From whales to nuclear weapons to genocide and beyond, a good deal of what people and governments do is regulated by international law. International law consists of promises made between governments, and it is binding on them. This seminar examines the key concepts of international law and looks at its relationship to questions of international politics.

The class will cross over the line between political science and legal scholarship, drawing cases, readings, and debates from both.

The seminar is also interested in cultivating good research skills and critical thinking for college and beyond. It contains several writing assignments, and we will also address citation style, avoiding plagiarism, research strategies, and paper structure.

**Required Texts**


Reading packet at Quartet Copies, Clark St.

Other required reading materials will be available online or distributed in class.

**Written Assignments**

- Oct. 23th, 800 word essay on aspects of the law of drones and its controversy
- Nov. 1st, sketch of the paper
- Nov. 13th, draft of the paper
- Dec. 11th, final paper, 8-10 pages

Each week you will also be asked to complete a page of definitions of international law terms or concepts. These will be distributed on Thursday and are due in class the following Tuesday. This begins in week II and ends in week VIII.

**Academic Integrity**

Students are expected to follow the University’s principles on academic integrity. This seminar will address these rules, especially on how to recognize and avoid plagiarism. You can read it here:

http://www.northwestern.edu/provost/students/integrity/

Cheating will automatically result in a failing grade in the class and will be reported to the Dean of the Weinberg College.

**Schedule of Topics**

**Week I**

Thursday September 27th -- Introduction to the course

**Week II**

Tuesday October 2nd -- Public International Law


Julian Assange case:

themes:
- what are obligations in international law?
- state consent, state sovereignty, state commitment
- what is the international law context for Assange in the Ecuadorean embassy?

Thursday October 4th -- State Sovereignty and Consent

*** first IL definitions sheet distributed today -- due Tuesday ***


themes:
- what is a state?
- what are the content limits of sovereignty?

Week III

Tuesday October 9th -- the United Nations: Structure and Obligations

**UN Charter**

_Shirley Scott_, Ch. 3.

_Richard Jolly, Louis Emmerij, and Thomas G. Weiss_, “The Three UNs and their Impact,” Ch. 2 of their _UN Ideas that Changed the World_. Indiana University Press.


themes:
- how to read the UN Charter?
- what are the obligations of UN members?
- what are the powers and limits of the UN itself?

Thursday October 11th -- the United Nations: Article 2(4) and the use of force

_Shirley V. Scott_, “International Law and the Use of Force,” Ch. 6 of _International Law in World Politics_.

**UN Security Council Resolutions 1973** and **2042**


themes:
- when it is legal for a state to use force against states and other kinds of actors?
- when it is legal for the UN to use force?

**Week IV**

Tuesday October 16th -- Genocide: A Treaty

Scott, Ch. 8 “Reading a Multilateral Treaty.”


themes
- what does the genocide convention prohibit? For whom? How? With what enforcement?
- what is the legal context for the Rwandan genocide as described by David Scheffer?

Thursday October 18th -- Drones: Blogs, sources, and controversy


- http://nyti.ms/NzLfdA

recommended

themes:
- what is the legal status of unmanned aerial drones as instruments of violence?
- how to engage the drones controversy

Week V

Tuesday October 23rd -- Library session: Jeannette A Moss

**** assignment #1 due: essay on legality of drones ****

Thursday October 25th -- Law breaking and the rule of law

Scott, Ch. 5 “The Logical Structure of International Law.”


themes:
- what does it mean to break international law?
- relation among law, state action, and state justification

Week VI

Tuesday October 30th -- Human Rights

Shirley Scott, Chs. 11 and 12.


Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, http://www.hrweb.org/legal/cat.html

themes:
- what are the legal obligations in the Universal Declaration and the Convention Against Torture?
- what does international law require and prohibit in relation to human rights?

Thursday November 1st -- Human Rights

**** assignment #2 due: paragraph on the paper topic ****


Week VII

Tuesday November 6th -- Whales

International Convention on the Regulation of Whaling

Shirley Scott, Ch. 13.


themes:
- what is the legal regime on whale hunting?
- what is in dispute in Australia v. Japan?

Thursday November 8th -- Enforcement and Compliance


themes:
- why do states comply with international law?
- what does ‘enforcement’ mean with respect to international law?
- relation among power, law, and state action

Week VIII

Tuesday November 13th -- Bombs

**** assignment #3 due: 2-page sketch of the paper ****

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, 1968

Scott Ch. 10, “International Law and Arms Control.”

UN SC Resolutions on North Korea 1874 (2009) and Iran 1737 (2006)

themes:
- legal regime on nuclear weapons
- legal content of the non-proliferation treaty
- what is in dispute in the nuclear cases between the UN Security Council and North Korea and Iran?

Thursday November 15th -- Discussion of paper sketches

Week IX

Tuesday November 20th -- Arbitration and Legal Disputes

*** final IL definitions sheet distributed today ***

Statute of the ICJ

ICJ Advisory Opinion on the Legality of Nuclear Weapons

Thursday November 22nd - Thanksgiving

Week X
Tuesday November 27th -- Key ICJ cases

themes:
- overview of important cases and opinions from the International Court of Justice

Thursday November 29th -- International Criminal Court

**** assignment #4 due: full draft of paper ****

Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court

David Scheffer, All the Missing Souls, Chs. 7, 8, 9.

themes:
- structure and law of the ICC

Week XI - Reading Week

Tuesday December 4th -- no class

Thursday December 6th -- no class

Tuesday December 11th -- Final Paper Due

**** assignment #5 due: final paper ****