COURSE DESCRIPTION
This class introduces students to the literature on international law and international cooperation. The class first focuses on some of the major themes in the literature, and then turns to specific institutions and issues. Some of the topics we cover are why international institutions are created; what specific functions international institutions can perform; and the domestic sources and consequences of international cooperation. The goal is to assess the state of the field and to identify potential research questions for future work.

The class has no formal prerequisites. We will frequently read articles that make use of game theory or quantitative evidence. The course assumes no prior knowledge of game theory or statistical models beyond what you should have learned in the first semester of the political science graduate sequence. If specific articles require additional discussion of game theory or statistical models, we will do so in class.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
After taking this class, students should have acquired or improved the following abilities:
– to identify major ideas in the field;
– to formulate their own research questions;
– to develop a theoretical argument;
– to present and communicate arguments concisely and effectively.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
The class meets once a week. You should come to class prepared, having read the assigned material in advance. There is no grade for attending class or for participation. I nonetheless expect you to attend class meetings and to participate in the discussion.

The class requires the completion of three types of assignments: article presentations and discussions (20% of the final class grade); four short papers (20% of the final class grade); and a final research paper (60% of the final class grade). More details for each assignment are discussed below.
Article presentations. At the beginning of the semester, you will sign up for article presentations and discussions from the articles that are assigned for each class; you also have the option of choosing an article not from the syllabus that matches your interests and goes along with the week's topics. Starting with the second class (January 26), we will have two article presentations each class. The presentations follow conference guidelines (at most twelve minutes for each presentation); you should present the assigned article as if you were the author of the paper. The discussant then provides two to three comments on the article, which should take at most five minutes, ideally less.

Short papers. You will submit four short papers, of at most two double-spaced pages each, on topics of your choosing. You do not have to sign up for these papers; just write them whenever the readings provoke an idea that you find worthwhile. However, try to avoid writing all of them in November and December. The papers should build on the assigned readings. View them as outlines for potential research projects – you could, for example, propose an extension of an existing argument, sketch a new theory to explain an empirical pattern, or suggest new ways to evaluate an existing argument. The papers are due at 3pm the day before the class on which you are writing. I will return the paper with comments by 9am the day of the class. Feel free to bring up your paper ideas in the class discussion. You are welcome to write more than the required four papers over the course of the semester.

Research paper. The research paper should present a theory and research design for a possible paper. The research paper needs to be framed in the relevant literature, has to lay out the theoretical argument, must derive testable hypotheses, and should briefly discuss potential data sources and how these data may be used to evaluate the argument. However, the research paper should not actually evaluate the argument. Instead, focus on the development of your theory, a clear presentation of your argument, and think carefully about how to frame the paper in a literature. You will present a brief version of your paper to the class on April 27. You should incorporate any comments in the final version, which is due on May 11.

For short papers as well as the research paper, I want you to focus on coming up with new ideas for research that, at the same time, appear feasible to carry out in the context of a paper or dissertation. Grading for all assignments is on the standard grading scale: A (90-100), B (80-90), C (70-80), etc.

Administrative Matters
For missed assignments, I follow the student rules with regard to absences; see, in particular, Rule 7. If you need to miss an assignment for an excused absence, you should provide me, where possible, with advance notice in writing and obtain my confirmation of receipt in writing (such as an email acknowledgement). If advance notice is not feasible, you must provide me with a notification within two working days after the last day of the absence, which should include an explanation of why advance notice was not feasible. If you miss an assignment for an excused absence, I will provide an opportunity to make up for the missed assignment.

For late assignments, I will subtract five per cent of the grade for each day the assignment is late, unless you made arrangements for an excused absence with me beforehand (following the
guidelines above on excused absences). Days are counted as calendar days: If an assignment that is due on Monday at 6pm is submitted Tuesday morning, I will subtract ten per cent. In other words, do not work all night if you are not able to finish your assignment before midnight.

Plagiarism is "The appropriation of another person’s ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit" (Aggie Honor System Office). This applies to entire papers as well as to passages of work, such as sentences or paragraphs. It also applies if you paraphrase somebody else’s work without giving appropriate credit. Whenever you use another person’s ideas or words, and regardless of whether it is word for word or paraphrased, you must credit and cite the source appropriately. For more information on what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it, please see the library sources at this website. Also be aware of the Aggie Honor Code – cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated, consistent with the Aggie Honor Code: “An Aggie does not lie, cheat or steal or tolerate those who do.” I will follow Texas A&M University’s procedures when there is evidence of any form of academic misconduct. For details, please refer to the Aggie Honor website.

**ACCOMMODATIONS**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact Disability Services, currently located in the Disability Services building at the Student Services at White Creek complex on west campus, or call 979-845-1637. For additional information, please see here.
Course Outline
The following provides an outline of the course. The assigned readings and the order of topics are subject to change. We will read parts of the following books:


Books and assigned book chapters will be available from library reserves.

I Introduction and Overview

January 19 – Introduction


Optional:


II FORMS AND DESIGN OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

January 26 – Cooperation and Institutions


Optional:


February 2 – Forms of Cooperation: Norms, Law, Private Governance


Optional:


February 9 – Cooperation Problems and Rational Design


Optional:


February 16 – Negotiations and International Agreements


Optional:


February 23 – No Class, ISA Meeting

III INFORMATION, ENFORCEMENT, AND COMPLIANCE

March 2 – Signaling, Commitment, and Information


Optional:


March 9 – Compliance


*Optional:*


March 16 – No Class, Spring Break

March 23 – Enforcement and Compliance


*Optional:*


March 30 – Dispute Settlement and Courts


Optional:


April 6 – Membership and Membership Rules


Optional:


April 13 – Institutions as Actors


Optional:


April 20 – Institutional Change


**VI Presentations**

April 27 – Presentations

May 11 – Research paper due by 6pm