POSC 268-00
International Environmental Politics and Policy

Syllabus

Monday and Wednesday: 11:10a.m - 12:20p.m
Friday: 12:00-1:00p.m
Fall 2008: September 15 – November 19

Willis 211
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Course Goals

International environmental politics and policy is perhaps the most prominent field that challenges traditional state-centric ways of thinking about international problems and solutions. The dominant theoretical lens and language of state-centric international relations theories alone cannot capture and explain the dynamic forces of international environmental politics. The unchallenged intellectual faith in these theories and language is an epistemological impasse to advancing our understanding of international environmental politics and policy making processes. Therefore, this course will employ both state-centric and non-state-centric approaches to unpack, analyze, and understand dynamics of international environmental politics and policy.

This course asks questions such as: (1) how do individuals and groups shape local-global dynamics of international environmental politics? (2) How can we understand how economic, political, and social processes at multiple domains shape global environmental changes, including climate change? (3) How can we understand the challenges of international environmental politics and policy formulations to face the challenges of global environmental changes? These nonexclusive overarching questions serve as the framework of this course.

In order to encompass the framework of the course, this course covers five arenas crucial to understanding the nature and dynamics of international environmental issues and political processes: (1) international political orders; (2) international environmental law; (3) human-environment interactions through market and politics; (4) political and societal challenges of sustainability; and (5) dynamics of human values and rules.

In so doing, this course is designed to equip students to: (1) understand international environmental politics from both state-centric and multi-actor centric views; (2) gain knowledge about international environmental law and to be able to evaluate the advantages and
disadvantages of legal approaches; (3) understand the fate of the Kyoto Protocol and the future of climate change treaty; and (4) prepare for the challenges in the practice of international environmental governance and the theoretical underpinnings of these challenges. To achieve these goals, the course is organized with the following topics.

Course Outline

Week 1: International Political Order
Week 2: Globalization and the Environment
Week 3: The Fate and Future of Climate Change Treaty
Week 4: International Environmental Law
Week 5: Local Dynamics of Global Environmental Changes
Week 6: Democracy and the Environment
Week 7: Multilayer Environmental Governance
Week 8: Rethinking International Environmental Institutions
Week 9: Commodity Chains and Environmental Changes
Week 10: Conclusion

Assignments and Due Dates

September 30: Essay on IEP is due (graded)
October 10: Take home exam is distributed
October 16: Take home exam answer is due (graded)
October 28: Policy paper on the future of climate change treaty is due (Graded)
November 12: Final draft of group paper is due (graded, 5%)
November 14-19: Group presentations (graded, 5%)
November 19: Final group paper is due (graded, 15%)

NOTE: Group members will provide evaluation of the performance and contribution of peers to the group work based on guidelines provided. This grade is 5% of total 30% group project grade.

Course Assignments, Expectations, and Grade

There are five interconnected course assignments. These five components will be used to evaluate your performance in this course. The percentage for each assignment for your final grade is in parentheses. The descriptions of assignments are as follow:

(1) Participation (15%): Your participation in this class begins with reading assigned materials before the day of class. This course will be conducted mostly in interactive lecture style. There will also be group-led and group-based discussion sessions. What this means is that you will have many opportunities to participate during the lecture. For group-led discussion sessions, I will assign a group of students to prepare a list of questions and ideas that are related to and
generated through the readings prior to the class discussion session. This assigned group is responsible for leading discussion with puzzles and questions. For group-based discussion sessions, I will assign problems related to the readings to each group during the class. There will also be group simulations. To be an effective participant, I encourage you to read leading news websites regularly and seek news about international environmental politics and policy.

(2) **Defining International Environmental Politics (20%)**: Each student is required to collect qualitative data that illustrate her or his personal relationship to international environmental politics and nature. The suggested data collection template that explains what to collect is provided. Students will collect this data for 4 consecutive days beginning from September 19, 2008. All items that are used by student during 24 hour period should be entered into data sheet. This data collection effort is worth 5% of total grade for this assignment. After collecting data, students will select three items they are interested in analyzing how these three items illustrate their personal relationship to international environmental politics and policy making processes and how their livelihoods link to nature. Each student is required to write an essay **between 6 and 8 double-spaced pages** that explains why these three items are selected and how they illustrate a personal relationship to nature and international environmental politics and policy. The essay and data sheets are **due at 5:00p.m on September 30**. Send them to me by email at tmyint@carleton.edu

(3) **Take Home Exam (15%)**: There will be one take-home assignment. You will choose one question out of the two given questions. Your assignment is to respond to the selected question directly and answer the question. These questions are related to the course readings, lectures, and class discussion preceding this assignment. Your answers should be **between 5 and 7 double-spaced pages**. You are not allowed to discuss your selected question or answer with your classmates. You may consult reading materials and your class notes. No research is needed for this assignment. While you consider readings, lectures, class discussion, and your notes as appropriate bases for your answer, what I am looking for is your own ingenuity in answering the question. This is an honor system. I expect you to be a conscientious citizen and honor this rule. You will have five days in total to answer the selected question beginning from the end of class in which the questions are distributed. If you desire, you may turn in your answer anytime within five days from the time you receive the question. This take home exam will be distributed on October 10 and the answer is **due at 5:00p.m on October 16, 2008**.

(4) **Policy Paper on the Future of Climate Change Treaty (20%)**: This is a policy paper for which students are required to assess the position of a selected country among top ten Green House Gases (GHG) emitting countries including the European Union. Student will: (1) identify the policy of selected country on Kyoto Protocol; (2) analyze the country’s current standing in terms of ratification and implementation of Kyoto Protocol, (3) provide critical assessment of the country’s policy on Kyoto Protocol; and (4) analyze and project what the selected country’s future position on post-Kyoto climate change treaty might be. This assignment is for students to analyze and understand which countries’ issues and interests dominate ongoing diplomatic
efforts beginning with the latest round of discussion in Bali, Indonesia in 2007, and also to project what the post-Kyoto global climate change treaty is going to be like. Students will find Dessler and Parson’s The Science and Politics of Global Climate Change: A Guide to the Debate as a reference to write this paper. The Gould Library has a resource website devoted to this course with particular attention to this assignment. Make a good use of this resource. The paper should be between 7 and 9 pages. This paper is due at 5 p.m. on October 28, 2008.

(5) Group Project (30%): Based on the individual essays on definition of international environmental politics and data collected for assignment No. 2, a group of four students will select an item and conduct analysis of commodity chain processes. I will establish groups on Friday, September 19. Each group will select one item or product that the group as a whole is interested in analyzing. There are four components to the assignment. The first is to map out the material processes defined by history, geography, and the movements of these items from the state of nature to a finished product you buy from a store. Student will use Google map with the help of GIS Lab to map out this process. The second is to discuss economic processes that govern material processes identified in the previous step. The third is to identify political and legal institutions that govern both the material processes and economic processes. Finally, the paper must provide analysis of: (1) how commodity chain analysis challenges the statecentric theories and approaches of international environmental politics; (2) what nodes within the chain has most complex networks of economic, political, and environmental consequences; and (3) what type of policy and institutional arrangements your group recommend to minimize negative environmental consequences. This group paper should be between 20 and 25 double-spaced pages excluding references, maps, pictures, and figures. The final draft of the group paper is due on November 12, 2008. The final paper is due on November 19, 2008. More details about this group project will be distributed on September 22.

NOTE: All written assignments should be double-spaced with 12 point Times New Roman font and with page numbers inserted on one inch margin page layout.

Required Texts:


**IMPORTANT:** This is a provisional syllabus and subject to change depending on the ebb and flow of the course and surrounding worlds.

**Course Conducts**

a. **Attendance:** Attendance is required for this course. If you need to be absent from the class, it is your responsibility to notify me in advance. When you are absent, it is in your benefit to borrow notes from a classmate or ask your classmates what you missed. If you wish, I will be available during office hours or by appointment at your request to meet with you and go over what you missed while you were absent. For the record, I will have attendance markup-sheet for every class.

b. **Plagiarism:** There is zero tolerance for plagiarism. A summary of the College’s policy on plagiarism states: “At Carleton College, an act of academic dishonesty is therefore regarded as conflicting with the work and purpose of the entire College and not merely as a private matter between the student and an instructor; all cases involving such dishonesty are referred for appropriate action to the Academic Standing Committee (ASC) via the Associate Dean of Students or the Associate Dean of the College.” For more information on Carleton’s policy on academic honesty, please consult [http://apps.carleton.edu/campus/dos/handbook/academic_regs/?policy_id=21359](http://apps.carleton.edu/campus/dos/handbook/academic_regs/?policy_id=21359)

c. **Late assignments:** Assignments are due on the dates specified in this syllabus or in the assignment sheet. Late work will receive one point reduction per late day. If you are unable to complete an assignment on time due to illness or personal emergency, you can request an extension with the supporting documents such as a medical note from a doctor or the Wellness Center.

d. **Special needs:** If you require special accommodation due to a documented physical or medically classified different learning capacity, please come see me during the first week of class or any time throughout the semester to discuss how I might best assist you in meeting the objectives and requirements of this course.

**IMPORTANT:** The key for you to be successful as a student and for me as a teacher in this course is timely and efficient communication between you and me. In addition, Carleton offers numerous resources for you to excel your learning. If you do not know them, do not be shy to ask. Make good use of resources on campus!
Schedule of Readings

WEEK 1: INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ORDER

September 15: Introduction

This syllabus

September 17: International Environmental Politics


Chapter 1: What are global environmental politics?, pp. 1-32.


Chapter 1: Introduction, pp. 1-12.


September 19: Individuals and Groups in World Politics


Chapter 4: Civic Politics and Social Power: Environmental Politics on the Ground, pp. 132-176.

WEEK 2: GLOBALIZATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT

September 22: International Environmental Politics & You


September 24:  What Do We Mean by “Global?”

Chapter 2: Deconstructing “global environment”, pp. 33-85


**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 25: MOVIE SCREENING:** *An Inconvenient Truth*, at Gould Library room 344 at 7:00 p.m.

September 26:  Consequences of Globalization on the Environment


WEEK 3: THE FATE AND FUTURE OF GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE TREATY

September 29: Climate Change and Social Change

Chapter 1: Global climate change: a new type of environmental problem, p. 1-16


October 1: Science, Policy, and the State of Kyoto Protocol

Chapter 2: Science, politics, and science in politics, p. 18-45
Chapter 4: Climate-change policy debate: impacts and potential responses

UNFCC, Text of Kyoto Protocol, see at http:// unfcc.int/essential_background/kyoto_protocol/background/items/1351.php

October 3: Future Global Climate Treaty


WEEK 4: INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL LAW

October 6: Sources of International Environmental Legal Orders


October 8: Theories of State’s Environmental Rights


Case Study: *The Rhine River Pollution and International Law* [no readings],
http://www.iksr.org

October 10: GIS Lab for commodity chain analysis on google map.

WEEK 5: LOCAL DYNAMICS OF GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

October 13: “New Species” of International “Law”


Case Study: *The Nam Theun 2 Dam*, http://www.namtheun2.com

October 15: Policy Problems and Prescriptions

[See also, for optional reading, Extensions of “The Tragedy of the Commons,” by Hardin at http://www.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/full/280/5364/682 ]


Group simulations: Nam Theun 2 Dam

October 17: GIS Lab for commodity chain analysis on google map.
October 18-20       MIDTERM BREAK

WEEK 6:       DEMOCRACY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

October 22:   The Danger of Panaceas and Monocentric Thinking

Berkes, Fikret, Going Beyond Panaceas Special Feature: Community-based conservation in a
globalized world. *PNAS*, 104: 15188-15193; published online before print September 19 2007.
url: http://www.pnas.org/cgi/reprint/104/39/15188

Alf Hornborg and Juan Martínez Alier, eds, *Rethinking Environmental History: World-System
   Chapter 19: Scale and Dependency in World Systems: Local Societies in Convergent

October 24:   Polycentric Governance: Local Politics and Global Sustainability

Thomas Prugh, Robert Costanza, and Herman E. Daly, *The Local Politics of Global
   Chapter 3: Aiming for Genotopia, pp. 41-61.

Case Study: *Pak Mun Dam*, read:

WEEK 7:       MULTILAYER ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE

October 27:  Does Democracy Promote Sustainability?

Thomas Prugh, Robert Costanza, and Herman E. Daly, *The Local Politics of Global
   Chapter 4: Prelude to Politics, pp. 65-84.
   Chapter 5: Engaging Politics, pp. 87-123.

October 29:  Democracy in Global Environmental Governance

Thomas Prugh, Robert Costanza, and Herman E. Daly, *The Local Politics of Global
   Chapter 6: The Once and Future Democracy, pp. 129-154.
   Chapter 7: Sustainability and Strong Democracy, pp. 159-165.
October 31: Local-Global Dynamics


Case Study: International Water Tribunal in the Rhine [No readings].

WEEK 8: RETHINKING INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL INSTITUTIONS

November 3: Reform Agenda?

   Chapter 2: Key Challenges to Effective Global Environmental Governance, pp. 67.
   Chapter 3: Elements of Reform Agenda, pp. 71-90.

November 5: Non-State Actors


November 7: Reform Challenges


WEEK 9: COMMODITY CHAINS AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

November 10: De We Need a Global Environmental Organization?


November 12: Meetings with Groups and Preparing for Presentation

[final draft of group paper is due]

November 14: Group Presentations

WEEK 10: FINAL WEEK

November 17: Group presentations

November 19: Group presentations

[Final group paper is due by 5:00p.m]

HAPPY HOLIDAYS