International organization is a central and increasingly important means of conducting international relations. International organizations – universal and regional, governmental and non-governmental, multi-purpose and functional – constitute important elements of the current global governance structures. This course bases itself on the classic understanding of international organization as a process and aims to expose students to the diversity and complexity of forms in which this process manifests itself by using the examples of specific international organizations. Although the United Nations System continues to be regarded ideationally and functionally as the chief reference point in the universe of international organizations, the canvas of this course is spread widely to include multiple forms and multiple levels of international organization. The course is designed to cover both theoretical and conceptual aspects of the practice of international organization in general as well as the specificities such as origins, evolution, structures, functions, politics, effectiveness and critiques of selected international organizations. In examining the potential as well as the limitations of international organization, a mix of theoretical, historical, legal and political approaches will be used to understand specific themes.

Instruction and Evaluation Methods

The main mode of instruction will be class room lectures and discussions spanning approx. 30–35 hours. Class time is expected to be interactive in nature, for which students are required to go through the prescribed readings (which will be circulated in advance) before coming for class. Although primarily based on the prescribed readings, lectures may refer to additional sources as well. If required, students can meet the course instructor individually after class in her office room between noon and 1:00 p.m. on working days. A few books and journals for general reading are listed towards the end along with an indicative list of relevant and interesting websites.

Evaluation will be based on (i) best grade out of three surprise tests held in class accounting for 10% of the total grade; (ii) a mid-semester examination accounting for 40% of the total grade held in the second week of March and (iii) an end-semester examination accounting for 50% of the total grade held in the first week of May.

Lecture Themes and Readings

1. International Organization

1.1. Defining, Characterizing, Classifying


1.2. Theoretical Approaches


1.3. Historical Legacy


2. The United Nations System

2.1. The Idea of the UN


2.2. Principal Structures of the UN


2.3. The UN in Action

2.3.1. Peace and Security


2.3.2. Human Rights


2.3.3. Development


2.3.4. Ideas


2.4. Reforming the UN


3. Governing the Global Political Economy

3.1. Bretton Woods Institutions (World Bank & IMF)


- James Raymond Vreeland, The International Monetary Fund: Politics of Conditional Lending (New York: Routledge, 2007), pp.5–36 [“What is the IMF?”].


3.2. World Trade Organization


4. Organizing Regionally


5. Global Civil Society and International Non-governmental Organizations


6. Inter-organizational Interaction and Issues of Coherence


7. International Organization: The Discipline


General Readings

Books


Journals

» *International Organization* (Massachusetts: Cambridge University Press).

Websites

» [www.globalpolicy.org](http://www.globalpolicy.org) [Global Policy Forum]
» Official websites of international organizations.

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