Course Description

Though states are sovereign and retain the highest level of authority in the international system, they often surrender some of that authority to international institutions and even obey these institutions as if they have independent authority. Why is that? Why do states create and join international institutions? When will states obey them? What mechanisms can international institutions use to affect state behavior?

In this course, we will examine the origins, designs, and effects of international institutions. We will study many different types of institutions, from intergovernmental institutions like the UN, the WTO, and NATO; to supranational institutions like the EU and the ICC; from “soft” institutions like international law and norms of behavior; to transnational institutions like advocacy networks, multinational corporations, and terrorist organizations. The course explores the institutional structures, political processes, and impact of international organizations within three issue areas: international peace and security, and global trade and development, and transnational politics such as human rights and the environment.

This is an upper-level seminar. It therefore requires a commitment from students to complete a significant amount of reading and assignment requirements. In addition, some of the material includes technical content. POLI 005 (Introduction to International Relations) is a prerequisite for this course.

Political Science Program Learning Objectives (PLOs)

Through the courses and programs of the political science program, students should acquire:

1. An understanding of the processes, theories, and empirical regularities of political institutions and political behavior in the student’s chosen emphasis area: American politics, comparative politics, or international relations.

2. An ability to employ critical thinking and demonstrate social scientific literacy, including basic quantitative literacy.
3. A capacity to utilize contemporary social science research methods to conduct rigorous research on political phenomena.

4. Effective written communication skills, especially the ability to convey complex concepts and information in a clear and concise manner.

5. An ability to apply abstract theory and research methods to understand contemporary political events and public policies.

Course Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Describe the life cycle of institutions in general terms as well as the details of the life cycle of particular international organizations

2. Explain the fundamental political relationships that often undermine the effectiveness of international organizations and describe how individual organizations are able to overcome those problems

3. Define and describe the core assumptions of the canonical interactions in political science, namely prisoner’s dilemma, coordination problems, and collective action problems

4. Summarize academic theories about whether and how international organizations affect state behavior, and determine whether empirical evidence supports or falsifies those theories

5. Compare and contrast different international institutions, particularly in the problems they solve and how they solve them, their organizational structure, etc.

6. Make policy recommendations regarding the protection of human rights based on theory and empirical evidence

Evaluation

The requirements for the class include class participation, four written assignments, and two exams. Grades will be distributed in the following manner:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence Analysis Assignment</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading Response Assignment</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policy Recommendation Assignment</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Cycle Project</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>25%</td>
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</table>
Participation: 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 75 out of 200 points (i.e., an F) for participation. Students may earn a maximum of 200 points for participation for the semester. There are three ways you can receive participation points:

1. Throughout the course, I will ask questions to which you can respond using your clickers (clickers are required for this course). You will receive 2 points toward your participation each time you respond to a question with your clicker. You cannot earn these points without attending class. It is your responsibility to (a) register your clicker to this class (even if you’ve used it before for a different class), (b) make sure your clicker works and you are receiving credit for your responses, and (c) bring your clicker to class. I cannot verify that you used your clicker if it does not register, and I will not accept written responses in lieu of clicker responses. Some lectures will have more questions asked than others.

2. About once per week, I will post discussion questions on the UCM CROPS site. Thoughtful responses to these questions are worth 5 points; one response is allowed for credit per student per discussion question. You may answer any question posted throughout the semester up until the beginning of the final exam.

3. Occasionally during the semester, we will have in-class group activities that include some questions or other assignment for which you can receive credit toward your participation grade. You must be present in class at the time of the activity to receive these points.

4. Finally, any uncivil classroom behavior, such as rudeness, texting, etc., will result in the loss of 5 participation points.

SONA participation: Political science is a science: we try to explain phenomena using theory and assess our predictions using evidence. As such, I want you to participate in the process of social science. All students are required to participate in SONA research studies for at least 1 SONA credit. This requirement is not graded in terms of quality; it is either completed or it is not. Students who complete a half SONA credit will receive 10 points toward their participation grade, and those who complete the full 1 credit will receive 25 points toward their participation total. Do not leave this to the last minute! You can do this at any time during the semester, so you might be better served by doing it in the first half, when you are less busy. Additional SONA credits can be earned for extra credit—see Course Policies below.

Assignments: The following are required writing assignments; I will post and circulate many more details about my expectations for each assignment throughout the semester.

1. Evidence Analysis: Students will use actual data to analyze the validity of a hypothesis about an international institution. The purpose of this exercise is to increase scientific literacy and think about standards of sufficient evidence for inference. DUE: Thursday, February 4.
2. Reading Response Paper: Before the midterm, students will choose one of the assigned research articles and respond to a series of questions about it. This will include a concise summary of the research question the author(s) ask, the theory posited to answer the question, and the evidence used to assess that theory. Importantly, students will be asked to engage with the reading, offering a meaningful critique of the work on its merits and describing how the research relates to other topics discussed in the course. **DUE: Thursday, March 10.**

3. Policy Recommendation: Students will take on the role of an advisor to a number of states and/or institutions and make a recommendation as to how the institution can address series of policy quandaries. Drawing from real and hypothetical international political scenarios, students will draw from the theories and evidence learned throughout the course to analyze a situation, present the potential options, and make a recommendation as to the ideal path for the institution to take to address the situation. **DUE: Thursday, April 28.**

4. The Life Cycle of an International Organization: Students will answer a series of questions asking them to explain and analyze the origins, structure, behavior, and adaptation or death of the international organization of their choice (subject to approval) according to the life cycle of international institutions. This assignment is comprehensive, applying material from the entire course to a particular international institution. **DUE: Tuesday, May 10**

**Mid-term Exam:** The mid-term exam will cover material from the beginning of the semester until the point of the exam. *All material presented in readings and class discussion is relevant for the exam.*

**Course Policies**

**Absence:** I do not take attendance. You do not need to alert me to the fact that you will be absent or bring me any official excuse letter. However, missing class means missing information. Many of these readings are demanding and may need clarification in class. Additionally, the lectures contain important supplemental information not found in the readings, and you are responsible for this information in exams and papers. Finally, you cannot earn participation points or earn credit for group activities if you are not in attendance. See policies below for late papers and missed exams.

**Late Papers:** Assignments should be turned in by the beginning of the class period on the day they are due, regardless of your presence in class. You may email assignments to me if you will be absent, whether the absence is excused or unexcused. I will accept late assignments, but you will incur a letter grade penalty for each day that the assignment is late.

**Missing Exams** Missed exams in cases of illness or personal emergency can be accommodated only with proper documentation. Exams missed due to a university sponsored event or religious holiday may also accommodated, provided that the student informs
me of the conflict at least two weeks in advance. I reserve the right to accommodate a missed exam with a rebalancing of the remaining exams rather than a retake, should circumstances make this optimal.

**Assignment Review:** I am happy to review any graded assignment or exam. However, I will not hear any concerns until 48 hours after the assignment has been returned to you. You must express your concern with the grade in an email and support your argument as to why it should be changed. If you bring me an assignment to regrade, I will regrade the entire assignment, and I reserve the right to raise your grade or lower it on any part of the assignment. In other words, be careful in your use of review. All grade challenges should be directed to Dr. Ritter, not the teaching assistant.

**Cell Phones, Laptops, Tablets:** Cell phones, tablets, and laptops should be turned off during class and put away. Answering a cell phone or text-messaging during class will result in a reduction of your participation grade for the day. Laptops are not allowed in class unless the student has received prior approval from the professor.

**Extra Credit:** For five extra credit points toward the assignment or exam of your choice, you may participate in an additional research study on campus through SONA. More information about this opportunity will be posted on CATCourses. I do not offer any other assignments for extra credit.

**Course Web Site:** I maintain a CatCourses website for this course. The readings, assignments, discussion questions, and other important information for the course will all be posted there, and you will frequently be asked to submit assignments through the site. Use this site liberally and often. I will post announcements and changes to the home page of the site—though I will always announce changes in class, please keep an eye out. If a change to the syllabus or requirements is posted in the announcements on this site, you are responsible for those changes. As an important caveat, I will post grades for all assignments and exams on CatCourses, but the gradebook calculates overall grades using a weighting system that is not always reliable. If the precision of your grade is important to you, I strongly recommend that you calculate your grade yourself. Here's some help with that: http://www.blacksdomain.com/files/Notes/Calculating_WA.php

**Academic Honor Code:** Students are assumed to have read and agreed with the University of California, Merced Academic Honesty policy, found at URL: http://studentlife.campuscms.ucmerced.edu/files/page/documents/academichonestypolicy.pdf. The following is taken verbatim from that document: “Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, altering graded examinations for additional credit, having another person take an examination for you, or facilitating academic dishonesty or as further specified in this policy or other campus regulations.” These and other forms of cheating are all potentially grounds for penalties including failure of the assignment or the course as well as university-level disciplinary action.

**Special Needs:** Reasonable accommodation for persons with known disabilities will be made in accordance with section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. No person with a known disability will
be intentionally excluded from participation in, be denied the benefit of, or otherwise be subject to discrimination under any University policy, program, service, or in relation to employment because of a disability. University programs and facilities are intended to be accessible to persons with disabilities. Any student who feels he or she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss his or her specific needs. If you have a disability, but have not contacted the Office of Disability Services, please call (209) 228-7884 as soon as possible to become registered and thereby ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. Requests for academic accommodations are to be made during the first three weeks of the semester, except for unusual circumstances. Students with disabilities must be registered with the Office of Disability Services before receiving academic adjustments. Student responsibilities are listed on the ODS website: http://disability.ucmerced.edu/

**If You Need Help:** There are many things that you might be dealing with that can hinder your ability to succeed in this course, your college career, and your life. You might be struggling with illness, socioeconomic issues, or personal issues that make it hard to concentrate, to work, or to attend class. If any of these or other things begin to hinder your ability to do your best, you can reach out to the office of the Dean of Students for programs, training, accommodations, and assistance (more information is available here: http://studentaffairs.campuscms.ucmerced.edu/). If you specifically need help or accommodation in this course due to your difficulties, please come meet with me so we can find a solution that allows you to succeed while being fair to others.

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate contacts for resources and confidence here: http://prevent-violence.ucmerced.edu/contact

**Statement on Diversity:** Diversity is defined as that incredible and beautiful variety of personal identities, experiences, values and world views that result from differences of origin, culture and circumstance. We define and appreciate diversity in all of its forms including age, ability or disability, ethnicity, national origin, race, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, and family and marital status. In this class, we will actively foster an environment of awareness, appreciation, and intentional inclusivity.

**Gender-Inclusive Language and Preferred Names/Pronouns:** Language is gender-inclusive and non-sexist when we use words that affirm and respect how people describe, express, and experience their gender. Just as sexist language excludes women's experiences, non-gender-inclusive language excludes the experiences of individuals whose identities may not fit the gender binary, and/or who may not identify with the sex they were assigned at birth. Identities including trans, intersex, and genderqueer reflect personal descriptions, expressions, and experiences. Gender-inclusive/non-sexist language acknowledges people of any gender (for example, first year student versus
freshman, chair versus chairman, humankind versus mankind, etc.). It also affirms non-binary gender identifications, and recognizes the difference between biological sex and gender expression. Teachers and students should use gender-inclusive words and language whenever possible in the classroom and in writing. *Students, faculty, and staff may share their preferred pronouns and names, either to the class or privately to the professor, and these gender identities and gender expressions should be honored.*

**Syllabus as Contract:** This syllabus is a contract to which the student agrees in taking this course. As the instructor, I reserve the right to alter this syllabus according to my discretion, though I will make every attempt to alert students of any changes made. For my part, I will strive to be fair and transparent in all matters regarding this course.

**Office Hours and Email Concerns:** Students are encouraged to meet with me during office hours to discuss any questions or concerns they may have, including readings, paper topics, etc. If you cannot meet with either Ms. Woo or Dr. Ritter during their office hours, please email them to set up an appointment that will work for you. I will also respond to email concerns, but be reasonable in your expectations of response time—I only check email during business hours on weekdays.

**Grading Standards**

The following standards will be applied to the evaluation of assignments. These standards are strict—I do not round grades for individual assignments or overall course grades.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93 and above</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90 to 92.99</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87 to 89.99</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83 to 86.99</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 to 82.99</td>
<td>B-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77 to 79.99</td>
<td>C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73 to 76.99</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 to 72.99</td>
<td>C-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67 to 69.99</td>
<td>D+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 to 66.99</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>0 to 59.99</td>
<td>F</td>
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A *Exceptional Performance*

Consistently outstanding work on all course-related tasks at a level that distinguishes the student from other members of the class. A comprehensive and incisive command of the issues, literature, and substantive information relevant to the course. A frequently demonstrated exceptional capacity for original, creative, critical and logical thinking. The ability to master and integrate large amounts of factual material and abstract theories. An outstanding ability to discuss effectively course subject matter using both written and oral communication skills.
A- Excellent Performance
Consistently strong work on all course-related tasks. A comprehensive command of the issues, literature, and substantive information relevant to the course. A clearly demonstrated capacity for original, creative, critical and logical thinking. Understands well and can integrate the relevant factual and theoretical material central to the course. A strong ability to discuss effectively course subject matter using both written and oral communication skills.

B+ Very Good Performance
Consistently above average work on all course-related tasks. A very good grasp of the issues, literature, and substantive information relevant to the course. A generally demonstrated capacity for original, creative, critical, and logical thinking. A very good command of factual and theoretical material, and some capacity to integrate the two. A solid ability to discuss effectively course subject matter using both written and oral communication skills.

B Good Performance
Good and generally consistent work on all course-related tasks. A general understanding of the issues, literature, and substantive information relevant to the course. Modest evidence of the capacity for original, creative, critical and logical thinking. A good understanding of factual and theoretical material, but limited evidence of the capacity to integrate the two. A basic ability to discuss effectively course subject matter using both written and oral communication skills.

B- Satisfactory Performance
Satisfactory work on course-related tasks. A reasonable understanding of the issues, literature, and substantive information relevant to the course. An infrequently demonstrated capacity for original, creative, critical and logical thinking. Understands at a basic level the facts and theories related to the course, but demonstrates weak integration skills. A limited or inconsistent ability to discuss effectively course subject matter using both written and oral communication skills.

C+/C/C- Adequate Performance
Adequate performance on course-related tasks. An understanding of the basic elements of the issues, literature, and substantive information relevant to the course. A rarely demonstrated capacity for original, creative, critical and logical thinking. An inability to go beyond a recitation of basic factual material related to the class. Demonstrated weaknesses in the ability to discuss effectively course subject matter using both written and oral communication skills.

D/D+ Minimal Passing Performance
Barely acceptable work on course-related tasks. A generally superficial and often inconsistent familiarity with the issues, literature, and substantive information relevant to the course. A failure to demonstrate the capacity for original, creative, critical and logical thinking related to course content. An uneven understanding of basic factual material related to the course; no evidence of fact/theory integration. Demonstrates significant gaps in the ability to discuss effectively course subject matter using both written and oral communication skills.
F Unacceptable Performance
Fails to meet minimum course expectations. Unable to understand even the most basic elements of the issues, literature, and substantive information relevant to the course. Demonstrates an inability to engage in coherent written or oral discussion of course material. Does not satisfy specific course expectations with respect to attendance, deadlines, etc.

Schedule of Required Readings and Assignments

Students are expected to complete the readings prior to the course meeting on the listed date. All readings are available electronically on the CatCourses Page, and material from all readings will be included in the exams. There are no required texts for the course, but clickers are required.

The most up-to-date syllabus will always be found on the CatCourses site.

Week 1
Tuesday, January 19: Course Overview
Read and understand the syllabus. Register your clicker to this course. Familiarize yourself with the CatCourses site.

Thursday, January 21: The Science in Political Science
No reading.

Week 2
Tuesday, January 26: Defining Institutions

Thursday, January 28: No Class
Dr. Ritter travels to Rice University to present her research.

Week 3
Tuesday, February 2: Why International Institutions?

Thursday, February 4: Creating IOs
Assignment Due: Evaluating Evidence.
Week 4

Monday, February 8: Last Day to Drop/Add the Course

Tuesday, February 9: Creating IOs - Collective Bargaining


Thursday, February 11: Designing IOs - Managing Substantive Operations


Week 5

Tuesday, February 16: Designing IOs - Bargaining Problems and Solutions


Thursday, February 18: Designing IOs - Bargaining Problems and Solutions


Week 6

Tuesday, February 23: Designing IOs - Agenda Setting

Reading: Conrad, Courtenay and Nathan Monroe. NSF Grant Proposal. Guest lecture by Professors Courtenay Conrad and Nate Monroe.

Thursday, February 25: Designing IOs - Delegation and Agency


Week 7

Tuesday, March 1: The Role of Structure - Allocating Power


Thursday, March 3: The Role of Structure - The Effects of Power

Week 8

TUESDAY, MARCH 8: THE ROLE OF STRUCTURE - NETWORK STRUCTURE

THURSDAY, MARCH 10: THE ROLE OF STRUCTURE - NETWORKS AND OUTCOMES
Assignment Due: Reading Response.

Week 9

TUESDAY, MARCH 15: MIDTERM EXAM
Bring an exam booklet, a scantron form, and a pencil.

THURSDAY, MARCH 17: NO CLASS
Dr. Ritter travels to the International Studies Association conference to present her research.

Spring Break - March 21 - 25

Week 10

TUESDAY, MARCH 29: WHY JOIN? THE CASE OF SOFT LAW

THURSDAY, MARCH 31: WHY JOIN? THE CASE OF HARD LAW

Week 11

TUESDAY, APRIL 5: COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT - INTRODUCTION

THURSDAY, APRIL 7: NO CLASS
Dr. Ritter travels to the Midwest Political Science Association conference to present her research.

Week 12

TUESDAY, APRIL 12: COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT - SELF-SUSTAINING COMPLIANCE

THURSDAY, APRIL 14: COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT - PUNISHING DEFECTION

**Week 13**

**Tuesday, April 19: Compliance and Enforcement - The WTO**


**Thursday, April 21: No Class**

Dr. Ritter travels to the University of California, San Diego, to present her research.

**Week 14**

**Tuesday, April 26: Compliance and Enforcement - Collective Action Problems**


**Thursday, April 28: Compliance and Enforcement - Domestic Constituencies**


*Assignment Due:* Policy Recommendation Assignment.

**Week 15**

**Thursday, May 3: Adaptation**


**Thursday, May 5: Institutional Death & Course Conclusion**

*No Reading*

**Tuesday, May 10: Final Assignment Due Online via CatCourses by 11:59 PM**

*Project Due:* Life Cycle of an Institution. Submit your final document through the assignment tab on UCM CROPS.