

PSCI 3600A
International Institutions
Tuesdays and Thursdays - 11:35am to 2:25pm
On-line via Zoom

Instructor: James Milner
Office: Loeb A629
Office hours: Via Zoom, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10am to 11am
Contact instructor to receive Zoom link
e-mail: James.Milner@carleton.ca

E-mail policy:

Please use your Carleton e-mail address or the e-mail function of Brightspace to send an e-mail to the instructor or TA and always include the course code in the subject line. You can expect an email response within 24 hours during the week. Instructors will generally not be responding to emails over the weekend.

First class: Thursday, 7 May 2026
Last class: Tuesday, 16 June 2026

Course material:

This course will be managed through [Brightspace](#), Carleton University's course support platform. We will discuss the sections and functions of Brightspace during our first class meeting. Please visit the course's Brightspace site regularly to receive the most current information pertaining to the content and delivery of the course.

Any required readings will be posted in the relevant Brightspace module at least 7 days before the relevant class meeting.

Grading rubrics for course requirements will also be posted in the relevant Brightspace module after the requirement has been introduced in class.

Course objectives:

International institutions have come to play an increasingly important role in global politics in the last century. Arguably the most prominent of these institutions is the United Nations (UN). Established in 1945 and in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, the UN's Charter set out the rights and obligations of Member States, and pledged to: "save succeeding generations from the scourges of war"; "reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights"; promote "respect for the obligations arising from treaties"; and "promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom".

A brief review of the state of the international system 80 years later, however, has led many to conclude that the UN is incapable of realizing its Charter ideals, and that the organization itself, and the very promise of global governance, is irrelevant. Indeed, challenges in peace and security, development and human rights have repeatedly underlined the challenges of global governance and the furtherance of a global common good. Given these shortcomings, do we still need the UN?

The purpose of this course is to critically engage with the notion of global governance and the functioning of international institutions through an applied consideration of the origins, development and functioning of the UN system. While the UN system engages with a broad range of global and regional issues, this course will engage with a select number of areas linked to the core objectives of the UN Charter. The course will draw on the global governance literature to provide a conceptual framework for understanding the challenge of international cooperation and the tensions between the interests of states and the ideals of a common good. Through a series of lectures, readings, discussions and presentations, this course will examine the constraints of the UN in today's international system, while considering its future role.

Learning outcomes:

Through this course, students will:

1. Become familiar with the theory and practice of international institutions
2. Develop an understanding of the origins and functions of the United Nations System
3. Critically evaluate key questions and debates relating to the theory and practice of global governance and international institutions
4. Apply this conceptual knowledge to the analysis of contemporary events and issues
5. Develop a deeper knowledge of a specific issue on the agenda of the United Nations
6. Demonstrate the ability to present a critical analysis of issues affecting outcomes for a specific issue on the agenda of the United Nations

Course outline:

The course is divided into two sections:

Section 1 will provide a historical, conceptual and structural foundation for our study of the UN system and international institutions more generally. We will begin with a consideration of the UN's ancestors and the historical circumstances within which the UN was established. We will then consider different conceptual approaches to the study of international institutions and how these perspectives can be used to focus our examination of the UN system. The section will then delve into the murky world of the UN system to outline the complex interaction between its various elements and the challenges of management and accountability of such a system, before outlining the challenges faced by the system today.

Section 2 will build from this background to consider prominent issues on the UN's agenda today. We will begin by examining core issues identified by the UN Charter: security, development, trade, and human rights/humanitarian action. We will examine the background and history of each issue before considering how the UN is able and unable to engage with these issues today. Students will then examine and analyze more specific areas of UN engagement and other areas of global governance through small group research and presentations.

Requirements:

Reflection papers (due by 26 May):	10%
Mid-term (starting at 12pm on 2 June):	40%
Group research:	40%
Group presentation (20% - 11 or 16 June)	
Group report (20% - due 11 or 16 June)	
Participation:	10%

Late penalties: With the exception of the mid-term, all assignments submitted after the due date will be penalized by 5% of the 100% assignment grade per 24 hours. Exceptions to this policy will only be made for academic accommodations, as outlined below, or for medical or personal emergencies substantiated by official documentation.

There is **no final exam** for this course. Instead, students are required to actively engage in reading, writing and participation throughout the term through four elements:

Reflection papers: Students are required to write a reflection paper, to be submitted by 26 May 2026. Reflection papers should be 1-2 pages long, single-spaced and referenced. Reflection papers should summarise the key arguments of the readings, raise questions about the readings, and relate them to a current event in global politics and the work of the United Nations. Critiques must be submitted via the Assignment function on Brightspace **before** the start of class when the readings addressed in the reflection paper will be discussed. For example, if you want to write your reflection paper on the theme of “Development”, your paper must be submitted by 11:30am on 21 May. The structure and requirements for the reflection paper will be discussed in class on 7 May.

Mid-term: Students will be required to write a 2-hour mid-term during class time on **2 June**. The mid-term will cover material from the first half of the course, and will include some multiple-choice, short-answer and essay questions. The structure and format of the mid-term will be discussed in class on 28 May.

Group research: By 28 May, every student will have identified which of the following specific area of global governance they would like to explore in the group research project in the second half of the course:

- Global Arms Control and Disarmament Governance
- Global Energy Governance
- Global Environmental Governance
- Global Financial Governance
- Global Health Governance
- Global Human Rights Governance
- Global Internet Governance
- Global Trade Governance

Within each group, individual students will take the lead on one of the following elements of the group’s analysis of the issue area:

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| - Definition | - Background |
| - Key actors | - Key agreements |
| - Key issues today | - Challenges |
| - Opportunities | - Recommendations |

While the goal of the assignment will be for students to synthesize their research, each student will be graded on their individual contribution through their area of responsibility, along with an overall assessment of the group’s collective results and evidence of synthesis.

Students will be given class time on 4 June to coordinate their group project, which will be presented in two ways:

Group presentation: On 11 and 16 June, groups will give a 30-minute shared presentation, covering the eight required elements outlined above. Presentations should be supported by visual materials and will be followed by a time for discussion. Presentations are worth 20% of the final course grade. Students will be graded on their individual section of the presentation, combined with an overall grade for the quality of the overall presentation and evidence of synthesis and collaboration in developing the group presentation.

Group report: On the day of their presentation, groups will also submit a joint report to the UN Secretary-General, covering the eight elements outlined above. The group report is worth 20% of the final course grade. Students will be graded on their individual section of the report, combined with an overall grade for the quality of the overall presentation and evidence of synthesis and collaboration in developing the group report.

Requirements for the group research will be introduced on 7 May during the first class meeting and discussed in more detail during class on 28 May. Students may sign-up for a group throughout the first half of term. Any student who has not signed-up for a group by the end of class on 28 May will be assigned to a group.

Students are strongly encouraged to consult the following sources for their group work:

- Thomas G. Weiss and Sam Daws (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook on the United Nations*, Second edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018. Available as an eBook in the Carleton Library.
- Thomas G. Weiss and Sam Daws (eds.), *International Organization and Global Governance*, Third edition, Routledge, 2023. Available as an eBook in the Carleton Library.

Participation: 10% of the final grade is for participation. Students are expected not only to attend class meetings, but engage in class discussion, small group discussions in the second half of class in weeks 2 to 6, and in response to the presentations in the second half of the course. To support this, students are expected to follow international news. Students may wish to subscribe to the daily news updates from the BBC (<http://news.bbc.co.uk>), Al-Jazeera English (<http://www.aljazeera.com/>) or a similar news service.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

As detailed below, any use of generative artificial intelligence tools (e.g. ChatGPT) to create work is considered a violation of academic integrity standards. Students may, however, use AI tools for basic word processing functions, including grammar and spell checking (e.g. Microsoft Word Editor). Students may not use generative or agential AI to submit work in this course.

Documenting AI use: For all written assignments, please include a description of your writing process, including any AI use. This policy ensures that student voices and ideas are prioritized and authentically represented, maintaining the integrity of the work produced by students while allowing basic support to enhance clarity, correctness, layout and flow of ideas. The goal of adopting a limited use of AI is to help students develop foundational skills in writing and critical thinking by practicing substantive content creation without the support of AI. In order to use AI effectively, you must be able to measure whether the corrections suggested by AI are correct.

The role of Teaching Assistant (TA):

The Teaching Assistant (TA) will play an important role throughout the course. The TA will be primarily responsible for receiving and grading reflection papers and the mid-term. The instructor will be primarily responsible for running the course, delivering the course material and facilitating class discussions, and grading the group research projects **Together, the TA and the instructor form the teaching team for this course.**

Readings and required texts:

Most readings for this course are available electronically through the Carleton University Library system **at no cost to the student.**

On-line journals and e-books may be accessed through the Carleton Library portal: <http://catalogue.library.carleton.ca/>

Other readings will be available through the Ares function in Brightspace.

Provisional outline of course topics:

Below is a **tentative** weekly breakdown of the course and core readings. Please consult Brightspace regularly for updates to this list of weekly topics and readings, in addition to information about the course.

Session 1

7 May 2026: Introduction: International institutions and global governance

Skills session: How to write a reflection paper

Weiss, Thomas and Rorden Wilkinson (2023), "International Organizations and Global Governance in a Turbulent World" in Weiss, Thomas G., and Rorden Wilkinson, editors. *International Organization and Global Governance*. Third edition., Routledge. (Available through Ares)

Pease, Kelly-Kate (2019). "Chapter 3: Mainstream theories", *International Organizations: Perspectives on Global Governance*. International student edition., Routledge. (Available through Ares)

Pease, Kelly-Kate (2019). "Chapter 4: Critical Theories and Approaches", *International Organizations: Perspectives on Global Governance*. International student edition., Routledge. (Available through Ares)

Session 2

12 May 2026: The history and evolution of international institutions

Archer, Clive (2001). "Chapter 1: Definitions and history", *International Organizations*, 3rd edition, New York: Routledge. (Available as an e-book in the Carleton Library)

Murphy, Craig (2023), "The Emergence of Global Governance" in Weiss, Thomas G., and Rorden Wilkinson, editors. *International Organization and Global Governance*. Third edition., Routledge. (Available through Ares)

Students will be arranged into discussion groups and have their first discussion topic based on short supplementary reading (to be posted on Brightspace)

Session 3

14 May 2026: The United Nations System

Samarasinghe, Natalie and Kuele, Giovanna (2023), "The UN System" in Weiss, Thomas G., and Rorden Wilkinson, editors. *International Organization and Global Governance*. Third edition., Routledge. (Available through Ares)

Luck, Edward (2018), "Chapter 44: Prospects for UN Renovation and Reform" in Weiss, Thomas G., and Sam Daws, editors. *The Oxford Handbook on the United Nations*. Second edition, Oxford University Press. (Available as an e-book in the Carleton Library)

United Nations Secretary General (2025), "Introduction and Way Forward" and "Towards New Paradigms in Every Pillar of Work" in *UN80 Initiative: Shifting Paradigms: United to Deliver*, Report of the Secretary General, p. 7-26, https://www.un.org/un80-initiative/sites/default/files/2025-09/UN80_WS3-1_250921_1238.pdf

Session 4

19 May 2026: Security

Williams, Paul and Bellamy, Alex (2023), "UN Security Council and Peace Operations" in Weiss, Thomas G., and Rorden Wilkinson, editors. *International Organization and Global Governance*. Third edition., Routledge. (Available through Ares)

Barkin, J. Samuel (2023), "Collective Security" in *International Organization: Theories and Institutions*. 3rd ed., Springer International Publishing. (Available as an e-book in the Carleton Library)

Buzan, Barry (1997), "Rethinking security after the Cold War", *Cooperation and Conflict*, Vol. 32, no. 1. (Available as an e-journal through Scholars Portal Journals in the Carleton Library)

Session 5

21 May 2026: Development

Marshall, Katherine, (2023), "Global Development Governance" in Weiss, Thomas G., and Rorden Wilkinson, editors. *International Organization and Global Governance*. Third edition., Routledge. (Available through Ares)

Fomerand, Jacques and Dijkzeul, Dennis (2018), "Chapter 36: UN Development System" in Weiss, Thomas G., and Sam Daws, editors. *The Oxford Handbook on the United Nations*. Second edition, Oxford University Press. (Available as an e-book in the Carleton Library)

Bond, Patrick (2006), "Global Governance Campaigning and MDGs: from top-down to bottom-up anti-poverty work", *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 27, no. 2. (Available as an e-journal through Scholars Portal Journals in the Carleton Library)

Session 6

26 May 2026: Human Rights and Humanitarianism

Due: Deadline to submit a reflection paper

Barkin, J. Samuel (2023), "Human Rights and Humanitarian Aid" in *International Organization: Theories and Institutions*. 3rd ed., Springer International Publishing. (Available as an e-book in the Carleton Library)

Crisp, Jeff (2018). "Chapter 32: Humanitarian Action and Coordination", in Weiss, Thomas G., and Sam Daws, editors. *The Oxford Handbook on the United Nations*. Second edition, Oxford University Press. (Available as an e-book in the Carleton Library)

Bellamy, Alex and Paul Williams (2011). "The new politics of protection? Côte d'Ivoire, Libya and the responsibility to protect", *International Affairs*, Vol. 87, no. 4. (Available as an e-journal through Scholars Portal Journals in the Carleton Library)

Session 7

28 May 2026: Review and introduction to group assignment

Session 8

2 June 2026: In-class mid-term (2 hours: will start at 12pm Ottawa time)

Session 9

4 June 2026: No class meeting (time for small group work)

Session 10

9 June 2026: The Future of the United Nations and Multilateralism

Acharya, Amitav (2018), "Chapter 43: Multilateralism and the Changing World Order", in Weiss, Thomas G., and Sam Daws, editors. *The Oxford Handbook on the United Nations*. Second edition, Oxford University Press. (Available as an e-book in the Carleton Library)

Woods, Ngaire (2023), "Multilateralism in the twenty-first century." *Global Perspectives* 4.1 : <https://online.ucpress.edu/gp/article/4/1/68310/195239/Multilateralism-in-the-Twenty-First-Century>

Archer, Clive (2001). "Chapter 5: International organizations: The future", *International Organizations*, 3rd edition, New York: Routledge. (Available as an e-book in the Carleton Library)

Session 11

11 June 2026: Small group presentations (30 minutes each)

- Global Arms Control and Disarmament Governance
- Global Energy Governance
- Global Environmental Governance
- Global Financial Governance

Session 12

16 June 2026: Small group presentations (30 minutes each)

- Global Health Governance
- Global Human Rights Governance
- Global Internet Governance
- Global Trade Governance

Political Science Course Outline Appendix

REQUESTS FOR ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Student Mental Health

As a university student, you may experience a range of mental health challenges that significantly impact your academic success and overall well-being. If you need help, please speak to someone. There are numerous resources available both on- and off-campus to support you. Here is a list that may be helpful:

Emergency Resources (on and off campus):

<https://carleton.ca/health/emergencies-and-crisis/emergency-numbers/>

Carleton Resources:

Mental Health and Wellbeing:

<https://carleton.ca/wellness/>

Health & Counselling Services: <https://carleton.ca/health/>

Paul Menton Centre: <https://carleton.ca/pmc/>

Academic Advising Centre (AAC):

<https://carleton.ca/academicadvising/>

Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS):

<https://carleton.ca/csas/>

Equity & Inclusivity Communities:

<https://carleton.ca/equity/>

Off Campus Resources:

Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region: (613) 238-3311 or TEXT: 343-306-5550, <https://www.dcottawa.on.ca/>

Mental Health Crisis Service: (613) 722-6914, 1-866-996-0991, <http://www.crisisline.ca/>

Empower Me: 1-844-741-6389,

<https://students.carleton.ca/services/empower-me-counselling-services/>

ood2Talk: 1-866-925-5454, <https://good2talk.ca/>

The Walk-In Counselling Clinic:

<https://walkincounselling.com>

Academic consideration for medical or other extenuating circumstances:

Students must contact the instructor(s) of their absence or inability to complete the academic deliverable within the predetermined timeframe due to medical or other extenuating circumstances. For a range of medical or other extenuating circumstances, students may use the online self-declaration form and where appropriate, the use of medical documentation. This policy regards the accommodation of extenuating circumstances for both short-term and long-term periods and extends to all students enrolled at Carleton University.

Students should also consult the [Course Outline Information on Academic Accommodations](#) for more

information. Detailed information about the procedure for requesting academic consideration can be found [here](#).

Pregnancy: Contact your Instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For accommodation regarding a formally-scheduled final exam, please contact Equity and Inclusive Communities (EIC) at equity@carleton.ca or by calling (613) 520-5622 to speak to an Equity Advisor.

Religious obligation: Contact your Instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details [click here](#).

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, please request your accommodations for this course through the [Ventus Student Portal](#) at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (*if applicable*). Requests made within two weeks will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. For final exams, the deadlines to request accommodations are published in the [academic calendar](#). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally scheduled exam (if applicable).

Survivors of Sexual Violence: As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and its survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: <https://carleton.ca/equity/sexual-assault-support-services>.

Accommodation for Student Activities: Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the

individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation will be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist.

PETITIONS TO DEFER

Students unable to write a final examination because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control may apply within **three working days** to the Registrar's Office for permission to write a deferred examination. The request must be fully supported by the appropriate documentation. Only deferral petitions submitted to the Registrar's Office will be considered. [See Undergraduate Calendar, Article 4.3](#)

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Student or professor materials created for this course (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the author(s). They are intended for personal use and may not be reproduced or redistributed without prior written consent of the author(s). Permissibility of submitting substantially the same piece of work more than once for academic credit. If group or collaborative work is expected or allowed, provide a clear and specific description of how and to what extent you consider collaboration to be acceptable or appropriate, especially in the completion of written assignments.

WITHDRAWAL WITHOUT ACADEMIC PENALTY

Please reference the [Academic Calendar](#) for each term's official withdrawal dates

OFFICIAL FINAL EXAMINATION PERIOD

Please reference the [Academic Calendar](#) for each term's Official Exam Period (may include evenings & Saturdays or Sundays)

For more information on the important dates and deadlines of the academic year, consult the [Carleton Calendar](#).

GRADING SYSTEM

The grading system is described in the Undergraduate Calendar section [5.4](#). Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity is an essential element of a productive and successful career as a student. Students are required

to familiarize themselves with the university's [Academic Integrity Policy](#).

PLAGIARISM

The University Senate defines plagiarism as "*presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one's own.*" This can include:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else, including the unauthorized use of generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT);
- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, and presenting these as one's own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another's data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in "*substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.*"

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the course's instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of "F" for the course.

RESOURCES (613-520-2600, phone ext.)

Department of Political Science (2777)	B640
Loeb	
Registrar's Office (3500)	300 Tory
Centre for Student Academic Success (3822)	4 th floor
Library	
Academic Advising Centre (7850)	302 Tory
Paul Menton Centre (6608)	501
Nideyinàn	
Career Services (6611)	401 Tory