

POL 350-B: International Organizations Introduction to the United Nations and Multilateral Diplomacy

Dr. Johannes Karreth

Office: 216 Bomberger

Office phone: 610-409-3126

Office hours: M 5–6pm, W 1:30–2:30pm, and F 12–1pm in 216 Bomberger; other times by appointment.

Email: jkarreth@ursinus.edu

Course website: <http://www.jkarreth.net/modelun.html>

Important dates — please note in your calendars:

- **Saturday, February 25, 11:59pm:** Final position papers must be submitted on Canvas.
- **Sunday, April 9, 8:45am:** Departure from campus
- **April 9-13:** NMUN conference in New York City

Course description

This course is the second part of the two-course sequence POL 350 for the Model United Nations program at Ursinus College. Students will build on their experience from POL 350-A to prepare for representing Norway at the Model United Nations Conference in New York City. Students will familiarize themselves with the politics and foreign policy of Norway and act as Norway's representatives on a UN committee during the 2017 National Model United Nations (NMUN) Conference. Working with a partner, members of each committee will prepare a position paper outlining their country's stance on issues such as climate change, disarmament, economic development, human rights, refugees, and women's rights. Students will also learn rules of procedure and gain experience with oral presentation and debate.

A considerable portion of the class in both semesters is dedicated toward the development of so-called soft skills—team work, writing and speaking clearly, adapting to changing circumstances and interacting with others from different backgrounds. Toward this end, you will be practicing persuasive writing, public speaking, critical thinking, problem-solving, strategizing and group work.

Learning outcomes

Upon successfully completing both courses of the POL 350 sequence, students will:

- have developed and improved core skills in research, writing, public speaking and team work.
- understand the organization of the United Nations, its role in international politics and the contemporary issues that it faces.

- look at contemporary issues from a global perspective, considering the distinct viewpoints of other countries and actors. In so doing, students will gain a better appreciation for the benefits and challenges of multilateral diplomacy.

Materials

Your primary reading material for this semester is posted on the National Model UN website:

- Your committee's background guide: http://nmun.org/ny_committee_guides.html.
- The *NMUM Delegate Preparation Guide*: <http://nmun.org/downloads/NMUNDelegatePrepGuide.pdf>.
- The *NMMUN Rules and Overview*: <http://www.nmun.org/downloads/NMUNRules.pdf>.

Two full books are useful to catch up on background knowledge. Students should have already acquired these books for POL 350-A.

- Fasulo, Linda (2015). *An Insider's Guide to the UN*, 3rd edition. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Weiss, Thomas G., David P. Forsythe, Roger A. Coate, and Kelly-Kate Pease (2016). *The United Nations and Changing World Politics*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

All other relevant readings (articles and book chapters/excerpts) are posted on Canvas or linked in this syllabus.

Requirements and assignments

Attendance & preparation (required to pass this course)

In keeping with a strong liberal arts tradition that encourages active learning and complete participation in the education process, Ursinus College expects all students to attend class. Attendance is especially important because this course prepares you for participating in the National Model UN Conference where you will be representing Ursinus College.

Students must complete and take notes on all assigned readings prior to the class in which they are scheduled to be discussed. You should plan on spending **about 4 hours per week outside the classroom** on this class, plus any additional time required for specific assignments.

In the event that a student experiences a significant health problem or other issue that may prevent them from performing adequately in their academic work and/or attending class for more than one class period, students must notify (1) the instructor and (2) the Office of Student Affairs. The Student Affairs phone and email contact is Lynda Manz: lmanz@ursinus.edu or 610-409-3590.

1. Quizzes (20% of your course grade)

Before most class meetings, short quizzes on Canvas will test your comprehension of the material assigned for that class. These quizzes will take about 5–10 minutes to complete and will consist of multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, and short answer questions. **Quizzes not taken by 6:45pm on the respective class day will earn 0 points.**

2. Current events reports (10% of your course grade)

Each student will be responsible for sending 3 international news digests during semester weeks 1–10 to the team listserv at modlunteam201617@ursinuscollege365.onmicrosoft.com. News digests should cover a sample of relevant international news and be modeled after the New York Times' *Evening Briefing*. A sign-up sheet for dates will be provided on Canvas.

3. Short written at-home assignments (10% of your course grade)

On dates indicated in the syllabus, students will prepare (mostly short) written assignments *before* class. Specific instructions, grading rubrics, and deadlines are posted on Canvas.

4. Short written in-class assignments (10% of your course grade)

In most class meetings, students will produce short pieces of writing, either individually or in small groups. Students will submit this output to Canvas. Specific instructions will be provided in class.

5. Oral presentations (10% of your course grade)

On two days as indicated below, each student will deliver oral presentations. For the first presentation, on Day 5 (February 20), each student will deliver a 3-minute presentation of Norway's key positions on the student's committee. For the second presentation, on Day 7 (March 13), each student will deliver a short policy proposal. Each presentation will contribute 5% to the overall course grade. A grading rubric will be posted on Canvas.

6. Position paper (20% of your course grade)

By February 25, each student will submit a revised position paper to Canvas. This position paper must incorporate any feedback received on earlier drafts. It must also follow all guidelines in the MUN *Position Paper Guide*.

7. Conference participation (20% of your course grade)

For a good grade in this class, every student needs to be an active and productive conference participant. Specific guidelines and instructions for excellent conference participation will be posted on Canvas.

Grading

Rubrics for all assignments are posted on Canvas. The course grade consists of the components below, sums to 100, and converts into letter grades as stated below. **Late assignments will receive a grade of 0. No exceptions.**

Quizzes	20%	A	100 - 93.0	C+	79.999 - 77.0
Current events reports (online)	10%	A-	92.999 - 90.0	C	76.999 - 73.0
Short written at-home assignments	10%	B+	89.999 - 87.0	C-	72.999 - 70.0
Short written in-class assignments	10%	B	86.999 - 83.0	D+	69.999 - 67.0
Oral presentations	10%	B-	82.999 - 80.0	D	66.999 - 63.0
Position paper	20%			D-	62.999 - 60.0
Conference participation	20%			F	59.999 - 0
Total	100%				

Course policies

Disability accommodations. I am committed to a fair and equitable learning environment. Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with documented physical and/or learning disabilities who are eligible to receive accommodations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you believe you have a disability requiring accommodation in this class, please notify Shammah Bermudez at the Center for Academic Support (Myrin Library, lower level, 484-762-4329, sbermudez@ursinus.edu). His office will contact me to make appropriate accommodations.

If you wish to discuss academic accommodations for this course, please inform me as soon as possible.

While I will make every effort to accommodate valid requests, students should not expect that, if they do poorly on an assignment, to claim, at that time, the need of an accommodation. This statement is to preclude that problem, and allow people with a need for accommodations to be treated fairly and appropriately.

Religious observance. I will also make every effort to accommodate religious observances and obligations. You are asked to bring any possible conflicts to my attention as soon as possible. Students should not expect that, if they do poorly on an assignment, to claim, at that time, the need of an accommodation. This statement is to preclude that problem, and allow people with a need for accommodations to be treated fairly and appropriately. However, **please note that** due to the nature of this class, **attending all class meetings and the MUN conference are required, without exception, for earning a passing grade for this class.**

Classroom interactions. Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to this standard may be subject to disciplinary procedures. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to topics dealing with differences of race, color, culture, religion, creed, politics, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, class, and nationality. Course rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name, but I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

Academic honesty. All students at Ursinus College are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of our institution. Please familiarize yourself with this policy at (<https://www.ursinus.edu/student-life/handbook/academic-policies/academic-honesty/>). Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. **The policy also prohibits submitting material that was previously submitted in another course.** If you are involved in plagiarism, the penalty will be failure in the course and you will be reported to the College. In this one regard there are no second chances. If you are not sure if something violates standards—ask. If you are not sure whether to cite or not to cite—cite. **Please note that plagiarism in position papers, draft resolutions, or other documents will also result in exclusion from the MUN conference.**

Emergencies and absences. Attendance is especially important because this course prepares you for participating in the National Model UN Conference where you will be representing Ursinus College. **If an emergency prevents you from attending class, please notify me as soon as circumstances allow.** Except for major emergencies, missing one or more classes will result in removal from the Ursinus Model UN delegation.

Electronic devices in the classroom. Cell phones and tablets must be stored away during class. Laptops can be used for class-specific purposes only on scheduled dates.

Preliminary Schedule

This schedule will be updated during the semester. Please visit <http://www.jkarreth.net/modelun.html> for the most recent information on deadlines, assignments, and additional readings that may be added to this schedule.

Day 1 (January 23)

What do you know about Norway?

- **Before class**, conduct research on Norway's political structure, economic condition, religion(s), history, and culture, using the following sources :
 - The CIA World Factbook (<https://goo.gl/5wTp>)
 - Norway's UN mission website (<https://goo.gl/KF8E8g> and <https://goo.gl/RHvb5d>)
- **Before class**, also look for:
 - potential problems within Norway regarding ethnic and religious minorities, suppression of dissent, division of wealth, freedom of the press, development, health care, education, poverty, the environment, human rights, etc.
 - more nuanced aspects of Norway's domestic and foreign policies: what are Norway's key priorities at the UN and in international relations in general? What initiatives is Norway known for?
- **Before class**, complete a short quiz on Canvas.
- During class, we will discuss key characteristics of Norway and its foreign policy.
- During class, you will produce topic-specific fact sheets on Norway in small groups, building on the research conducted prior to class.

Day 2 (January 30)

The ins and outs of a Model UN conference

- **Before class**, read pp. 17–27 of the *Delegate Preparation Guide* as well as <http://outreach.un.org/mun/?p=944>.
- **Before class**, complete a short quiz on Canvas.
- During class, we will outline a mock strategy for Norway's delegation at the NMUN conference.

Day 3 (February 6)

Understanding your committee

- **Before class**, read your committee's preparation guide.
- **Before class**, complete a short quiz on Canvas.
- During class, you will produce a fact sheet on your committee.

Day 4 (February 13)

Understanding your committee topics

- **Before class**, read your committee's preparation guide.
- **Before class**, read the *Position Paper Guide*.
- **Before class**, revisit your mock position paper from Fall 2016 and research Norway's position on your committee's topics.
- During class, you will outline a fact sheet on your committee topics and Norway's position on these topics.

First draft of position papers due on Canvas at 11:59pm on February 15.

Day 5 (February 20)

Finalizing your committee work and position papers

- **Before class**, complete your final position paper draft in consultation with your fellow committee member.
- **Before class**, read [guide on effective presentations].
- **Before class**, prepare a 3-minute presentation of your key positions for your committee.
- During class, you will take notes on your fellow delegates' presentations.
- After class, you will make any last revisions to your position paper draft in consultation with your fellow committee member.

Final position paper due on Canvas at 11:59pm on February 25.

Day 6 (February 27)

How do you negotiate successfully?

- **Before class**, read pp. 28–49 of the *Delegate Preparation Guide*.
- **Before class**, read the following guides:

<https://outreach.un.org/mun/content/fundamentals-negotiation>

<http://outreach.un.org/mun/guidebook/skills/negotiation/the-process-of-negotiation/>

<https://outreach.un.org/mun/content/competitive-bargaining-vs-cooperative-problem-solving/>

<http://outreach.un.org/mun/guidebook/skills/negotiation/limitations/>

and consider this question: Is a powerful country automatically more successful in international negotiations?

- **Before class**, complete a short quiz on Canvas.
- **During class**, we will watch this video on diplomacy, featuring Ambassador Melrose and Ursinus alumna Carolyn Strainic: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KYGnMsw9GiU>.

Day 7 (March 13)

How do you present a proposal effectively and persuade others?

Special guest: Dr. Talia Argondezzi

- **Before class**, read <https://outreach.un.org/mun/content/speaking-conference> and all four sub-sections linked on that site.
- During class, you will deliver short ad-hoc proposals.

Day 8 (March 20)

How do you navigate the (M)UN Rules of Procedure?

- **Before class**, read the *NMUM Rules and Overview* at <http://nmun.org/downloads/NMUNRules.pdf>.
- **Before class**, read <https://outreach.un.org/mun/content/drafting-resolutions>
- **Before class**, complete a short quiz on Canvas.

Day 9 (March 27)

What does a committee session look like?

- **Before class**, read carefully pp. 46-50 of the *Delegate Preparation Guide* at <http://nmun.org/downloads/NMUNDelegatePrepGuide.pdf>.
- **Before class**, prepare to act as the fictitious country assigned to you on Day 8.
- During class, we will conduct a simulated negotiation.

Day 10 (April 3)

What recent developments might affect negotiations at the upcoming NMUN conference?
Preparation for our briefing at the Permanent Mission of Norway to the United Nations.

- **Before class**, submit three questions for briefing on Canvas.
- During class, you will also brief each other on any events that might have an impact on conference negotiations.

NMUN conference in New York City April 9–13. Plan ahead for all your classes that you will miss.

April 17: No class meeting

Use class time to decompress and catch up on your other class work.

Day 11 (April 24)

Post-conference reflection

- **Before class**, complete an anonymous survey at <http://tinyurl.com/nmun17-survey>
- During class, we will discuss “lessons learned” from the conference.
- **After class**, submit a formal reflection paper on Canvas by 11:59pm on Wednesday, April 26.

April 27

Post-conference dinner.

- 7:30pm, Location TBA.