In a relatively idealistic moment in world history, the United Nations was created in 1945 in an attempt to regulate war and to minimize its devastating effects. This was followed shortly by the near-universal ratification of the Four Geneva Conventions in 1949. Yet almost immediately, a Cold War began between the world’s two greatest powers, resulting in many hot wars in various places around the globe. This course will explore and analyze the theoretical and practical considerations of the attempt to regulate the use of armed conflict through the United Nations Charter and other international documents. Readings will examine how successful such attempts have been, including attention to such issues as the responsibility to protect, collective security, and the role of the Security Council and the great powers in armed conflict.