

**NYU****SCHOOL OF  
PROFESSIONAL STUDIES**

M.S. in Global Affairs  
**THE UNITED NATIONS AND 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY CHALLENGES**  
**GLOB1-GC 2645.001**  
Fall 2021  
Class Format: In person

**GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION**

Instructor: [Dr. Waheguru Pal Sidhu](#), Clinical Professor

E-mail: [wpssidhu@nyu.edu](mailto:wpssidhu@nyu.edu) (please use the Brightspace messages tool or NYU email to send messages to set up meetings or for any other course-related queries)

Office Hours: I will be available to meet before and during the course by appointment. During the course, I will also be available between 15:30–18:30 (EST) on Wednesdays.

Course Schedule: Fall 2021 (8 September to 8 December 2020)

Wednesdays, 12:30–15:10, Room 421

Credits: 3 credits

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Building on the foundational “The United Nations” course (GLOB1-GC 2345.001), this course will enable students to examine in-depth the global challenges confronting the United Nations in the 21st century and efforts to address them. These challenges range from complex great power geopolitical contestations; the growing peacekeeping mandates to protecting civilians, countering terrorism, and tackling pandemics (such as Covid-19); to addressing the political, technical, and financial hurdles in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals; to mitigating the climate change crises, including managing natural disasters, and climate refugee flows; and to understanding the potential of emerging technologies (artificial intelligence, drones, cyberspace, revolution in information and telecommunication, social media) with the objective of enhancing global digital cooperation and reducing digital confrontation. Students will study these challenges through a series of in-person lectures, official briefings, and simulations & negotiation exercises to enhance their policy-making skills.

This course will cover the following topics:

- Overview of emerging and future 21<sup>st</sup> century global challenges, notably COVID-19;
- Impact on the UN of the resurgence of great power geopolitical contestations;
- UN peace operations, protection of civilians, counter terrorism, and pandemics;
- Technological & financial challenges to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially Goals 13, 14, 15 and 16;
- Challenges to coordinating humanitarian assistance in the Covid-19 era;
- The UN and emerging technologies and the prospects of multilateral digital cooperation; and
- Reform of the UN

**COURSE PREREQUISITES**

The United Nations (GLOB1-GC 2345.001) course is required to be completed first if you are doing the UN Specialization, but not necessary if you are not.

## **COURSE STRUCTURE/METHOD**

This course meets in person for 14 weekly sessions of 2 hours and 40 minutes each, and relies on a combination of lectures, in-class group work, discussion, and debate as well as briefings by UN experts. Students will be expected to present book reviews, and policy briefs based on the readings, lecture, and a close tracking of global news events involving the UN. Additionally, students will also be expected to participate in simulations/ exercises, attend panel discussions, and write memos and event reports.

## **COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES**

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Develop theoretical and practical understanding of the nature of the emerging and future 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges and how the UN system is coping with them.
- Develop skills and ability to analyze emerging and future challenges, as well as identify possible solutions, with due consideration to political, economic, cultural, legal and socio-economic factors.
- Have practical, hands-on experience – through exercises/simulations and report/memo writing – of dealing with these challenges within the UN system.

## **COMMUNICATION POLICY**

Students may communicate with me through NYU email or Brightspace messages tool. All email inquiries will be answered within 24 hours.

Please be sure to frequently check the “Announcements” tab within the course. This will be the main method I communicate with the class other than email. This is the best way to post time-sensitive information critical to your success within the course. Information that I might send out would be:

- Due dates for assignments and projects
- Changes to your syllabus
- Corrections/clarifications of materials

Please be sure to contact me directly via NYU email should you have any questions regarding any announcement.

## **REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS AND COURSE MATERIALS**

The following material is required and available either via [NYU Libraries](#) or to buy at the NYU Book Store (726 Broadway):

1. Kofi Annan, *We the Peoples: The Role of the United Nations in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, (New York: UN Department of Public Information, 2000), available [here](#).
2. *Basic Facts about the United Nations* (42<sup>nd</sup> edition) (New York: United Nations Department of Public Information, 2017), available [here](#).
3. *Charter of the United Nations*, available [here](#).
4. Linda Fasulo, *An Insider's Guide to the UN*, (3<sup>rd</sup> edition), (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015), available [here](#) with NYU login.
5. Karen A. Mingst, Margaret P. Karns, and Alynna J. Lyon, *The United Nations in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Dilemmas in World Politics*, (5<sup>th</sup> edition) (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2017), available [here](#) with NYU login.

6. Thomas G. Weiss and Sam Daws (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook on the United Nations* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition) (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), available [here](#) with NYU login.

The syllabus includes additional specific reading materials that will be on Brightspace. These readings provide background knowledge about the class lessons and must be read **before the class session** where that material will be discussed.

## **Additional Resources**

### **a. International non-governmental organizations and think tanks**

American Society of International Law: [www.asil.org](http://www.asil.org)  
Amnesty International: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/what-we-do/united-nations/>  
Business and Human Rights: <http://www.business-humanrights.org/>  
Center for Global Development: <http://www.cgdev.org/>  
Center for UN Reform Education: <http://www.centerforunreform.org/>  
Center on International Cooperation, New York University: <http://cic.nyu.edu/>  
CIVICUS: <http://www.civicus.org/>  
Freedom House: [www.freedomhouse.org](http://www.freedomhouse.org)  
Global Center for the Responsibility to Protect: <http://www.globalr2p.org>  
Global Center on Cooperative Security: <https://www.globalcenter.org>  
Global Policy Forum: <http://www.globalpolicy.org/>  
Human Rights Watch: <https://www.hrw.org/topic/united-nations>  
International Committee of the Red Cross: <https://www.icrc.org/en>  
International Council on Human Rights: <http://www.ichrp.org/en/themes>  
International Crisis Group: <https://www.crisisgroup.org>  
International Network for Economic, Social & Cultural Rights: [www.escr-net.org](http://www.escr-net.org)  
International Peace Institute: <http://www.ipinst.org/>  
NGO Coalition for the ICC: <http://www.iccnw.org/>  
Parliamentarians for Global Action: <https://www.pgaction.org/>  
Physicians for Human Rights: [www.phrusa.org](http://www.phrusa.org)  
Politically Speaking: <https://dppa-ps.atavist.com>  
Religious freedom: <http://www.forum18.org/>  
Security Council Report: <http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/>  
South Centre: <http://www.southcentre.org/>  
Transparency International: <http://www.transparency.org/>  
UN Chronicle: <https://www.un.org/en/chronicle>  
UN Watch: <http://www.unwatch.org/>  
United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR): <https://www.unidir.org>  
United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD): <http://www.unrisd.org>  
United Nations University, Center for Policy Research (UNU-CPR): <https://cpr.unu.edu>

### **b. Government/intergovernmental**

African Union (AU): <https://au.int/>  
Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN): <http://asean.org/>  
Caribbean Community (Caricom): <http://caricom.org/>  
Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS): <http://www.cisstat.com/eng/cis.htm>  
Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS): <http://www.ecowas.int/>  
European Union (EU): [https://europa.eu/european-union/index\\_en](https://europa.eu/european-union/index_en)

Group of 77 developing countries (G-77): <http://www.g77.org>.  
 League of Arab States (LAS): [http://www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/arab\\_league.htm](http://www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/arab_league.htm)  
 Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)  
 Organization of American States (OAS): <https://www.oas.org/en/default.asp>.  
 Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF):  
<https://www.francophonie.org/Welcome-to-the-International.html>  
 Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC—Official) <http://www.oic-oci.org>.  
 Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE): <http://www.osce.org/>.  
 South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC): <http://saarc-sec.org/>.  
 The Commonwealth: <http://thecommonwealth.org/>.  
 US Department of State, International Organization Affairs: <http://www.state.gov/p/io/>.  
 US Mission to the United Nations: <http://www.un.int/usa/>.

### **c. Useful periodicals on international organization, international relations and the United Nations**

<i>Alternatives: Global, Local, Political</i> <i>American Journal of International Law</i> <i>Ethics and International Affairs</i> <i>Foreign Affairs</i> <i>Foreign Policy</i> <i>Global Governance</i> <i>Global Society</i> <i>Globalizations</i> <i>Human Rights Quarterly</i> <i>International Affairs</i> <i>International Feminist Journal of Politics</i> <i>International Journal on World Peace</i> <i>International Organization</i> <i>International Peacekeeping</i> <i>International Relations (London)</i> <i>International Security</i> <i>International Studies Review</i> <i>International Studies Perspectives</i> <i>International Studies Quarterly</i> <i>Interventions: The International Journal of Post-Colonial Studies</i>	<i>Journal of Conflict Resolution</i> <i>Journal of Human Rights</i> <i>Journal of Human Rights Practice</i> <i>Journal of Humanitarian Assistance</i> <i>Journal of International Affairs</i> <i>New Political Economy</i> <i>Peacekeeping and International Relations</i> <i>Population and Development Review</i> <i>The Review of International Affairs</i> <i>Review of International Studies</i> <i>Security and Human Rights</i> <i>Seton Hall Journal of Diplomacy and International Relations</i> <i>Third World Quarterly</i> <i>Transnational Organized Crime</i> <i>UN Chronicle</i> <i>World Affairs</i> <i>World Politics</i>
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## **COURSE EXPECTATIONS**

### **Attendance**

Attendance will be taken into consideration when assigning final grades. Please contact me at least 24 hours in advance of the excused absence and arrange to make up missed work or examinations. Unjustified absences may lower your grade. Per SPS guidelines, **any more than two (2) absences (other than for verifiable medical or similar reasons) during the Fall and Spring and one (1) absence during the summer will likely lead to a need to withdraw from the course or a failing grade.**

Students who miss class for medical reasons are required to notify their instructor of their absence and may be asked to produce documentation.

Students who plan to miss classes for religious reasons are expected to inform instructors beforehand and to be responsible for assignments given during their absence. For university policies on religious holidays please check:

<https://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/university-calendar-policy-on-religious-holidays.html>.

### **Classroom Expectations**

As most of the sessions will feature guest speakers, you are expected to conduct yourselves in a professional manner. Please make sure your cell phones (and anything else that beeps, rings, vibrates, or makes noise) are turned off during class. **Use of electronic devices is not allowed in class as it is distracting to other students and discourteous to speakers.** E-mails etc. can be checked during the break.

SPS classrooms are diverse and include students who range in age, culture, learning styles, and levels of professional experience. To maintain an inclusive environment that ensures all students can equally participate with and learn from each other, as well as receive feedback and instruction from faculty during group discussions in the classroom, all course-based discussions and group projects should occur in a language that is shared among all participants.

### **Time Commitment**

As you begin this course, you would be wise to schedule 10-12 or more hours per week for studying materials and completing assignments.

### **Assignments & Deadlines**

To pass this course, students must complete **all** assignments (see assessment section for description, due dates, and penalties for late assignments) and receive a passing grade. All assignments must be uploaded to the “Assignments” tool in Brightspace. Assignments will not be accepted through email. Each assignment sub-folder will include the detailed assignment description and grading criteria/rubric. The number of the assignments and their due dates are on the course outline that follows. Late assignments are not accepted without prior permission from me and cannot be granted more than once throughout the semester. Failure to submit assignments on time will result in a grade reduction.

## **ASSESSMENT STRATEGY**

Grading in this course is based upon the following activities and assignments. Since all graded assignments are related directly to course objectives, failure to complete any assignment will result in an unsatisfactory course grade. All written assignments are to be completed using APA format and must be typed and double-spaced. Grammar, punctuation, and spelling will be considered in grading. Please carefully proof-read your written assignments before submitting them for a grade.

<b>Component</b>	<b>Percentage of Overall Grade</b>
Class Preparation & Participation	20%
Book Review	20%
Event Report	20%
Policy Memo	30%
Policy Presentation	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **Class Preparation & Participation (20%)**

Students are expected to attend all class sessions. In addition to being present, your **participation grade entails being on time and prepared, staying focused, and being active, respectful, and collegially engaged in class discussion and group activities that demonstrates meaningful knowledge of the assigned readings and current events.** To that end, it is important to have prepared by completing the required readings before class so that you will be able to contribute to class discussion. I also recommend taking some notes on the readings that you can refer back to. Students are also encouraged to consult readings beyond those assigned and become familiar with the current discourse on the UN. Participation grades (like other grades) will be assigned according to the SPS Grading Policy table below.

### **Book Review (20%)**

**Students will be assigned a book chapter or article to review from one of the prescribed readings. The review should be no longer than 500-750 words.** The review should provide a synopsis of the main arguments as well as a critique of the chosen reading. Students will then present the review in class during the reading seminar. Each week (from week 2 to week 13) the class will begin with a book review and reading seminar for about 30-45 minutes. The book review grades will be determined by the clarity with which the main argument of the reading is presented as well as the robustness of its critique. All book reviews must be submitted by **noon on Wednesday, 6 October 2021.**

### **Event Report (20%)**

As part of the course **each student will be assigned to write an event report. The expected length of the event report is 500-750 words.** The grade will be determined by how accurately the report sums up the deliberations of the panel, as well as the overall conclusion of the discussion, and the clarity of the writing. **The report will be due a week after the event.** The best event report will be posted on the CGA website.

### **Policy Memo (30%):**

Students are required to write a policy memo on one relevant 21<sup>st</sup> century challenge faced by the UN that is of interest (e.g. peace operations, implementing the SDGs, tackling complex humanitarian crises, dealing with emerging technologies, and the prospects of reforming the UN etc.). The memos should include a brief executive summary (1 paragraph), an assessment of the issue and the severity of the challenge, and recommend potential courses of action. The memo should be written to a practitioner or policymaker and highlight key points and findings excluding superfluous language. The memo should be between 2000-2500 words (excluding references). The memo should use in-text citations or footnotes and include additional page(s) of references. The policy memo will be graded on its clear understanding of the issues at hand, the analysis of the response, and the originality of the recommendation, and the clarity of the writing. **The memos are due at noon on Wednesday, 1 December 2021.**

### **Policy Presentation (10%):**

**All students will present their policy memo in class on Wednesday, 8 December 2021.** The briefing should be between 7 to 10 minutes and be presented as if one were addressing policymakers or practitioners on a critical issue in a limited amount of time. Remember, these are busy people so you need to convey the important issues and facts as quickly and clearly as possible. **You should practice your briefing to ensure that the key points are covered in the allotted time.** The presentation will be judged on the ability to present the memo in an interesting, lucid and professional manner appropriate to the audience.



**Note:** All written assignments must be submitted in **Word format only** (not Pages or PDF) with standard margins and font (Times New Roman, 11-12 pt). Students are free to use any method of in-text citation or footnotes that they choose **so long as all sources are properly referenced and the citation method selected is consistent throughout the assignment. Unexcused late assignments will be penalized one full letter grade for every 24 hours that they are overdue.** Students are expected to use proper grammar and think seriously about the organization and style of their writing. **You will be penalized for sloppy, incoherent, or poorly organized writing.**

**Midterm grades** will be announced at the beginning of November 2021 and will be determined by your class participation to date (10%), book review (20%), and event report (20%). The final grades will be the total of the midterm grade plus class participation to date (10%), policy memo (30%) and presentation (10%) grades.

All written work must be submitted via the Assignment Tool on Brightspace. All required assignments in this course will be scanned by Turnitin plagiarism-detection software.

## **NYU-SPS POLICIES**

“NYUSPS policies regarding the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Academic Integrity and Plagiarism, Students with Disabilities Statement, and Standards of Classroom Behavior among others can be found on the NYU Classes Academic Policies tab for all course sites as well as on the University and NYUSPS websites. Every student is responsible for reading, understanding, and complying with all of these policies.”

The full list of policies can be found at the web links below:

- University: <http://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance.html>
- Student Affairs and Reporting- <https://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/student-services.html>
- NYUSPS: <http://sps.nyu.edu/academics/academic-policies-and-procedures.html>

### **Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy**

All students are expected to be honest and ethical in all academic work. This trust is shared among all members of the University community and is a core principle of American higher education. Any breaches of this trust will be taken seriously. A hallmark of the educated student and good scholarship is the ability to acknowledge information derived from others. Students are expected to be scrupulous in crediting those sources that have contributed to the development of their ideas.

Plagiarism involves borrowing or using information from other sources without proper and full credit. Students are expected to demonstrate how what they have learned incorporates an understanding of the research and expertise of scholars and other appropriate experts; and thus recognizing others' published work or teachings—whether that of authors, lecturers, or one's peers—is a required practice in all academic projects. Students are subject to disciplinary actions for the following offenses which include but are not limited to:

- Cheating
- Plagiarism
- Forgery or unauthorized use of documents
- False form of identification

**Lateness policy**

All students must attend class regularly. Your contribution to classroom learning is essential to the success of the course. Per SPS guidelines, any more than **two** absences during term will likely lead to a need to withdraw from the course or a failing grade.

**Incomplete policy**

Incompletes are only granted in extreme cases such as illness or other family emergency and only where almost all work for the semester has been successfully completed. A student's procrastination in completing his/her paper is not a basis for an Incomplete.

Use the link below to read more about Academic Integrity Policies at the NYU School of Professional Studies. [Academic Policies for NYU SPS Students](#)

**Student Resources**

Students seeking academic help in their studies can use university resources in addition to an instructor's office hours. University Resources include the [Academic Advising](#), [Writing Center](#), [Career Center](#), Tutoring Center, [Learning Center](#), and [Student Affairs](#). The centers provide services such as tutoring, writing help, critical thinking, study skills, degree planning, and student employment.

**Writing Assistance**

Some students may find it difficult to write academic papers in a clear and concise manner. Because writing is one of the most important skills for a professional in global affairs, we highly recommend that any students experiencing difficulties with writing should seek assistance. One free, on-campus resource is the NYU Writing Center, located at 411 Lafayette St., 3rd Floor, Telephone: 212 998-8866 Email: [writingcenter@nyu.edu](mailto:writingcenter@nyu.edu). Additional resources are also available for international students through SPS at:

<https://www.sps.nyu.edu/homepage/student-experience/International-Students.html>

For a complete list of student resources, Students can visit the [NYU SPS Office of Student Affairs Resource and Services](#) page.

**Students With Disabilities**

If you are a student with a disability who is requesting accommodations, please contact New York University's Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) at 212-998-4980 or [mosescsd@nyu.edu](mailto:mosescsd@nyu.edu). You must be registered with CSD to receive accommodations. Information about the Moses Center can be found at [www.nyu.edu/csd](http://www.nyu.edu/csd). The Moses Center is located at 726 Broadway on the 3rd floor.

**Health and Wellness**

To access the University's extensive health and mental health resources, contact the NYU Wellness Exchange. You can call its private hotline (212-443-9999), available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to reach out to a professional who can help to address day-to-day challenges as well as other health-related concerns.

**NYU SCHOOL OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES GRADUATE GRADING SCALE**

Grading for graduate programs is by letter grade: A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, and F. For



NYUSPS's complete graduate grading policies, including criteria for a grade of incomplete, taking a course on a pass/fail basis, and withdrawing from a course, see:  
<https://www.sps.nyu.edu/homepage/student-experience/policies-and-procedures.html#Graduate1>

<b>Letter</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>GPA</b>	<b>Descriptions</b>	<b>Definitions</b>
A	95-100	4.0	Exceptional	Demonstrates exceptional mastery of all learning outcomes of the course and thorough and complete understanding of all concepts.
A-	90-94	3.7	Excellent	Demonstrates highly competent mastery of all learning outcomes of the course and strong understanding of all concepts.
B+	87-89	3.3	Very Good; exceeds course standards	Demonstrates mastery of all learning outcomes of the course and understanding of core concepts.
B	83-86	3.0	Good; meets course standards	Demonstrates mastery of some learning outcomes; understanding of some core concepts could be improved.
B-	80-82	2.7	Somewhat Satisfactory; meets some course standards and requires improvement	Demonstrates basic understanding of some learning outcomes; improved understanding of all core concepts is needed.
C+	77-79	2.3	Less than Satisfactory; requires significant improvement	Demonstrates partial understanding of all learning outcomes and core concepts; requires significant improvement.
C	73-76	2.0	Unsatisfactory; requires substantial improvement	Demonstrates partial understanding of some learning outcomes and core concepts; requires substantial improvement.
C-	70-72	1.7	Unsatisfactory; requires extensive improvement	Demonstrates poor understanding of all learning outcomes and core concepts; requires extensive improvement.
F	Below 70	0.0	Fail	Demonstrates minimal to no understanding of all key learning outcomes and core concepts; work is unworthy of course credit towards the degree.

## Tips for Reading, and Class Discussion<sup>1</sup>:

- Some of the readings are descriptive, these are intended to provide context for thinking about a specific kind of threat. As you read these try to identify key facts or examples that you find puzzling and/or surprising.
- Some of the readings are theoretical, providing you with ways of thinking about the issue we are studying. Before approaching each theoretical reading think about key contemporary events and how that reading relates to them. Then skim over the reading to get a sense of the themes it covers, and, before reading further, jot down what questions you hope the reading will be able to answer for you. Next, read the introduction and conclusion. This is normally enough to get a sense of the big picture. Ask yourself: Are the claims in the text surprising? Do you believe them? Can you think of examples of places that do not seem consistent with the logic of the argument? Is the reading answering the questions you hoped it would answer? If not, is it answering more or less interesting questions than you had thought of? Next ask yourself: What types of evidence or arguments would you need to see in order to be convinced of the results? Now read through the whole text, checking as you go through how the arguments used support the claims of the author.
- **For any reading, you should keep notes as you read.** When you come across issues that you are not convinced by, write them down and bring them along to class for discussion. Also note when you are pleasantly surprised, when the author produced a convincing argument that you had not thought of.

## COURSE OUTLINE

### **Session 1, 8 September 2021: Introduction**

*Overview of the present and emerging challenges and their impact on the UN's role in peace and security, development, and human rights and humanitarian issues. Overall description of the course, detailed explanation of the syllabus, course requirements, grading criteria.*

#### Readings:

1. Kofi Annan, *We the Peoples: The Role of the United Nations in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, (New York: United Nations Department of Public Information, 2000), available [here](#).
2. Bruce Jones & Susana Malcorra, *Competing for Order: Confronting the Long Crisis of Multilateralism* (Brookings & IE School of Global & Public Affairs) 2020.
3. Karen A. Mingst, Margaret P. Karns, and Alynna J. Lyon, *The United Nations in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Dilemmas in World Politics*, (5<sup>th</sup> edition) (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2017), chapters 1-2.
4. Thomas G. Weiss and Sam Daws, "The United Nations: Continuity and Change", in Thomas G. Weiss and Sam Daws (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook on the United Nations* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition) (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), available [here](#) with NYU login.
5. UN75 Final Report, *Shaping Our Future Together*, (New York: United Nations, 2021) available [here](#).

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<sup>1</sup> These are taken from Marcatan Humphrey's syllabus for a graduate course on political violence.

## **Session 2, 15 September 2021: Resurgence of great power contestation**

*What is the impact of the ongoing geopolitical contest between the permanent five (P5) members of the UN Security Council on the UN? What is the impact of the contest between the P5 and non-P5 rising powers on the UN as well as the possible role of the UN in managing these competitions.*

### Readings:

1. Seven Opportunities for the UN in 2019-2020, *ICG Special Briefing*, No. 2, 12 September 2019, available [here](#).
2. Richard Gowan, Learning to live with a limited Security Council, *ICG Commentary*, 29 July 2021 available [here](#).
3. Richard Gowan & Ashish Pradhan, The COVID-19 Pandemic & Deadly Conflict, *ICG Commentary*, 4 August 2020.
4. Sebastian von Einsiedel et al., *The UN Security Council in an Age of Great Power Rivalry UNU Working Paper 04*, 2015, available [here](#).

## **Session 3, 22 September 2021: Peace and security: the changing nature of armed conflict**

*What are the factors behind the changing nature of armed conflict in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century? What explains the resurgence of civil wars, the growing role of non-state actors, the rise in importance of jihadi networks, and the impact of transnational crime? How do these dynamics challenge the traditional forms and tools of conflict prevention?*

### Readings:

1. COVID-19 and Conflict: Seven Trends to Watch, *ICG Special Briefing*, No. 4, 24 March 2020, available [here](#).
2. Sebastian von Einsiedel, "Civil War Trends and the Changing Nature of Armed Conflict," United Nations University, *Occasional Paper 10*, 2017 available [here](#).
3. Mary Kaldor, *New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era*, (3<sup>rd</sup> edition) (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2012), chapters 1-3.
4. Stathis Kalyvas, "'New' and 'Old' Wars—A Valid Distinction?" *World Politics*, 54(1) (2001) 99-118.
5. David Harland, "War is Back: The International Response to Armed Conflict," *Center for Security Studies*, Zurich, 2017, available [here](#).

## **Session 4, 29 September 2021: Peace and security: armed groups and violent extremism**

*What are the factors behind the changing dynamics of armed group formation globally, especially groups prone to violent extremism. What are the various pathways into and out of armed group activity, and how can the UN and other actors engage with groups in a variety of settings.*

### Readings:

1. Mara Revkin, "Law and Lawfare in the Islamic State" *LAWFARE BLOG*, available [here](#).
2. Amanda E. Rogers, Viewing Non-State Armed Groups from a Brand Marketing Lens: A Case Study of Islamic State, United Nations University, available [here](#).

3. Siobhan O'Neil, "Trajectories of Children Into and Out of Non-State Armed Groups", chapter in Siobhan O'Neil and Kato Van Broekhoven (eds.), *Cradled by Conflict: Child Involvement with Armed Groups in Contemporary Conflict*, (Tokyo: UN University Press, 2018), available [here](#).
4. Kato Van Broeckhoven, "A Complex Programming Landscape" in Siobhan O'Neil and Kato Van Broekhoven (eds.), *Cradled by Conflict: Child Involvement with Armed Groups in Contemporary Conflict*, (Tokyo: UN University Press, 2018), available [here](#).

### **Session 5, 6 October 2021: Peace and security: conflict management and peacekeeping**

*What conflict management tools – including multi-dimensional peacekeeping – has the UN employed in an attempt to manage conflict in increasingly complex environments? How effective has the UN been in its utility of the use of force, counter-terrorism, and attempts at reforming to improve its conflict response capacities?*

**\*\*\* Deadline for all book reviews \*\*\***

#### **Readings:**

1. Larry Attree et. al., "UN Peace Operations in Complex Environments", *Saferworld*, 2018.
2. Mats Berdal and David Ucko, "The Use of Force in UN Peacekeeping Operations, Problems and Prospects", *RUSI Journal*, 160:1 (2015) available [here](#).
3. Arthur Boutellis, "Can the UN Stabilize Mali? Towards a UN Stabilization Doctrine", *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development* 4(1) (2015), available [here](#).
4. Bruno Charbonneau, "Intervention in Mali: building peace between peacekeeping and counterterrorism," *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 35:4 (2017).
5. Adam Day, *Improving Security Council Practice in Mission Settings* (New York: UNU-CPR, 2020).
6. Jason Stearns, "Can force be useful without a political strategy? Lessons from UN missions to the Congo", *Congo Research Group*, 2015.
7. David Ucko, "Preventing violent extremism through the United Nations: the rise and fall of a good idea", *International Affairs*, 94:2 (2018) 251-270, available [here](#) with NYU login.

### **Session 6, 13 October 2021: Simulation on peace and security**

*In this session, a scenario will be provided in which a setting moves from extremely tense into more widespread conflict. Students will be asked to draw from the peace and security classes and design a strategy to respond to the situation as it evolves. Tools of conflict prevention (e.g. early warning, deployment of mediators, sanctions) will need to be combined with those of conflict management (deployment of missions, peacemaking, possible use of force) and tied to longer-term peacebuilding to build an effective strategic response.*

### **Session 7, 20 October 2021: Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

*What are the primary political, technical, and financial hurdles to implementing the SDGs in general? What are the ongoing efforts to address these hurdles, especially innovative partnerships within and outside the UN, the role of cities, and civil society?*

#### **Readings:**

1. Independent Group of Scientists appointed by the Secretary-General, *Global Sustainable Development Report 2019: The Future is Now – Science for Achieving Sustainable Development*, (New York: United Nations, 2019) available [here](#).
2. *The Sustainable Development Goals Report*, 2021 (New York: United Nations, 2021) available [here](#).
3. Sakiko Fukuda-Parr, “Sustainable Development Goals”, in Thomas G. Weiss and Sam Daws (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook on the United Nations*, (2<sup>nd</sup> edition) (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018).
4. Jason Hickel, “The contradiction of the sustainable development goals: Growth versus ecology on a finite planet”, *Sustainable Development*, Vol. 27 No. 5, 2019.
5. Saadia Madsbjerg, “A New Role for Foundations in Financing the Global Goals”, *Rockefeller Foundation*, September 2017 available [here](#).
6. Belay Begashaw, “Africa and the Sustainable Development Goals: A long way to go”, *Brookings*, July 2019 available [here](#).

### **Session 8, 27 October 2021: Mitigating climate crises OR Panel discussion on Covid-19**

*This session will specifically focus on SDG 13 (climate action), 14 (life below water), and 15 (life on land), which are related to the ongoing climate change induced crises. At the strategic level, what are the results of the ongoing UN efforts to mitigate the climate change crises, including its role in convening public-private partnership, and engaging corporations, cities, and civil society? At the tactical level, what are the link between climate change crises, natural disasters, and refugees as well as the UN's role in managing these new challenges?*

#### **Readings:**

1. Franz Baumann, “The systemic challenge of global heating”, *International Politics Reviews*, October 2018, 134-144 available [here](#).
2. “Summary for Policymakers” from *Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021).
3. Linda Fasulo, *An Insider's Guide to the UN*, (3<sup>rd</sup> edition) (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015), chapter 11.
4. Maria Ivanova, “Climate Change,” in Thomas G. Weiss and Sam Daws (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook on the United Nations*, (2<sup>nd</sup> edition) (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018).
5. 2015 Paris climate change agreement, available [here](#).
6. *Report of the Secretary-General on the 2019 Climate Action Summit and The Way Forward in 2020* (New York: United Nations, 2019), available [here](#).
7. William Sweet, *Climate Diplomacy from Rio to Paris* (New Have: Yale University Press, 2016), 61-90 and 119-185.

### **Session 9, 3 November 2021: Climate change negotiations exercise**

*In this UN simulation exercise, students will practice applying international problem-solving and negotiation skills to the global challenge of climate change. In advance, students will be assigned a country, a background brief and membership of a negotiating bloc in the UNFCCC Paris climate negotiations. Negotiation blocs should prepare their positions and tactics in advance, and come to class ready to undertake two rounds of negotiations. The negotiation outcomes will be assessed by students for their likely impact on global temperature increases (software will be available in class). The UN simulation will shed light on the scale of the threat posed by climate change; the global and multilateral nature of the response that is*

needed; and the key ingredients that make international agreements succeed or fail. In advance, students should also read:

Readings:

1. Dimitrov, Radoslav. "The Paris Agreement on Climate Change: Behind Closed Doors". *Global Environmental Politics*, Vol 16, No 3, August 2016, pp. 1-11. Available at: [http://politicalscience.uwo.ca/people/faculty/full-time\\_faculty/GEP%20Paris%20Agreement.pdf](http://politicalscience.uwo.ca/people/faculty/full-time_faculty/GEP%20Paris%20Agreement.pdf)
2. O'Brien, Emily and Gowan, Richard. *What Makes International Agreements Work: Defining Factors for Success*. Center on International Cooperation, NYU. Available at: [http://cic.nyu.edu/sites/default/files/gowan\\_obrien\\_factors\\_success.pdf](http://cic.nyu.edu/sites/default/files/gowan_obrien_factors_success.pdf)

**Session 10, 10 November 2021: Challenges of implementing SDG 16**

*How have the UN's special offices, especially the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, Office on Disarmament Affairs, and Office of Counter terrorism, along with cities, and civil society sought to promote SDG 16 (peace, justice & strong institutions). How successful have these efforts been?*

Readings:

1. James Cockayne and Amanda Roth, *Crooked States*, UNU Report, October 2017.
2. Rachel Locke, Anthony Pipa, and Max Bouchet, "Cities using the SDGs to reduce urban violence", Brookings, 18 December 2019, available [here](#).
3. Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies, *The Roadmap for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies – A Call to Action to Change our World* (New York: Center on International Cooperation, 2019), available [here](#).
4. Task Force on Justice, *Justice for All – Final Report* (New York: Center on International Cooperation, 2019), available [here](#).
5. Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies, *Inequality and Exclusion* (New York: Center on International Cooperation, 2019), available [here](#).
6. Liv Tørres, SDG16+ - The key to managing the COVID-19 crisis, Pathfinders, 18 March 2020, available [here](#).
7. Alan Whaites, Achieving the impossible: Can we be SDG 16 believers?, *GovNet Background Paper No2*, 2016.

**Session 11, 17 November 2021: Digital cooperation vs digital confrontation**

*What is the impact of existing and emerging technologies (such as artificial intelligence, automation, drones, cyber, and revolution in information and telecommunication) on the role of the UN in peace and security, development, and human rights & humanitarian assistance?*

Readings:

1. Eleonore Pauwels, "The New Geopolitics of Converging Risks: The UN and Prevention in the Era of AI", *United Nations University Centre for Policy Research*, 29 April 2019, available [here](#).
2. Lucas Kello, "Cyber Threats," in Thomas G. Weiss and Sam Daws (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook on the United Nations*, (2<sup>nd</sup> edition) (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018).
3. Perspectives on Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems, *UNODA Occasional Paper No. 30*, November 2017, available [here](#).



4. Report of the UN Secretary General's High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation, *The Age of Digital Interdependence*, June 2019, available [here](#).
5. Road map for digital cooperation: implementation of the recommendation of the High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation, A/74/821, 29 May 2020, available [here](#).
6. Roundtable: "Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Global Affairs", *Ethics and International Affairs*, Summer 2019, available [here](#).

### **Session 12, 24 November 2021: Briefing on the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)**

OCHA is the UN's entity that is at the forefront of humanitarian assistance, including in war-torn regions. A briefing on OCHA's work will include a presentation of their current missions and challenges.

#### **Readings:**

1. Christina Bennett, *Time to let go: Remaking humanitarian action for the modern era*, Overseas Development Institute, 2016, (<https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/resource-documents/10422.pdf>).
2. Jeff Crisp, "Humanitarian Action and Coordination", in Thomas G. Weiss and Sam Daws (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook on the United Nations*, (2<sup>nd</sup> edition) (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018).
3. Emanuela-Chiara Gillard and Nathalie Weizmann, "Humanitarian Relief in Situations of Armed Conflict", in Robin Geib and Nils Melzer (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of the International Law of Global Security*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021).
4. Karen A. Mingst, Margaret P. Karns, and Alynna J. Lyon, *The United Nations in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Dilemmas in World Politics*, (5<sup>th</sup> edition) (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2017), chapter 7.

### **Session 13, 1 December 2021: Reform of the UN**

This session will feature a high-level panel discussion on the strategic and tactical efforts to reform the UN system, initiated by Secretary General Antonio Guterres. The session will also consider the reform of the UNSC, UNGA, ECOSOC and other branches of the UN.

**\*\*\* Deadline for all policy memos \*\*\***

#### **Readings:**

1. Sarah Cliffe and Karina Gerlach, "UN Reforms—A Major Step Forward January 1, but Some Challenges Still to Overcome", *CIC Commentary*, January 2019, available [here](#).
2. Edward C. Luck, "Prospects for UN Renovation and Reform", in Thomas G. Weiss and Sam Daws (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook on the United Nations*, (2<sup>nd</sup> edition) (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018).
3. Michele Griffin, "The UN's Role in a Changing Global Landscape", in Thomas G. Weiss and Sam Daws (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook on the United Nations*, (2<sup>nd</sup> edition) (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018).
4. Karen A. Mingst, Margaret P. Karns, and Alynna J. Lyon, *The United Nations in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Dilemmas in World Politics*, (5<sup>th</sup> edition) (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2017), chapter 8.
5. Waheguru Pal Singh Sidhu, "The United Nations: Managing Unrealistic Expectations", in C. Ankersen and W. P. S. Sidhu (eds.), *The Future of Global Affairs*, (New York: Palgrave, 2021).

6. Alexander Sullivan and Kristine Lee, “People’s Republic of the United Nations”, Center for a New American Security, May 2019.

**Session 14, 8 December 2021: Policy memo presentations and course conclusion**

*The final session will be devoted to the presentation of policy memos by the students with recommendations to the UN to address the new challenges. A course feedback and evaluation will also be conducted in this concluding session.*

**\*\*\* Presentation of policy memos \*\*\***

**Final wrap up session, course evaluation & feedback.**

**NOTE: At the discretion of the instructor, the syllabus may be modified to better meet the needs of the students and to achieve the learning outcomes established in the syllabus.**