



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

Spring 2021 / Th 7:00-8:40pm / IDC 114

Dr. Johannes Karreth

Office: 216 Bomberger (but using Zoom for individual meetings this semester)

Student hours: T 1:30pm–3:30pm; F 1:30-2:45pm. Sign up and Zoom link at https://calendly.com/jkarreth_ursinus.

Email: jkarreth@ursinus.edu

Course website (only to submit assignments and view grades): Canvas

Collaboration platform (for everything else): Teams (UCGroup_Model_UN_2021)

Covid-19 adjustments: please scroll to "Learning during a pandemic".

Important dates — please add to your calendars:

Saturday, January 30, 11:59pm: Second drafts of position papers must be posted on Teams.

Saturday, February 20, 11:59pm: Merged position papers (one per committee) must be posted on Teams.

Sunday, March 28-Wednesday, March 31, all day: NMUN conference, virtual format

Please clear your absence during NMUN with your professors by the end of January. The first two days of the 2021 NMUN conference also fall on the first two days of Passover. When in doubt about the conference schedule, please consult the NMUN website at

<https://www.nmun.org/conferences/new-york/at-the-conference/conference-schedule.html>

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 Turkmenistan at the 2021 National Model United Nations conference. Due to Covid-19, this year's NMUN conference will be held in a virtual format instead of the usual in-person event in New York City. During the course, students will familiarize themselves with the politics and foreign policy of Turkmenistan and act as Turkmen representatives on a UN committee during the 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 in a virtual format, 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.
- have become skilled negotiators in a videoconference setting, sharing recent experiences of “real” diplomats.

Learning during a pandemic

I promise to do everything I can to make sure you get everything you were hoping for out of this course and Model United Nations. Because of the pandemic, the NMUN conference will look very different from usual. All negotiations will be virtual. The NMUN organization reports from a previous, smaller NMUN conference: “Everyone agreed that the educational component of NMUN was not compromised and numerous people stated they were pleasantly surprised at how much it felt like the in-person conference. ”

I will make all reasonable accommodations I can to help you finish your assignments and do well in this course. Please know, though, that much of your experience depends on deadlines and rules set by the NMUN organizers. I will do my best to help you navigate the NMUN framework.

Safety measures. For in-person delegate meetings, everyone is required to wear a mask covering their mouth and nose. You will be asked to leave the classroom if you are not properly wearing a mask. If you forget your face mask, disposable masks are available in all buildings. **Do not** attend our meetings in person if you do not feel well. Just join the meeting remotely instead. In the event that courses must go fully remote, we will move our meetings online.

Materials

Your primary reading material for this semester is:

- Your committee’s background guide: <https://www.nmun.org/conferences/new-york/prepare-for-committee/committee-materials.html>.
- The *NMUN Delegate Preparation Guide*: <http://nmun.org/downloads/NMUNDelegatePrepGuide.pdf>.
- The *NMUN Rules and Overview*: <http://www.nmun.org/downloads/NMUNRules.pdf>.
- Bohr, Annette. 2016. “Turkmenistan: Power, Politics and Petro-Authoritarianism”. *Chatham House Russia and Eurasia Programme*. URL: <https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/publications/research/2016-03-08-turkmenistan-bohr.pdf>
- Additional resources shared on Teams

Two full books are useful to catch up on background knowledge. Students can borrow these books from the instructor.

- Fasulo, Linda (2015). *An Insider’s Guide to the UN*, 3rd edition. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Moore, John Allphin and Pubantz, Jerry. 2017. *The New United Nations: International Organization in the Twenty-First Century*. New York, NY: Routledge.

All other relevant readings (articles and book chapters/excerpts) are posted on Teams 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 you to attend class. In addition, this class serves as preparation for the NMUN Conference. For this conference, it is important that your fellow delegates can rely on you. Missing more than one single meeting during one semester (for any reason) therefore means that you will become ineligible to attend the NMUN conference.

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 4-6 hours per week outside the classroom** on this class, plus any additional time required for specific assignments.

In the event that you experience a significant health problem or other issue that may prevent you from continuing your pre-conference work via a remote setup, please reach out to me so we can work out alternative accommodations.

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

Each student will be responsible for posting two international news digests each week before the conference on our Teams channel. 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 students in POL 350-B) for dates will be provided on Canvas.

2. Short written assignments (20% of your course grade)

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

3. Oral presentations (20% of your course grade)

On a few days as indicated below, each student will deliver oral presentations on (1) your committee and committee topics on Day 2, (2) a background issue on Turkmenistan (Day 4), and a short policy proposal (Day 6). A grading rubric will be posted on Canvas.

4. Position paper (30% of your course grade)

By January 30, each student will submit the second draft of their individual position papers. By February 20, each student will submit a merged, revised, final 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*. The grade on this assignment evaluates both drafts.

5. 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 in a virtual conference environment 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 because NMUN sets hard deadlines that I cannot change.**

Current events reports (on Teams)	10%	A	100 - 93.0	C+	79.999 - 77.0
Short written assignments	20%	A-	92.999 - 90.0	C	76.999 - 73.0
Oral presentations	20%	B+	89.999 - 87.0	C-	72.999 - 70.0
Position paper	30%	B	86.999 - 83.0	D+	69.999 - 67.0
Conference participation	20%	B-	82.999 - 80.0	D	66.999 - 63.0
Total	100%			D-	62.999 - 60.0
				F	59.999 - 0

Course policies

Disability accommodations. Ursinus College strives to provide an inclusive learning environment. Any student who experiences barriers to access due to any kind of disability (learning, emotional, physical, or cognitive) and needs accommodations to increase their access should work with the Director of Disability Services, Dr. Dolly Singley, located at the Ursinus Institute for Student Success in the lower level of Wismer Center. To confirm eligibility for accommodations and supports for a disability, students need to meet with Dr. Singley. At the beginning of each semester, qualifying students will send their accommodations letters through Bear Accessibility, an online system used to help students and faculty navigate the use of accommodations. If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Singley at 484-762-4329 or by email at dsingley@ursinus.edu.

Additional resources regarding dining accommodations, medical leave of absence and service animal policies, campus safety are posted at <https://www.ursinus.edu/offices/ursinus-institute/students-with-disabilities/>.

Discrimination and harassment. Ursinus College seeks to provide an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. I am also a member of two faculty and staff groups that work toward this goal, and therefore particularly committed to ensuring that you are comfortable on campus. Ursinus College considers sexual misconduct to include assault, harassment, stalking, and relationship violence of a sexual nature. If you have been the victim of sexual harassment, misconduct, or assault, we encourage you to report this. As a mandatory reporter, I am required to report any information I receive about sexual misconduct on campus. I am also simply happy to talk to you about issues you may be experiencing and refer to you to the appropriate resources on campus. You may choose whether you or anyone involved is identified by name. For more information about your options at Ursinus, please go to <https://www.ursinus.edu/title-ix/>.

If you have been the victim of a discriminatory act, you can report this to the College. For more information and ways to report, please see <https://www.ursinus.edu/student-life/handbook/section-i-student-code-of-conduct/policy-on-discriminatory-acts/>.

Your mental health. The Wellness Center has a virtual drop-in crisis hour at 2-3 pm each weekday, which is available for students in crisis who need to be seen immediately by a clinician. Their resources are confidential and free to all students. Please consult the Wellness Center website for more information and the link to the virtual crisis hour: <https://www.ursinus.edu/offices/wellness-center/counseling/>.

Emergencies related to money. The college knows that temporary financial hardships can impact students' access to course materials, as well as their access to opportunities on campus. Please be aware of the Bear2Bear fund, which has been established by donors to the college and provides special grants for students who have exhausted other sources of funding. You can find more information at <https://www.ursinus.edu/offices/student-financial-services/grants-scholarships-loans/bear2bear-student-emergency-fund/>.

Religious observance. I will make every effort to accommodate religious observances and obligations. Please bring any possible conflicts with deadlines or assignments to my attention at the beginning of the semester. Organized conference activities are virtual and limited to the hours of 1-5pm on Sunday March 28 and 9:30am-5:00pm on

Monday-Thursday March 29-April 1. The first two days of the 2021 NMUN conference also fall on the first two days of Passover.

Break days. Because of Covid-19, Ursinus College (like most other universities and colleges in the United States) is converting spring break into a series of break days for this semester only. Because we cannot change the NMUN schedule, unfortunately this means that one of your break days occurs during the conference. In detail:

- February 18: Break day, no delegate/course meeting. (But please note deadline for position papers on February 20.)
- March 31: College is on break, but delegates will be attending the NMUN conference.

Names. I would like to address you by your preferred name and your personal gender pronoun. Please let me know your information early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records; course rosters are provided to me with students' legal name as they were entered into the College's databases. Please be patient with me as I learn everyone's names and pronouns. I encourage you to correct me when/if I make a mistake (i.e., call you by the wrong name/pronoun or mispronounce your name).

Classroom interactions. In this class and within the NMUN delegation, we will work to promote an environment where everyone feels safe and welcome, even during uncomfortable conversations. The topics we will address can be political, personal, controversial, and provocative. As we explore these ideas, every voice in the room has something of value to contribute to group discussion. Because the group will represent a diversity of individual beliefs, backgrounds, and experiences, every participant must show respect for all others. You are encouraged to not only take advantage of opportunities to express your own ideas, but also to learn from the information and ideas shared by other students. Participation is crucial to the success of this classroom experience. Your insights, questions and comments will be useful not only to yourself and to your instructor, but to your fellow students as well.

This extends to the virtual conference environment. NMUN has its own conduct expectations (see <https://www.nmun.org/conduct-expectations.html>). Beyond those expectations, we will also discuss as a group how to approach virtual negotiations while maintaining an inclusive, safe, and productive environment for all participants.

Academic honesty. TI; dr: do your own work, cite your sources all of the time, and don't cheat. This applies to your work for and at NMUN as well.

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 you previously submitted in another course. If you violate the academic integrity policy, the penalty is failure in the course and you will be reported to the College. If you are not sure if something violates the policy—ask me. If you are not sure whether to cite or not to cite—cite. In addition, NMUN takes plagiarism seriously and will not tolerate plagiarism in position papers, draft resolutions, and any other work that participants bring to the conference.

Schedule

This schedule will be updated during the semester. Please visit Teams for the most recent information on deadlines, assignments, and additional materials.

Day 1 (January 21)

Check-in: NMUN during a pandemic; Turkmenistan; Recent events in world politics

- **Before class**, revisit information on Turkmenistan from the following sources that you explored in the Fall semester:
 - CIA World Factbook entry on Turkmenistan
 - International Model United Nations country profile: Turkmenistan (<http://www.imuna.org/resources/country-profiles/Turkmenistan>)
- **Before class**, read pp. 5–18 of the Delegate Preparation Guide.
- **Before class**, research your assigned topic (see email) and
- During class, we will discuss key characteristics of Turkmenistan and its foreign policy as well as the basics of NMUN diplomacy.
- After class, download the following resource on Turkmenistan:
 - Bohr, Annette. 2016. "Turkmenistan: Power, Politics and Petro-Authoritarianism". *Chatham House Russia and Eurasia Programme*. URL: <https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/publications/research/2016-03-08-turkmenistan-bohr.pdf>

Day 2 (January 28)

Understanding your committee and committee topics

- **Before class**, read your full committee's background guide.
- During class, you will outline a fact sheet on your committee topics, prior related activities, and Turkmenistan's position on these topics. Bring your position paper draft to help with this activity.

Second draft of individual position papers due on Teams at 11:59pm on January 30.

Day 3 (February 4)

Conference overview; Drafting policy language and contributing to resolutions;

- **Before class**, read the *NMUN Rules and Overview*, pp. 1–11, at <http://nmun.org/downloads/NMUNRules.pdf>.
- **Before class**, re-read the *NMUN Delegate Preparation Guide*, pp. 19–24, at <https://www.nmun.org/assets/documents/NMUNDelegatePrepGuide.pdf>.
- **Before class**, read the UN guide on drafting resolutions at <https://www.un.org/en/model-united-nations/drafting-resolutions>.

Day 4 (February 11)

All about Turkmenistan

- Resource for today's class:
 - Bohr, Annette. 2016. "Turkmenistan: Power, Politics and Petro-Authoritarianism". *Chatham House Russia and Eurasia Programme*. URL: <https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/publications/research/2016-03-08-turkmenistan-bohr.pdf>
- **Before class**, you will prepare individual presentations on select aspects of Turkmenistan's politics, economy, and culture.
- After these presentations, we will discuss implications for Turkmenistan's diplomacy at the United Nations.

February 18

No course meeting (Break day)

Final draft of merged position papers due on Teams at 11:59pm on February 20.

Day 5 (February 25)

Simulation: beginning and conducting a committee meeting; using technology to collaborate with others

- **Before class**, revisit the materials from Day 3 and submit questions about committee procedure on Canvas.
- **During class**, meet with Carolyn Strainic '11 (U.S. Mission to the United Nations)
- During class, we'll work through a short rules training video: <https://www.facebook.com/NationalModelUN/videos/408654600235509/>
- **After class**, obtain a committee email account from Maggie Frymoyer

Day 6 (March 4)

Communicating your agenda to others (the "elevator pitch"), convincing others, and public speaking

- **Before class**, read <https://outreach.un.org/mun/content/speaking-conference> and all four subsections linked on that site.
- **Before class**, prepare a 3-minute presentation of your key positions for your committee.
- During class, you will deliver short ad-hoc proposals in the form of extemporaneous presentations.
- During class, you will take notes on your fellow delegates' presentations.

Day 7 (March 11)

Full committee simulation

- **Before class**, read the assigned simulation materials.
- During class, you will further practice negotiation and drafting resolutions.

Day 8 (March 18)

Communicating across cultural backgrounds; managing tensions in international negotiations; leveraging your research

- **Before class**, prepare a one-page handout for yourself listing key resources for your committee topics.
- **During class**, we will conduct a self-assessment and conduct several tabletop exercises on critical situations during committee.
- **During class**, you'll take a pop quiz on Turkmenistan's politics, foreign policy, and other relevant information.

Day 9 (March 25)

Final preparation: Turkmenistan's strategy for NMUN; navigating the virtual conference environment

- **Before class**, revisit your position paper and committee background guide.
- **Before class**, read one position paper from one other country for your committee and compare it to your position paper.
- **During class**, you'll take another pop quiz on Turkmenistan's politics, foreign policy, and other relevant information.

NMUN conference March 28–March 31. Plan ahead for all your classes that you will miss. When in doubt, please consult the official schedule at <https://www.nmun.org/conferences/new-york/at-the-conference/conference-schedule.html>.

Day 10 (April 8)

Post-conference reflection; planning for CoSA; building on your NMUN experience for professional development

- **Before class**, please fill out the anonymous feedback form at ...
- **Before class**, please submit your conference reflection and your committee's resolution(s) on Canvas.