

POLITICS & CULTURE: THE UNITED NATIONS

Political Science 111 | Fall 2022 | 3 cr. | [Quest I](#)

BASIC COURSE INFORMATION

Course Time: MWF, 12:40-1:40pm

Course Location: Sage 4221

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Dr. Tracy H. Slagter (Ph.D., University of Iowa)

Office Location: Sage Hall 4626

Office Hours: M, 2:00-3:00pm, Th 10:00am-12:00pm

Email: slagtert@uwosh.edu (best way to reach me!)

PEER MENTOR INFORMATION

Ms. Emma Sullivan (B.A., 2025)

Office Location: Sage 3434 (Model UN Library)

Office Hours: M & F, 2:00-3:00pm

Email: sullie64@uwosh.edu

DEPARTMENT MAIN OFFICE

Contact: Angelee Hammond

Office Location: Sage Hall 4631

Office Phone: (920) 424-3456

Office Hours: M-F 7:30am-3:00pm

Email: hammond@uwosh.edu

Bulletin Description: This Quest I Global Citizenship course focuses on a current global issue or set of issues. Students will gain an ability to analyze, understand, evaluate, and appreciate the complex dynamics that shape our collective capacity to address global challenges in a complex and interconnected world. The course provides an introduction to governance in societies with different cultural perspectives and examines different vantage points of political actors tasked with governing (global, transnational, national, and local) in societies outside the United States.

Fall 2022 Description: The United Nations (UN) is the world's premier international organization: 193 countries (of less than 200 total) belong to the UN and use it to help resolve global problems. We will discuss why the UN exists and how it was founded, how it is organized, how it works (or does not), and look at its role in mitigating global problems. Is the UN still necessary? Should it have more power, or less? Can it be reformed? Throughout the semester, we will view the UN while acting as the UN ourselves in a semester-long simulation that will, at times, work in coordination with our award-winning UW Oshkosh Model United Nations (MUN) team.

OUR CLASS PROCEDURE

This class is probably not what you are expecting. We will conduct most class periods as UN committee sessions, with formal procedures that we will build and learn as we go. You will make mistakes; I will correct you. It's OK if you mess up; we're here to learn, not to be perfect. Here are a few things to know on Day 1:

- I will refer to you as "*delegate*" or "*delegates*." You should refer to each other the same way. It is also common to use "*Delegate from Canada*" or "*Canadian delegate*." At times, I may refer to you as simply your country name.
- Whenever you speak, you must stand in your place.
- You must refer to yourself using your country name at all times: "*Canada has a question about the paper assignment...*"
- Whenever you have a question or comment, you should indicate it by raising your blue placard and wait until you are recognized.

ISSUES ON OUR COURSE AGENDA

The UN is always engaged in global affairs, often on issues you may not know exist. These issues are broadly divided into political issues, economic issues, and social issues, though many global topics are a complex mix of all three. This semester, we will focus on these broad issue areas (the UN General Assembly Committee discussing these issues is in parentheses):

- **Topic I:** Reducing the threat of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs; General Assembly First Committee)
- **Topic II:** Rights of indigenous peoples (General Assembly Third Committee)
- **Topic III:** Disaster risk reduction (General Assembly Second Committee)

You will probably look at these issues and think, "But I don't know anything about *any* of that stuff!" Never fear. You will become experts on these issues before the semester is over.

COUNTRIES

We will be simulating the UN's General Assembly all semester long. Each student will represent a particular country on this list. No country is "better" than the others; they are all important. Each of them only has a single vote in the General Assembly, no matter how big or powerful they are. You will find blue placards in alphabetical order on the tables in our classroom every time we meet. The countries are as follows:

Afghanistan
Argentina
Belgium
Brazil
China
Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)
Egypt
Ethiopia
France
Germany
Ghana
Honduras
India
Kenya
Malaysia
Mauritius
Mexico
Nigeria
Norway
Pakistan
Russia
Senegal
Singapore
South Africa
United Arab Emirates (UAE)

REQUIRED MATERIALS

The following book is available at University Books & More or via online retailers:

Fasulo, Linda. 2021. *An Insider's Guide to the UN*, 4e. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Other readings will be made available to you on Canvas. Please let me know immediately if you have trouble finding them.

You should bring your assigned readings to each class meeting. I expect that you will have completed the reading before we discuss it in class. Note that I do not lecture out of the book; lectures are designed to *supplement* what you have read.

ABOUT QUEST I & THE USP

Why are you taking this class? **This is a Quest I course, a special type of class designed only for first-year students at UW Oshkosh.** If you look around the room, you'll notice that all of your classmates are first-year students like you. This is on purpose: first-year students need a reliable place to ask questions and make mistakes. This is that place.

Quest I is part of the **University Studies Program (USP)**, which is UW Oshkosh's way of welcoming you and preparing you for advanced study in your

eventual major. This semester you'll take Quest I, next semester you'll take Quest II, and next year you'll take Quest III. You'll top it all off with an advanced writing course called Connect.

OUR SIGNATURE QUESTION

Each Quest course addresses a Signature Question related to Intercultural Knowledge, Civic Learning, or Sustainability. These are significant areas of research and conversation at UW Oshkosh and across the globe. Our class is about **intercultural knowledge and competence**: *How do people understand and bridge cultural differences?* You will find, however, that we talk a lot of about civic knowledge and sustainability in this class as well.

Being culturally knowledgeable and competent means understanding your own culture as well as cultures beyond your own; recognizing the cultural values and history, language, traditions, arts, and social institutions of groups of people; having the ability to negotiate and bridge cultural differences in ways that allow for broader perspectives to emerge; and possessing the skill to investigate a wide range of world views, beliefs, practices, and values.

GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

This course also satisfies your USP Global Citizenship requirement. Global Citizenship is the knowledge of nations, cultures, or societies beyond the U.S.; the recognition of how interaction, interdependence, and inequity among diverse geographical, social, political, or economic systems have shaped historical and contemporary global challenges and opportunities; and the skills to engage with the responsibilities of informed citizenship in a complex, interdependent, and changing world.

Our exploration of politics and culture through a global perspective are part of what it means to be liberally educated. A liberally educated person is prepared to deal with complexity, diversity, and change. Such individuals possess broad knowledge of the wider world (e.g. science, culture, and society) as well as in-depth knowledge of a specific area of interest.

ABOUT LIBERAL EDUCATION

Some of you came to college knowing what you want to do. Most of you have no idea, and even those who do will likely change their minds. The first year of college is an exploration of the world of knowledge that is out there. At UW Oshkosh, we're giving you a foundation in **liberal education** (sometimes also called "general education"), which means that we're

going to expose you to a LOT of different disciplines and ways of knowing in your first and second years. This is to help you make informed decisions about your future, and also to equip you with the knowledge and skills you'll need to be a 21st century citizen. A foundation in liberal education is the whole point of the University Studies Program.

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance: This is a Quest I course, and we cover a lot of material each session. *I expect you to be in class every day.* In many cases, work we do in class cannot be made up. If you absolutely must be absent, please inform me ahead of time. Missed exams or assignments require documentation of your absence.

Late Work: It's always better to turn work in late than to not turn it in at all. Late work will receive a half letter-grade deduction per day. Plan ahead and don't let this happen to you! Note again that work done in class *cannot* be made up or turned in later if you miss it. But most of all, *communicate* with me if you're having trouble meeting deadlines. Life happens—I get it, and I want to help.

Email: I will send all course communications to your University email account (@uwosh.edu). Be sure you check it regularly or have it forwarded to the email address you use the most. All of your professors expect you to check your University email account several times per day. (We'll talk about email management in the first week of class—it's crucial to success in college and beyond. Trust me.)

Cell Phones: Please be courteous and set your phone to silent during class. It is disruptive to all of us if it rings during lecture or discussion. It is also unprofessional. *I ask that all phones be kept in your bag, out of sight, during class time.* I will do the same.

Laptops/Tablets: It is my strong preference that you take notes by hand in class, as this is proven to be beneficial to your learning (and I can share studies with you to back that point up!). Laptops and tablets often prove distracting not only to you, but to those around you as well. You'll note that there are several days where I *want* you to have a laptop—bring them then, but bring a notebook and pen every day, too.

Other Distractions: Please refrain from playing on your phone, listening to music, or frantically completing your reading or assignments for other classes while you're in mine. It's disrespectful to me and to your classmates, and I will call you out on it. I unapologetically expect your full attention.

Changes: As I get to know you as a group and as individuals, I may decide to make some slight modifications to this syllabus. If I do, I will let you know in advance via email and will post the change on our course Canvas site.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After successfully completing this course, students should be able to:

- *Understand* the actions and limitations of global actors like the United Nations in solving the world's most pressing problems;
- *Explain* the different sides of multiple arguments related to the issue areas under investigation in this course;
- *Articulate* their position from a particular perspective (e.g., the country they represent this semester) and understand why and how that position matters relative to others;
- *Recognize* the construction of identity as shaped by cultural heritage and / or patterns of power or privilege;
- *Synthesize* information and arguments from a wide variety of sources;
- *Find and use* the resources available to them at UW Oshkosh; and
- *Recognize* an increase in confidence in their ability to read critically, write succinctly, and speak professionally.

GRADING

The following grading scale will apply to all assignments in this course:

A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	74-76
C-	70-73
D+	67-69
D	65-66
F	0-64

Please feel free to see me at any time if you have questions about your grade. Your grade will be constantly updated in Canvas throughout the semester.

ASSIGNMENTS

Participation (0%): Yep, you read that right: participation is important, but it's not worth any part

of your course grade. Like the real UN, we will take roll call every session—so there will be a record of your attendance. You cannot meaningfully do any of the other tasks associated with this course if you're not in class, so I expect you to come to class prepared with the readings and assignments completed to the best of your ability. If you need to miss class, please let me know as soon as you can. If you will miss an assignment or project deadline, I need *written documentation* of your absence (e.g., note from your doctor) in order to excuse the absence.

Country Profile (15%): This assignment requires you to get to know the country you're representing in some detail. This is the foundation for all further assignments, and if done well, will make all other assignments easier to complete.

Speech Framing Worksheet (10%; 5% each for Topics I and II): How do you organize a speech quickly and efficiently? This assignment will help you devise your own system to produce three short speeches during this semester.

Position Papers (30%; 5% for Topic I, 15% for Topic II, and 10% for Topic III): Every delegate will submit a position paper on each of the issues we work on this semester. Detailed instructions will be available on Canvas and we will talk about them in class.

General Assembly Simulation (25%): This is one of the major activities for the course and takes place outside of our normal class time. Please mark your calendars for **Wednesday, November 9, 6:00-9:00pm**. [Attendance is required.](#)

Final Caucusing and Resolution Drafting Session (20%): In the final week of the course, you'll put what you've learned to good use in a final caucusing and resolution drafting session.

EARLY ALERT NOTICES

After the first several weeks of class, you will receive a notice about your overall progress in this course and each of the courses you are taking in your first semester. This process is called "Early Alert," and it is designed to help you evaluate your study skills and your class attendance so that you know if you are on the right track. These Early Alert notices are not permanent and will not appear on your transcript.

RESOURCES

Your tuition dollars support these excellent campus resources, so it makes sense to use them. We will

talk about these resources this semester so you know where to find them.

Counseling Center:

<https://uwosh.edu/counseling/>

Need help working through some things? Don't be ashamed—get the help you need, *free* to students. Call (920) 424-2061. If you're worried about going alone, I'm happy to walk you to their offices in the Student Success Center.

Writing Center: <http://www.uwosh.edu/wcenter>

The Writing Center helps students of all ability levels improve their writing. The Writing Center is located in the Student Success Center, Suite 102; call them at 424-1152.

Center for Academic Resources:

<http://www.uwosh.edu/car> CAR provides free tutoring for students in most undergraduate classes on campus. CAR is located in the Student Success Center, Suite 102; call them at 424-2290.

Reading Study Center:

<http://www.uwosh.edu/readingstudycenter> The center offers strategies for improved textbook study, time management, note-taking, test preparation, and test-taking. For more information, visit them in Nursing Ed Room 201, or call 424-1031.

Polk Library:

<http://www.uwosh.edu/library>

Our library is staffed with helpful professionals who are experts at helping you find what you need. This isn't your high school library! You can even set up a research advisory session with a librarian for more help: <https://www.uwosh.edu/library/services/for/ms/research-assistance> Polk Library is located behind Albee Hall.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

A college education is intended to develop your skills, knowledge, and confidence. Graded assignments are designed to work on these items. Thus, to gain the skills, knowledge, and confidence of a college-educated person all graded work is to be your own. When you are directed to work alone, an assignment or test must be done by you, its primary ideas are to be your own, and any outside materials should be dealt with properly (quoted when using someone's words, and cited when quoting or referencing them in any other way). When your instructor directs you to work in teams, the work is to be done by the team. More information can be found here:

<https://uwosh.edu/politicalscience/wp-content/uploads/sites/14/2020/08/Academic-Honesty.pdf>

GRIEVANCES

The Department of Political Science is committed to offering you a high-quality classroom or online experience, and we take your feedback very seriously. If you have concerns about anything related to this course, assignments, or teaching method, you are encouraged to first speak with your instructor directly. If you are not comfortable speaking with the instructor, you are invited to speak with the Chair of the Department of Political Science, Dr. James Krueger. He can be reached at kruegerj@uwosh.edu. Should he be unable to resolve your concerns, he will guide you to appropriate resources within the College of Letters and Science.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you have or think you may have a learning difference or a disability—a mental health, medical, or physical impairment—that would limit your access to learning or demonstrating your

knowledge in this course, please contact the Dean of Students Office. If you already have an accommodation, please let me know in the first week of class. Note that this class *may* be recorded for accommodation purposes.

STUDENT RIGHT TO KNOW ACT (1990)

Students are advised to see the following URL for disclosures about essential consumer protection items required by the Student Right to Know Act of 1990: <https://uwosh.edu/financialaid/consumer-information/>

POLITICAL SCIENCE MAJORS

If you are currently a Political Science major or if you think you might be one of our majors in the future, it is important that you save your graded coursework from this class. Seniors in our department are required to take Political Science 401, a fall semester seminar in which students' progress through the major is surveyed and a professional digital presentation of their work is created. This portfolio can then be used to showcase your work to graduate/professional schools or employers.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS (MARK YOUR CALENDARS!)

*Reading assignments are meant to be completed on the day they appear on the syllabus. Thus, if you see a reading on this list for September 12, for example, you should have it done **before class** on September 12.*

WEEK ONE

September 7

Introductions, bringing the United Nations into our classroom

READ: this syllabus, and bring questions to class

DO: 15-second introductory speeches (instructions provided in class)

September 9

International organizations and the United Nations

READ: Fasulo, Chapter 1 ("What is the UN?")

PLAN: Country Profile Assignment explained and released

WEEK TWO

September 12

How did we get the United Nations?

READ: Fasulo, Chapter 2 ("Founding the UN")

September 14

VIPs in the UN

READ: Fasulo, Chapters 3 and 4 ("Secretary-General..." and "American Ambassador")

September 16

Organs of the UN: The Security Council

READ: Fasulo, Chapter 5 ("The Security Council")

PRACTICE: Read a Security Council resolution (in class)

WEEK THREE

September 19

Organs of the UN: The General Assembly

READ: Fasulo, Chapter 6 ("The General Assembly")

PRACTICE: Read a General Assembly resolution (in class)

- September 21 Committees in the General Assembly
READ: NMUN Background Guide committee description excerpts
- September 23 What is diplomacy? Can anyone do it?
READ: Fasulo, Chapter 7 (“Rubbing Elbows and Egos...”)
PRACTICE: How can we problem-solve for mutual benefit?
- WEEK FOUR**
- September 26 **NO CLASS** | Dr. Slagter out of town
👉 **Country Profile DUE to Canvas by 11:59pm tonight!**
- September 28 **Undergraduate Advising Classroom Visit | Mr. Frank Holmes**
Attendance REQUIRED. We’ll take a break from the UN today to talk about everything related to advising and your academic career at UW Oshkosh. An adviser from our Advising Center (the UARC) will be in our class to give a short presentation and answer your questions. Emma will do the roll call today, as Dr. Slagter will still be out of town.
- September 30 First Committee Business: Bombs and Terrorists
READ: Fasulo, Chapter 9 (“International Terrorism and WMDs”)
- WEEK FIVE**
- October 3 First Committee Business: Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs)
READ: NMUN Background Guide (GA1, Topic I, 2022; excerpt on Canvas)
- October 5 What’s Your Position?
READ: NMUN Position Paper Guide (2022, excerpt on Canvas)
PLAN: Position Paper Worksheet explained and released (we will do a “mini” version of this assignment, with a full version to follow on another topic)
- October 7 Position Paper Workshop I (IEDs)
PREPARE: bring your laptops to class; we will be working on research to figure out what your country’s position on GA1, Topic I might be, using the Position Paper Worksheet.
- WEEK SIX**
- October 10 Position Paper Workshop II (IEDs)
👉 **Position Paper on IEDs DUE today by class time.** Peer review and critiques in class.
- October 12 Speaking Like a Delegate
READ: “Preparing an Opening Speech” document
DO: Opening Speeches on Easy Topics (30 seconds or less; speeches written in class)
- October 14 Speech-writing Workshop
PLAN: Have your position paper handy so that you can consult it as you complete the Speech-writing worksheet!
👉 **DO: Speech-writing worksheet (distributed in-class, due by the end of class)**
- WEEK SEVEN**
- October 17 Opening Speeches and Critiques
DO: Every delegate gives an opening speech for their country on IEDs (60 seconds)
- October 19 **NO CLASS** | Attend **Earth Charter Keynote** later today!
Dr. Andrea Dutton, UW-Madison: “The View From Here: A Geologist’s Perspective on Living Through Climate Change.” Culver Family Welcome Center, 5:00-7:00pm. **Attendance REQUIRED.**

October 21 Third Committee Business: Human Rights
READ: Fasulo, Chapters 10 and 13 (“Human Rights and R2P” and “2030 Agenda...”)

WEEK EIGHT

October 24 Third Committee Business: Rights of Indigenous People
READ: MMUN Background Guide (GA3, Topic II, 2023, on Canvas)
United Nations Day! (Yes, there will be cupcakes.)

October 26 The Durban Declaration and Programme of Action
READ: A/RES/75/237 (on Canvas) and skim the Durban Declaration pages 47-59 to get a sense of the document (available at <https://www.un.org/en/fight-racism/background/durban-declaration-and-programme-of-action> -- click on the PDF at this link)

October 28 Position Paper Workshop Day I (Indigenous People and Durban Declaration)
PREPARE: bring your laptops to class; we will be working on research to figure out what your country’s position on the rights of indigenous people might be, again using the Position Paper Worksheet. It should be a little easier this time around because you’ve done it once before!

WEEK NINE

October 31 Can we Meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?
READ: Saxena, Anurag et al. “Striving for the SDGs: What Will It Take?” *Discover Sustainability* 2: 20 (2021). (Canvas)

November 2 Position Paper Workshop Day II (Indigenous People and Durban Declaration)
PREPARE: bring your laptops to class; we will continue working on position papers and begin talking through how they will fit into the GA simulation on 11/9/2022.

November 4 Opening Speech Workshop
PREPARE: Using your position paper as a guide, start work on your Opening Speech for 11/9. Remember use the Speech-Writing Worksheet as a guide to framing your speech!

WEEK TEN

November 7 Getting Ready for the General Assembly
PREPARE: We will talk (along with Emma!) in detail about what to expect Wednesday night and how you can best be ready for it.
👑 Position Papers (Indigenous Peoples) DUE to Canvas by 11:59pm tonight.

November 9 **👑 General Assembly Simulation in Sage 1214, 6:00pm-9:00pm**
👑 Opening Speeches evaluated in the General Assembly; be ready!
ATTENDANCE MANDATORY—no exceptions!

November 11 General Assembly Debrief: What Did We Learn?
Did you win an award? **MAYBE!** Come find out and eat pizza together.

WEEK ELEVEN

November 14 The UN as Problem-Solver: Collective Action Problems
READ: Hindmoor, Andrew and Brad Taylor. “Mancur Olson and the Logic of Collective Action.” Chapter 6 in *Rational Choice*, 2e. (New York: Red Globe Press, 2015). (Canvas)

November 16 The UN as Problem-Solver: Peacekeeping
READ: Fasulo, Chapter 8 (“Peace Operations”)

November 18 The UN as Problem-Solver: Climate Change
READ: Fasulo, Chapter 15 (“Climate Change”)

THANKSGIVING WEEK

November 21 Should the UN be reformed? Who pays for it?
READ: Fasulo, Chapters 17 and 18 (“Three Pillars...” and “Paying for It...”)

November 23 **Thanksgiving Break** | NO CLASS | Tell your Grandma about the UN!

November 25 **Thanksgiving Break** | NO CLASS | Give an opening speech at dinner to anyone who’ll listen!

WEEK TWELVE

November 28 Second Committee Business: Financing and Development
READ: NMUN Background Guide (GA2, 2020) (Canvas)

November 30 Disaster Risk Reduction
READ: NMUN Background Guide (GA2, Topic III, 2020) (Canvas)

December 2 Position Paper Workshop I
PREPARE: bring your laptops to class; we will be working on research to figure out what your country’s position on disaster risk reduction might be, again using the Position Paper Worksheet. You’re old pros at this by now!

WEEK THIRTEEN

December 5 Working with the Resolution Template
PREPARE: View the NMUN Working Paper Template on Canvas. We’ll talk about how to use it in class today.

December 7 The Sendai Framework and Position Paper Workshop II
READ: The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (<https://www.undrr.org/implementing-sendai-framework/what-sendai-framework> and then click on the PDF) We will review this in class and then have time to talk about it and figure out how to use it in your position papers.

December 9 Opening Speeches
DO: Every delegate gives an opening speech on disaster risk reduction (60 seconds).

WEEK FOURTEEN

December 12 Caucusing and Resolution Drafting I
PREPARE: Have your position paper handy and get ready to do some quick work with your classmates to write a resolution together. How many countries will agree with you? Can you negotiate? Can you make compromises?
👉 **Position Papers DUE to Canvas by class time today.**

December 14 Caucusing and Resolution Drafting II

December 16 Final Caucusing and Voting
👉 **Final resolutions (whether they passed or not) due on Canvas after class today (submit by 2:30pm).** Be sure all countries who support the resolution have their country name on the resolution, and that it is in the proper format (use the template provided).