POSC 268-00
International Environmental Politics and Policy

Syllabus

Monday and Wednesday: 11:10a.m - 12:20p.m  
Friday: 12:00-1:00p.m  
Winter 2008: January 3 – March 16  
Willis 205  
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Course Goals

This course covers both theoretical and policy challenges of international environmental politics and policy. International environmental politics and policy is the most prominent field that challenges traditional statecentric ways of thinking about international problems and solutions. This course will cover five arenas crucial to understanding the nature and origin of international environmental issues and policymaking mechanisms: (1) international political orders; (2) international environmental law; (3) human-environment interactions through market and politics; (4) challenges of sustainable development; and (5) dynamics of human values and rules.

The course is designed to equip students to: (1) understand international environmental politics from both statecentric 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; and (3) prepare for the challenges in the practice of international environmental governance and the theoretical underpinnings of these challenges. To achieve these goals, the course will follow the following outline.

Course Outline

Week 1: International Political Order  
Week 2: Globalization and the Environment  
Week 3: International Environmental Law  
Week 4: Dynamics of Values & Rules  
Week 5: Tragedy of the Commons  
Week 6: Democracy and the Environment  
Week 7: Multilayer Environmental Governance  
Week 8: Considering Policy Challenges  
Week 9: Individuals in International Environmental Politics  
Week 10: Conclusion
Course Assignments, Expectations, and Grade

There are six interconnected course assignments. These six components will be used to evaluate your performance in this course. The percentage for each assignment for your final grade is in parentheses. The details 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 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, you will be better off paying attention to international environmental politics and policy problems and thinking about them along with readings of this course. Needless to say, this requires you to read news in hard and soft media. Visiting leading news websites regularly and seeking news about international environmental politics and policy will be helpful.

2. **One critical thinking memo (15%)**: Each student is required to complete one memo during the term. The due date for the memo is to be self-selected on January 7 when I will have a sign-up sheet for you. The aim of this assignment is to give you the opportunity to scrutinize readings and to connect theories and concepts from readings, lectures, and discussion to current international environmental politics and policy. It is encouraged, but not required, to write your critical thinking memo focusing on the readings that are assigned for the following day the memo is due. The memo should NOT summarize what the readings say, but jump directly to your critical responses in light of what you learn from the readings. This memo should be no longer than 2 to 3 double-spaced pages. It is quality rather than quantity of words that will be counted toward your grade. The entries should be sent to the listserv of the class on your selected due date. The entire class is entitled to analyze, comment, and respond to your memos in a respectful manner in the listserv. While it is encouraged, it is not required for readers to respond. I may also use your memos for illustrations and discussions in class.

3. **Experiment (5%)**: Students will participate in a computer-based experiment. Each student is required to write up an evaluation and suggestion for the improvement of the conceptual component of the experiment. The evaluation questions will be provided. This evaluation is due on February 5 by email. This experiment will be conducted on January 30 and February 1. Since this is an experiment, students will receive explanation and instruction at the time of the experiment.
(4) **One take-home assignment (20%)**: 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. 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 February 6 and **due on February 11**.

(5) **Data Collection and Selection (15%)**: Each student is required to collect qualitative data that illustrate her or his personal relationship to international environmental politics and the surrounding nature. The suggested data collection template that explains what to collect is provided on January 7. Students will collect this data for 10 consecutive days beginning from the first day of the second week of class. After the tenth day, students will select five items they are interested in analyzing how these five items illustrate their personal relationship to international environmental politics and policy making processes. Each student is required to write a short statement (two double-spaced pages) of interest that explains why these five items are selected and how they illustrate a personal relationship to nature and international environmental politics and policy. The statement of interest and data are **due at 5:00pm on January 20**. Send them to me by email at tmyint@carleton.edu

(6) **One group paper and presentation (30%)**: Based on the individual statement of interest and data collected in the previous assignment, a group of four students will conduct analysis of the relationship between the group and international environmental law, politics, and policy making processes. I will establish groups on January 21 based on your interests. Each group will discuss and select five items 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. The second is to discuss economic dimensions of material processes identified in the previous step. The third is to identify political and legal institutions that govern both the material processes and economic dimensions. Finally, the paper must provide analysis of how each group relates to and participates in international environmental politics and policy contexts. This group paper should be between 15 and 20 double-spaced pages excluding references, maps, and figures. The paper is **due on March 3**. More details about this group project will be distributed on January 21.

**NOTE**: All written assignments should be double-spaced with 12 point Times New Roman fonts and with page numbers. With the exception of critical thinking memos, your take home
assignments and final group papers have to be submitted to me in hard copy in addition to pdf electronic files for the record.

**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 your classmate or ask your classmates to learn 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!

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**Schedule of Readings**

**WEEK 1: INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ORDER**

**January 4:** **Introduction**

This syllabus

**January 7:** **International Environmental Politics**


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


Chapter 1: Introduction, pp. 1-12.


**January 9:** **Individuals and Groups in World Politics**


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

January 11: International Environmental Politics & You


WEEK 2: GLOBALIZATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT

January 14: What Do We Mean by “Global?”

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


January 16: Consequences of Globalization on the Environment


THURSDAY, JANUARY 17: MOVIE SCREENING: *An Inconvenient Truth*, at Gould Library room 300 at 7:00p.m.

January 18: Sources of International Environmental Legal Orders


WEEK 3: INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL LAW

January 21: Theories of State’s Environmental Rights

Perrez, Franz Xaver, The relationship between "permanent sovereignty" and the obligation not to cause transboundary environmental damage.
http://www.thefreelibrary.com/The+relationship+between+%22permanent+sovereignty%22+and +the+obligation...-a019109151

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

**January 23:** Successes and Failures of International Environmental Law

http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Enforcement+of+environmental+law+in+United+States+and+European+law%3a...-a019109152


**January 25:** “New Species” of International “Law”


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

**WEEK 4:** DYNAMICS OF VALUES & RULES

**January 28:** Policy Sciences and International Environmental Politics


**Group simulations:** Nam Theun 2 Dam
January 30: Dynamics of Rules: Experiments in Lab


The experiment will take place at CMC computer lab [exact room, TBA].

February 1: Dynamics of Rules: Experiments in Lab

The experiment will take place at CMC computer lab [exact room, TBA]

WEEK 5: TRADEGEDY OF THE COMMONS

February 4: Policy Problems and Prescriptions


February 6: The Struggle to Govern the Commons


February 8: The Danger of Panaceas

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


WEEK 6: DEMOCRACY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

February 11: Local Politics and Global Sustainability

Chapter 3: Aiming for Genotopia, pp. 41-61.


**February 13: Does Democracy Promote Sustainability?**


Chapter 4: Prelude to Politics, pp. 65-84.
Chapter 5: Engaging Politics, pp. 87-123.

**February 15: Democracy in Global Environmental Governance**


Chapter 6: The Once and Future Democracy, pp. 129-154.
Chapter 7: Sustainability and Strong Democracy, pp. 159-165.

**WEEK 7: MULTILAYER ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE**

**February 18: Local-Global Dynamics**


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

**February 20: International Environmental Regimes**

Young, Oran, “Inferences and Indices: Evaluating the Effectiveness of International Environmental Regimes, *Global Environmental Politics*, 3(3): 97-104.

**February 22: Non-State Regimes and Actors**


[http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1309/is_4_36/ai_61693396](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1309/is_4_36/ai_61693396)

WEEK 8: CONSIDERING POLICY CHALLENGES

**February 25: Do We Need a Global Environmental Organization?**


**February 27: Reform Agenda?**

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

**February 29: Policy Challenges and Theoretical Puzzles**


WEEK 9: INDIVIDUALS IN INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS

March 3: Group Presentations

[Group papers are due]

March 5: Group presentations  
March 7: Group presentations

WEEK 10: CONCLUSION

**March 10: Sustainability Practices and Science**

Robert W. Kates, William C. Clark, Robert Corell, J. Michael Hall, Carlo C. Jaeger, Ian Lowe, James J. McCarthy, Hans Joachim Schellnhuber, Bert Bolin, Nancy M. Dickson,