26:790:538 Global Environmental Issues

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Tuesdays 2 pm – 4.40 pm in Hill Hall 216
Office Hours: Tuesdays 11.30 am – 1pm or by arrangement

This is a graduate course focused on the global environmental "problematique" and the ways in which it is being played out in a variety of political and policy arenas. Apart from introducing the student to the concepts and literature in global environmental politics, the course is intended to provide students with insights into the political structure and context of transnational environmental issues; the ways in which individuals are implicated in these issues; the intergovernmental mechanisms established for addressing environmental problems; the treatment of environmental problems that occur in many different places but are not necessarily linked; transnational environmental activity, including that through social movements, non-governmental organizations, and corporate actors. We will approach these matters through a focus on four general aspects of the environmental problematique: Environmental governance; civil society and transnational actors; critical debates on justice, development and economic issues; and environmental security.

On successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate broad familiarity with and understanding of core concepts and debates in the literature on global environmental politics
- Demonstrate knowledge of the global governmental processes and mechanisms through which environmental questions are addressed
- Demonstrate understanding of the roles of and relationships between various governmental and non-governmental actors implicated in global environmental politics
- Analyze environmental problems in relation to debates on justice, development, economy and environmental security

Skills that will be practiced and developed

- Mapping the broad structure and content of an area of academic literature and debate
- Critical engagement with texts of various kinds pertaining to the global environment, including academic literature, policy documents, NGO reports
- Participation in small and large group discussion
- Oral presentation skills
- Student-led research within the framework of the course and designated reading list
- Academic writing skills
Assignments

In addition to attendance and active participation in class exercises (20% of grade: 10% on the presentation, 10% active engagement with subject matter in the classroom), students must read the assigned texts and articles. There are several written requirements:

- **Mid-term paper** (40%): due March 2, 2018 (via Blackboard)
- **Final paper** (40%): due May 1, 2018 (via Blackboard)

Both papers have a length of 3,000 words and a list of essay questions will be released two weeks before the respective due date.

Fair warning and integrity policy

I reschedule exams and extend deadlines only if you provide documentation of extenuating circumstances and if you notify me in advance. I will prosecute to the fullest any breach of the University’s integrity policy or any act of plagiarism by reporting it to the appropriate authority. Plagiarism is defined by the university as “the deliberate use and appropriation of another’s work without any indication of the source and the passing off of such work as the student’s own. Any student who fails to give credit for ideas or materials taken from another is guilty of plagiarism”.

There will be no textbook and we will rely on journal articles and Blackboard uploads in the interest of your finances and to expose you to a variety of views and concepts.

Classes

**Meeting one**: Tuesday, January 16, 2018
Introductory meeting: discussion of course aims and content, assignment of presentation activities, essay titles etc.

**Meeting two**: January 23, 2018
Environmental literature in global context – from the origins of social environmental thought to the history of global environmental politics

- Dimitris Stevis (2005), The trajectory of the study of international environmental politics (on Blackboard)
- Lipschutz,R (2005), Global environmental politics – power, perspectives, practice, chapter 1, CQ Press (on Blackboard).
• Jennifer Clapp & Peter Dauvergne (2005), Paths to a green world, chapter 1, MIT Press, (on Blackboard)

Presentations

Gro Harlem Brundtland, The Brundtland report

**Meeting three: January 30, 2018**

IR and the environment – international law and politics

• John Vogler, ‘International Relations and the environment’ in: G Kütting (ed), Global Environmental Politics – concepts, theories and case studies, Routledge, 2018 (on Blackboard),

• Oran Young, ‘Inferences and indices, evaluating the effectiveness of international environmental agreements’, *Global Environmental Politics*, 2001, 1, 1, pp 99-121.

• Ron Mitchell, chapter 5 (on Blackboard)

Presentations

The Climate Change regime

**Meeting four: February 6, 2018**

Environmental governance and regimes – part 2


• Case study (on Blackboard)

Presentations

The biodiversity regime
**Meeting five: February 13, 2018**  
Environmental institutions and governance – critical perspectives

- R. Lipschutz, Global environmental politics – power, perspectives, practice, chapter 5, CQ Press (on Blackboard).

Presentations  
David Humphreys, Logjam

**Meeting six: February 20, 2018**  
Environmental governance – the role and rise of global social movements and global civil society

- Lucy Ford (2018), Global civil society and non-state actors (on Blackboard)  

Presentations  
Keck & Sikkink, Activists beyond borders

**Meeting seven: February 27, 2018**

Mid-term paper – no class and one-on-one meetings in my office instead.

**Meeting eight: March 6, 2018**  
Environmental governance- economy versus environment
• Thomas Hickmann and Markus Lederer (2018), Global political economy and development (on Blackboard)

Presentations
Peter Newell, Climate capitalism

*Spring Break*

**Meeting nine:** March 20, 2018
Consumption

• Doris Fuchs & Frederike Boll, ‘Sustainable consumption’, in: G Kütting (ed), Global Environmental Politics – concepts, theories and case studies, Routledge, 2018 (on Blackboard),

Presentations
Tim Jackson, Prosperity without growth

**Meeting 10:** March 27, 2018
Democracy and the environment
Guest lecture by Professor Frank Fischer

• Book excerpt by Professor Fischer to follow
Meeting 11: April 3, 2018
Development

- Pratap Chatterjee & Matthias Finger, The Earth Brokers (on Blackboard)
- Pamela Martin, ‘Global governance from the Amazon’, *Global Environmental Politics*, 11,4, 2011.
- Vandana Shiva:
  http://pi.library.yorku.ca/ojs/index.php/cws/article/viewFile/8884/8061

Presentations:
The Neem tree study

Meeting 12: April 10, 2018
Environmental security


Presentations
Research one of the case studies of Homer Dixon

Meeting 13: April 17, 2018
Ecological security


Presentations
Any case study chapter from Peluso & Watts
Meeting 14: April 24, 2018

Ecological justice

- Bradley Parks & J. Timmons Roberts, Environment and ecological justice (Blackboard)

Presentations
R. Bullard, Dumping in Dixie