
Spring 2017
PSC 332: International Organization

O'Brian 210
TR 12:30–1:50pm

Professor Elena V. McLean
Office Hours: TR 2–3pm
<http://elenamclean.weebly.com/>

507 Park Hall
716-645-8444
elenamcl@buffalo.edu

Course Description & Objectives

This is an undergraduate course on international organizations. The course examines mostly formal, intergovernmental organizations, but also spends some time on informal institutions, or regimes. We ask the following questions: how are institutions established? What makes them change over time? What impact (if any) do they have? How do they influence government policies? How do they operate? How do they structure decision-making? How do international organizations affect domestic politics? The course will begin by focusing on different theoretical perspectives on these questions, and continue by examining international organizations in specific issue areas.

Course Learning Objectives

After completing this course, a student should be able to:

- Define, understand, and use concepts and terms relevant to the study of international organizations;
- Apply a body of factual knowledge directly relevant to understanding the impact of international organizations on domestic and international politics;
- Apply alternative explanations for the emergence and evolution of international organizations.

Outcome Assessment

The final course grade will be based on the following:

- **Pop-up Quizzes: 20%.** I will give very short quizzes throughout the semester without prior notice. The quizzes will be based on the readings assigned for that week and class material from the previous week (or two). I will drop one with the lowest score for each student at the end of the semester.
- **Exams: 60%.** There will be two non-cumulative exams held on March 9 and April 27. Specifics about each exam will be discussed later in the semester, but you can

expect each exam to cover the material from both lectures and assigned readings that came before the exam. If you miss an exam without notifying me in advance, you will get zero points for that test. All material presented in lectures, readings and class discussion is relevant for the exam.

- **Participation: 10%.** Attendance is not required, but you will receive credit for coming to class through your active participation in class. Each student begins the semester with 50 out of 100 points for participation and may earn a maximum of 100 points for meaningful participation. By “meaningful participation” I mean discussion contributions that (1) show a good grasp of the issues and substantive information relevant to the course; (2) rely on critical and logical thinking; and (3) indicate good command of factual material and assigned readings.
- **Presentation: 10%.** You will present a group report on an international organization. The report will describe the IO and its objectives. You should then make an argument about why the IO is successful (or not) at achieving its objectives. In general, I will look for four things in your presentations: (1) a clear and informative description of the IO and its role in international cooperation, (2) a well-reasoned explanation of your position on the IO’s effectiveness, (3) an illustration of your position with case studies and/or data, and (4) the use of the relevant literature covered in the course. I will present a list of IOs that you will be able to choose from, provide more detailed instructions and give you an opportunity to form groups and choose IOs for presentations during the second week of the semester.

Learning Outcome	Assessment Measure
Define, understand, and use concepts and terms relevant to the study of international organizations.	Exams 1 and 2; quizzes; presentations; discussion participation
Apply a body of factual knowledge directly relevant to understanding the impact of international organizations on domestic and international politics.	Exams 1 and 2; quizzes; presentations; discussion participation
Apply alternative explanations for the emergence and evolution of international organizations.	Exams 1 and 2; quizzes; presentations; discussion participation

Course Policies

- **Technology Policy:**
The use of laptop computers, tablets, cellphones, smartphones, or any other electronic device is prohibited during lectures and exams. If I catch you using an electronic device during lecture, I will ask you to stop immediately. The second time I catch you, I may

ask you to leave the room. I put this policy in place because there is ample evidence that the use of electronic devices distracts not only the user, but those around him/her. If you need to use electronic devices for medical or disability reasons, please contact me as soon as possible to make appropriate arrangements.

- Exam Attendance:

There are no excused absences for exams short of a documented medical emergency that you could not foresee or a formal UB-sanctioned athletic event for members of UB's athletic teams. If you are a member of a UB athletic team, speak with me within the first two weeks of class if you will be missing classes during the semester because of team activities.

- Accessibility Resources:

If you require classroom or testing accommodations due to a disability, please contact Accessibility Resources, located at 25 Capen Hall. AR can be reached by phone at (716) 645-2608 or by email at stu-accessibility@buffalo.edu. Please inform me as soon as possible about your needs so that we can coordinate your accommodations. For more information, visit <http://www.student-affairs.buffalo.edu/ods/>

- Course Materials Copyright:

This syllabus, lecture slides and any handouts used in this course are copyrighted. Because these are copyrighted, you do not have the right to copy and distribute course materials, unless I expressly grant permission.

- Academic Integrity:

Cheating, plagiarism, or any other form of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and will result in an automatic grade of "F" for the course and possibly further punitive action. You may find more information about academic dishonesty at: <http://undergrad-catalog.buffalo.edu/policies/course/integrity.shtml>

- Grade Disclosure:

All personal information concerning students' performance in this course is governed by federal privacy legislation, known as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). No grades or status information can be provided to students by telephone or email.

- Grading Scale:

A	93–100%	B	83–86.9%	C	73–76.9%	D	63–66.9%
A-	90–92.9%	B-	80–82.9%	C-	70–72.9%	F	0–62.9%
B+	87–89.9%	C+	77–79.9%	D+	67–69.9%		

Note that I will not use a curve when calculating grades. There will be no extra credit assignments or make-up exams.

Reading Materials

The following book is assigned for the course:

- Ian Hurd. 2013. *International Organizations: Politics, Law, Practice*. 2nd edition. Cambridge University Press.

Readings not included in the textbook can be found through the University library. I expect that every student will do all the readings assigned for a given week **before** the week begins. In addition, I encourage you to read on the regular basis at least one of the following news sources: the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal, the Financial Times, the Economist, or a comparable publication. Note that I will not provide outlines of my notes or PowerPoint slides to students.

Course Schedule

Note that I reserve the right to change the following schedule in order to ensure that we spend adequate time on each topic. If such changes become necessary, I will make an announcement in class.

Week 1 (Jan 30–Feb 3): Introduction to IOs

- Hurd, Chapter 1, pages 1–14.

Week 2 (Feb 6–10): Theories of IOs

- Hurd, Chapter 2, pages 15–40.

Week 3 (Feb 13–17): Formation and Design of IOs

- Abbott, Kenneth and Duncan Snidal. 1998. “Why States Act through Formal Organizations.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 42:3–32.
- Barbara Koremenos, Charles Lipson and Duncan Snidal. 2001. “The Rational Design of International Institutions.” *International Organization* 55(4): 761–799.

Week 4 (Feb 20–24): The UN (Part I)

- Hurd, Chapter 5, pages 101–135.
- **ISA Conference: Feb 22–25**

Week 5 (Feb 27–Mar 3): The UN (Part II)

- Hurd, Chapter 6, pages 136–164.

Week 6 (Mar 6–10): Security Organizations

- Jyoti Khanna, Todd Sandler, and Hirofumi Shimizu. 1998. “Sharing the Financial Burden for U.N. and NATO Peacekeeping, 1976-1996.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 42(2):176–195.
- James D. Morrow. 1994. “Alliances, Credibility, and Peacetime Costs.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 38(2): 270–297.
- **Mar 9 – Exam #1**

Week 7 (Mar 13–17): Trade Institutions; the WTO

- Hurd, Chapter 3, pages 41–70.

Mar 20–25: Spring recess

Week 8 (Mar 27–31): International Financial Institutions; the IMF and the World Bank

- Hurd, Chapter 4, pages 71–100.

Week 9 (Apr 3–7): The ILO

- Hurd, Chapter 7, pages 165–189.

Week 10 (Apr 10–14): The ICJ

- Hurd, Chapter 8, pages 190–221.

Week 11 (Apr 17–21): Human Rights Institutions; the ICC

- Hurd, Chapter 9, pages 222–250.

Week 12 (Apr 24–28): Regional Organizations; the EU

- Hurd, Chapter 10, pages 251–279.
- **Apr 27 – Exam #2**

Week 13 (May 1–5): Environmental Organizations

- Keohane, Robert O., and David G. Victor. 2011. “The Regime Complex for Climate Change.” *Perspectives on Politics* 9(1): 7–24.
- Nielson, Daniel L. and Michael J. Tierney. 2003. “Delegation to International Organizations: Agency Theory and World Bank Environmental Reform.” *International Organization* 57(2): 241–276.

Week 14 (May 8–12): The Future of IOs

- Hurd, Chapter 11, pages 280–287.
- Becker, Raphael N., Arye L. Hillman, Niklas Potrafke, and Alexander H. Schwemmer. 2015. “The Preoccupation of the United Nations with Israel: Evidence and Theory.” *The Review of International Organizations* 10(4):413–437.
- Abbott, Kenneth W., Jessica F. Green, and Robert O. Keohane. 2016. “Organizational Ecology and Institutional Change in Global Governance.” *International Organization* 70(2):247–277.