

MEREDITH COLLEGE
Politics 370: Topics in Model United Nations
Autumn 2009

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Course Description and Goals:

This course will introduce students to the origins, function, structure and issues facing the contemporary United Nations and prepare a student delegation to participate in a Model United Nations conference. Participation in the conference is a requirement for the course.

Educational Outcomes:

By semester-end, students will possess the abilities to

- 1) know basic theoretical frameworks within the field of political science;
- 2) explain scientific discovery and process, and the ability to explain the primary research methods of the field;
- 3) connect primary supporting research with a particular theoretical position in the field;
- 4) apply theoretically-based explanations and solutions to individual behavior or societal phenomena;
- 5) solve problems by analyzing data, thinking critically, and selecting optimal results.
- 6) develop and demonstrate oral communication skills conveying their knowledge of the United Nations in a systematic and formal manner, to include:
 - a) employing current research tools and strategies;
 - b) write and organize thoughts appropriate for the context;
 - c) speaking clearly, cogently, and aptly both individually and as part of a group;
 - d) selecting rhetorical strategies appropriate for her audience;
 - e) listening actively for denotative and connotative meaning.

The underlying motivation for the course content and these objectives is to equip students not only for further study of the United Nations and other international organizations but also for further action as participants within them.

Texts

The following texts are required for this course:

The United Nations in the Twenty-First Century

by Karen Mingst & Margaret Karns

Westview Press (2007) ISBN: 978-0813343464

The United Nations and International Law

by Christopher Joyner

Cambridge U Press (1997) ISBN: 978-0521586593

Other short readings may be assigned by the instructor during the course. These will be provided in electronic or hardcopy format by the instructor to students. Finally, in

addition to the above text, students are encouraged to keep abreast of international news by reading one of the major national newspapers with significant political coverage.

Requirements

Team Activities:

Southern Regional Model United Nations

A key component of this class is our participation, as a team, in the 19th Annual Southern Regional Model United Nations (SRMUN), which will be held at in Atlanta on November 20-22. Students will be responsible for researching, writing position papers, resolutions and a delegate portfolio in addition to learning the protocols and strategy of UN committee work in the issue areas that the SRMUN has decided to discuss this year. Once at the conference, students attend their committees, assist other Meredith delegates and get to experience a simulation of the United Nations in action. Official SRMUN observers will evaluate Meredith's performance at the conference based on students' quality of preparation, understanding of UN protocol and faithful representation of their country.

Attendance Policy

Because this class involves a group-effort off campus, class attendance is absolutely essential. Students who miss classes will not only be disadvantaged when it comes to the final exam but will also handicap the Meredith delegation as a whole. Therefore, students are allowed three absences only. For every absence after the third, your final grade will be reduced by 5 points (a half letter grade). Attendance at the SRMUN conference in Atlanta is mandatory. Students who fail to attend the SRMUN conference will automatically fail the course. Please note the dates of the conference to make sure you will not have any schedule conflicts. Any student who knows ahead of time that attendance at the SRMUN is impossible must drop the course.

Model UN Club Policy

All students enrolled in Model United Nations are required to join the Meredith Model UN club and participate in all of its activities including fundraising. The class will work closely with the club [some club members have already taken Model UN as a course and will therefore not be enrolled] in preparation for SRMUN

Note on Funding of Model UN experience

The Model UN club and Meredith College will endeavor to finance the class trip to Atlanta to participate in SRMUN. We will do this through soliciting funds from the Wake County United and various campus sources. However, it is possible that our fundraising activities will fall short of the level needed to fully fund the trip and in that event I will have to levy a course fee of up to \$75.00 per student to cover the difference. I will let you know as soon as possible whether or not this is the case.

In addition to the above mentioned special requirements, students are also expected to complete five assignments, a number of position papers (as determined by SRMUN), presentation of the position papers, a delegate portfolio and a final exam.

The grading weights and the dates when these particular requirements are due are as

follows:

Team Activities	Various Dates	20%
Position Papers	Final version due 10/31	20%
Presentations of Position Papers (3)	Various Dates	20%
Assignments (3)	Various Dates	15%
Final Exam	12/4 at 1 PM	25%

Detailed descriptions of each of these requirements are provided below:

Position Papers:

Position Papers are two-page, researched briefs on the various topics assigned by SRMUN to the various committees. The position papers will be turned in to me and will also be forwarded to the SRMUN observers. Moreover, students will present their position papers to the class. Because SRMUN requires all position papers to be emailed by a certain date, the position papers cannot be late. There is no make-up.

Presentation of Position Papers:

A wonderful opportunity for global engagement and the development of personal connections with one's world is through the discussions of international affairs. Often times, however, individuals feel unprepared to engage in such discussions, not for lack of concern or knowledge about the issues, but rather for lack of confidence and knowledge regarding the structure of such discussions. In other words, they feel they lack the skills of oral communication that would facilitate the raising of their voices and the sharing of their insights.

In POL 370 students will develop and demonstrate these skills through formal presentations. The content of these exercises will perfectly parallel the substantive content of the course therefore no additional work is required in that regard. Students will incrementally develop their oral communication skills, with three formal presentations representing a competent demonstration of the skills acquired during the semester.

Students will not be graded on whether they agree or disagree with other's opinions or perspectives, but rather on how well they argue their own personal viewpoints using the available evidence (e.g., the textbook, newspaper reports) as their touchstone. Since structure and style problems can weaken otherwise strong arguments (and your objective is to make a strong argument) students should be sure to practice presentations beforehand. All presentations must have been completed by the last day of class.

Individual presentations are throughout the semester. (Note: Some will take place during International Education Week during the evening, in one of the College's auditoriums.) Once scheduled, presentation dates cannot be changed except in the case of a medical or other serious emergency. There is no make-up. The grading rubric on the next page indicates the areas in which students will develop and demonstrate their oral communication skills.

ORAL PRESENTATION EVALUATION

PRESENTATION			
Loudness & Articulation:	Easy to hear and understand	Fades away in places	Often too soft or unclear
Fluency:	Easy to follow	Too slow – stutters, "ums/uhs"	Too fast
Intonation:	Appropriate, effective	Phrases statements as questions	-low energy -little enthusiasm - -monotone
Eye Contact:	-frequent -most of audience	-some -few people	-little or none
Posture & Gestures:	-upright -Fluid-movements	-slouches -hides behind podium -no gestures	Stands on one leg -off balance -jerky movements
Use of AV:	Effective, helpful	None	Poorly used, poor quality
Manner:	Effective	Obviously nervous or tense	Too casual, silly, informal

CONTENT Organization:	Clear, easy to follow, interesting, good examples, illustrations	Mostly clear, some examples, mostly abstract	Loses place - jumps around
Support:	Ample evidence, statistics, logic, research	Some evidence, statistics, logic, research	Few or no examples, opinion, little support
Time:	Uses time well	Too much material	Too little material

Exam:

The final exam will test the student's comprehensive learning at the end of the semester. It will include multiple choice and short essay questions. Study guides and sample questions will be circulated well in advance of exams. Excused absences from the examination can only be obtained for medical or other emergencies. Such emergencies must be documented to the satisfaction of the instructor. An unexcused absence from an examination will result in a grade of zero for that examination. There is no make-up.

Assignments

Assignments familiarize students with the structure of the UN, regional international politics, the countries we will represent and current issues facing the UN. For the last assignment students are required to have attended at least one Wake County United Nations Association meeting to listen to a featured speaker. Students will write up a summary and reflection of the event. I will keep you informed of the dates and topics of the regular Wake County UNA programs. There is no make-up.

Final Letter Grades

Final scores are determined using the weights mentioned above and according to the breakdowns listed below:

A: 93-100 B: 84-92 C: 70-83 D: 60-69 F: 0-59

Meredith Code of Honor

We, the Meredith Community, are committed to developing and affirming in each student a sense of personal honor and responsibility. Uncompromising honesty and forthrightness are essential elements of this commitment. The Honor System is a method by which individual honors are protected and maintained. Any dishonorable action will be regarded as a violation of this commitment, and corrective action will be taken. If I am in violation of the Honor Code, to prevent jeopardizing the Honor System or weakening our system of self-government, I have an obligation to report myself to the proper authorities. If I am aware of a violation of the Honor System by another student, I shall call this matter to the attention of that student as a violation of responsibility to the community. In choosing Meredith College, I am accepting the Honor System as a way of life. As a Meredith student, I am responsible for insuring that the Honor System is at all times carried out.

Students with Disabilities

Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with documented disabilities. In order to receive accommodations, students must go through the Counseling Center/Disability Services Office. Disability Services is located in 106 Carroll Hall and can be reached at 760-8427 or disabilityservices@meredith.edu. For additional information see the website at <http://www.meredith.edu/students/counsel/disability>.

Weather

We will follow the college policy on inclement weather.

Course Timeline

The following lists the tentative assignments for the semester. All readings are from ***The United Nations in the Twenty-First Century*** (henceforth ***Century***) and ***The United Nations and International Law*** (henceforth ***Law***).

8/20 –	Intro/ Learning Through Action
8/25 & 27 –	<i>Century</i> Chs 1 & 2: Antecedents and Foundation of the UN
9/1 & 3 –	<i>Century</i> Ch 3: Actors
9/8 & 11 –	<i>Century</i> Ch 4: Security
9/15 –	<i>Century</i> Ch 5: Development/ ** Assignment 1 Due **
9/17 –	<i>Century</i> Ch 5: Development
9/22 –	<i>Century</i> Ch 6: Human Rights
9/24 –	<i>Century</i> Ch 7: Environment
9/29 & 10/1 –	How to Write Position Papers/ How to Present Position Papers
10/6 –	<i>Law</i> Part I (Chs 1 – 3)
10/8 –	No Class
10/13 –	Parliamentary Procedure (SRMUN Handout)/ ** Assignment 2 Due **
10/15 –	<i>Law</i> Part III (Chs 14-16)
10/20 to 29 –	Position Papers & Presentations of Position Papers
10/31 –	** FINAL POSITION PAPERS DUE TO SRMUN DIRECTLY**
11/3 to 15 –	<i>Law</i> Part II (Chs 4 – 13)
11/17 –	In-class Simulation
11/19 to 22 –	SRMUN Conference
11/24 –	Debriefing
12/1 –	Review / ** Assignment 3 Due **
12/4 –	** Final Exam (1 PM) **