

PCST/POSC 357: MODEL UNITED NATIONS

An introduction to the history, structure, and struggles of the United Nations,
and preparation for a Model United Nations Conference

Ronald E. Osborn
Peace Studies Program
Chapman University

Professor: Ronald E. Osborn
Contact: rosborn@chapman.edu
Credit Hours: 3

Location: Beckman Hall 204
Time: Weds, 7-9:50pm
Office Hours: By appointment

I. Course Description

This course serves two basic goals: 1) it will prepare you to participate as a delegate in a Model United Nations Conference; and 2) it will introduce you to the history, structure, and politics of the United Nations, with particular attention to questions of human rights, war, and peace. Our meetings will be conducted not as lectures but as discussion-based seminars. You should therefore come to every class prepared to actively participate based on your careful reading of all assigned texts. By the end of this course you will have gained knowledge of the UN system and global politics, as well as skills researching and writing carefully reasoned policy papers and delivering polished public speeches.

II. Grading Scale and Distribution

The grading scale for this course is as follows: A (93-100); A- (90-93); B+ (87-90); B (83-87); B- (80-83); C+ (77-80); C (73-77); C- (70-73); D (60-69); F (< 60). As a general benchmark, to receive a solid A in this course you should do **exemplary** work in all areas. To receive a grade of A- you should do **strong to excellent** work in all areas. To receive a grade in the B range you should do **strong** work in all areas. To receive a grade in the C range you should do **passable** work in all areas. You will be assessed based on the following distribution of points:

- 20% **Attendance (10%) and Class Participation (10%)**: You are expected to attend all classes on time and to actively contribute to discussions through thoughtful dialogue and at times respectful debate with others based upon your careful reading of all assigned texts. *Note: There are no excused absences apart from days of University recognized religious observance, and serious medical or family emergencies. Three late attendance marks will count as one absence. However, out of consideration for the vicissitudes of college life, you are permitted two missed classes without any questions over the course of the semester without any grade reduction. Each additional missed class will result in a letter grade reduction from your final overall grade for the course.*
- 20% **Model UN in New York**: In addition to your weekly class attendance, you are required to attend and actively participate as a delegate in the Model UN

Conference to be held in New York over Spring Break. I expect you to be an exemplary ambassador not only for our assigned country (Malaysia) but also for Chapman University. This includes attending ALL scheduled committees to which you have been assigned (on time!), demonstrating preparation for and engagement with the conference proceedings, and conducting yourself with sass but also class at all times.

- 20% **Committee Position Paper:** You will prepare and submit a succinct (approximately two page) position paper representing our assigned country's policies, interests, and recommendations for action on the topic of your particular Model UN committee. This paper is due in class on February 22.
- 20% **Reading Journal:** In the second half of our course, after our trip to New York, you will keep an ongoing typed reading journal in which you outline and summarize key ideas in two books. You will provide me with a hard copy of your reading journal at the start of class. Note: late journals will not be accepted.
- 10% **Public Speaking Exercise:** You will prepare a deliver to your classmates a well-prepared formal opening speech that incorporates elements of your committee position paper and follows Model UN conventions. You will hopefully have the opportunity to deliver this same speech at the actual Model UN!
- 10% **World Geography Quiz:** Before embarking on our odyssey to New York (on March 15), you will be tested on your ability to locate countries of the world on a map.

III. Students with Special Needs

Students requesting academic accommodations based on disability or special needs are should contact the Disability Services Office with the necessary documentation. The DSO will then notify me of what specific accommodations should be granted. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early as possible. More information about school policies and procedures for students who need academic accommodations can be found on the Chapman University website.

V. Academic Integrity

Your work on all assignments should be your own. You should not use the words or ideas of others without giving full credit to them using proper citation methods. If you have any questions about how and when to cite other peoples' work you should speak with me. Students found to be copying or plagiarizing the work of others on any assignment will receive an automatic failing grade for the course.

Academic integrity means more, however, than simply not cheating or plagiarizing. It also means fulfilling assignments with the care and rigor of a serious scholar, showing basic respect and courtesy to others both in and out of the classroom (including being in

class on time), and being honest and forthright in dialogue. While not all of these virtues are directly subject to grading, they will serve you well in this class and in your academic and professional lives in general.

VI. Electronic Devices and Recordings

This course depends upon your active participation as an attentive listener and generous conversation partner with others. Texting, Internet surfing, and social media are grave impediments to conversation and are not permitted in class at any time. I will not interrupt class to ask you to stop texting (or using the book of faces or other apps or sites). However, observed use of phones, computers, or any other electronic devices for anything other than note-taking at any time will be noted and result in an automatic absence mark for the day.

Consistent with state laws and university policies, you are not permitted to take photographs or make video or audio recordings of any part of our class without the prior knowledge and permission of all persons being recorded, including the instructor. Violations of this rule will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. (Let the Golden Rule be your guide: if you would prefer not to be secretly filmed and turned into an embarrassing meme or viral video or BuzzFeed article by your classmates or professors, do unto others as you would have them do unto you.) You should contact me immediately if you have a compelling need to use a recording device for note-taking purposes and also register with the Disability Services Office (see section III above).

VII. Required Texts

You should purchase your own copies of the following books:

Fasulo, Linda, *An Insiders Guide to the UN*, 3rd edition (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015).

Glendon, Mary Ann, *A World Made New: Eleanor Roosevelt and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (New York: Random House, 2001).

Weiss, Thomas, *What's Wrong With the United Nations and How to Fix It*, 3rd edition (Cambridge: Polity, 2016).

VIII. Recommended Readings

In addition to the required texts you are responsible to independently research the policies of our assigned country (Malaysia) in preparation for the Model UN. I will provide you with some documents that might be helpful to you, including recent reports from the International Crisis Group, Human Rights Watch, World Bank, CIA, and U.S. State Department. A wealth of UN-specific information can also be found on the following websites:

- Permanent Mission of Malaysia to the UN (<https://www.un.int/malaysia/>)
- UNDPI (<http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/unms/malaysia.shtml>)
- Malaysian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (<http://www.kln.gov.my/>)
- Malaysia Chairma of ASEAN (<http://asean2015.gov.my/>)

IX. Course Outline and Weekly Reading Assignments

To encourage active reading and discussion, you are required to bring all assigned texts to class, preferably copiously marked. Readings marked with a star (*) will be made available to you as PDF documents. Note: I might add readings or make other adjustments to this outline as our course progresses.

Wk.1 (Feb.1): Introduction and Preliminary Committee Assignments

Wk.2 (Feb.8): Fasulo, *An Insiders Guide to the UN*, pp.1-55;
*NMUN Delegate Preparation Guide, pp.1-28.

Wk.3 (Feb.15): Fasulo, *An Insiders Guide to the UN*, pp.55-111;
*NMUN Delegate Preparation Guide, pp.28-54.

Wk.4 (Feb.22): *****FIRST DRAFT OF POSITION PAPERS DUE*****
Fasulo, *An Insiders Guide to the UN*, pp.111-153;
*NMUN Position Paper Guide, pp.1-18.

Wk.5 (Mar.1): Fasulo, *An Insiders Guide to the UN*, pp.153-208;
*NMUN Rules and Overview, pp.1-30.

Wk.6 (Mar.8): *****PUBLIC SPEAKING EXCERCISE*****
Fasulo, *An Insiders Guide to the UN*, pp.208-259;
*MUN Public Speaking, pp.1-4.

Wk.7 (Mar.15): *****WORLD GEOGRAPHY QUIZ*****
Final preparations for MUN

*****SPRING BREAK/MODEL UN IN NEW YORK: Mon.-Sat., March 20–25*****

Wk.9 (Mar.29): Thomas Weiss, *What's Wrong With the UN and How to Fix It*, pp.1-77;
*UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 (Israel/Palestine)

Wk.10 (Apr.5): Ibid., pp.77-135;
*UN Security Council Resolution 687 and 1441 (Gulf War and Iraq War)

Wk.11 (Apr.12): Ibid., pp.135-239;
*UN Security Council Resolution 912 and 1706 (Rwanda and Darfur)

Wk.12 (Apr.19): Mary Ann Glendon, *A World Made New*, pp.1-121;

*UN Security Council Resolution 1244 and 2332 (Kosovo and Syria)

Wk.13 (Apr.26): Ibid., pp.1-78;

*International Crisis Group Report (TBA)

Wk.14 (May.3): Ibid., pp.78-171;

*International Crisis Group Report (TBA)

Wk.15 (May.10): Ibid., pp.171-241;

*International Crisis Group Report (TBA)