
POL S 122: THE UNITED NATIONS

Bellevue College, Winter 2013

TH 1:30 to 3:20 in D103

Professor: Tim Jones, Ph.D. (Please call me “Tim”)

Office: A200B

Office Hours: M/T/W/TH: 11 am to 12 pm, or by appointment.

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Course Website: <https://bc.instructure.com/courses/793449>



“More than ever before in human history, we share a common destiny. We can master it only if we face it together. And that, my friends, is why we have the United Nations.”

~Former UN Secretary General Kofi Anan

“Humor has a way of bringing people together. It unites people. In fact, I’m rather serious when I suggest that someone should plant a few whoopee cushions in the United Nations.”

~Comedian Ron Dentinger

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This three-credit course is the second in a ten-credit sequence of three courses designed for students participating in Bellevue College's (BC) Model United Nations (MUN) program. The sequence is specifically designed to prepare students to participate in the National Model United Nations (NMUN) conference in New York, NY, March 24-28, 2013. At this conference 5,000 student "delegates" from around the world come together to simulate UN committee proceedings as representatives of a country other than their own. This year we will be representing Guatemala. Student delegates at the conference write position papers, draft resolutions, negotiate with supporters and adversaries, and navigate the U.N.'s rules of procedure in an attempt to mobilize international cooperation to resolve real international problems. This is an amazing opportunity to travel to New York City, to meet with real foreign diplomats, and to visit the United Nations Headquarters. It is also a unique learning opportunity that will help you foster skills related to research, writing, public speaking, problem solving, consensus building and conflict resolution. Last quarter in POLS 121 we focused on world geography and the United Nations in general. This quarter I expect all of you to become experts (to the greatest extent possible) on (a) the *committee* to which you are assigned for the New York conference, (b) the *topics* before your committee, (c) *Guatemala's position* on each of those topics, and (d) the *rules of procedure* for the conference in New York.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. To develop an understanding of, and appreciation for, the United Nations.
2. To examine issues of global importance from the perspective of different countries.
3. To develop informed opinions about issues of global importance.
4. To prepare you for the 2013 National Model United Nations Conference in New York City.
5. To practice diplomatic skills such as research, writing, public speaking, problem solving, consensus building, conflict resolution, compromise and cooperation.

COURSE POLICIES

This is a unique course in that it is largely student-driven. I will do my best to facilitate our interactions in a fun and interesting way, and to assess your learning fairly. I expect you to do your best to actively participate in all facets of the course. ***If you do not understand something you need to take the initiative to find out the answer.*** I cannot read minds so it is up to you to try to seek clarity when it is lacking.

ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAMS

All assignments must be submitted on our course website by the due date. Emailed and hard copy write-ups will not be accepted. All major due dates are indicated on the attached syllabus. Because I believe that one of the major lessons that students learn in college is the importance of meeting deadlines, I will not accept any late work unless it has been approved by me BEFORE the date it is due or you can document a real catastrophe (for example, being medically unable to complete the work). ***All assignments turned in late will receive a grade of 0.0.*** Likewise, ***missed exams will receive a grade of 0.0.*** Make-up exams will not be administered unless you receive prior permission from

me or you can document some sort of catastrophe (such as being medically unable to take the exam).

DISABILITY RESOURCES

The Disability Resource Center (DRC) serves students with a wide array of learning challenges and disabilities. If you are a student who has a disability or a learning challenge for which you have documentation or have seen someone for treatment and if you feel you may need accommodations in order to be successful in college, please contact the DRC staff as soon as possible. The DRC office is located in B132 and the reception desk phone number is 425-564-2498. For application information and other helpful links the DRC website is <http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/drc>. Deaf students can reach the DRC by videophone at 425-440-2025 or by TTY at 425-564-4110. Finally, if you have either an apparent or non-apparent disability and require assistance in case of an emergency situation, such as a fire, earthquake, etc., please let me know early in the quarter so that we can develop an appropriate safety plan for you. Thank you.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Cheating and plagiarism (using the ideas or words of another as one's own without crediting the source) are violations of the Student Code of Conduct at Bellevue College (http://bellevuecollege.edu/policies/2/2050P_Student_Code_%28Procedures%29.asp).

Such behavior will result in a grade of 0.0 for the assignment/exam in question. Please note that these are serious offences, which can result in possible probation or suspension from Bellevue College and go on your permanent record. If you have questions about academic integrity, please familiarize yourself with BC's Student Code of Conduct and/or come talk to me during my office hours.

COURSE MATERIALS

There are no required texts that you need to purchase for this course. However, I do expect you to engage with the readings, videos, and audios that I will make available on our course website. For an introduction to the United Nations in general and the Model United Nations more specifically, I would recommend the following books, all of which are all available on Amazon:

- *Model UN Handbook: A Preparation for MUN Conferences* (\$19.00).
- *The United Nations: A Very Short Introduction* (\$11.95)
- *Basic Facts about the United Nations* (\$15.00)
- *The Winning Delegate: An Insider's Guide to Model United Nations* (\$16.95)

For more information on the history of Guatemala, U.S. involvement there, and the 36 year "civil war," I would recommend the following books:

- *The Guatemala Reader: History, Culture, Politics* (\$29.95)
- *Silence on the Mountain: Stories of Terror, Betrayal, and Forgetting in Guatemala* (\$23.95)
- *I, Rigoberta MEnchu: An Indian Woman in Guatemala* (\$22.95)
- *Bitter Fruit: The Story of the American Coup in Guatemala* (\$22.95)
- *Buried Secrets: Truth and Human Rights in Guatemala* (\$22.00)

The most important readings that you will do all quarter are the *2013 Delegate Preparation Guide* and the *Committee Background Guide* for the committee to which you

will be assigned. Both of these guides can be downloaded for free from the NMUN website: http://www.nmun.org/nmun_ny.html. All other required readings will be made available in class or on our course website.

KEEPING UP WITH THE NEWS

It is very important that you keep up with current events related to international relations, in general, and Guatemalan foreign policy, in particular. I recommend that you check in daily with a foreign news site such as *BBC* (www.bbc.co.uk) or *Al Jazeera* (<http://english.aljazeera.net>). I also recommend that you sign up for the UN News Wire (https://www.smartbrief.com/un_wire/index.jsp), and that you check in regularly with Guatemala's major English news source, *The Guatemala Times* (www.guatemala-times.com), as well as the Permanent Mission of Guatemala to the United Nations (www.guatemalaun.org).

GRADED WORK

Profile Picture Assignment	(10 pts)	2%
Syllabus Quiz	(10 pts)	2%
Office Visit	(20 pts)	3%
Attendance	(30 pts)	5%
Geography Exam	(50 pts)	8%
Final Exam	(50 pts)	8%
Draft Resolution/Report	(50 pts)	8%
Research Binder	(80 pts)	12%
Participation	(100 pts)	17%
Position Paper	(100 pts)	17%
Weekly Progress Report	(100 pts)	17%
	(600 pts)	100%

GRADEPOINT CONVERSION CHART

Grade	Points	Percentage	Grade	Points	Percentage
A	558-600	93-100%	C	438-467	73-77%
A-	540-557	90-92%	C-	420-437	70-72%
B+	528-539	88-89%	D+	408-419	68-69%
B	498-527	83-87%	D	360-407	60-67%
B-	480-497	80-82%	F	0-299	59% & Below
C+	468-479	78-79%			

PROFILE PICTURE ASSIGNMENT (10 pts ~ 2%) (DUE JANUARY 7TH)

For this assignment, you need to upload a profile picture of yourself to our course website. If you prefer not to share a picture of yourself, please upload an (appropriate) image with which you would like to be associated. Thank you!

SYLLABUS QUIZ (10 PTS ~ 2%) (DUE JANUARY 7TH)

For this assignment you need to read the syllabus and answer ten logistical questions about the class. The quiz will be made available on our course website. To access the

quiz just click on the “Assignment” button and you should see it. *To get credit for this assignment, you need to take the quiz before 1:30 pm on Monday, January 7th, 2013.* The purpose of this quiz is to make sure you (a) read the syllabus, (b) are familiar with the course schedule and my expectations, and (c) can navigate your way around our course website. I would recommend printing the syllabus so that you can easily refer to it during the quiz.

OFFICE VISIT (20 PTS ~ 3%) (DUE FEBRUARY 6TH & MARCH 14TH)

To fulfill the requirements for this assignment, you need to visit me during my office hours twice—once prior to Thursday, February 7th, and again prior to Thursday, March 14th. If you are unable to make my office hours because of a time conflict, in order to receive full credit you need to send me an email during the first two weeks of the quarter to arrange an alternative appointment time. The purpose of these office visits is threefold: (1) to break the ice so that you feel comfortable visiting my office, (2) for me to get to know you a bit better, and (3) to check-in to see how the course is going. See you soon!

ATTENDANCE (30 PTS ~ 5%)

I intend to start class on time every day and I expect you to be there when I do. Occasionally, you may find it necessary to be late, in which case I would certainly prefer that you come rather than miss the entire class. We are scheduled to meet 10 times this quarter and attendance is worth 30 points. For each class that you arrive on time you will receive three points. For each class that you arrive late you will receive one point. You will not receive any points when you miss class unless I excuse your absence. Excused absences include documented doctor’s visits, family emergencies, and school or work-related issues that are cleared with me in advance. If you miss class, you are expected to connect with one or more of your classmates to find out what you missed. I am happy to clarify what you miss during my office hours, but I will only do so after you have checked with at least one of your classmates first.

GEOGRAPHY EXAM (50 pts ~ 8%)

An important part of understanding the United Nations--and international relations more generally--is being familiar with how the world is divided up politically—in other words, knowing where countries are on a map. As motivation to expand your knowledge of world geography before the upcoming NMUN-NY conference (March 24-28, 2013), you will be tested on the 195 countries officially recognized by the United Nations. This comprehensive geography test is scheduled for *Thursday, March 7th, 2013* and it will be administered in class.

FINAL EXAM (50 pts ~ 8%)

There will be an in-class final exam on *Thursday, March 14th*. The exam itself will consist of a mix of question types, including: true-false, multiple-choice, identifications, short answer, and essay. A study-guide will be made available to you a week before the exam. The exam will be comprehensive and will focus on Guatemala, the rules of procedure, your committee, Guatemala’s position on the topics before your committee, and major current events.

DRAFT RESOLUTION/REPORT (50 pts ~ 8%)

This assignment requires you to write a draft resolution or report depending on what committee you are on for the NMUN conference in New York. You will not be able to submit this resolution at the conference—as the Delegate Preparation Guide states that, “the NMUN will not accept any pre-written resolutions or reports”—but it will give you important resolution/report writing experience. It will also indicate to me your preparedness for the conference and your level of diplomatic strategic thinking. If another person has been assigned to your committee, you will need to work with that person on this assignment. Working individually or as a team you need to submit an innovative resolution or report that you think would pass at NMUN on one of the topics being considered by your committee. Before drafting your resolution, please read the sections of the 2013 Delegate Preparation Guide entitled “Resolution and Report Writing” (pp. 20-26) and the “Sample Resolution and Report” (pp. 51-55) from the 2012 Delegate Preparation Guide. All draft resolutions need to include exactly eight preambulatory clauses and eight operative clauses; All draft reports need to address the three parts of a report: (1) Introduction, (2) Mandate, and (3) Conclusions and Recommendations. All draft resolutions and reports should be co-sponsored by Guatemala and the four countries you think would be most likely to support the ideas in your resolution or report at the conference. The deadlines for this assignment are as follows: a *rough draft is due by 1:30 pm on Thursday, March 7th*. There will be time in class for you to give each other feedback on your draft resolutions/reports before and then your *final draft is due by 1:30 pm on Thursday, March 14th*.

RESEARCH BINDER (80 pts ~ 12%)

All students must keep a research binder this quarter. This binder will help you organize your research and it will be an important reference for you at the New York conference. Binders will be evaluated on the degree to which they are well organized, thorough, and represent a sound collection of quality resources. You may organize your binders however you see fit, but I expect you to have separate sections addressing the following topics: (1) general country information, (2) general committee information, (3) specific research on issue one, (4) specific research on issue two, (5) specific research on issue three, (6) information on the rules of procedure, (7) information on resolution writing, and (8) general information on the conference. A detailed table of contents should introduce the material in the binder, and the binder needs to look like it has been used (including, highlights, underlining, notes in the margins, etc.). Your research binder is worth 50 pts and it is *due in class on Thursday, March 14th*.

PARTICIPATION (100 PTS ~ 17%)

This is not a traditional class in which I as the professor do all of the talking—in fact, I will do very little talking at you this quarter. This is a student-driven course that requires student initiative and participation. It is impossible for you to participate if you are not in class, but participation is about more than just attendance. You are expected to come to every class having completed the day’s readings, viewings, and assignments. You are also expected to regularly contribute to our in-class discussions—even if you are shy. Please come to every class with a pen or pencil, some paper, and a copy of the materials

assigned for that day. Please also make sure you participate fully in the in-class simulations as these are an important preparation for the conference.

WEEKLY PROGRESS REPORT (100 pts ~ 17%)

This assignment requires you to submit a weekly progress report summarizing what you did during the previous week and detailing what you plan to do during the next week to prepare for the conference. Each progress report needs to be a minimum of 400 words in length.

POSITION PAPER (100 pts ~ 17%)

A position paper is a succinct policy statement about a particular country's views regarding the topics being addressed in committee. For this assignment you need to write a position paper from the perspective of Guatemala about the topics being addressed in the committee to which you are assigned for the New York conference—regardless of whether you are actually attending the conference. If you have a partner on your committee, you will need to work with that person to write your position paper. To begin, I would recommend reading the sections of the Delegate Preparation Guide entitled “Researching Your Committee” (pp. 7-9), “Researching Your Agenda Topics” (pp. 9-10), and “Position Papers” (p. 10) in the 2013 Delegate Preparation Guide. I would also recommend reading the sample position paper from the 2012 Delegate preparation guide (pp. 49-50). I would then recommend reading and re-reading the *Committee Background Guide* for the committee to which you are assigned. Keep in mind that you will need to conduct substantial independent research—to learn about your committee topics from Guatemala's perspective. MUN, at its best, is student-driven, and this assignment is going to require you to be proactive, creative, and diligent. By the end of February, I expect each of you to be an expert—to the greatest extent possible—on (a) the *committee* to which you are assigned, (b) the *topics* that will be covered on your committee in New York, and (c) *Guatemala's position* on each of those topics. A ***first rough draft of your position paper is due on Canvas by 1:30 pm on Thursday, February 7th***, which means you will only have about four weeks to become an expert in these areas. There will be time in class for you to give each other feedback on your position papers and then your a ***second rough draft is due on Canvas by 1:30 pm on Thursday, February 14th***. Again, there will be time in class for you to give each other feedback on your position papers and then your ***final draft is due on Canvas by 1:30 pm on Thursday, February 21st***. Prior to submitting your position paper make sure you follow the submission guidelines exactly as they are outlined in the Delegate Preparation Guide (p. 10).