POLI 387: International Simulation

(Spring 2017)

GEP Category: Experiential Learning (XL)

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Office Hours: Thursday 12:00PM-2:00PM, and by appointment

Class Meeting: Wednesday 14:00-16:30 (CCC 234)

Course Website: https://uwsp.courses.wisconsin.edu/d21/home/3620723

Overview

The United Nations (UN) is the globe's most important international organization. With an almost universal membership and bodies working in areas from security to crime to health and the environment, the UN is a player on most important global issues. In this course, we will learn about the United Nations, its history and role in global politics. We will study the structure of the UN system and focus on important organs such as the Security Council and the General Assembly.

Additionally, and perhaps more importantly, this course will provide you with an opportunity to research a country's background, government, and foreign policy, along with a selection of UN issues like security, the environment, or economic development. You will learn the basic rules by which UN diplomats operate, and then put the knowledge you have gained into effect by trying to craft agreements to solve real-world, real-time issues at the conference.

As part of the course, the students have the option of participating in an intercollegiate Model UN simulation conference—i.e., the National Model United Nations (http://www.nmun.org/) in New York, NY. National Model United Nations is about simulating the speech making, resolution drafting, consensus building, interpersonal relations, and negotiations carried out by real diplomats around the world.

Learning Outcomes

General Education Program

Students benefit from opportunities to learn by reflecting on experiences beyond their typical classroom activities and by applying the knowledge and skills they gain from traditional courses in new settings. To this end, students are required to complete an Experiential Learning requirement as part of UWSP's General Education Program (GEP). POLI 387 fulfills part of the GEP requirement for Experiential Learning.

Experiential Learning (XL): Learning Outcomes

Experiential learning is a broad concept, including many types of active, hands-on learning opportunities. It is an example of a "high-impact teaching practice" that has been shown to enhance a student's comprehension of course material, to enable students to see connections between theory and practice, to aid in student retention, and to develop a student's sense of responsibility for their education. Moreover, experiential learning provides students with an experience that aids in the development of leadership skills and responsible citizenship.

Upon the successful completion of the XL requirement, students will be able to ...

- ... complete an approved experiential learning project.
- ... reflect on the experiential learning activity in order to gain further understanding of their university education, and an enhanced sense of one's personal responsibility as a member of a larger community.

(Note: "Community" in this context is defined as any of the various on- or off-campus departments, units, or organizations with whom students might work to complete their Experiential Learning requirement.)

Course Learning Outcomes

POLI 387: International Simulation is a strong example of active learning. You will be expected to participate actively in class, apply what you are learning in class to real-world issues, carry out research into your countries and topics, and simulate the behavior of a real-world diplomat in a Model UN conference setting. In the course, you will develop knowledge of international politics and individual nations' foreign policies along with skills in critical analysis, public speaking, diplomacy, teamwork and interpersonal relations, research, and leadership.

Please note that you will get out of this course what you put into it, and much of the learning will be SELF-DIRECTED. You need to stretch yourself to learn more. Remember that you are responsible for energetically pursuing your own learning.

Upon the successful completion of POLI 387, students will be able to \dots

- ... explain how the UN works in theory as well as in practice.
- ... find and analyze information on their assigned countries' official position regarding several issues facing the global community (such as global warming, poverty, refugee flows, terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, etc.).
- ... communicate in both verbal and written format their assigned countries' policy preferences to their fellow delegates clearly, concisely, and convincingly.
- ... simulate the behavior of a real-world diplomat (e.g., engage in formal and informal negotiations with delegates from other UN-member countries, write draft resolutions intended to solve their common problems, and put draft resolutions to a vote using the actual rules of procedure at the UN, etc.) in a 4-week Model UN exercise.

Assignments and Grading

Grades for the course will be assigned according to completion of the following course assignments:

Attendance: 10%Participation: 10%

Country Fact Sheet: 10%Group Presentation: 10%Position Paper: 10%

• In-class UN Simulation: 35%

• Final Exam: 15%

Your final point total for the semester will translate into letter grades as shown below: (The scale may be revised if needed.)

• 92.5 and above: A

• 92.4-89.5: A-

• 89.4-86.5: B+

• 86.4-82.5: B

• 82.4-79.5: B-

• 79.4-76.5: C+

• 76.4-72.5: C

• 72.4-69.5: C-

• 69.4-64.5: D+

• 64.4-59.5: D

• 59.4 and below: F

Class Attendance: There are NO penalties for the first TWO <u>unexcused</u> absences, but these will be counted when calculating the penalties that start after you've had two unexcused absences. If you have three unexcused absences, you lose one attendance point, so the maximum you can get for attendance is 9%; if you have four unexcused absences, the maximum you can get for attendance is 8%; if you have five unexcused absences, the maximum you can get for attendance is 7%; etc. <u>Excused absences</u> do not count against these limits, but you must provide official documentation (e.g., doctor's note) to have absences count as excused.

Participation: In the old days, students were seen to be an empty vessel into which the professor poured his or her knowledge. However, this old-model of education has come under severe challenge in recent years. Rote memorization is now seen to offer little to students. How often have you "crammed" for a test and then forgotten everything you learned within a few weeks?

The philosophy behind this course is that students learn better when that learning is active. Hence, you are expected to not only attend class but also participate in class discussions, considering, manipulating, testing, and questioning the topics presented in class in order to develop their knowledge of the UN. Active class participation by all students has the advantage of helping to foster tolerance for divergent viewpoints and developing students' abilities to formulate arguments in a well-reasoned manner.

Active participation in our discussions is an important and required element of the course and will be critical to successfully learning the material. Hence, you should be prepared to answer questions that are posed, ask questions about concepts that are not clear, challenge viewpoints expressed in the reading or class discussion, and be involved in the conversations. These discussions must always be conducted with an air of respect for differing viewpoints and the people who present them, and with an open mind (e.g., arguing for positions even if you are not yet certain of them, and being willing to consider new arguments or information). Since attendance and participation are two related but separate components of grading, participation grades will be based on active involvement rather than attendance.

Country Fact Sheet: Each student is required to fill out a sheet with a list of questions pertaining to a specific country they are performing research on. The questions are posted on the course's D2L page. An electronic copy of the completed country fact sheet is due in the appropriate D2L Dropbox on March 1 at 2:00PM. A hard copy should also be submitted to me on or before March 1 at 2:00PM.

Group Presentations: In order to develop your research, teamwork, and public speaking skills, as well as to learn about some of the many issues that the UN works on, you will be grouped and assigned an issue on which to present. Student groups will have about 15 minutes in which to give an overview of their issue and to describe what role the UN currently plays (the precise timing of the presentations will depend on how many groups/issues we need to cover). Student groups MUST offer a critical perspective on the UN's role. Is it succeeding according to your standards, humanitarian standards, the standards the UN itself has set? Why do the problems that exist in the issue area exist/persist? You might consider alternative (more ambitious?) roles for the UN on the issue, but these should be advocated only if they are politically and financially feasible.

Primary source material from the UN and affiliated agencies should be used to inform the presentation but so should outside information, at least some critical, of UN efforts. These can be found in the media, in scholarly journal articles, and books. In you presentation, you are expected to use PowerPoint (including bullet points, photos, graphs, charts, etc.) and spread the load of speaking equally among group members. A selection of UN issues can be found at http://www.un.org/en/globalissues/. Student groups should submit their PowerPoints to me electronically on the day the presentation is given. (I will not chase you down for this. You remember to turn it in, or you don't.) Please also note that my evaluation of your presentations will be supplemented by peer evaluations to determine the grade for this assignment.

Position Papers: It is standard procedure at any Model UN conference for delegates to produce position papers on the issues before their committees written from the perspective of their assigned countries (National Model United Nations usually has three issues per committee). Make sure your position paper contains a clear statement of your country's position on the issue, background to your country's involvement on the issue domestically and internationally as well as thinking about the international aspects of the issue that will be negotiated with delegates from other member countries of the UN. Your choices need to be justified or grounded in your country's foreign policy (include quotations and data to support your positions). Remember that the position paper is the grounding for everything you do during the negotiation stage. Therefore, it has to be well researched and well thought through. Details instructions on this assignment as well as a sample policy memo are posted on D2L.

Position papers will be evaluated based on the clarity of the country's position and the reasons for that position, the thoroughness of the research (including use of primary source quotations), and the quality of the writing. Be aware of the need to use diplomatic language, to put your country's best foot forward, and to write in the "voice" of your country. An electronic copy of the paper is due in the appropriate D2L Dropbox on April 19 at 2:00PM. A hard copy should also be submitted to me on or before April 19 at 2:00PM. Late assignments will be penalized one letter grade (e.g., from an A- to a B+) for each day or fraction of a day late (e.g., 5 minutes past the deadline). Delegations jointly representing one country on the same committee will submit a joint position paper.

In-class UN Simulation: Attendance and avid participation in the simulation exercise are vital. This is the culmination experience for each of us in the course and the raison d'être of the entire course. Because of differing personalities, some students will participate more visibly than others. Some are more shy, some more gregarious. Regardless of such differences in personality, all can in their own way engage themselves actively in the simulation, trying to grapple with the issues and attempting to get their country's point of view across to other delegates. Whether one is quiet or outgoing by constitution, all can participate in shaping the outcome of their committees through speechmaking, behind-the-scenes consensus building, resolution drafting, or creative development of salable compromises.

Important Note: Unlike a written assignment, there will be NO MAKE-UP for the simulation exercise EVEN IF you provide official documentation for your absence. Therefore, if you will not be able to attend class meetings on March 1, April 19, April 26, May 3, AND May 10, you should <u>DROP</u> the course before it is too late.

Final Exam: There will be one take-home final exam. The exam will be comprehensive. The examination is an opportunity to bring together and consider all that you have learned over the semester. The questions on the final exam will test your knowledge of the subject material. You will have full access to your textbook and class notes to answer the questions. The point of this exam is not to serve as criteria for how you can recall and regurgitate as much as your ability to critically analyze material presented to you.

Important Note: While you may consult your books, other reference material, and/or your class notes, you may NOT consult any person other than the instructor about any aspect of the exam. Any behavior in violation of this requirement will have serious academic consequences.

A dropbox folder will be set up for the final exam on D2L. The questions will be posted on D2L on May 15 at 10:00AM, and you will have 72 hours to work on the exam. That is, an electronic copy of your answers is due in the appropriate D2L Dropbox on May 18 at 10:00AM. Late assignments will be penalized one letter grade (e.g., from an A- to a B+) for each day or fraction of a day late (e.g., 5 minutes past the deadline).

Missed Assignments: Please take note of all exam and assignment dates, and make plans around them. Except in extraordinary and unavoidable circumstances, make-up exams will NOT be offered. Any requests for accommodations must be made at least one week in advance to be considered. I understand that emergencies happen. In a genuine emergency, I am very willing to work with you. I will, however, require documentation of emergencies (e.g., notes from doctors, emergency room personnel, etc.) in all instances.

Re-grading Policy: If you feel that any assignment has been graded incorrectly, you may request that it be regraded. However, you must wait for 48 hours after the assignment has been returned before issuing any complaints. Following such "cooling-off" period, you must provide a 1-2 page double-spaced memo indicating the reason for your concern and why you deserve a better grade. Please note that this memo has to be based entirely on the merit of your own work (i.e., it cannot be based on comparisons with the grades of other students). Upon receiving your memo, I will regrade the ENTIRE assignment in question within 72 hours. This means that the revised grade may be higher or lower than what you originally received. So please be certain that you have a very specific and justifiable reason before asking us to make any changes; this is not a risk-free process!

Special Accommodations

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal law requiring educational institutions to provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. For more information about UWSP's policies: http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RightsRespons/ADA/rightsADAPolicyInfo.pdf.

If you have a disability and require classroom and/or exam accommodations, please register with the Disability and Assistive Technology Center, and then contact me as early as possible (within the first two weeks of the semester, or as soon as those needs arise) to discuss how they can be met within the structure of the course. I will make every effort not only to maintain the confidentiality of personal information but also to enable full participation in this course by all students.

For more information, please visit the Disability and Assistive Technology Center, located on the 6th floor of the Learning Resource Center (the Library). You can also find more information here: http://www4.uwsp.edu/special/disability.

Communications and Technology

Contacting me: I strongly encourage you drop in to my office hours (no need to set up an appointment) or set up a meeting if there is anything you would like to discuss about the course. My office hours are the time for you to get individual help. You can come see me during office hours to clear your mind about issues/terms that you feel you do not quite understand and/or to talk about any course-related issue that you would rather not bring up in front of your fellow classmates, etc.

I generally answer emails very quickly from Monday 8:30AM to Friday 4:30PM (Feel free to email me again if you do not hear within 24 hours during these times). However, please do consult the syllabus or other course materials first to see if the answer to your question is there, and recognize that broader substantive questions will probably be best addressed at in-person meetings.

D2L: There is a D2L page set up for this class: https://uwsp.courses.wisconsin.edu/d21/home/3620723. I strongly encourage you to access this webpage regularly and get accustomed to using it. There you will find the syllabus and other materials that you will need as they become available. The D2L page contains also a news box that I will use to post announcements and reminders.

Electronic Devices: You are permitted to use laptop computers during class to access PowerPoints, online notes, or to type your own course notes. That being said, laptops are not to be used for surfing the internet or checking e-mail. During periods of class discussion, computers should be closed to ensure adequate attention and participation. Cellphones should be turned off or put on vibrate. Texting is never permitted.

Academic Integrity and the Honor Code

UW-Stevens Point values a safe, honest, respectful, and inviting learning environment. In order to ensure that each student has the opportunity to succeed, we have developed a set of expectations for all students and instructors. This set of expectations is known as the Rights and Responsibilities document, and it is intended to help establish a positive living and learning environment at UWSP. For more information: http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Pages/rightsandresponsibilities.aspx.

Academic integrity is central to the mission of higher education in general and UWSP in particular. Academic dishonesty (e.g., cheating, plagiarism) is a very serious offense that will get you in great trouble. There are now thoroughly reliable software programs to check if plagiarism has occurred. In all your classes, please use proper citation form for all materials obtained from primary and secondary sources.

The minimum penalty for a violation of academic integrity is a failure (zero) for the assignment. Generally the matter will then be referred to the Dean of Students for a formal hearing at the Student-Faculty Committee on Student Conduct. Depending on the circumstances, the committee may suspend or expel a student that behaves dishonestly. This will make it extremely difficult for you to gain entrance to graduate schools and will jeopardize your opportunities with a large number of employers in the future.

For further information, please come talk to me and/or see the university's rules and procedures for student academic misconduct available here: http://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Pages/Academic-Misconduct.aspx as well as the UWSP "Student Academic Standards and Disciplinary Procedures" section of the Rights and Responsibilities document, Chapter 14, which can be accessed here: http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RightsRespons/SRR-2010/rightsChap14.pdf

Please note that you MAY receive help on your written assignments (<u>not tests</u>) from your roommate, significant other, parents, the University Learning Center, or a passerby on the street. The process of reading and revising your work based on the comments of others is an important part of how we learn and improve.

Classroom Etiquette

Please remember to turn off your cell phones before coming to class and refrain from eating. Drinks, on the other hand, are permissible.

Arriving late or leaving during class is usually disruptive both for me and for your classmates. Please make every effort to be on time. If you come to class, plan to stay for the whole session. If you know in advance that you have to leave early, let me know before class begins.

Course Resources and Readings

Readings for each week are indicated on the syllabus and should be completed prior to the class meeting of the week in which they are assigned. Additional readings covering case studies in current or recent international events will be distributed via D2L.

Students are strongly encouraged to have taken at least the introduction course to international relations and be familiar with the major theories of international relations.

The main textbook for this course is *The United Nations in the 21st Century*, (Boulder: Westview, 2011, 4th edition, ISBN: 978-0813345383) by Karen A. Mingst and Margaret P. Karns, which available through Text Rental. (Hereafter referred to as "Mingst and Karns.")

The following text will also be used as a supplemental reading: Basic Facts about the United Nations, (New York: Department of Public Information, United Nations, 2014). While a hard copy is available for purchase at the university's book store, this text can also be accessed online for free: http://bit.ly/lQMvJkF. (You will need to log onto your UWSP account when you are off campus.) Alternatively, the text is also available here for purchase: http://unyearbook.un.org/content/basic-facts-about-united-nations/. (Hereafter referred to as "Basic Facts.")

Additional readings will be posted under E-Readings, which can be accessed by going to the D2L homepage for this class. (Hereafter referred to as "E-Reading.")

Students are also encouraged to subscribe to the e-mail newsletter, UN Wire, produced by the United Nations Foundation. Go to https://www.smartbrief.com/un_wire/index.jsp for this free service.

In addition, you are expected to read a major daily newspaper (online or print) with coverage of international events, such as the New York Times, Washington Post, Wall Street Journal, or Financial Times. These and others are available at the library or online. Lectures and discussions will frequently reference relevant current international events, and being conversant with what is going on in the world will be important to contribute to discussions and do well in this course. Be prepared to talk about how these events fit into the substantive concepts we are learning, and how we can apply the analytic tools we are using to understand them more fully.

Lecture slides: I will post lecture slides on the course's D2L page prior to each lecture. These will be sparse outlines intended to facilitate your note-taking. These outlines will allow you to anticipate the topics discussed and to "fill in" the information provided in lectures. Please note, however, that the lecture outlines should not be seen as a substitute for attending class, doing the readings, or taking notes.

World Wide Web: The web has a bounty of information for research in international affairs (not all of it credible—be a careful consumer!!!). Below is a list of links to a selection of scholarly resources, organizations, and news from the world of the UN and Model UN:

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BBC World Service http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice
BBC Country Profiles http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/country_profiles/default.stm
Brookings Institution http://www.brookings.edu/
Carter Center http://www.cartercenter.org/
Chatham House http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk/
CIA World Factbook https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook
Council on Foreign Relations http://www.cfr.org
EU Observer http://www.euobserver.com
Economist (country briefings) http://www.economist.com/countries
Electronic Embassy (links to embassies in Washington, DC) http://www.embassy.org/
Foreign Affairs http://www.foreignaffairs.org/
Foreign Ministries http://www.usip.org/library/formin.html
Foreign Policy http://www.foreignpolicy.com/
Foreign Policy in Focus http://www.fpif.org/
Freedom House http://www.freedomhouse.org/
Global Issues http://www.globalissues.org/
Global Policy Forum http://www.globalpolicy.org/
Global Security http://www.globalsecurity.org/
Human Rights Watch http://www.hrw.org/
International Crisis Group http://www.crisisweb.org/
National Model United Nations http://www.nmun.org/
United Nations (official) http://www.un.org/
United Nations Chronicle http://www.un.org/Pubs/chronicle/index.html
United Nations System http://www.unsystem.org/
UN Watch http://www.unwatch.org/
US Department of State (Official) http://www.state.gov/
World Wide Web Virtual Library Int. Affairs Resources http://www.etown.edu/vl/
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To find more information on your country, organization, or issue, please consult the following library databases (accessible via the library homepage at (http://library.uwsp.edu/). The databases will connect you with citations to books and articles as well as online full-text electronic resources:

ABI Inform; Britannica Online; CIAO; EbscoHost; JSTOR; LexisNexis Academic; Project MUSE; WorldCat

For a pronunciation guide for officials of your country, see names.voa.gov. In addition, you are strongly encouraged to find newspapers from inside your country. One way is www.onlinenewspapers.com.

Course Schedule

Week 1

• Basic Facts, pp. 3-28

January 25:

- Course Overview
- Lecture: Structure of the UN System
- Discussion: UN Organization Chart
- For next week:
 - Explore http://www.un.org, and find a good information source to share with the class
 - Think about how to complete the country fact sheet

Week 2

• Mingst and Karns, pp. 1-49

February 1:

- Lecture: History and Place of the UN in World Politics
- Discussion: UN webpage explorations, and country fact sheet
- Assign roles for in-class UN simulation

Week 3:

• Mingst and Karns, pp. 49-80

February 8:

- Lecture: Structure of the UN System
- Discuss: UN Organization Chart
- Discuss: Committees assigned for in-class UN simulation
- For next week:
 - Be prepared to outline your assigned country's position on the assigned issues
 - Work on your "Country Fact Sheet," which is due on March 1

Week 4

- Mingst and Karns, pp. 80-97
- \bullet Basic Facts, pp. 28-52

February 15:

- Lecture: UN General Assembly
- Discussion: Assigned countries' positions on key issues related to UN committees
- Discussion: How to write a good position paper
- For next week:
 - Think about topic preferences for group presentations

Week 5

- Mingst and Karns, pp. 100-154.
- E-Reading: Simon Adams, "Failure to Protect: Syria and the UN Security Council." Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, March 2015, pp. 5-21.

February 22:

- Lecture: International Peace and Security
- Discussion: UN involvement in Syria
- Assign topics for group presentations

Week 6

• NMUN "Rules of Procedure" (http://www.nmun.org/downloads/NMUNRules.pdf)

March 1:

• Lecture: Rules of Model UN

• Practice: Flow of Debate at the UN

***** COUNTRY FACT SHEET DUE ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1 @ 2:00PM *****

Week 7

- Mingst and Karns, pp. 83-94
- E-Reading: Brian Urquhart, "The Next Secretary-General: How to Fill a Job with No Description." Foreign Affairs, September-October 2006, pp. 15-22.
- S/RES/2254 (2015) http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2254 (2015)
- A/RES/70/120 (2015) http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/120

March 8:

- Lecture: UN Secretary General
- Discussion: Role and power of the UN Secretary General
- Discussion: How to write a resolution
- Discussion: Peer evaluation form for group presentations
- For next week:
 - Public speaking exercise: For two minutes (+/- 15 seconds), speak to an international forum about your country's position on key issues under the assigned committees.

Week 8

- Mingst and Karns, pp. 159-187
- E-Reading: Thomas Weiss, "ECOSOC IS Dead, Long Live ECOSOC." Dialogue on Globalization, December 2010, pp. 1-6.

March 15:

- Lecture: Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)
- Public speaking exercise
 - Hints on speaking: Be inspiring, and have specific proposals. Reflect your country's interest but persuade others that what you propose is best for them, too. Practice in advance to get your time right. Have two or three take-away lessons that you hammer home again and again. Greet your fellow delegates; thank the chair for the opportunity to speak. Learn the diplomatic lingo.)
- Discussion: How to strengthen public speaking skills

Spring Recess

*** No Class on March 22 ***

Week 9

- Mingst and Karns, pp. 197-218
- \bullet Basic Facts, pp. 189-198

March 29:

- Lecture: Human Rights in the UN
- Group presentations (Day 1)
- For next week:
 - Group presentations continue on April 5

Week 10

- Mingst and Karns, pp. 247-264
- Basic Facts, pp. 213-219

April 5:

- Lecture: Human Security in the UN
- Group presentations (Day 2)

Week 11

- Mingst and Karns, pp. 281-292
- E-Reading: Eric Shawn, The U.N. Exposed: How the United Nations Sabotages America's Security and Fails the World. No place of publication: Sentinel, 2006, pp. 60-87.

April 12:

- Lecture: Critical Views of the UN and Its Mandate
- Discussion: Criticisms of the UN from the left and the right
- Discussion: Mock rules of UN simulation
- For next week:
 - "Country Position Paper" due on or before April 19 at 2:00PM
 - "In-class UN Simulation" begins on April 19

Week 12

• No Reading

April 19:

- In-class UN Simulation (Day 1)
 - Roll Call, Setting the Agenda, Formal Debate, and Informal Debate

***** POSITION PAPER DUE ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19 @ 2:00PM *****

Week 13

• No Reading

April 26:

- In-class UN Simulation (Day 2)
 - Formal Debate and Informal Debate

Week 14

• No Reading

May 3:

- In-class UN Simulation (Day 3)
 - Formal Debate and Informal Debate

Week 15

• No Reading

May 10:

- In-class UN Simulation (Day 4)
 - Formal Debate, Informal Debate, and Voting

*** FINAL EXAM ***

Posted on D2L on May 15 at 10:00AMDue on May 18 at 10:00AM