

## **Organizing the World: International Order in an Uncertain Age**

**Time:** Wednesdays, 10am—1pm

**Place:** New York, New York

### **Instructor:**

Christopher David LaRoche

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The international order we live in is under attack from both within and without. According to its defenders, this open, “rules-based” order and its institutions have made the world more just, prosperous, and peaceful. The order’s critics say it has imposed Eurocentric ideologies across the globe, upending local values, subjugating working classes, and ushering in a dystopic neofeudalism ruled by a technocratic elite.

This is the international story of our time. How can we take our bearings in it? We will try by examining what contemporary international order is, and how modes of ordering have concretely shaped the international relations of today. What is international organization and global governance? What are the world’s major institutions? The major issues? What sorts of thinking do they reflect—and prevent?

We start with a brief tour of some major don’t-miss-it sights of liberal internationalism before proceeding to concrete international institutions by topic or “regime”: the UN-centered postwar order, regional organizations, humanitarianism and human rights, the nuclear politics and nonproliferation, global health, the environment, cities, and the future.

### **Aims**

This course’s main aim is to provide students with improved understandings of:

- theories of international organization as they have been forwarded in historical and contemporary context, with a focus on institutions;
- the “mechanisms” and components of international institutions, multilateralism, human rights, etc.;
- how these components evolved devolved over time and in specific issue areas;
- current debates about the decline (or perseverance), viability, and desirability of the postwar liberal order and its alternatives; and
- our role as thinkers and practitioners in the above.

### **Assessment**

Class attendance & participation:	10%
Reading responses:	20%
Presentation & Factsheet:	10%
Quizzes:	20%
Short written assignments:	40%
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TOTAL:	100%

*Class attendance & participation* ensures you're coming to class and demonstrate both your knowledge of the readings and thinking about a topic. Students should bring their reading responses into conversation on the relevant weeks. (5% each = 10% total).

*Short reading responses* will ask you to write two short (1-2 pages) responses to assigned or supplementary readings (7.5%) and help lead class discussion (2.5%) (10% each = 20% total).

*Presentations* involve one 10-minute presentation on an IO of your choice (as per the *adopt an IO program*) or on your home internship organization, 7.5%. *Factsheets* about your organizations are circulated before your presentations, worth 2.5%. (7.5% + 2.5% = 10% total).

*Quizzes* will ask you questions about the readings using multiple choice, true-or-false, and fill in the blank formats. I will take your top four best results from six quizzes. (5% each = 20% total).

*Written assignments* will ask you to think through the course materials and your adopted or home IO. The second assignment will ask you to present a briefing to a new executive of your adopted or home IO. More details will come. (20% each = 40% total).

### Conduct

According to the protoliberal theorist of order, Thomas Hobbes of Malmsbury, justice lies in the keeping of covenants and those who make covenants promise to obey them (*Leviathan* I.xiv-xv). This syllabus is such a covenant between all class members. We will discuss topics that are contentious or controversial. You are welcome to criticize each other's (and my) ideas, but not each other's characters.

Contact: [larohec@ceu.edu](mailto:larohec@ceu.edu) + office hours. If I don't respond within 48 weekday hours, email again.

*Absences, plagiarism, student needs, and other matters:*

CEU & Bard College maintain policies governing student conduct and expectations (<https://ir.ceu.edu/policies>). These include policies on absences, plagiarism, grading, and the use of AI in assignments (don't do it!), and other topics.

### PROVISIONAL TOPICS SCHEDULE

1. <u>Introduction</u>	04 Sept
2. <u>The case for and against international organization I</u>	11 Sept
3. <u>The case for and against international organization II</u>	18 Sept
4. <u>Bureaucratic pathologies and global governance</u>	25 Sept
5. <u>The Postwar Order I – The UN &amp; Bretton Woods</u>	02 Oct
6. <u>The Postwar Order II – BRICS &amp; regions</u>	09 Oct
7. <u>International justice</u>	16 Oct
8. <u>Humanitarianism and human rights</u>	23 Oct
9. <u>The nuclear order</u>	30 Oct
10. <u>The environment</u>	06 Nov
11. <u>Ocean governance</u>	13 Nov
12. <u>Global health</u>	20 Nov
13. <u>Global cities</u>	27 Nov
14. <i>Course overhang, wrap-up &amp; UN tour</i>	<b>December 4, 11 &amp; 18</b>