Course Goals

Global environmental politics and policy is perhaps the most prominent field that challenges traditional statecentric ways of thinking about international problems and solutions. The dominant practices, theoretical lenses and language of statecentric international relations alone cannot capture and explain the dynamic forces of global environmental politics, let alone providing solutions. The uncontested intellectual faith on these theories and language centered on states is epistemological impasse to advancing our understanding of global environmental politics and policy making processes. Therefore, this course will employ both statecentric and non-statecentric approaches to unpack, analyze, and understand dynamics of global environmental politics and policy.

This course asks questions such as: (1) how do individuals and groups shape local-global dynamics of global environmental politics? (2) How can we understand how economic, legal, political, and social processes at multiple domains shape global environmental changes, including climate change? (3) How can we understand the dynamics of global environmental politics and policy formulations to face the challenges of global environmental and social changes? (4) What are the roles of international law, treaties, and diplomacy? (5) Do we need a global treaty and a global organization to govern locally-driven global climate change issues? (6) What are the strengths and weaknesses of both global, national, and local approaches to addressing global climate change and environmental changes? (7) Do capitalism and its market approaches provide solutions to climate change issues? (8) How do human needs and wants explain the challenges of governing global environmental changes? What can we learn from the recent experience handling Covid-19 pandemic? These nonexclusive overarching questions serve as the framework of this course.
To encompass the framework of the course, this course covers five arenas crucial to understanding the nature and dynamics of global environmental issues and political processes: (1) global and 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 global environmental politics from both statecentric and non-statecentric views; (2) gain knowledge about international environmental laws and to be able to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of legal approaches; (3) understand the fate of Kyoto Protocol and the COP21 Agreement; and (4) prepare for the challenges in the practice of global environmental governance and theoretical underpinnings of these challenges. To achieve these goals, the course is organized with the following topics.

**Course Outline**

Week 1: You and Global Environmental Politics  
Week 2: Globalization and the Environment  
Week 3: Dynamics of Climate Change Treaty Making  
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: Polycentric Environmental Governance

**Schedule of Assignments and Due Dates**

3/26 - Course survey  
3/28 - Distribute GEP Essay guidelines  
4/12 - Distribute guidelines for group projects  
4/19 - Personal GEP essay and Data Sheet is due (graded)  
4/23 - Library Research Guide  
4/28 - The coordinates of commodity chain nodes are due at noon.

**4/29 – MID-TERM BREAK**

4/30 - GIS Lab (graded)  
5/10 - GIS Map and first draft of group paper is due (graded)  
5/19 - Final Draft of the group project report is due (graded)  
5/21 - Group presentations … (graded)  
5/23 - Group presentations … (graded)  
5/28 - Group presentations … (graded)
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 of each assignment for your final grade is in parentheses. The descriptions of assignments are as follow:

1. **Participation (20%)**: Your participation in this course begins with reading assigned materials before the 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 class. There will also be group simulations. To be an effective participant, I encourage you to read leading news websites regularly and seeking news about global environmental politics and policy. To be a good standing citizen of this course, you are required to: (1) have good attendance; (2) read assigned materials before the class; (3) have timely notification and communication with me when you have to be absent or if you need to request extension for personal reasons; (4) exercise self-respect and responsibility of a student for the success of learning mission of this course and the Carleton College as a whole; and (5) exercise your intellectual freedom in discussions and the assignments for the course. For this assignment, you will pick two days out of ten weeks to prepare for leading class discussion with prompts and questions. I will have signup sheet for you on Thursday, March 28.

2. **Personal Essay on Global Environmental Politics (25%)**: Each student is required to collect qualitative and quantitative data that illustrate her or his personal relationship to global environmental politics and the nature. The data collection template which explains what to collect is provided on March 28 along with the guidelines. Students will collect this data for 2 consecutive days beginning on April 5. All items that are used by student during 48-hour period should be entered into spreadsheet with the information about the name of item, type of usage, cost of item, country of origin, and location of store where student bought. This data collection effort is worth 5% of total grade for this assignment. After collecting data, students will select three items out of all the items collected in two days. Students will then analyze: (1) how three items enable their livelihoods; (2) how the illustrated livelihoods connect to global environmental politics; and (3) how they are connected to people around the world and nature via three items. Based on the analysis, each student will write an essay defining global environmental politics from a personal standpoint. The essay should be between 5 and 7 double-spaced pages. The essay is due at 5:00pm on April 19. Send the pdf copy of the essay and spreadsheet of data to me by email at tmyint@carleton.edu

3. **Group Project (35%)**: Based on the personal essays on the definition of global environmental politics and data collected for the assignment No. 2, a group of three to four students will select an item and conduct analysis of commodity chain processes. The groups will be established in week 2. There are four components to the assignment. The first step 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 bought from a store. Each group will first identify and describe each node of the commodity chain of the item from raw material extraction node to waste site of the item. Student will use google earth to locate coordinates and, with the help of GIS Lab, map out the commodity chain of the item. The second step is to discuss political economic processes that govern material processes identified in the previous step. The description of each node and the price of the commodity at node will be estimated for economic analysis along with political analysis. The third step is to identify political and legal institutions that govern both the material processes and economic processes. Finally, the project must provide analysis of: (1) what nodes within the chain has most complex networks of economic, political, and environmental consequences; (2) what types of costs are captured in the price of commodity at each node, and how and what types of costs are externalized (not captured) in the price at each node, and why; and (3) how your commodity chain define global environmental politics and policy and challenges the statecentric theories and approaches of international environmental politics. The final draft of group project paper is due on May 19.

(4) Group Presentation (20%): Each group will present the findings in class on May 21, 23, and 28. Each group is required to submit PowerPoint slides before the day of presentation to me by email. Your presentation is evaluated based on: (1) control of contents as you select what to present from a research paper to PowerPoints in a given time slot; (2) control of language and narrative; (3) eye-contact and connection with the audience; (4) group dynamics, professional posture, and level of confidence; (5) organization of the presentation and narrative; (6) appearance of PowerPoint slides and visual aid; (7) quality of connection, collaboration, and coherence among presenters; (8) level of authority you project by using credible sources and evidences; (9) connection between your paper and presentation; and (10) creativity to motivate your audience and making presentation worthy of attention. Based on your team presentation and my reading of your final draft of the paper, I will provide written comment on your final draft submitted to me on May 19 and the presentation. Your presentation and my comments should prepare you to write the final-polished paper which is due at noon on June 3.

Required Texts:


Thomas Prugh, Robert Costanza, and Herman E. Daly, The Local Politics of Global Sustainability, Island Press, 2000. (recommended)
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.

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

c. Use of Artificial Intelligence: Use of AI tools, including ChatGPT, is permitted in this course for students who wish to use them. Any use of AI including generating ideas for assignments has to be stated up front on the cover page of the essay. Students have to be specific about for what purposes AI was used for the assignment and the class. In addition, to adhere to our scholarly values, students must cite any AI-generated material that informed their work (this includes in-text citations and/or use of quotations, and in your reference list). You may attach the entire text from AI as appendix to your assignment. Using an AI tool to generate content without proper attribution qualifies as academic dishonesty.

d. Late assignments: Assignments are due on the dates specified in this syllabus or in the assignment guideline 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 from your class Dean’s office. Request should be one day in advance latest unless it is due to emergency.

e. Special needs: If you require special accommodation due to a documented physical or medically classified different learning capacity, please come see me as soon as possible 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 effective communication between you and me. In addition, Carleton offers numerous resources for you to excel in your learning. If you do not know them, do not be shy to ask. Make good use of resources on campus community!

Schedule of Readings

WEEK 1: YOU AND GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS

March 26: Introduction

This syllabus
Course survey

March 28: Climate Change and Global Environmental Changes


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

WEEK 2: GLOBALIZATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT

April 2: Global Environmental Politics & You


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

April 4: Consequences of Globalization on the Environment


WEEK 3: THE FUTURE OF GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE TREATY

April 9: Sources of International Environmental Legal Orders


https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/29567/ELGP1StockD.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

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

April 11: Theories of State’s Environmental Rights


Case Study: The Rhine River Pollution and International Law [see handouts], http://www.iksr.org

WEEK 4: INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL LAW

April 16: Science, Policy, and the State of Kyoto Protocol

UNFCCC, Text of Kyoto Protocol, see at http://unfccc.int/essential_background/kyoto_protocol/background/items/1351.php [Read articles 1 to 12 and Annex A and B.]


April 18: Social Processes of Global Environmental Politics


WEEK 5: LOCAL DYNAMICS OF GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

April 23: Local Politics and Global Sustainability


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


April 25: “New Species” of International “Law”


Case Study: Nam Theun 2 Dam Lao P.D.R. See: www.namtheun2.com

April 29 – MID-TERM BREAK

WEEK 6: DEMOCRACY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

April 30: Future of Global Climate Treaty

COP 21 Paris Agreement, http://unfccc.int/files/essential_background/convention/application/pdf/english_paris_agreement.pdf [Read Articles 1 to 29]


NOTE: We will discuss Scheyder’s War Below this week!

May 2: Politics of Hydrosphere


Erik Stokstad, “Power play on the Nile” *Science*, February 16, 2016. [http://science.sciencemag.org/content/351/6276/904](http://science.sciencemag.org/content/351/6276/904)

WEEK 7: RETHINKING INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL INSTITUTIONS

May 7: 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](http://www.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/full/280/5364/682]


May 9: The Danger of Panaceas and Monocentric Thinking


Case Study: *International Water Tribunal in the Rhine* [Handout].
WEEK 8: MULTILAYER ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE

May 14: Does Democracy Promote Sustainability?


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

May 16: Polycentric Environmental Governance


Tun Myint, *Citizen Science and Sustainability*, Draft Manuscript.
- Chapter 1: Social Ecological Society
- Chapter 2: $2^{2/3}$ Great Transformations


WEEK 9: RETHINKIN GLOBAL APPROACH

May 21: Presentations

May 23: Presentations

WEEK 10: RETHINKIN GLOBAL APPROACH

May 28: Presentations
The following is the rubric I use to evaluate your personal GEP essay.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graded areas/guidelines</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stating personal definition of GEP.</td>
<td>- Do you provide personal definition of IEP based on your analysis of three items?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization, appropriate language and control of errors</td>
<td>- Is your essay organized so that you have coherent presentation of ideas and the reader can follow your ideas? Do you control errors carefully?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Application of the concepts from readings and class discussions in discussing personal definition | - Do you apply theories and concepts from readings, discussion, and lectures from the class?  
- How well do you understand the readings, theories, and concepts?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Critical thinking & creativity with the definition and findings | - Do you show your critical understanding of and thinking about your items and your livelihoods and subsequently connect your personal GEP data to the essay?  
- Do you incorporate your analysis of economic and environmental dimensions and general impression/reflection on all your possession?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Use of concrete evidences from your data sheet (qualitative and quantitative) from self-study | - Do you demonstrate both qualitative and quantitative dimension of your selection items with regard to how you and your fellow Homo sapiens would affect ecosystem and global environmental politics considering your findings?  
- What does your personal GEP data inform you about both your definition and your analysis.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Quality of Data sheet                                        | - How thorough and careful you are in collecting data, using the data, and presenting it.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

TOTAL Points
## Appendix B

### Guidelines and Grading Rubric for Group Presentation

POSC268 – Global Environmental Politics and Policy
Spring 2024
Carleton College
Northfield, MN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guidelines/graded areas</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control of contents</td>
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<tr>
<td>Control of language and narrative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eye-contact and connection with the audience</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professionalism, posture, and level of confidence on the topic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organization of presentation and narrative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Appearance of slides and visual aid</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality of connection, collaboration, and coherence among presenters</td>
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<tr>
<td>Level of authority presented by the use of credible resources and evidences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Connection between the paper and presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creativity to motivate audience and to keep the audience attention</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL POINTS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>