International Organization

The course raises the question of the existence and significance of international institutions broadly defined as to include law, treaties, and international organizations. Drawing from political economy, we will ponder what the specific reasons are for why anarchy fails to deliver an efficient allocation of resources and what specific institutional solutions have been, or could be, invoked or devised to remedy each type of failure. We will also devote a few sections to new trends in the study of international institutions.

The course requires no prior knowledge of game theory or statistical modeling.

It will be run in the form of a seminar. A set of readings will be assigned each time, with each participant being expected to present and comment on those readings. The class will be sanctioned by a seminar paper, a five-to-ten-page-long paper to be outlined in the last sitting and handed in by the official deadline.


1. Paradigmatic change: From transaction costs to institutional design
Lake, David A. 1996. Anarchy, hierarchy and the variety of international relations. IO 50,1:1-33.
Koremenos, Barbara, Duncan Snidal and Charles Lipson. 2001. The rational design of international institutions. IO 55,4:761-800.
http://politics.as.nyu.edu/docs/IO/2601/TransactionsCostsApproach.pdf

2. Zero-sum conflict
(read Waltz and Fearon as disquisitions on why and when international institutions are unnecessary.)
Optional: Fearon, James D. 1998. Bargaining, enforcement, and international cooperation. IO 52:269-305. (reinforces Krasner’s point that bargaining is more important than enforcement)
Mitchell, Ronald B. and Patricia Keilbach. 2001. Situation structure and institutional design: Reciprocity, coercion, and exchange. IO 55, 4 (Issue linkage and side-payment as solutions to asymmetric distributive problems)
3. Participation and free riding (the collective action problem)


Thompson, Alexander and Daniel Verdier. 2012. Multilateralism, bilateralism and regime design. Unpublished manuscript (bilateralism and side-payments to the rescue)

4. Cheating enabled by unobservable action (the moral hazard problem)


Downs, George, David M. Rocke and Peter N. Barsoom. 1996. Is the good news about compliance good news about cooperation? *IO* 50, 3:


5. Time inconsistency (the credible commitment problem)


6. Private information about intentions (the adverse selection problem)


7. **Uncertain future**


*Optional:* Johns, Leslie. 2011. Depth versus rigidity in the design of international trade agreements. unpublished manuscript (formal model)

8. **Belief diversity (the common knowledge problem)**


*Finnemore, Martha. 1993. International organizations as teachers of norms. IO 47,4:565-99 (sociology approach)*


**New trends**

9. **Informal Governance**


**SELF-ENFORCED (NO ENFORCEMENT PROVISIONS)**


**SELF-COMMITTAL (NO LEGAL COMMITMENT): TRANSGOVERNMENTAL NETWORKS**


**Nongovernmental (No Government): Private Governance**


*Optional:*


10. **Fragmentation, Complexity, Forum Shopping**


