UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

SYLLABUS DEL CORSO

Organizzazione Internazionale

2526-4-A5810211

Learning objectives

The course aims to provide a systematic understanding of the phenomenon of international organizations, by examining the legal nature of international organizations and state unions, as well as the legal issues concerning their functioning, powers, and relevance within the international legal system.

The learning objectives are as follows:
a) Knowledge and understanding
Students will acquire a critical and in-depth knowledge of the legal nature of international organizations, their institutional structure, functions, and the normative sources governing their activities. They will also understand the differences between various forms of international organizations and state unions, and the role these entities play in global governance.
b) Applying knowledge and understanding
Students will be able to identify and interpret relevant legal rules and documents related to the operation of international organizations. They will develop the ability to analyze real cases concerning the legal acts or activities of such organizations and resolve legal questions regarding their powers, responsibilities, and immunities.
c) Making judgments
The course fosters critical and independent thinking on the role of international organizations in contemporary international law, encouraging students to assess their impact on the balance between state sovereignty and international cooperation, as well as the legitimacy of their interventions in various global contexts.
d) Communication skills
Students will develop the ability to present legal knowledge on international organizations in a clear and coherent manner, using the appropriate technical and legal terminology specific to international institutional law.
e) Learning skills
Students will strengthen their capacity for independent learning and in-depth study of the discipline, including through the use of primary sources and official documents of international organizations, in preparation for further academic or professional paths in international law and international relations.

Contents

The course addresses the following key topics:
The legal nature of international organizations and unions of states
Types of international organizations, with particular focus on universal organizations (e.g., United Nations and its specialized agencies) and regional organizations (e.g., African Union, Organization of American States, Council of Europe)
The legal personality of international organizations

Constitutive acts and internal structure of organizations
Organs, powers, and functions
Internal legal systems and immunities
Legal responsibility of international organizations
The relationship between international organizations and the legal systems of member states

Detailed program

The phenomenon of international organization in international law
Types of international organizations: universal, regional, technical, intergovernmental
Legal nature and personality of international organizations
Founding instruments and fundamental principles
Institutional structure: main and subsidiary bodies
Decision-making processes and organizational functioning
Normative and executive powers
Internal legal systems of international organizations
Immunities of international organizations and their personnel
Legal responsibility of international organizations
The relationship between international organizations and domestic law
Adaptation and incorporation of the law of international organizations

Prerequisites

Students are expected to have a solid background in the fundamentals of international law, particularly concerning:
International legal personality
Sources of international law (treaties, custom, general principles)
State responsibility
International dispute settlement

Teaching methods

The course is delivered through interactive lectures, combining traditional teaching with active student engagement. Legal principles and rules governing international organizations will be critically examined through discussion of official documents, case law, and other materials distributed in class or available on the course e-learning platform. Active student participation is encouraged to promote independent analysis and deeper understanding.

Assessment methods

The exam is oral. No written midterm assessments are included. The exam consists of two general questions covering topics discussed in class and included in the recommended readings. In order to pass the exam, students must provide satisfactory answers to both questions, demonstrating:
A sound theoretical understanding of the subject matter
The ability to conduct legal analysis and argumentation
Proper command of technical legal terminology

Textbooks and Reading Materials

Students may choose one of the following two options:
Option A
Gaetano Arangio-Ruiz, Rapporti contrattuali tra Stati e Organizzazione internazionale. Per una teoria dualista delle unioni di Stati, Editrice Il Sirente, Fagnano Alto, 2019 (160 pp.)
Supplemented by:
Ugo Draetta, Principi di diritto delle Organizzazioni internazionali, Giuffrè, Milan, 4th ed., 2020 (242 pp.)
OR Option B
Benedetto Conforti, Carlo Focarelli, Le Nazioni Unite, Wolters Kluwer, 13th edition, 2023 (640 pp.)

Sustainable Development Goals

PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS