Course Overview:

This is a graduate political science/government seminar studying international organizations and institutions. International institutions, meaning both formal organizations and less formal sets of rules, norms, and expectations, are now a common and increasing presence in international affairs. This prompts a number of questions from international relations scholars: Why do states form and act through international institutions? Can international institutions alter states’ behavior? If so, through what mechanisms? How do international institutions influence domestic politics? How does power play out in international organizations? Can international organizations create and spread new norms about appropriate behavior?

These are some of the questions that we will address throughout the semester. As a graduate seminar in the government department, most of the reading will be in the tradition of positive social science. That means that there will be a heavy emphasis on the careful exploration and development of theoretical ideas and expectations and attention to empirical evidence that can arbitrate between competing theoretical explanations.

This seminar also aims to prepare graduate students for comprehensive exams in international relations and/or conducting original and cutting edge research in the area of international organizations. The readings and assignments are organized with these goals in mind.

Readings:

We will cover approximately four to five professional journal length articles or a book equivalent each week. Students are expected to have carefully completed the readings in advance to facilitate useful discussion.

If you are planning on taking comprehensive exams in international relations, you should be familiar with, at a minimum, the required readings on the syllabus. The recommended readings are meant to provide additional, but by no means exhaustive, works that can help you prepare for exams and/or generate and conduct original research.

The following books will be available for purchase:
Assignments:

**Weekly papers:** Students are required to complete a 1-2 page reaction paper to ONE of the readings for each week. You have 3 “bye” weeks, in which you do not have to submit a paper. There are 14 weeks of class you are not required to submit a paper the first week of class, so that makes 10 reaction papers. Your reaction papers should read like a short book or article review, highlighting the key themes of the article or book chosen and pointing out the strengths and weaknesses of the piece. This will be worth 20% of your grade.

**Discussion leading:** Students will choose a topic/week to lead discussion. Discussion leading will consist of no more than a 10 minute summary of the core theme and questions from that week and then facilitation of discussion throughout the seminar. Each student will perform this task at least once and possibly twice, given the number of presenters and weeks. This will be worth 15% of your grade.

**Research design paper:** Each student will select a topic and write a research design paper, due at the end of the semester. These papers should be 20-30 pages in length, written like a professional journal article, but data analysis is optional. The focus should be on carefully developing an original research question, discussing relevant literature, and developing the logic of that original question leading to the formation of a testable hypothesis. The paper should include a plan to muster empirical evidence in order to support or refute that hypothesis. During the last two weeks of class you will deliver a conference-style presentation (15 minutes for presentation, 15-30 minutes for q&a). Combined the paper and presentation will be worth 50% of your grade. Absolutely no late papers will be accepted, pending a serious illness that physically prevents you from completing the paper, a death in the family that prevents you from completing the paper, or an otherwise legitimate life catastrophe that prevents you from completing the paper. Please notify me immediately if any of these events occurs.

**Class attendance and active participation:** Class attendance is required. The success of this seminar, in terms of what you get out of it, depends crucially on the active participation and input of everyone. 15% of your grade will therefore come from how actively you participate by asking questions, raising relevant points, and maintaining a respectful scholarly atmosphere.

**Students with disabilities:** Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259, [http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/](http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/)
Course Calendar:

**Week 1 Why States Cooperate Aug. 31**

**Recommended:**

**Week 2: Delegation Sept. 7**


**Week 3: Compliance and Cooperation Sept. 14**


*Recommended:*


**Week 4 Monitoring Sept. 21**


**Week 5 Enforcement Sept. 28**


**Recommended:**


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**Week 6 Credible Commitments and Treaty Entry Oct. 5**


**Recommended:**


**Week 7: Institutions and Domestic Politics Oct. 12**


**Recommended:**


**Week 8 Design and Flexibility Oct. 19**


**Recommended:**


**Week 9 International Law Oct. 26**


*Recommended:*


**Week 10 Dispute Settlement/Forum Shopping Nov. 2**


**Week 11 Governing Global Security Nov. 9**

*Recommended:*

**Week 12 Regional Integration November 16**

*Recommended:*

**Week 13 November 23**
Research Design Presentations

Week 14 November 30 (last day of class)

Research Design Presentations
Research Design Due in class