

IS/PSCI 4984: Special Study
Regional and International Organizations
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Spring 2014

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Course Information

Course Schedule: IS/PSCI 4984 (CRN 19727)
Location: Major Williams 527

Course Description

This special study discusses the relevance and contribution of regional international organizations to regional security and stability. This course provides students the opportunity to develop skills in analysis, public speaking, to broaden their knowledge on one or more regions (Europe, Africa, and the Arab World), and to hone their diplomacy skills. Students will represent countries in a structured debate designed to foster solutions to real-world problems in a dynamic learning environment. Class will be a combination of seminar style discussions of major international issues and debate simulation.

Focus will be on two regional organizations: the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Arab League (AL). During these simulations, students will work together to write draft resolutions (or communiqués) on policies for the organization covered that week. As part of the DC-related trips, students will meet with ambassadors and embassy personnel and visit the embassy of the country they will represent at the conference.

Course Aims

The purpose of this course is to:

1. acquaint students with the idea of regionalism in world affairs,
2. make students aware of the contents and implications of the universalism versus regionalism debate,
3. familiarize students with the major security issues facing the regional international organizations under examination,
4. acquaint students with the structure and function of the regional international organizations under investigation, and
5. familiarize students with the issues and problems related to the interaction between the regional international organizations under examination and the United Nations.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this course, students will:

1. be familiar with the structure, policies, and activities of regional int'l orgs including NATO, and the Arab League and suggest possible reforms,

2. be able to identify problems in the international system and develop practical solutions to those problems in a collaborative environment and under crisis,
3. conversant with diplomacy in practice, through lectures, diplomatic simulations, and visits to embassies,
4. comprehend the complexity of major regional security issues and the constraints regional international organizations facing in addressing those issues,
5. Understand the complexity of the relations between the United Nations and the regional international organizations under examination and think of possibilities for improving their cooperation,
6. be familiar with the policies and operations of regional security institutions, and
7. Understand the applicability of International Relations Theory and security analysis to international organization both at the global and regional levels.

Rules & Regulations

Classroom conduct – Classroom discussion should be open, frank, and causal. Please respect the perspectives and inquiries of your peers and instructor. Do not interrupt someone who is speaking and refrain from deliberately demeaning language or intimidating behavior. The instructors are not and do not wish to perform the role of the class policeman. They believe in freedom of expression and personal responsibility. Therefore, students should be free to choose what they do with their time in the classroom as long as their actions (talking to each other, phone texting, phone ringing, emailing, internet surfing) do not interrupt the class operation.

Tardiness and leaving early – Please be on time. If you enter after the class has begun, sit down quietly. If you need to leave the class early, please inform the instructors.

Miscellaneous – Please turn off all cell phones or place them on ‘silent.’ You may answer emergency calls outside the classroom. Students who do not abide by this policy will be reminded the first time and dismissed from the class every time thereafter.

Grades

Grades in this class will be based heavily on participation at a conference (MNATO or MAL), which is *required* for taking this course. While students may only attend one conference (multiple conferences is allowed), they will also help prepare each team that travels. Student grades will be broken down in the following categories:

- Blogging (10%) – Students will be required to maintain a blog with content relevant to that week’s material, with the goal of helping to prepare each other for each upcoming conference. More information on blog requirements and deadlines is available on Scholar.
- One research paper (25%) - Students are required to write one research paper. Students will work in conjunction with the instructor on an appropriate topic and thesis. Paper length requirements and grading rubrics are available on Scholar. Research papers are due on the following schedule:
 - Thesis Statement: Monday, March 17 at midnight on Scholar.
 - Outline/Annotated Bibliography: Friday, April 4 at midnight on Scholar.
 - Rough Draft: Monday, April 14 at midnight on Scholar.
 - Final Draft: Friday, May 9 at 7 p.m. on Scholar.
- Preparation for conference (30%) – Students will be required during class to give short briefings on an assigned area related to our current conference preparation. Students must also submit a position paper on the policy of their committee/country assignment for each conference they attend. Finally, students must submit their research portfolio (either PDF or binder) to the instructor. More information on position papers and briefing requirements/deadlines are available on Scholar.

- Performance at conference (35%) – Students will be graded on their participation at the conference they have chosen to attend. This will be based in part on accurate representation of their country, attention to diplomatic language and parliamentary procedure, and proper representation of Virginia Tech. Should a student attend more than one conference, their performance must remain consistent across conferences, or the performance portion of the grade will suffer. Conversely, improved performance at conference will benefit the student's grade. Please note that any actions or behavior that would embarrass our team or Virginia Tech may adversely affect your final grade.

Grade Scale

Students in this course will be graded on a plus/minus system (i.e. A, A-, B+):

A: 100-93, A-: 92-90, B+: 89-87, B: 86-83, B-: 82-80, C+: 79-77, C: 76-73, C-: 72-70, D+: 69-67, D: 66-63, D-: 62-60, F: 59-0

Academic Integrity

I will not tolerate any form of academic dishonesty in this class. On all projects, we will make sure students are aware of the expected outcomes and project guidelines. All work will be appraised under the guidelines of Virginia Tech's Honor Code: <http://www.honorsystem.vt.edu/>

Students Requiring Accommodations:

If you are a student with special needs or circumstances, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible during my office hours or see me before or after class.

Readings

There is no specific textbook for this course. At minimum, students are required to read the following:

- Simulation Handbook
- Simulation material
- The website of the regional international organizations under examination
- The websites of the Member States' Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defense

Below please find a list of books pertaining to this course. Additional sources can be found in the university library, as well as on-line. Students are encouraged to consult them for preparing their assignments.

- John Akokpari *et al.*, *The African Union and Its Institutions* (Jacona Media, 2009).
- Margaret Karns and Karen Mingst, *International Organizations*, 2nd edition (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2009).
- Rodrigo Tavares, *Regional Security: The Capacity of International Organizations* (London: Routledge, 2009).
- Wallace Thies, *Why NATO Endures* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).
- Diedre Badego, *The African Union* (Chelsea House, 2008).
- Ahmed Ali Salem, *International Relations Theories and Organizations: Realism, Constructivism and Collective Security in the League of Arab States* (VDM Verlag, 2008).
- Rebecca Moore, *NATO's New Mission* (New York: Praeger, 2007).
- Chris Toffolo and Peggy Kahn, *The Arab League* (Chelsea House, 2007).

- Lawrence Kaplan, *NATO Divide, NATO United: The Evolution of an Alliance* (New York: Praeger, 2004).
- Jolyon Howorth and John Keeler, *Defending Europe: The EU, NATO and the Quest of European Autonomy* (London: Palgrave 2003).
- Stanley Sloan, *NATO, the European Union, and the Atlantic Community* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003).
- Louise Fawcett and Andrew Hurrell, *Regionalism in World Politics: Regional Organizations and International Order* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).

Course Schedule

Week 1 (January 21-24) – NO CLASS (MLK Holiday)

Week 2 (January 27-January 31) – Introduction to Regional and International Organizations. Assignment of practice countries for MNATO (team will represent Greece), Parliamentary Procedure, Basics of Resolution Writing, Initial prep for MNATO

Week 3 (February 3-7) – Prep for MNATO (MNATO Position Papers due Friday at 5 p.m. See Scholar for example under “Resources”)

Week 4 (February 10-14) – Final Prep for MNATO/**MNATO (Washington, DC) – FEBRUARY 13-16**

Week 5 (February 17-21) –Assignment of practice countries for SERMAL/NUMAL (team will represent Mauritania). Introduction to MAL.

Week 6 (February 24-February 28) – Prep for SERMAL (SERMAL Position Papers due Friday at 5 p.m.)

Week 7 (March 3-7) – Final Prep for SERMAL

Week 8 (March 10-15) – **Spring Break. SERMAL (Spartanburg, SC) – March 14-16**

Week 9 (March 17-21) – Prep for NUMAL. **THESIS STATEMENTS FOR FINAL PAPER DUE MARCH 17 AT MIDNIGHT ON SCHOLAR.**

Week 10 (March 24- 28) - Final Prep for NUMAL. **NUMAL (Washington, DC) – March 28-30**

Week 11 (March 31-April 4) – Relations between NATO and the European Union (student-led discussion based on individual research). **OUTLINE AND ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR FINAL PAPER DUE APRIL 4 AT MIDNIGHT ON SCHOLAR.**

Week 12 (April 7-11) - Relations between the African Union and the European Union (student-led discussion based on individual research)

Week 13 (April 14-18) – Relations between the Arab League and other regional organizations (GCC/OPEC/etc.) (student-led discussion based on individual research). **ROUGH DRAFT OF FINAL PAPER DUE APRIL 14 AT MIDNIGHT ON SCHOLAR.**

Week 14 (April 21-25) – Paper Workshops

Week 15 (April 28-May 2) – Class Cancelled

Week 16 (May 5-7) – Party/Recognition

FINAL PAPER IS DUE FRIDAY, MAY 9, 2014 BY 7 P.M. ON SCHOLAR.

NOTE: This schedule could change at any time. The instructor will give students proper notice of any changes.