INTL 4210
Introduction to Intl Law

Dr. Leah Carmichael

Welcome

A hands-on study of international law through the advocacy of seven high-stakes contentious cases

1. Oceania — Sea Levels & Statehood Status

Whether a state can legally remain a state when climate change erases its territory.

2. The Americas — The Legaliity of Intervention

The legal rules around foreign interference and the use of force.

3. Europe — Russia's Invasion of Ukraine

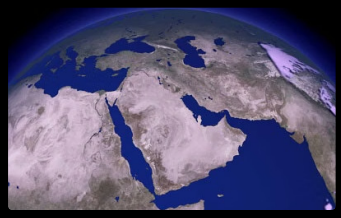
How the use of "genocide" impacts the legality of military actions.

4. Asia — South China Sea & UNCLOS

Exploring competing maritime claims and island building within the laws of the sea.

5. Africa - Water Wars

To what extent can intl law prevent fighting over decreasing supplies of water?



6. Middle East - Advisory Opinion on Occupation

What is the legal definition of Occupation in the Geneva Conventions

7. Space - Mining the Moon

Who gets to extract resources in outer space, and what "sovereignty" means beyond Earth?

Instructor & Course Logistics

Instructor:

Dr. Leah Carmichael
Senior Lecturer in Intl Affairs

leahlang@uga.edu

Time & Place

Tuesdays & Thursdays,
11:35 AM to 12:55 PM

Sanford Hall 109

Course Materials

All course materials will be provided at no cost to students and can be accessed at:

Link here

Office Hours

Tuesdays & Thursdays
8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m by appointment

Sanford Hall 307

Institutional Competencies

Analytical & Critical Thinking

Think critically, solve problems across real-world contexts, and evaluate information before reaching conclusions.

Peer Learning Assistants (PLAs)

Jane Cantrell
Grace Hamilton

Raquel Caldas Laranjeira

Student Learning Outcomes

1. **Key Concepts**
   Identify key concepts and cases in international law

2. **Intl Law Cases**
   Apply key concepts within historical and fictional cases

3. **Multiple Legal Perspectives**
   Analyze cases from multiple legal perspectives

4. **Evaluate Legal Arguments**
   Evaluate the merits of legal arguments

Assignments

Attendance

The daily attendance quiz will open during class and remain available for one week. Students who are present will complete it during class time. Students who are absent may complete the same quiz later in the week to document their absence and upload proof that they notified their group. There is no penalty for submitting the quiz late; the only penalty occurs if the quiz is not submitted at all. A missing quiz submission counts as an unexcused absence and contributes to the 1.5% deduction for up to ten percent of one's final grade.

10%

Unexcused absence worth 1.5% each

Course Reader Assignments

A low-stakes, repeatable quiz that checks your engagement with the module's background reading. Includes brief comprehension questions and a short personal response to ensure you've previewed the facts, laws, and context before class.

20%

Seven assignments, each worth 2.86%

Facts & Law Assignments

An in-class assignment with extended submission window in which you identify key facts and laws from the case, upload a handwritten timeline or notes, and reflect on what you understand, what's uncertain, and which issues may become pressure points in argument.

20%

Seven assignments, each worth 2.86%

Memorials

A structured written submission presenting both sides' legal arguments. You will build full sections (laws, interpretations, facts, and conclusions) for the Applicant and the Respondent, using the framework developed in class. This document serves as your team's formal advocacy brief for the upcoming court simulation.

20%

Six assignments, each worth 3.33%

Court Simulation Participation

An in-class simulation where teams present oral arguments, respond to questions, and engage in rebuttal. This is the practical application of your memorials and the core experiential component of the course. Participation is paramount.

20%

Seven assignments, each worth 2.86%

Reflection

A short reflective piece analyzing your performance, your team's strategy, what you learned about the law and the dispute, and how your understanding evolved through the simulation.

10%

Seven assignments, each worth 1.43%

Court Simulation Schedule

Goal of Simulation

In our moot court simulations, you'll step into the shoes of advocates and judges to tackle international legal challenges. This exercise is designed to sharpen your ability to analyze treaties, craft persuasive arguments, and think critically about complex legal issues. By rotating through roles and collaborating in teams, you'll experience the dynamics of legal debate, practice impartial decision-making, and learn to communicate with clarity and confidence. Beyond understanding the law, you'll develop professional skills—reasoned judgment, collaboration, and advocacy—that prepare you for careers in law, diplomacy, and international affairs.

Day 1: Knowledge Mapping (Recall)

Build a visual timeline of events and map how each side interprets them. Recall key facts, actors, and treaty articles from the course reader. Identify leverage points where interpretations clash—your roadmap for future arguments.

Day 2: Legal Analysis & Analytical Reasoning (Apply)

Shift from recalling facts to applying law. Dive into treaties, practice rule-to-outcome reasoning, annotate timelines with legal citations. Map obligations and rights for both sides, draft preliminary arguments.

Day 3: Expert Jigsaw & Opposing Arguments (Evaluate)

Diplomacy becomes theater. Your Ambassador delivers a powerful opening speech. Then: intense negotiations and treaty drafting. Debate language, trade concessions, fight for protective clauses. Every word matters. .

Day 4: Moot Court & Meta-Reflection (Create & Reflect)

Synthesize everything in a simulated ICJ hearing. Deliver structured oral arguments with visuals and precise citations, then reflect on your growth.

Course Schedule

Module One: Oceania - Sea Levels Rising & Statehood Status

Kiribati vs. China (2035): *If rising sea levels render a State's territory inundated or uninhabitable, does this affect the State's continued legal personality as a State under international law?*

- *Tuesday 1.13.26* - (No Assignments Due)
- *Thursday 1.15.26* - (Module One - Course Reader Assignment Due @ 11:30 am)
- *Tuesday 1.20.26* - (Module One - Facts & Laws Assignment Due @ 11:30 am)
- *Thursday 1.22.26* - (Module One - Court Simulation @ 11:30 am)
- *Tuesday 1.27.26** - (Module One - Reflection Due @ 11:30 am)

Module Two: The Americas - Intervention in Sovereign Nations

Republic of Venezuela vs. United States (2026): Can the U.S.' use of force, naval blockades and seizures, and capture and arrest of Maduro be justified under international law?

- *Tuesday 1.27.26** - (Module Two - Course Reader Assignment Due @ 11:30 am)
- *Thursday 1.29.26* - (Module Two - Facts & Laws Assignment Due @ 11:30 am)
- *Tuesday 2.03.26* - (Module Two - Memorials Due @ 11:30 am)
- *Thursday 2.05.26* - (Module Two - Court Simulation @ 11:30 am)
- *Tuesday 2.11.26** - (Module Two - Reflection Due @ 11:30 am)

Module Three: Europe: Russia's Invasion of Ukraine & Genocide

Ukraine vs. Russia (Ongoing): Did Russia unlawfully use force against Ukraine by invoking a false claim of genocide, and does the Genocide Convention provide any legal basis for Russia's military operation?

- *Tuesday 2.11.26** - (Module Three - Course Reader Assignment Due @ 11:30 am)
- *Thursday 2.13.26* - (Module Three - Facts & Laws Assignment Due @ 11:30 am)
- *Tuesday 2.17.26* - (Module Three - Memorials Due @ 11:30 am)
- *Thursday 2.19.26* - (Module Three - Court Simulation @ 11:30 am)
- *Tuesday 2.24.26** - (Module Three - Reflection Due @ 11:30 am)

* Dates include multiple assignment submissions

Module Four: Asia: South China Sea & UNCLOS

Philippines vs. China (2027): How adequately does international law address emerging challenges in maritime governance?

- *Tuesday 2.24.26** - (Module Four - Course Reader Assignment Due @ 11:30 am)
- *Thursday 2.26.26*- (Module Four - Facts & Laws Assignment Due @ 11:30 am)
- *Tuesday 3.05.26* - (Module Four - Memorials Due @ 11:30 am)
- *Thursday 3.07.26* - (Module Four - Court Simulation @ 11:30 am)
- *Tuesday 3.17.26** - (Module Four - Reflection Assignment Due @ 11:30 am)

Module Five: Africa: Use of Force, Self-Defense & Regional Security

Egypt v. Ethiopia (2030): To what extent can international law mitigate transboundary water disputes?

- *Tuesday 3.17.26** - (Module Five - Course Reader Assignment Due @ 11:30 am)
- *Thursday 3.19.26* - (Module Five - Facts & Laws Assignment Due @ 11:30 am)
- *Tuesday 3.24.26* - (Module Five - Memorials Due @ 11:30 am)
- *Thursday 3.26.26* - (Module Five - Court Simulation @ 11:30 am)
- *Tuesday 3.31.26** - (Module Five - Reflection Assignment Due @ 11:30 am)

Module Six: The Middle East: Occupation & Self-Determination

Legal Consequences (2026): What are the updates on the legal implications of the original ruling following the events of October 7th?

- *Tuesday 3.31.26** - (Module Six - Course Reader Assignment Due @ 11:30 am)
- *Thursday 4.02.26* - (Module Six - Facts & Laws Assignment Due @ 11:30 am)
- *Tuesday 4.07.26* - (Module Six - Memorials Due @ 11:30 am)
- *Thursday 4.09.26* - (Module Six - Court Simulation @ 11:30 am)
- *Tuesday 4.14.26** - (Module Six - Reflection Assignment Due @ 11:30 am)

Module Seven: Space Law: Mining the Moon

India v. U.S. (2028): Does the licensing of private companies to extract lunar resources violate intl law?

- *Tuesday 4.14.26**- (Module Seven - Course Reader Assignment Due @ 11:30 am)
- *Thursday 4.16.26* - (Module Seven - Facts & Laws Assignment Due @ 11:30 am)
- *Tuesday 4.21.26* - (Module Seven - Memorials Due @ 11:30 am)
- *Thursday 4.23.26* - (Module Seven - Court Simulation @ 11:30 am)
- *Tuesday 4.28.26* - (Module Seven - Reflection Assignment Due @ 11:30 am)

AI & Assignment Expectations

Political writing requires students to develop an intentional tone and clearly articulate their own position—skills that come only from authentic engagement with the material. For this reason, all assignments must reflect original thought rather than AI-generated content. While AI can be useful elsewhere, this course prioritizes your ability to analyze evidence and communicate your stance with clarity and integrity. Using AI to produce assignments undermines this learning process and constitutes academic dishonesty. More details on AI policies at UGA can be found **here**.

Fundamental Rules of Respect

- We will engage respectfully with one another and with the ideas presented in class. I welcome open political discourse as long as contributions are evidence-based and delivered with respect. If at any point you feel unable to express well-informed opinions, please communicate with me. We will work to ensure that all contributions to the class discussion improve (rather than detract from) the quality of the course.
- Class rosters list legal names; if you use a different name, please let me know early in the semester so I can update my records.

Grading Scale

There is no rounding of your grades

94 to 100	A
90 to 93.99	A-
88 to 89.99	B+
82 to 87.99	B
80 to 81.99	B-
78 to 79.99	C+
72 to 77.99	C
70 to 71.99	C-
60 to 69.99	D

Academic Integrity

All students must demonstrate academic integrity in all parts of the course. Any cases of academic dishonesty will be dealt with according to the University's guidelines. The University's policy and procedures for handling cases of suspected dishonesty can be found at**https://honesty.uga.edu/Academic-Honesty-Policy/Prohibited_Conduct/**

FERPA & Accessibility

The Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) grants students certain information privacy rights. For more details, visit **www.apps.reg.uga.edu/FERPA/**.Learning Accommodation PolicyUGA is committed to creating a universally accessible course environment. Students needing accommodations should contact Accessibility and Testing: **https://accessibility.uga.edu/register-for-services/**.

Additional Student Resources

UGA Well-being Resources

UGA Well-being Resources **well-being.uga.edu** promote student success by cultivating a culture that supports a more active, healthy, and engaged student community.

Students needing assistance are encouraged to contact Student Care & Outreach (SCO) at 706-542-8479 or visit **sco.uga.edu**. Student Care & Outreach connects students with appropriate resources during difficult circumstances and administers the **Embark@UGA program**, which supports students experiencing homelessness, foster care, or housing insecurity.

UGA provides both clinical and non-clinical options to support student well-being and mental health, any time, any place.

- University Health Center: **healthcenter.uga.edu**
- Counseling and Psychiatric Services: **caps.uga.edu** or CAPS 24/7 crisis support at 706-542-2273
- Health Promotion/ Fontaine Center: **healthpromotion.uga.edu**

Student Success Resources

The Office for Student Success and Achievement (OSSA) empowers students to achieve success throughout their academic journey through free peer tutoring, academic coaching, UNIV student success courses, Bulldog Basics, and first-generation student support: **ossa@uga.edu**