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ANNÉE

2014-2015

# DESRIPTIF ENSEIGNEMENT

**INTITULE DU COURS :** Voting in the UN General Assembly

*COURSE'S TITLE :*

**ENSEIGNANT(S) :** Professor Steven Holloway

**FONCTION(S) :** Professor of Political Science at St Francis Xavier University, NS, Cda

**TYPE DE COURS :**  SEMINAIRE D'OUVERTURE  SEMESTRE 1  SEMESTRE 2

## RESUME DU COURS / OBJECTIFS

Since its first session in 1946, the United Nations, as the world's "Parliament," has met annually to raise, discuss and debate a wide range of topics from nuclear disarmament and chemical weapons to global warming and the rights of the child. It has regularly recorded the positions of its member governments on a wide range of international issues through its roll-call votes. These votes offer a rich cache of data for the scholar of UN politics with relevance to global polarization and political realignment, regionalism and alliance cohesion, Hegemonic Stability Theory, global attitudes and the evolution of discourses and regimes.

This seminar will discuss the politics of the UN General Assembly and its evolution over nearly 70 years through the analysis of those votes. It assumes no previous training in quantitative methods (such as cluster or factor analysis): explanations of such techniques will be in simple non-mathematical terms with emphasis on developing a general understanding of the findings of past statistical research. The course will examine the growing phenomenon of university-level Model UN role-playing exercises, showing the relevance of this analysis to such simulations.

## EVALUATION :

60% Take home exam (essay.)

40% Student preparation and participation in class discussions.

## **PLAN / SEANCES :**

### **Topics for 6 three hour sessions:**

- Full citation for the "Readings" is given in the following "Bibliography."
- 1) Introduction and the UN General Assembly (UNGA) in general  
What are the main procedures and committees of the UNGA?  
How has the UNGA evolved over time? What is it like to be a UNGA delegate?  
Readings: *Basic Facts about the United Nations* (any year, read chapter on GA.)
  - 2) What do UNGA votes represent and past approaches to studying them  
What motivates the votes? How have past studies used UNGA to examine –  
Voting alignment and voting in blocs? cohesiveness of regional groups (EU)?  
The impact of regime/government change on foreign policy?  
Readings: Alker and Russett (1965), Hagan (1993), Rausch (2008, chp6.)
  - 3) Use of Cluster and Multi-Dimensional Analysis (MDS) in my own research  
(A very non-technical introduction to clustering techniques.)  
How useful are visual representations particularly in exploratory analysis?  
What uses have been made of clustering procedures in international politics?  
Readings: Holloway (1990). Lorr (1983, TBA), Yau (2011, TBA)
  - 4) An examination of some findings of my own research  
As to findings on alignment and voting blocs? Hegemonic Stability Theory?  
realignments of the end of the Cold War and Arab Spring?  
Readings: Holloway (1995, 1996, 2000.)
  - 5) The issues debated in the UNGA.  
How have resolution topics evolved over time?  
Readings: Holloway (2000), Gorman (2000)
  - 6) Model UNs: simulating the UNGA and Conclusions  
What are some of the uses and limits of university-level Model UNs and Crisis Games?  
Readings: "Harvard Model UN: Guide to Delegate Preparation," 2005, PDF.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHIE :**

- Basic Facts about the United Nations 2014*, Revised Edition (NYC: United Nations, 2013.)  
Hayward Alker and Bruce Russett, *World Politics in the General Assembly* (New Haven: Yale University, 1965).  
Robert F Gorman, *Great Debates at the United Nations: An Encyclopedia of Fifty Key Issues 1945-2000* (Westport, Greenwood Press, 2001.)  
Joe Hagan, *Political Opposition and Foreign Policy in Comparative Perspective* (Boulder: L Rienner Pub, 1993.)  
"Harvard Model UN: Guide to Delegate Preparation," 2005, PDF.  
Steven Holloway, "Forty Years of UN General Assembly Voting," *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, XXIII:2 (June 1990) pp 279-296.  
--with R Tomlinson, "The New World Order and the General Assembly: Bloc Realignment at the UN in the Post-Cold War World," *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, XXVIII:2 (June 1995) pp 227-254.  
--"From Bush to Clinton at the UN General Assembly: How much Difference Does a Regime Change Make?" paper presented at ISA Annual Conference in San Diego, April 1996.  
-- "US Unilateralism at the United Nations: Why Great Powers do not make Great Multilateralists" *Global Governance* 6 (2000), pp 361-381.  
Maurice Lorr, *Cluster Analysis for Social Sciences* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1983).  
Maximilian B. Rausch, *The EU at the UN* (Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2008.)  
Nathan Yau, *Visualize This: The Flowing Data Guide to Design, Visualization, and Statistics* (Wiley, 2011.)