COURSE NAME: International Law
COURSE NUMBER: Law 8753
PROFESSOR: Timothy Lynch

ESSENTIAL PREREQUISITES: None

DESIRABLE PREREQUISITES: It will be helpful to have taken Constitutional Law since we will spend part of the course discussing how international law is incorporated into the US domestic legal system, at both the federal and state levels, through relevant constitutional provisions.

COURSE BOOKS: To be determined.

METHOD OF GRADING & APPRAISAL OF STUDENT FOR GRADE: Students will have the option of taking an in-class final exam or writing a 25-page paper. Also, depending on the number of students taking the class, there will be a class participation component in the final grade.

DESCRIPTION OF COURSE: This course is an introduction to public international law. International law mainly concerns the rights and responsibilities of states vis-à-vis other states but has evolved to include aspects which directly affect international organizations, individuals and private entities.

We will discuss theories of international law and will closely examine the development and nature of the two primary sources of international law: customary international law and treaty-based international law. We will study the nature of states and other international entities, the allocation of legal authority among states, international dispute resolution, and how international law operates within the US domestic legal environment. We will also discuss the principle of sovereign immunity and the act of state doctrine.

Traditionally in an international law course a portion of the course is devoted to introducing the substantive international law of particular legal subjects, subjects such as the law of the sea, human rights law, international criminal law, the use of force and national security law, international trade law, and international environmental law. Given the time constraints of a single semester, we will not be able to cover all the possible substantive topics, but we will introduce as many of these topics as possible. The substantive topics we cover will largely be determined based on student interest.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: By the end of this course, a student will understand the nature and sources of international law, in particular treaty-based law and customary international law. A student will also understand how international law is incorporated into American domestic law and will recognize how international law might be relevant to their practice.

RELEVANCY OF COURSE FOR CAREER PURPOSES: Like constitutional law, federal statutory law, state statutory law, administrative law and the common law, international law is part of American law. The United States is a party to over 17,000 treaties and other international agreements and is a member of scores of international organizations, some of which have been effectively been given rule-making authority. The United States adheres to customary international law. The US also uses international law to advocate for its interests in the international
sphere. To be a good lawyer, it is not only necessary to understand what international law is and how it is a part of American law – but also to understand when it might be relevant in any transaction or legal dispute.

**RELEVANCY OF COURSE FOR BAR EXAM PREPARATION:** International law is not specifically tested on the Missouri or Kansas bar exams.