

POLI 387 – International Simulation – Model United Nations
Fall 2022
Mondays & Wednesdays 5:00-6:15 PM, SCI D320

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Student Hours: Mondays 1:00-2:00 PM and Thursdays 12:00-1:00 PM, and by appointment

Course Description

This course aims to develop students' knowledge and understanding of international politics, diplomacy, and crucial global issues through the study and simulation of the work of the world's most important international organization (IO), the United Nations (UN). Founded in 1947, the UN boasts near universal membership of the world's recognized states and plays an instrumental role in addressing vital global issues related to peace and security, development and poverty, the environment, and the promotion of human rights. We will study the history and structure of the UN system and explore key global issues addressed within the UN framework.

In this class, you will learn not only by reading, writing, and researching, but also through simulating and role playing. You will research and draft resolutions, make speeches, engage in negotiations, thus simulating the work of real-world UN diplomats. You will be tasked with researching an assigned country's background, government, and foreign policy, and you will research and develop expertise on specific global issues. Students will learn the basic rules and protocols that guide diplomatic work at the UN and then put this knowledge to work as you try to craft agreements to solve a pressing global issue during the final simulation at the end of the semester.

Students in this class are encouraged to consider joining the UWSP student organization the United Nations Student Organization (UNSO) with the aim of participating in the National Model United Nations (NMUN), one of the largest and most well-known intercollegiate Model UN conferences, which is held every April in New York City. This class will prepare you well to participate with the UNSO delegation in this conference!

Specific Course Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Describe basic facts about the UN
- Explain how the core institutions and member states of the UN function in practice
- Research and analyze information on specific countries and important global issues
- Identify key components of some non-English-speaking countries and describe how their history, culture, or institutions shape their views on global issues and politics
- Analyze and evaluate the UN's effectiveness in promoting global cooperation and problem solving
- Put yourself in the shoes of a country not your own and play the role of that country in a simulation of an international meeting
- Effectively communicate and advocate for policy preferences and negotiate with other parties.

General Education Learning Outcomes

This course fulfills the Global Awareness GEP category and aims to meet these learning outcomes.

GEP Global Awareness Learning Outcomes

- Identify the key components found within one or more cultures that are distinct from those found in predominantly English-speaking cultures.
- Analyze key forces or processes that contribute to global interconnectedness, and their implications.
- Demonstrate curiosity and empathetic insight about diverse cultural perspectives.

Required Texts

- Karen A. Mingst, Margaret P. Karns, and Alynna J. Lyon. *The United Nations in the 21st Century, Fifth Edition*. New York, London: Routledge, 2017. (Available through UWSP Text Rental)
- Other assigned readings will be made available on Canvas under the e-Reserves module.

Course Requirements and Grading

Your grade will be based on your performance in the following areas:

Attendance & Participation	10%
Current Event Presentation	2%
UN Information Source	2%
Country Fact Sheet	10%
Position Paper	20%
Regional Group Presentation	10%
Draft Clauses for Security Council Resolution	10%
Participation in UNSC Simulation	20%
Final Exam	16%
TOTAL	100%

Grading Scale

Course grades will be calculated on a straight percentage scale. An A equals 93 or above, A- 90-92.99, B+ 87-89.99, B 83-86.99, B- 80-82.99, C+ 77-79.99, C 73-76.99, C- 70-72.99, D+ 67-69.99, D 60-66.99, F 59.99 and below.

Attendance and Participation: This is meant to be an interactive and participatory class. While I will do some lecturing during the first six weeks, by Week 7 the class will be fully devoted to collaborative research and simulation exercises. To succeed in this course you must be prepared to participate fully in the class activities and exercises. Attendance and participation are ***crucial*** to success and will count for 10% of your grade. You are expected to attend all class sessions and come prepared to engage in that day's activities having completed all assigned readings and/or tasks.

Each student will be allowed 2 unexcused absences with no penalty. **More than 6 unexcused absences (3 weeks) will result in a failing grade for Attendance and Participation.** which means you will earn anywhere from 0-60% of the possible 10 points and risk failing the course. Excused absences will **not** count towards these limits, but you should provide me with documentation, such as a note from a doctor or coach to request an excused absence. Absences will ***NOT*** be allowed during Weeks 12-14 because that is when we will hold the simulation. Participation in the simulation is ***MANDATORY***.

Current Events: I encourage all students to get in the habit of following the news; it is especially important for this class as we will be talking about many current global issues. Please try to keep up daily with international news. For newspapers with excellent coverage of international events, I recommend the *New York Times*, *The Guardian* (London), *The Economist*, *Speigel Online*, and *Al Jaazera*, among others.

Each student will be required to present a current events story on their assigned country at the start of class once during the semester. These presentations should be brief (about 3-5 minutes) and are not graded. Everyone who completes the assignment will get credit. A sign-up sheet will be distributed after country assignments are made. Presenters should upload the link to their story to Canvas before the class in which they will present. The Current Event presentation counts as 2% of your grade. Choose stories from reputable news outlets with excellent coverage of international affairs.

Acceptable sources include:

- [*The New York Times*](#)
- [*The Guardian* \(London\)](#)
- [*Al Jazeera* \(Qatar\)](#)
- [*The Economist*](#)
- [*The Atlantic*](#)
- [*Foreign Affairs*](#)

Another great way to keep up with the news, even when you do not have much time, is to listen to the daily news programs on National Public Radio (NPR). They will keep you up to date on current events and important issues, both domestic and international. You can hear NPR news on [Wisconsin Public Radio](#), which has two local radio stations: The Ideas Network at 99.1 FM and News and Classical at 90.9 FM. You can also listen live and access podcasts of previous shows on their website. I also recommend the daily news program [Democracy Now!](#) for excellent and critical coverage of national and world events from a progressive, non-mainstream perspective. This television news program is broadcast weekday mornings and can be heard anytime online. There are many terrific podcasts that can help you learn about and keep up with the news. One that I recommend for delving deeper into top news stories is [The Daily](#), which is produced by the *New York Times* and is available for free on Apple Podcasts and other platforms.

Country Fact Sheet: Each student will be assigned to represent a country for the semester and for the final Security Council Simulation. To lay a foundation for understanding your assigned country, each student will research and fill out a sheet with facts about their assigned country. The assignment will be distributed during Week 3 and the completed Fact Sheets will be due on Sunday, October 2, by 5PM.

Group Presentations: To develop your research, teamwork, and public speaking skills, and to get familiar with your assigned region, the class will be broken up into regional or other relevant UN groupings to work together on research for the simulation. Groups will research their topic and prepare a PowerPoint to present to the class. Each group will have about 15-20 minutes to present an overview of dynamics in the region related to the simulation topic. More specific instructions and guidelines will be provided.

Position Paper: The main writing assignment for the semester will be a 1–2-page single-spaced country position paper laying out your country’s position on the chosen simulation topic. Preparing your position paper will involve research. Position papers will be due by midnight on November 11th.

Draft Clauses for Security Council Resolution: In preparation for the simulation and based on the research you did for your position paper; you will be guided in writing draft clauses to be debated for inclusion in the final Security Council resolution. Draft Clauses will be due on Friday, November 18th at midnight before the start of the simulation. Further instructions will be provided.

Model Diplomacy Simulation: The culminating activity of the semester will be a three-week long simulation of a Security Council meeting called to address a hypothetical international crisis. We will use one of the simulations in the Model Diplomacy series prepared by the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR). Students will play the role of their assigned country. Attendance and active participation in the simulation exercise are essential and will count for 20% of your grade. Due to differences in personality and assigned roles, some students may participate more visibly than others. Regardless of these differences, all can in their own way engage actively in the simulation, grappling with the issues, attempting to persuade other members of the council, and ultimately helping to arrive at a final decision that will be captured in a final document.

Important Note: Unlike a written assignment, there will be **NO MAKE-UP** for the simulation exercise. The only exception would be some grave and unforeseen extenuating circumstance, like a serious illness or accident. Therefore, if you know now that you will be unable to attend class meetings during Weeks 12-14 (11/21, 11/23, 11/28, 11/30, 12/5, and 12/7), you should **DROP** the course.

Final Exam: The final exam will consist of a variety of question types and a short essay that will have you reflect on the simulation. A study guide will be provided towards the end of the semester.

Extra Credit: There will be several opportunities for extra credit. A key opportunity will be attending Council on Foreign Relations webinars. The schedule for these will be posted on Canvas under Course Organization. To get extra credit, attend a webinar and then write up a brief reflection on what you learned, what questions you have, and/or what your impressions were of the views of the speakers and the topic. Turn these extra credit assignments into Canvas.

Communications and Technology: There is a Canvas section set up for this class, which you should access regularly and get accustomed to using. There you will find the syllabus, e-Reserve readings, gradebook, and other materials. I will also use Canvas to post announcements and reminders. Finally, you will turn in all written assignments to Canvas.

I welcome your questions, thoughts, concerns, and suggestions. There are several ways you can communicate with me: approach me before or after class, meet with me during my Student Hours (days and times are listed at the start of this document), send me a message via email or Canvas Inbox. If you find you are having trouble keeping up with assignments or other aspects of the course, make sure to reach out to me as early as possible. Building rapport and effective relationships are key to becoming a successful professional. Make sure that you are proactive in informing me and your other instructors when difficulties arise during the semester so we can help you find a solution.

The Tutoring and Learning Center: The [UWSP Tutoring and Learning Center \(TLC\)](#) offers a variety of services to support student learning, including tutoring sessions and a Writing Lab that offers free one-on-one help with papers. Writing Lab consultants are successful UWSP students who can discuss any type of writing at any stage of the drafting process, including brainstorming, outlining, research, drafting, and preparing citations. They work with experienced as well as struggling writers; everyone can benefit from discussions about their writing.

Academic Integrity: All students are expected to abide by the guidelines for academic integrity contained in the UW System Administrative Code as detailed in this [brochure](#) from the Dean of Students Office. As a student it behooves you to be well acquainted with these guidelines and to understand what constitutes plagiarism as violations can result in severe consequences. Much of the work in this class will be collaborative; I will encourage you to work together, however, the written assignments will be done individually and must be clear of plagiarism. All written work that is uploaded to Canvas will be run through a plagiarism detection program, Turnitin.com. **Do NOT cut and paste or copy text without giving proper credit!!!** That is plagiarism. If I discover you have plagiarized something, *at a minimum*, you will receive a zero for that assignment.

An Inclusive Classroom: It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs are addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that the students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength, and benefit. It is my intent to create a classroom environment that is respectful of diversity: gender identity, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, nationality, political viewpoint, religion, and culture. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated. Please let me know ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally or for other students or student groups. If there is a dynamic in the classroom that impedes your learning in any way, please come and talk to me about it.

If you have experienced a bias incident (an act of conduct, speech, or expression to which a bias motive is evident as a contributing factor regardless of whether the act is criminal) at UWSP, you have the right to report it. The [Dean of Students webpage](#) has links where students can report several types of incidents, including bias, sexual assault, and academic misconduct.

Equal Access for Students with Disabilities: UWSP will modify academic program requirements as necessary to ensure that they do not discriminate against qualified applicants or students with disabilities. The modifications should not affect the substance of educational programs or compromise academic standards; nor should they intrude upon academic freedom. Examinations or other procedures used for evaluating students' academic achievements may be adapted. The results of such an evaluation must demonstrate the student's achievement in the academic activity, rather than describe his/her disability.

If modifications are required due to a disability, please inform your instructor, and contact the [Disability Resource Center](#) (DRC) to complete an Accommodations Request form. Collins Classroom Center Room 108. Phone: 715-346-0123.

Classroom Etiquette

- **Eating and drinking:** Thank you for refraining from eating in class; drinks are permissible.
- **Arriving and leaving class:** Arriving late or leaving during class is disruptive. Please make every effort to be on time. If you know in advance that you will have to step out early, please let me know before class begins.
- **Cell phone usage:** Research supports the idea that having visual access to a cell phone diminishes our ability to learn. Checking social media, texts, emails, and messages is unprofessional and disrespectful to our class community. Please turn off or mute your phone during class; I will do so as well. The only time you should be using your cell phone in class is when we are using Kahoot. If I notice you are using your phone during class, I may ask you to share what you are researching or ask you to put it away. Thank you for following these guidelines as they help create a positive learning community.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Week 1 – Introductions

9/7 – Introductions and Course Overview

No assigned reading

Week 2 – United Nations: Overview and Structure

9/12 – Overview of the Origins and Role of the UN in World Politics

Readings: Mingst, Karns, & Lyon, Ch. 1 (entire) and Ch. 2, pp. 21-25, ending at “The Organization of the UN”

Watch: The United Nations: It's Your World” (6 min. Video produced by the UN on e-Reserves)

Homework Assignment for Week 3:

Explore [UN website](#) and identify useful information source to share with class.

9/14 – UN Structure and Organs

Reading: Mingst, Karns, & Lyon, Ch. 2, pp. 25-55, ending at “Persistent Organizational Problems”

Class Activity: Decide on topic for UN Security Council Simulation

Week 3 – States and Non-State Actors in the UN System

9/19 – States in the UN System

Reading: Mingst, Karns, & Lyon, Ch. 3, pp. 71-90, ending at “Coalitions, Blocs, and the Importance of Consensus”

Class Activity: Country Assignments and Discuss Country Fact Sheet Assignment

9/21 – Other Actors: Coalitions, the Secretariat, and Nonstate Actors

Reading: Mingst, Karns, & Lyon, Ch. 3, pp. 90-107.

Class Activity: Students share UN information sources with class (see HW from 9/12)

Week 4 –Peace and Security

9/26 – Collective Security

Reading: Mingst, Karns, & Lyon, Ch. 4, pp. 111-131, ending at “Peace Operations”.

Class Activity: Students share UN information sources with class (see HW from 9/12)

9/28 – Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding

Readings:

- Mingst, Karns, & Lyon, Ch. 4, pp. 131-159. (Note: pp. 140-153 contain several case studies. Pick one from each category and skim the rest.)
- Barbara F. Walter, Lise Morje Howard, and V. Page Fortna. “The Astonishing Success of Peacekeeping.” *Foreign Affairs*, November 29, 2021 (e-Reserves).

Week 5 – Human Rights

10/2 – *DUE Sunday at 5 PM in Canvas – Country Fact Sheet*

10/3 – The UN and the Human Rights Agenda

Reading: Mingst, Karns, & Lyon, Ch. 6, pp. 235-261, ending at “Case Studies of the UN in Action”

10/5 – Case Studies of UN Action on Human Rights

Reading: Mingst, Karns, & Lyon, Ch. 6

- Read at least one of the 4 case studies in the section titled, “Case Studies of the UN System in Action”, pp. 261-277, ending at “Ad Hoc International War Crimes Tribunals”.
- Read final section of chapter, “Evaluating the UN’s Human Rights Record, pp. 282-285.

Class Activity: Finalize groups for group research and presentations

Week 6 – Economic Development; UN Organizational Challenges and Reform

10/10 - Economic Development

Reading: Mingst, Karns, & Lyon, Ch. 5, pp. 191-198, 209-223, and 226-228.

10/12 - Problems and Criticisms of the UN

Readings:

- Mingst, Karns, & Lyon, Ch. 2, pp. 55-67.
- Richard Gowen. “The UN is Another Casualty of Russia’s War.” *Foreign Affairs*, March 10, 2022 (e-Reserves)
- Chris McGreal. “70 years and half a trillion dollars later: What has the UN achieved?” *The Guardian*, September 7, 2015. (Link is provided here and on e-Reserves)
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/sep/07/what-has-the-un-achieved-united-nations>

Week 7 – Background on Simulation Topic

Readings: TBD –background readings on the chosen simulation topic

10/17 – Lecture and Discussion on Simulation Topic

10/19 - Lecture and Discussion on Simulation Topic

Week 8 – Research for Country/Regional Presentations and Position Papers

10/24 – Class will meet in computer lab. Time to work on regional presentations.

10/26 – Class will meet in computer lab. Time to work on regional presentations.

Week 9 – Rules of Procedure

10/31 – Rules of Procedure

Reading: NMUN Rules of Procedure. (e-Reserves)

11/2 – Rules of Procedure

Week 10 – Rules of Procedure

11/7 – Rules of Procedure

11/9 – Rules of Procedure

11/11 (Friday) – DUE: Country Position Papers - Upload to Canvas by midnight

Week 11 – Regional/Country Presentations

11/14 – Regional/Country Presentations

11/16 – Regional/County Presentations

11/18 (Friday)- DUE: Draft Clauses for UN Security Council Resolution- Upload by midnight

Week 12 – UNSC Simulation

11/21 – UN Security Council Simulation – Day 1 – Public Session

11/23 – UN Security Council Simulation – Day 2 – Informal Session

November 24-27 – Thanksgiving Break!!! Enjoy!

Week 13 – UNSC Simulation

11/28 – UN Security Council Simulation – Day 3 – Public Session

11/30 – UN Security Council Simulation – Day 4 – Informal Session

Week 14 – UNSC Simulation

12/5 – UN Security Council Simulation – Day 5 – Public Voting Session

12/7 – Simulation Debrief

Week 15 – Conclusions

12/12 – The Future of the UN

Readings:

- Mingst, Karns, & Lyon, Ch. 8, entire
- CFR.org Editors. [“The UN at 75: How to Make it Relevant Again.”](#) Council on Foreign Relations, September 14, 2020. (e-Reserves)

12/14 – Conclusions and Review for Final Exam

FINAL EXAM: WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 21ST, 5:00-7:00 PM