information, including deadlines, assignments, and reading materials outlined in this syllabus are subject to change.**

## PREREQUISITES

This is an upper level course involving a wide array of international relations readings. Students taking this course **MUST** have already taken Introduction to International Relations and Introduction to Comparative Politics. It is highly advisable to have taken Political Science Research Methods and Quantitative Methods prior to taking this course. Upper level courses such as International Political Economy, International Relations Theory, and European Integration Politics are **HIGHLY** recommended but not required prerequisites for this course.

## REQUIRED READING MATERIALS

Most readings for this course are from academic journals that can be obtained from the NU Library portal <http://nulibrary.summon.serialssolutions.com/>. Please familiarize yourself with system since this will be a key source of scholarly works during the course of the semester. Several of our weekly readings however will be chapters from these books. These will be made available to you via a Dropbox link.

**Main Text:** *The United Nations in the 21st Century* by Karen A. Mingst, Margaret P. Karns, and Alynna J. Lyon [Abbreviation: **MKL**]

**Other Text** *International Negotiation in a Complex World* by, Brigid Starkey, Mark A. Boyer, and Jonathan Wilkenfeld [Abbreviation: **SBW**]

## COURSE EXPECTATIONS: PARTICIPATION

Students are expected to participate in class discussions which address assigned readings and issues pertinent to the topics scheduled for a given class period. This rule will be the key to your class experience, since best comprehension can only be facilitated through preparation before the class and active participation through in-class discussions. Completion of all assigned readings *prior* to the scheduled class will increase the benefits of class attendance and can serve as a good metric of your comprehension of the material. I will evaluate both quantity and quality of the comments made during our discussion. In your preparation, read all required articles and glimpse through those in the suggested readings. Understand the argument each article offers, the methods employed, and the findings. Compare and contrast the different readings, focusing on their arguments, methods, and findings. Identify differences and inconsistencies that arise from these articles and consider what accounts for these divergences and consider what accounts for these divergences. Additionally, identify which readings are more compelling than others and why, the main problems in the research on the particular topic under consideration, and what research questions can be considered in the future. These guidelines should be relevant also as you prepare your discussion outlines.

Distractions due to the use of cellular phones, computers, tablets, chatter, and napping/sleeping during class will automatically result in all participation points being lost. Additional penalties may be added. Please note that attendance **does not** count as participation. Participation will account for 10% of your grade.

### Participation points will be based on the following general rubric:

- **8.5-10.0:** Student participates consistently at every class meeting, their comments show that they have read the material beforehand and/or their comment quality is very high.
- **6.0-8.5:** Student participates every other class meeting, their comments show that they have read the material beforehand and/or their comment quality is very high.
- **4.5-6.0:** Student participates every class meeting, but shows low comment quality (just talks for participation points). OR:  
Student participates every other class meeting, their comment quality is satisfying.
- **3.0-4.5:** Student participates, but not regularly. However, they are clearly following the conversation and being thoughtful about it.
- **1.0-3.0:** Student participates but not regularly, seems distracted most of the time.
- **0:** Student has never participated.

## **COURSE EXPECTATIONS: POP QUIZZES**

In the course of the semester I shall give ten (10) quizzes on the readings. These quizzes will each account for 1% of your grade (10% total). These brief quizzes are intended to assess the extent to which students keep up with readings and class discussions. These quizzes will be in the form of 2-5 questions on key points in the readings assigned in any given week. The quizzes will be on any of our meeting days, but it is most likely that quizzes will be administered on Thursdays. Keep in mind that there will be a quiz on the first week.

## **COURSE EXPECTATIONS: EXAMS**

There will be two (2) exams in the course each worth 15% of your grade. The first exam will be administered in Week 7, while the second exam will be administered during the finals week. Each exam should take approximately 2 hours. The exams will constitute two broad parts. Part 1 will ask you 10-15 questions to evaluate your grasp of core concepts covered in the course and your ability to synthesize and juxtapose readings covered in the course. Keep in mind some of these 15 questions will require you to answer in short-essay format. Part 2 will provide you with a choice of two essay questions out of which you will be expected to answer one of them. These essay questions will aim to evaluate the extent to which you can evaluate themes covered in the weeks preceding the exam.

## **COURSE EXPECTATIONS: ESSAYS**

Students will be expected to write two (2) 1500-word essays aimed at analyzing the institutional design and functions of the United Nations. Each essay will be worth 20% of your grade.

The first essay will require students to draw on materials between Week 1 and Week 5 and write an evaluation of the effect of the UN's institutional design on key outcomes of the UN, particularly the effect of the UN on its member-states' behavior. Given the shortness of the essay, you will be expected to pick a particular aspect of the institutional design of the UN and not the entire UN System and evaluate, using the theoretical understanding of cooperation and bargaining that we will cover in these first weeks, how these features contribute to how the the UN operates.

For example, whereas the UN System is composed of five key organs, each has specific design features that affects the execution of the UN's mandate. Decision-making rules of the Security Council are quite different from those of the General Assembly, influencing the extent to which and how these two organs affect states. The powers of Secretariat differ from those of ECOSOC while the multitude of specialized agencies tied to ECOSOC and the UN more generally affect the realization of the UN's goals as laid out in the Charter. The task in this first essay is to demonstrate 1) an understanding of the particular design feature, 2) what theory tells us about such a design feature, and 3) how the design feature affects the operations of the UN with reference to particular effects on state action and behavior.

The second essay will require students to pick a specific issue-area that the UN deals with and critically assess the UN's approach to dealing with it. This second essay will require you to refer to material covered between Week 7 and Week 11 on broad issues that the UN addresses and challenges to the UN's operations. The expectation is that students will select a specific issue within these broad categories. For example, one of the UN's main aims is to ensure international peace and security. Yet within this issue, specific areas can be deciphered including terrorism, civil wars, coups, nuclear proliferation, among others. Students will be expected to 1) identify the issue and describe its importance to the realization of the UN's goals as outlined in the Charter. 2) describe the institutions in the UN that aim to address that particular issue and evaluate the extent to which these UN institutions have addressed the issue, and 3) reasons why the UN's success in realizing the issue is mixed (if at all) and what changes might be introduced to improve the UN's ability to realize better results.

The essays should be formatted in the following manner: text should be in 12-point Times New Roman Font, double-spaced with justified margins. Citations must adhere to the Chicago Style (as used in this syllabus). Keep in mind the 1500-word limit does not include references.

**Writing Fellow Requirement:** This assignment will require you to submit your first draft to our Writing Fellows. The Writing Fellow program is administered by the Writing Center and the purpose of having Writing Fellows assigned to this course is to assist students in their writing assignments. As noted in the Important Dates section, students will be required to submit a first draft and to schedule and meet with the Writing Fellow prior to the submission of the final drafts of each essay. I will not accept nor grade any essay that has not been checked by the Writing Fellow. The first essay is due on 5 October and the second essay is due 30 November. Both essays are due at 2359 Hours and must be submitted via Moodle.

## **COURSE EXPECTATIONS: UN SIMULATION**

One of the main goals of this course is enabling students to develop bargaining and negotiation skills. To do so, we will have one student-led Model United Nations simulation at the end of the semester. A Model United Nations simulation entails each individual student assigned a state or international organization whose interests this individual will represent. In the third week of the semester, the topic of the simulation will be announced. Each student will also be assigned a country to represent at this time. You are expected to prepare on your assigned country's position on the topic throughout the semester. Throughout the semester, we will plan the simulation and go over rules and expected roles of students as country representatives.

The simulation will entail two components.

**1. Position Papers:** Each student will be expected to write a position paper on the state (or international organization) assigned to her/him at the four graded simulations. A position paper is a succinct document that articulates a states position on the particular issue being considered by the particular body of the United Nations. Writing position papers requires thorough research on your states position. You will be expected to be as accurate as possible in your position papers. A good position paper will include:

- A brief introduction to your country and its history concerning the topic and committee;
- How the issue affects your country;
- Your countrys policies with respect to the issue and your countrys justification for these policies;
- Quotes from your countrys leaders about the issue;
- Statistics to back up your countrys position on the issue;
- Actions taken by your government with regard to the issue;
- Conventions and resolutions that your country has signed or ratified;
- UN actions that your country supported or opposed;
- What your country believes should be done to address the issue;
- What your country would like to accomplish in the committees resolution;
- How the positions of other countries affect your countrys position;
- NO BS nor conjectures.

Your position paper will account for 5% of your total grade. Your position paper will be due Monday 19 November at 2100 hrs via Moodle. Late position papers will get an F.

**Formatting:** Position papers should be between one and one-and-a-half, single-spaced pages (not counting footnotes/endnotes/citations) using 12-point Times New Roman Font with justified, one-inch margins on all sides. Use of footnotes or endnotes is highly encouraged. Citations should adhere to the Chicago Manual of Style Format. Please not all articles in the schedule section of this syllabus follow the Chicago Style. Failure to adhere to these formatting instructions will result in a 5% point loss in your position paper grade.

**2. Simulation Participation:** During simulations, student performance will be evaluated. Performance constitutes actively contributing to the discussion of the issue under consideration. This will require you to

speak publicly and actively participate in the caucusing sessions to ensure the positions of the country you represent are accommodated in any final resolution. You will be expected to be familiar with and adhere to the rules of procedure of Model United Nations proceedings that will be discussed in class over the course of the semester. The official language of all our proceedings is English. Your participation in the simulation will account for 5% of your grade using a rubric similar to that of class participation outlined above.

DRAFT

## ACADEMIC HONESTY, ATTENDANCE, MAKE-UPS, & OTHER BUSINESS

**Academic Honesty:** Students are subject to Nazarbayev University's Student Code of Conduct. It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with academic regulations and procedures. In particular, familiarize yourself with the university's policy on plagiarism, and consult the instructor immediately if you do not understand what plagiarism is. I will NOT tolerate any instances of plagiarism and academic dishonesty. Any and all instances of suspected academic misconduct will result in a failing grade in the assignment concerned in addition to other disciplinary action from University authorities, including withdrawal from the course with a failing grade (F).

What is **Plagiarism**? According to the University's Student Code of Conduct, Plagiarism is intentionally or carelessly presenting the work of another as one's own. It includes submitting an assignment purporting to be the student's original work, which has wholly or in part been created by another person. It also includes the presentation of the work, ideas, representations, or words of another person without customary and proper acknowledgment of sources. Plagiarism occurs when a person:

1. Directly copies one or more sentences of another person's written work without proper citation. If another writer's words are used, you must place quotation marks around the quoted material and include a footnote or other indication of the source of the quotation. This includes cut and paste from the internet or other electronic sources;
2. Changes words but copies the sentence structure of a source without giving credit to the original source, or closely paraphrases one or more paragraphs without acknowledgment of the source of the ideas, or uses graphs, figures, drawings, charts or other visual/audio materials without acknowledging the source or the permission of the author;
3. Submits false or altered information in any academic exercise. This may include making up data for an experiment, altering data, citing nonexistent articles, contriving sources, etc.;
4. Turns in all or part of an assignment done by another student and claims it as their own;
5. Uses a paper writing service, has another student write a paper, or uses a foreign language translation and submits it as their own original work.

**University Attendance Policy:** As a graduate/advanced level seminar, students are expected to attend all classes. This course only meets once a week, therefore I will not tolerate any absences or tardiness. Students coming to class after 10 minutes will be considered to be absent. Students taking unnecessary long breaks during the class will be considered absent. Our seminar will have one break at the midpoint of our meeting time period: you are expected to wait until this break point. Any absence will drastically affect both your participation points and final grade. The first absence will reduce your maximum overall grade to B-; the second to a C-; and the third to a F in the course and the possibility of withdrawal from the course. Additionally, all instances of absence will be notified to the Vice Dean for Academic Affairs.

**Make-up & Re-grading:** Absolutely no make-up assignments will be administered. If you miss class during a day where there is an assignment without an iron-clad, documented reason presented no later than the day following the missed class, the instructor will assume that you chose to forfeit the points awarded to that particular assignment. Only the following situations are excusable:

- 1) Serious illness (common colds and allergies do not count) documented by a visit to the physician and acknowledged by SHSS student affairs Office;
- 2) Hospitalization of an immediate family member (parents and/or siblings) also documented by a physician and a note from your parent;
- 3) A death in the family documented by a copy of the obituary and a note from your parent.

**UN Simulation:** If you miss the simulation, you will be expected to submit a 2500 word paper documenting your assigned country's history and interaction with the UN and the UN's work. This make-up essay is in addition to the position paper for the simulation. This make-up essay will be due 1 December.

If you want an assignment re-graded, you have one week from the time it is returned to you to turn it in for a re-grade. No re-grading will be considered after this one week. The entire work will be re-graded. If you choose to do so, you must turn in, on a separate sheet of paper, a short typed memo describing why you

think your grade should be changed. Note that the new grade may be higher, lower or equal to the original grade. There will be no re- grading of re-graded assignments. For the final exam, students will have 48 hours to launch a re-grade request, documented in the same manner as reading quizzes.

**Note Taking:** You should take notes during the course of our class meetings. Any PowerPoint used in this course will be extremely limited and sparse. These notes will be useful as you prepare for your quizzes and exams and will help you comprehend material covered in this course.

## **ETIQUETTE**

- You are expected to be in class on time and to remain in class for the entire 75 minutes. Late arrivals or leaving the classroom for more than five minutes will be considered absences.
- Cell phones must be turned off during all class sessions. No electronic devices will be allowed in class. (This includes computers). Any act contrary to this requirement will result in a total loss of all participation points (all 10%).
- Absolutely no make-up exams or quizzes will be administered in this course unless you have an iron-clad, documented reason for your absence.
- Absolutely no extra-credit assignments will be administered in this course.
- Tardiness in turning in assignments will not be tolerated. I will not accept nor grade assignments turned late.
- As International Relations students, I expect you all to keep up with global events that are relevant to this course. Class discussions will be motivated by some of these events happening around us.
- You will treat each other with respect. I will not tolerate any rudeness directed at your fellow classmates or myself. Such incidents will be reported to the Vice Dean for Academic Affairs for disciplinary action and the instructor may recommend your withdrawal from the course.
- While you are welcome to email me anytime about any issue you may be having in the class, please note that I will not respond to emails regarding information that is contained in this syllabus, grades, nor emails that fail to conform with proper salutation and email etiquette. When you write to your instructor you MUST address him using phrases such as, Dear Professor etc. You MUST use correct English in the email. Any emails that read like a text message WILL NOT receive a reply.
- I reserve the right to change this syllabus, including adding or subtracting readings, changing due dates, etc. but will give students ample warning in writing.

## GRADING

### Grading Scale:

	B+: 85-89.99	C+: 70-74.99	D+: 55-59.99	F: 0-49.99
A: 95-100	B: 80-84.99	C: 65-69.99	D: 50-54.99	
A-: 90-94.99	B-: 75-79.99	C-: 60-64.99		

### Grading Components:

<b>Class performance</b>	Participation	10%
	Pop Quizzes	10%
<b>Exams</b>	Exam 1	15%
	Exam 2	15%
<b>Essays</b>	Essay 1	20%
	Essay 2	20%
<b>UN Simulation</b>	Position Paper	5%
	Simulation Participation	5%
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Total		100%

### IMPORTANT DATES:

Add/Drop Deadline	17/24 August.
Kurban Ait	21 August.
Constitution Day	30-31 August.
Essay 1 drafts due	21 September.
First exam	25/27 September.
Meeting with Writing Fellow	1 - 5 October.
Essay 1 final draft due	11 October.
Fall Break	8-12 October.
Withdrawal Deadline	17 October.
Essay 2 drafts due	17 November.
Meeting with Writing Fellow	19 - 23 November.
Essay 2 final draft due	30 November.
Second exam	TBA.



## COURSE SCHEDULE:

### BACKGROUND & THEORY:

#### WEEK 1

Tuesday, 14 August: Why do we have international organizations?

##### Readings:

**Abbott, Kenneth W., and Duncan Snidal.** "Why states act through formal international organizations." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 42, no. 1 (1998): 3-32.

Thursday, 16 August: Why the United Nations?

##### Readings:

MKL Chapter 1

U.N. Charter.

#### WEEK 2

Thursday, 23 August: Evolution of the UN

##### Readings:

MKL Chapter 2

**Barnett, Michael N.** "Bringing in the new world order: Liberalism, legitimacy, and the United Nations." *World Politics* 49, no. 4 (1997): 526-551.

**Jentleson, Bruce W.** "Global Governance, the United Nations, and the Challenge of Trumping Trump." *Global Governance: A Review of Multilateralism and International Organizations* 23, no. 2 (2017): 143-149.

#### WEEK 3

Tuesday, 28 August: The main actors in the UN

##### Readings:

MKL Chapter 3

**Weiss, Thomas G., Tatiana Carayannis, and Richard Jolly.** "The Third United Nations." *Global Governance: A Review of Multilateralism and International Organizations* 15, no. 1 (2009): 123-142.

#### WEEK 4

Tuesday, 4 September: Designing international organizations

##### Readings:

**Abbott, Kenneth W. and Duncan Snidal.** "Hard and soft law in international governance." *International Organization* 54, no. 3 (2000): 421-456.

**Duffield, John S.** "The limits of rational design." *International Organization* 57, no. 2 (2003): 411-430.

Thursday, 6 September: Designing the UN

##### Readings:

**Rathbun, Brian C.** "Before hegemony: generalized trust and the creation and design of international security organizations." *International Organization* 65, no. 2 (2011): 243-273.

#### WEEK 5

Tuesday, 11 September: Bargaining in international organizations

##### Readings:

**Fearon, James D.** "Bargaining, Enforcement, and International Cooperation." *International Organization* 52, no. 2 (1998): 269-305.

Tuesday, 13 September: Bargaining strategies

##### Readings:

SBW: Chapters 3 & 4.

### WEEK 6

Tuesday, 18 September: Power in international organizations

#### Readings:

**Schneider, Christina J.** “Weak States and Institutionalized Bargaining Power in International Organizations.” *International Studies Quarterly* 55, no. 2 (2011): 331-355.

**Thompson, Alexander.** “Coercion through IOs: The Security Council and the Logic of Information Transmission.” *International Organization* 60, no. 1 (2006): 1-34.

Tuesday, 20 September: The role of the UN

#### Readings:

**Hammarskjöld, Dag.** “Do we need the United Nations.” Address before the Students Association. Copenhagen (1959): 364-374.

**Rushton, Simon.** “The UN Secretary-General and norm entrepreneurship: Boutros Boutros-Ghali and democracy promotion.” *Global Governance: A Review of Multilateralism and International Organizations* 14, no. 1 (2008): 95-110.

### WEEK 7

Tuesday, 25 September: Midterm Exam Part 1

Thursday, 27 September: Midterm Exam Part 2

## THE UN AT WORK

### WEEK 8

Tuesday, 2 October: UN and collective security

#### Readings:

MKL Chapter 4

**Bennett, Andrew, and Joseph Lepgold.** “Reinventing collective security after the Cold War and Gulf conflict.” *Political Science Quarterly* 108, no. 2 (1993): 213-237.

Thursday, 4 October: UN Peacekeeping

#### Readings:

**Lipson, Michael.** “A garbage can model of UN peacekeeping.” *Global Governance: A Review of Multilateralism and International Organizations* 13, no. 1 (2007): 79-97.

### WEEK 10

Tuesday, 16 October: Human rights and responsibility to protect

#### Readings:

MKL Chapter 6

**Bellamy, Alex J.** “Conflict prevention and the responsibility to protect.” *Global Governance: A Review of Multilateralism and International Organizations* 14, no. 2 (2008): 135-156.

Thursday, 18 October: Human rights enforcement

#### Readings:

**Hug, Simon, and Richard Lukacs.** “Preferences or blocs? Voting in the United Nations human rights council.” *The Review of International Organizations* 9, no. 1 (2014): 83-106.

### WEEK 11

Tuesday, 23 October: The UN and development

#### Readings:

MKL Chapter 5

Thursday, 25 October: The UN and other development organizations

### Readings:

**Joshi, Devin, and Roni Kay O'Dell.** "Global governance and development ideology: The United Nations and the World Bank on the left-right spectrum." *Global Governance: A Review of Multilateralism and International Organizations* 19, no. 2 (2013): 249-275.

**Toye, John.** "Assessing the G77: 50 Years after UNCTAD and 40 Years after the NIEO." *Third World Quarterly* 35, no. 10 (2014): 1759-1774.

### WEEK 12

Tuesday, 30 October: Human security

#### Readings:

MKL Chapter 7

**Oberleitner, Gerd.** "Human security: a challenge to international law?." *Global Governance: A Review of Multilateralism and International Organizations* 11, no. 2 (2005): 185-203.

Thursday, 1 November: Human development

#### Readings:

**Human Development Report:** Chapter 1.

## THE UN AND GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

### WEEK 13

Tuesday, 6 November: North-South Divide

#### Readings:

**Malone, David M., and Lotta Hagman.** "The North-South divide at the United Nations: fading at last?" *Security Dialogue* 33, no. 4 (2002): 399-414.

Thursday, 8 November: Regime complexity

#### Readings:

**Weiss:** Chapter 4

**Ruggie, John Gerard.** "The United Nations and globalization: Patterns and limits of institutional adaptation." *Global Governance* 9 (2003): 301-321.

### WEEK 14

Tuesday, 13 November: Reforming the UN

#### Readings:

**Frohlich, Manuel.** "The ironies of UN Secretariat reform." *Global Governance: A Review of Multilateralism and International Organizations* 13, no. 2 (2007): 151-159.

**Hurd, Ian.** "Myths of membership: the politics of legitimation in UN Security Council Reform." *Global Governance: A Review of Multilateralism and International Organizations* 14, no. 2 (2008): 199-217.

Thursday, 15 November: The future of global governance

#### Readings:

MKL Chapter 8

**Patrick, Stewart.** "The Unruly World: The Case for Good Enough Global Governance." *Foreign Affairs* 93, no. 1 (2014): 58-73.

### WEEK 15

Tuesday, 20 November: UN Simulation Day 1

Thursday, 22 November: UN Simulation Day 2