

GES 064
**THE UNITED NATIONS:
 A CRITICAL INTRODUCTION**

DR. HERMAN T. SALTON
 Associate Professor of International Relations
 Department of Politics and International Studies

1. CONTACTS

EMAIL:	salton@icu.ac.jp
OFFICE:	ERBII-230
PHONE:	0422 - 333141
ASSISTANT:	Mr Yuki Moritani Email: p003981a@icu.ac.jp

2. INSTRUCTOR

QUALIFICATIONS: B.A. in International Law (Trento, Italy)
 Ph.D. in International Law (Auckland, New Zealand)
 M.Phil. in International Relations (Oxford, UK)
 Ph.D. in International Politics (Wales, UK)

EXPERTISE: International Relations, International Law, International History
 International Organization (especially the UN), Diplomacy

PROFILE: *I am an Associate Professor of International Relations in the Department of Politics and International Studies, having joined ICU in 2018. I also serve as the Associate Director of the Rotary Peace Center, as well as ICU Human Rights Adviser.*
I was educated at the Universities of Trento (Italy), Auckland (New Zealand), Oxford (UK) and Aberystwyth (UK), and I hold two doctoral degrees, one in International Law and the other in International Relations.
Prior to joining ICU, I was an Associate Professor of Politics, Philosophy and Economics (PPE) at the Asian University for Women (AUW); a researcher at Sciences-Po in Paris; an officer at the Icelandic Human Rights Centre in Reykjavik, Iceland; a Visiting Professor at Zhejiang University in Hangzhou, China; and an Associate with the UN Under-Secretary-General's Office in New York City.
I teach and publish in the areas of international politics, international law, global institutions (especially the UN) and human rights. I have written a number of academic articles and three single-authored monographs, most recently 'Dangerous Diplomacy', which was published by Oxford University Press in 2017.
In addition to my role at ICU, I am also the Deputy Director of the Academic Council on the United Nations System (ACUNS), Tokyo Office; the Deputy Secretary-General of the Global Peacebuilding Association of Japan (GPAJ); a Senior Adviser to the Centre for Advanced Studies on South Asia in Kathmandu, Nepal; and the Secretary/Treasurer of the International Studies Association, Asia-Pacific.
For more info, see www.hermansalton.net

3. COURSE DESCRIPTION

The United Nations Organisation is a paradox of international relations. It is made up of independent States, but it is supposed to limit their excesses. It is based on the principle of sovereign equality, but it is controlled by the most powerful States. It is engaged in military operations, but it does not have an army. It was born from the ashes of the Holocaust, but it treats dictators with deference. It claims to protect human rights, but it cannot meddle in the affairs of its members. It preaches democracy, but it does not practice it.

This course serves as a critical introduction to the world's only universal organization. After outlining the basic structures and functions of the UN, it will focus on the debates and controversies that have accompanied since its birth. We will consider - with frankness, without fear, and in an intentionally 'undiplomatic way' - the Organization's successes as well as its failures. As current events show - from Covid-19 to Ukraine - the United Nations is profoundly inadequate. The question is: why? And who benefits from a weak UN?

4. LEARNING GOALS

By the end of this course, students are expected to be familiar not only with the basic structure of the UN Organization, but also with some of the challenges faced by it in the 21st Century. This includes administrative challenges but also legal and political ones, thus providing a comprehensive assessment of this unique international organization.

5. SCHEDULE

PART I STRUCTURES

WEEK 1 | 11 & 13 APRIL 2023 | OVERVIEW & HISTORY

- CL1. Introductions: Teacher, Students, Subject
- CL2. Introducing the UN, its History and its Goals

WEEK 2 | 18 & 20 APRIL 2023 | GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- CL1. Introducing the General Assembly
- CL2. Group Work, Debate & Case Studies

WEEK 3 | 25 & 27 APRIL 2023 | SECURITY COUNCIL

- CL1. Introducing the Security Council
- CL2. Group Work, Debate & Case Studies

WEEK 4 | 2 MAY 2023 | SECRETARY-GENERAL

- CL1. Introducing the Secretary-General
- CL2. No class (Golden Week)

WEEK 5 | 9 & 11 MAY 2023 | SECRETARIAT & INT'L COURT OF JUSTICE

- CL1. Introducing the Secretariat and the International Court of Justice
- CL2. Group Work, Debate & Case Studies

PART II: THEMES

WEEK 6 | 16 & 18 MAY 2023 | PEACE OPERATIONS

- CL1. Introducing UN Peace Operations
- CL2. Group Work, Debate & Case Studies

WEEK 7 | 23 & 25 MAY 2023 | INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT

- CL1. Introducing the International Criminal Court
- CL2. Group Work, Debate & Case Studies

WEEK 8 | 30 MAY & 1 JUNE 2023 | MULTILATERALISM & CHANGING WORLD ORDER

- CL1. Introducing Multilateralism
- CL2. Group Work, Debate & Case Studies

WEEK 9 | 6 & 8 JUNE 2023 | REFORM OF THE UNITED NATIONS

- CL1. Introducing UN Reform
- CL2. Group Work, Debate & Case Studies

WEEK 10 | 13 & 15 JUNE 2023 | FINAL ESSAY & CONCLUSION

- CL1. Final Essay (in class)
- CL2. Conclusion

6. LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION

Lectures:	English
Readings/Materials:	English
Essays/Presentations:	English
Communication with Instructor:	English/French/Spanish/Italian

7. GRADING POLICY

Group Presentations:	30%	<i>Topic: Assigned at Start of Course, Depends on Student Numbers</i>
Attendance/Participation:	20%	<i>Your Active Participation is Encouraged</i>
Final Paper (No Exam):	50%	<i>Topic: The IR of an African Country of Your Choosing</i>

Grades matter and you should strive to obtain the best possible grade. However, *the way* you study and approach the subject is even more important. In this course, factual knowledge is insufficient; participation to class discussions and critical thinking is what will make the difference in terms of grades and—far more importantly—in terms of your learning. Consequently, the mere memorization of facts will not take you far—only the critical assessment of them will. What I am interested in is your own approach to a certain theme. However, you will only be able to acquire this analytical capacity if you do the readings *before* coming to class and if you participate in the discussions. Remember: analytical reasoning without facts is impossible, but facts without an analytical framework are useless! Both are required and both will be assessed throughout the course.

8. INDEPENDENT STUDY

Study time depends greatly on the student's attitude and abilities. The best performers will have done the readings carefully, perform well in presentations, participate actively in class discussions, and finished their final paper at least a few days before the deadline.

9. COURSE FORMAT

The course involves a mixture of lectures, discussions and presentations. All classes will be interactive: in my view, the role of the teacher is not to offer correct answers but to raise questions, especially in a course like this one that deals with a wide range of topics. As a result, it will not be enough to come to class: you will need to be proactive and participate in the discussions. Naturally some of you will be shyer than others, which is fine (the best students are not the most talkative!) But you need to interact with myself and your peers.

10. REQUIRED READINGS

All readings will be uploaded on Moodle before class. The textbook is:

Thomas G. Weiss & Sam Daws (eds)
The Oxford Handbook on the United Nations
Oxford University Press, 2018

11. FURTHER READINGS

You may also find the following readings useful, especially as a critical introduction to the topics discussed in class:

Thomas G. Weiss, *What is Wrong with the United Nations and How to Fix it*, Polity Press, 2009.

Thomas G. Weiss, *Would the World Be Better Off Without the UN?*, Polity Press, 2018.

/END OF DOCUMENT/