

POLITICS & CULTURE: THE UNITED NATIONS

Political Science 111 | Fall 2023 | 3 cr. | [Quest I](#)

BASIC COURSE INFORMATION

Course Time: MWF, 10:20-11:20am

Course Location: Sage 4215

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

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

Office Location: Sage Hall 4626

Office Hours: TTh, 10:00-11:30am

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

PEER MENTOR INFORMATION

Ms. Cali DiVito (UW Oshkosh junior)

Email: divitc91@uwosh.edu

DEPARTMENT MAIN OFFICE

Contact: Angelee Hammond

Office Location: Sage Hall 4630

Office Phone: (920) 424-3456

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 2023 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? 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.

TEXTBOOK

The following book is available to you at University Books and More or via online retailers:

Moore, John Allphin and Jerry Pubantz. 2023. *The New United Nations: International Organization in the 21st Century*. New York: Routledge.

Other readings will be available to you on our course Canvas page. Bring readings with you to class on the day we are discussing them.

OUR CLASS PROCEDURE

This class is probably not what you are expecting. We will conduct many class periods as UN committee sessions, with formal procedures that we will build and learn as we go. You will make mistakes and it will feel strange at first! 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 often 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 when we're in formal session, you must stand in your place.
- When we're in formal session, 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 (i.e., officially called upon to speak).

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 1:** The Impact of Climate Change on Global Food Security
- **Topic 2:** Toward a Nuclear Weapon-Free World: Accelerating Disarmament and Non-Proliferation

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.

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.

ABOUT YOUR PEER MENTOR

Most Quest I courses have a Peer Mentor, an older student who has been through the Quest sequence and can help you navigate your first year on campus. Your Peer Mentor is Ms. **Cali DiVito**, who actually took this class with me when she was a first-year student two years ago! You'll get to know Cali better as the semester goes on; she will be in our class at least once a week (and she's wonderful).

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 (5%): 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.

Also, note that *every student will be required to meet with me* either individually or in small groups of 2-3 students. We will discuss this in class.

Discussion Prompts (15%): At the end of each chapter in our textbook there are discussion questions. In the syllabus, I ask you to answer one of these questions on Canvas in a few short sentences (following the word "DISCUSS"). More details on this will follow in class.

Country Profile (10%): This assignment requires you to get to know the country you're representing. This is the foundation for all further assignments, and if done well, will make many of the other assignments easier to complete. It is not a difficult assignment, but you will learn a lot quickly by doing it well.

Examinations (30%, or 15% each): There will be two multiple choice/short answer exams on the UN system and how it functions in different contexts. These exams will be open note (but not open book), so keep this in mind as you're reading and taking notes for this course.

Outcomes for Topic 1 and GA Simulation: 20%
Every delegate will produce a folder that contains a position paper, a speech, and a draft resolution on Topic 1. You will have ample time to workshop these in class and ask questions. This work will be in preparation for one of the major activities for the course that takes place outside of our normal class time. Please mark your calendars for **Thursday, October 26, 2023, 5:00-9:00pm. Attendance is required.**

Outcomes for Topic 2 and Resolution Drafting Session (20%): As with Topic 1, each delegate will submit a folder that contains a position paper, a speech outline, a resolution, and a negotiation strategy for the final days of class. In the final week of the course, you'll put what you've learned to good use in a group 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/forms/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 typically invited to speak with the Chair of the Department of Political Science. However, since I am both the instructor and the Chair, I invite you to speak with our Assistant Chair, Dr. David Siemers (siemers@uwosh.edu). He

will listen to you, suggest remedies, and/or and direct you to the appropriate resources.

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 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 13, for example, you should have it done **before class** on September 13.*

WEEK ONE

September 6

What is this class about?

READ: this syllabus!

DO: 15-second introductory speeches (instructions provided in class), geography organization activity/seating arrangement w/placards

September 8

International organizations and the United Nations

READ: Moore & Pubantz, Introduction (pages 1-26); bring your textbook to class (today and every class session)

DO (In-Class): Active reading; be sure to bring your textbook to class! How do we read academic texts in a way that helps us to understand and remember what we've read? How should you take notes in college?

WEEK TWO

September 11

International organizations and the United Nations, II

READ: Review Moore & Pubantz, Introduction (from last week)

DISCUSS & DO: Look at the discussion questions on the bottom of page 24. Pick one to discuss in class, and jot down any other questions you have. This is a key chapter, so it's important you understand the basics!

September 13

Thinking Theoretically: Different "Lenses"

READ: Moore and Pubantz, Chapter 1 (pages 27-39)

DISCUSS: Look at the third discussion question on page 38. How might you answer it? Have you ever heard of these theoretical positions before? If so, when? Why do you think these theories are important?

September 15

Origins of the UN

READ: Moore and Pubantz, Chapter 2 (read only pages 40-63)

DO (In-Class): Country Profile Assignment introduced today; due September 22!

WEEK THREE

September 18

Origins of the UN

READ: Moore and Pubantz, Chapter 2 (read pages 63-84)

DISCUSS: How would you respond to the third discussion question on page 82?

September 20

What is the UN Charter?

READ: Moore and Pubantz, Chapter 3 (read only pages 85-105)

DISCUSS: The full UN Charter is reproduced at the end of this book so you can see what it really looks like. Take a look: it starts on page 325. According to your textbook, what are the most important articles of the UN Charter and why?

September 22

The Principal Organs of the United Nations

READ: Moore and Pubantz, Chapter 4 (read only pages 127-150)

DO: UN member state configurations; **Country Profile Assignment DUE to Canvas by classtime!**

WEEK FOUR

September 25

The Specialized Agencies of the United Nations

READ: Moore and Pubantz, Chapter 4 (read pages 150-173)

DISCUSS: How would you answer the first discussion question posed on page 171?

September 27

Introduction to Human Rights

READ: Moore and Pubantz, Chapter 7 (read pages 263-281 only)

DISCUSS: How would you respond to the first discussion question on page 281?

September 29

Catch-up or Review Day

Come to class with questions; exam is on Monday!

WEEK FIVE

October 2

Examination I

October 4

Undergraduate Advising Classroom Visit

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.

October 6

Introducing Global Environmental Policy

READ: Moore and Pubantz, Chapter 8 (read pages 284-309 only)

DISCUSS: How are the issues in this chapter related to the human rights issues we learned about in Chapter 7?

WEEK SIX

October 9

Simulating the United Nations

READ: NMUN Background Guide on "Climate Change and Global Food Security" from NMUN DC 2019 (on Canvas)

PREPARE: Highlight terms you do not know or understand!

October 11

Position Paper Workshop 1

No reading today. Bring your laptops to class.

DO: With your colleagues, figure out what your country's position on issues in the "Climate Change and Global Food Security" background guide might be!

October 13 Position Paper Workshop 2
No reading today. Bring your laptops to class.
DO: With your colleagues, continue to work on your position papers (due at class time on 10/16)

WEEK SEVEN

October 16 Speech Workshop 1 (Speaking Like a Delegate)
No reading today. Position Papers are DUE by class time!
DO: Work on draft speeches following the outline presented in class! Speeches will be delivered on 10/20.

October 18 Resolution Workshop 1 (How the General Assembly Gets Stuff Done)
READ: Sample General Assembly Resolution (on Canvas)
DO: Practice resolution writing on everyday topics

October 19 **Special Event: Former Ambassador to Ukraine Marie Yovanovitch**
Attendance REQUIRED: Reeve Ballroom, 6:00-8:00pm

October 20 Speech Workshop 2 (Opening Speeches)
DO: Everyone gives a **one-minute opening speech** in class today (60 seconds)!
Constructive criticism to follow.
SUBMIT: Outlines of speeches DUE to Canvas by class time today (before you give your speech)

WEEK EIGHT

October 23 Resolution Workshop 2
Bring your laptops and position papers to class.
DO: Work on resolutions (clause pairs) on the simulation topic. What other countries might support your resolution? Which countries would oppose it?

October 25 Getting Ready for the General Assembly Simulation
PREPARE: We will talk in detail about what to expect Thursday night and how you can be ready for it (what to wear, when to eat, what to bring, what to say, etc.)
SUBMIT: Resolutions (3 clause-pairs) DUE to Canvas by 11:59pm tonight!

October 26 **UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY SIMULATION**
Attendance REQUIRED: Sage Hall 1216, 5:00-9:00pm
Dress appropriately!

October 27 Simulation Debrief
READ: No readings for today. **ATTENDANCE REQUIRED.**
DO: Simulation Reflections DUE to Canvas by class time!

WEEK NINE

October 30 Maintaining International Peace and Security
READ: Moore and Pubantz, Chapter 5 (read pages 174-189)

November 1 Collective Security and NATO
READ: "Two Dresden Nights." Chapter 1 in M.E. Sarotte, *Not One Inch: America, Russia, and the Making of the Post-Cold War Stalemate*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2021. (On Canvas)
DISCUSS: How is the UN's mission to maintain international peace and security different from NATO's mission?

November 3 Arms Control and the UN
READ: Moore and Pubantz, Chapter 5 (read pages 189-197)

WEEK TEN

November 6 Challenges to Collective Security
READ: Moore and Pubantz, Chapter 5 (read pages 197-215)

November 8 Peacekeeping
READ: Moore and Pubantz, Chapter 6 (read pages 219-233)
DISCUSS: How has peacekeeping changed since the Cold War? Should the UN be involved in places that are clearly still at war?

November 10 Peacebuilding
READ: Moore and Pubantz, Chapter 6 (read pages 233-249)
DISCUSS: How is peacekeeping different from peacebuilding? Is the UN successful at accomplishing either?

WEEK ELEVEN

November 13 Review for Examination II
Bring your questions to class!

November 15 **Examination II**

November 17 NO CLASS
Dr. Slagter with the MUN Team in Germany

THANKSGIVING WEEK

November 20 NO CLASS
Dr. Slagter with the MUN Team in Germany

November 22 **Thanksgiving Break** | NO CLASS | Tell your Grandma about the UN!

November 24 **Thanksgiving Break** | NO CLASS | Give an opening speech at dinner to anyone who'll listen!

WEEK TWELVE

November 27 NO CLASS
Dr. Slagter with the MUN Team in Germany

November 29 Introducing Topic 2: Nuclear Weapons and Disarmament
READ: NMUN Background Guide on "Towards a Nuclear Weapons-Free World" from NMUN DC 2019 (Canvas). Highlight words or concepts you do not know!
DISCUSS: What position might your country take on this issue? How do you know? Google your country's name and "disarmament" or "nuclear weapons." What did you find?

December 1 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 nuclear weapons and disarmament might be, again using the Position Paper Worksheet.

WEEK THIRTEEN

December 4 Working with the Resolution Template
DO: Start working on some clause-pairs for a potential resolution by the end of next week. We will review resolution drafting today and practice.
PREPARE: Opening speeches for Friday!

December 6 Final Position Paper/Speech/Resolution Workshop Day
DO: Bring your laptops and questions to class!
PREPARE: Opening speeches for Friday if you're not already finished...!

December 8 Opening Speeches
DO: Every delegate gives an opening speech on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament (90 seconds – these are longer than last time).

WEEK FOURTEEN

December 11 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?

December 13 Caucusing and Resolution Drafting II

December 15 Final Caucusing and Voting
👉 **Final Topic 2 folders containing position papers, resolutions you started (whether they passed or not) and speech outlines are due on Canvas *after class* today (submit by noon).** If you have a resolution that was used in class, 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).