

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
FALL 2006
IR 323, Politics and the Global Environment
M&W 5:00-6:20 P.M, VKC 102**

Professor Fred Gordon

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Office Hours: VKC 313, M, 9:00 a.m.– 9:50 a.m.

M,W, 4:10 p.m. – 4:50 p.m., and T & TH 11:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

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Overview

This course explores how the global environment is an increasingly important factor in international politics. In the early 1990's, a new world order emerged from the shattered structures of the Cold War. The rigid simplicity of Cold War bipolarity, where actors in the international arena were often constrained by the rules of the US-Soviet rivalry, gave way to a complex order in which a host of unforeseen challenges emerged. Politicians, scholars, and the public have since recognized environmental factors in interstate relations. Issues such as global warming, resource scarcity, population growth, and pollution continue to challenge the modern state and civil society. In turn, greater attention has developed in understanding international environmental agreements and their impact in preserving and conserving the environment.

Objective

This course is approached in an incremental manner. Students will develop a general understanding of the political nature of the global environment. Focus will shift toward understanding and evaluating the international institutional response toward meeting environmental challenges. We will then examine two global environmental issues in greater detail; **global climate change and resource conflict**. This course concludes with a thorough evaluation of environmental sustainability. International relations theory will be incorporated to provide greater understanding for explaining both environmental cooperation and conflict.

You should come away from this class with: 1) a sound grasp of the political nature of the global environment as well as a firm understanding of the challenges and opportunities in achieving global governance.

The central questions that will be considered in this course are 1) how does international environmental politics relate to the struggle for power, wealth, legitimacy, and authority? 2) How successful have institutional responses been in mitigating environmental problems? 3) What is the nexus between resource scarcity and interstate conflict and, 4) What is sustainability and is it compatible with globalization? Regional issues will be explored to offer a composite perspective on the global environment.

Exams, assignments, and grading

Midterm 20%
Final Exam 30%
Term Paper 25%
Class Presentation 15%
Class Participation 10%

Exams

The exams will consist of a selection of essays derived both from the reading and lectures which will challenge to develop well informed perspective on issues relating to global governance. You will receive a selection of possible questions before each exam to help you prepare.

Paper

Each of you will choose a subject that you consider to be a major global challenge. You should choose from one of the following categories, and then narrow this down to a specific issue A) Global warming, B) Resource Scarcity, C) Global inequality and poverty and the effectiveness of international environmental accords. The paper should be approximately 10 pages that are double spaced with 12 pt font, standard margins. I will provide further guidance on choosing a topic in class.

Sources

You must use and refer to at least eight sources for your paper, as follows

- No less than three books
- No less than five academic journals
- No less than two news articles (which may be Opinion pieces) from reputable news sources (print or electronic edition).
- There is no upper limit on the number of sources used, but you should not try and accumulate as many sources as possible in an effort to impress. Use what you need to make your argument, following the above guidelines for basic scholarly credibility.

A Note on Plagiarism

USC's rules against plagiarism – defined as passing someone else's ideas off as your own—are extremely severe. I will perform random checks of your sources, and will adhere to school policy on the matter: You will receive a Fail on the assignment, and, if the instance is egregious, in the course, if I find that you plagiarized.

Presentation

Each student will have the chance to critique an article from the readings to offer greater depth to an issue covered in class. Each presentation will last approximately 10 minutes. Additionally, each student will turn in a written report in their presentation. Each paper should be approximately 4-5 pages. Please keep in mind that your paper should analyze the literature, not simply be a summary of the article.

Class participation 1) You are expected to contribute thoughts and comments to the class, and should come prepared to discuss the readings. You must keep up on the readings: I will call on students to facilitate discussion. If you are unable to respond to questions regarding the readings, I can only conclude that you are not focused on the course, and must take this into account in your final grade. Attendance is mandatory. Roll will be taken each class session.

Things you must keep in mind

- There are no makeup exams or extensions on the terms paper unless justified by one of the reasons stipulated by university policy. Any excuse for any missing assignment deadline should be supported by written documentation
- Any student wishing to contest a grade must see me in person and present an oral and written explanation. I will not engage in discussions about your grade via email
- You are expected to follow the daily international news and pay particular attention to news relating to the topics covered in this syllabus. Good and free online sources include the New York Times (nytimes.com), the international Herald Tribune (iht.com), CNN (cnn.com), the Washington Post, (washingtonpost.com), and the Los Angeles Times, (latimes.com). Besides reading the headlines, you should consult the Opinion Page of these papers for different perspectives on international events.

Readings

Readings for this course consist of three books and number of independent articles which will be made available to you via Blackboard.

Adger, W. Neil, Jouni Paavola, Saleemul Huq, and M.J. Mace eds. Fairness in Adaptation to Climate Change, MIT Press: Cambridge, 2006

Conca, Ken and Geoffrey D. Dabelko eds. Green Planet Blues, Environmental Politics From Stockholm to Johannesburg, Westview Press: Boulder, 2004.

Oberthur, Sebastian and Thomas Gehring eds. Institutional Interaction in Global Environmental Governance MIT Press: Cambridge, 2006.

Pirages, Dennis and Ken Cousins eds. From Resource Scarcity to Ecological Security MIT Press: Cambridge, 2005.

ARTICLES ON BLACKBOARD

Gleick, Peter. "Water and Conflict, Freshwater Resources and International Security," International Security, 8:1, 1993, pp. 79-112

Levy, Marc. "Is the Environment a National Security Issue?" International Security 20, 1995 pp. 35-62

Mathews, Jessica Tuchman. "Redefining Security" Foreign Affairs, Spring 1989, pp. 162-177

"Patterson, Mathew. "Interpreting Trends in Global Environmental Governance" International Affairs 75:4, pp. 793-802.

Rodrigues, Maria Guadalupe Moog. "Advocating for the Environment" Environment, 2004

Rooch, Philippe and Franz Xaver Perrez. "International Environmental Governance: The Strive Towards a Comprehensive, Coherent, and Efficient Environmental Regime" Colorado Journal of Environment and Policy <http://web.lexis-nexis.com/universie/document> (recommended)

RECOMMENDED READINGS

Commoner, Barry. Making Peace with the Planet The New Press: New York, 1992.

Dolsak, Nives and Elinor Ostrom. The Commons in the New Millennium ed. MIT Press: Cambridge, 2003.

Dougherty, James E. and Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, Jr. ed. Contending Theories of International Relations A Comprehensive Survey, Addison Wesley Longman: New York, 2001

Haas, Peter. "Do Regimes Matter? Epistemic Communities and Mediterranean Pollution Control," International Organization Summer 1989.

Hardin, Garret. Living Within Limits: Ecology, Economics, and Population Taboos New York: Oxford University Press, 1994

Kamieniecki, Sheldon and George A. Gonzalez and Robert O. Vos Flashpoints in Environmental Policymaking Controversies in Achieving Sustainability State University of New York Press, 1997

Postel, Sandra. The Last Oasis: Facing Water Scarcity W.W. Norton Publishers, New York 1997

THE POLITICAL NATURE OF THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT

Aug. 21 – Introduction and Course Overview

August 23 “Three Decades of Global Environmental Politics,” Conca, pp. 1-36

Aug. 28 “The Tragedy of the Commons,” Conca pp. 37-60

Aug. 30 “Ecology and the Structure of the International System”, Conca, pp. 61-98

Sept 4 LABOR DAY – UNIVERSITY HOLIDAY

Sept. 6 Kenya’s Green Militant, Think Globally, Act Locally, Politics Beyond the State, pp. 99-139, (Documentary, “The Killing of Chico Mendes,” Bullfrog Films)

Sept. 11 Rodrigues, “Advocating for the Environment” Environment, 2004, pp. 14-25
Documentary, “Drowned Out”, Bullfrog Films)

Sept. 13 “The Prospects for International Cooperation,” Conca, pp. 143-182

Sept 18 “Institutions as Though the Earth Mattered,” Conca, pp. 185-226,
Patterson, “Interpreting Trends in Global Environmental Governance,”
International Affairs 75:4, 1999 pp.793-802 (Blackboard)

INSTITUTIONAL INTERACTION IN GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE

Sept. 20 Introduction and Conceptual Foundations of Institutional Interaction, Oberthur, chaps. 1-2, pp. 1-52

Sept. 25 The Climate Change Regime and the Convention on Biological Diversity, Oberthur, chaps. 3-4, pp. 54-102

Sept. 27 Protecting the Northeast Atlantic: One Problem, Three Institutions and Institutional Interplay and Responsible Fisheries, Oberthur chaps. 5-6, pp. 103-156

Oct 2 The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species and Interactions

between the World Trade Organization and International Environmental Regimes, Oberthur chaps. 708 pp. 157-204

Oct. 4 Interactions of EU Legal Instruments..., and The EU Habitats Directive, Oberthur, The EU Deliberate Release Directive, Oberthur chaps. 9-11, pp. 205-258

Oct. 9 OCTOBER 9 ****MID TERM EXAM****

CLIMATE CHANGE

Oct. 11 “Global Warming The Signs and the Science” PBS DVD.
“Toward Justice in Adaptation to Climate Change and Politics, Science, and Law in Justice Debates”, Adger, chap. 1, pp. 1-22

Oct. 16 Future Socioeconomic And Political Challenges of Global Climate Change and Global Climate Change: Policy Challenges, and Policy Responses, Pirages, Chaps. 8-9, pp. 145-186

Oct. 18 “Dangers and Thresholds in Climate Change and Adaptation under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change”, Adger, chaps. 2-3, pp. 23-76.

Oct. 23 “Exploring the Social Justice Implications of Adaptation and Vulnerability” and “Is it Appropriate to Identify Winners and Losers?”, Adger, chaps. 4-5 pp. 79-114.

Oct. 25 “Climate Change, Insecurity and Injustice” and “Adaptation: Who Pays Whom?”, Adger, chaps. 6-7. pp.115-154.

Oct. 30 “A Welfare Theoretic Analysis of Climate Change Inequities and Equity in National Adaptation Programs: The case of Bangladesh”, Adger, chaps. 8-9 pp. 156-200.

Nov. 1 “Justice in Adaptation to Climate Change in Tanzania, and Adaptation and Equity in Resource Dependent Societies”, Adger, chaps. 9-10, pp. 181-222

Nov. 6 “Extreme Weather and Burden Sharing in Hungary” and “Multifaceted Justice in Adaptation to Climate Change”, Adger chaps. 12-13, pp. 229-278.
The EU Air Quality Framework, Oberthur, Chap. 12, pp. 285-306

RESOURCE SCARCITY

Nov 8 – “From Ecological Conflict to Environmental Security,” Conca, pp. 285-313 and Mathews, “Redefining Security” Foreign Affairs, 1989, pp. 162-177

The Human Dimensions of Environmental Insecurity,” Conca, pp. 314-345
(Levy, “Is the Environment a National Security Issue?,” pp. International Security, 1995, pp. 35-62

- Nov. 13 “From Limits to Growth to Ecological Security, The Future Is Not What is Used to Be: World Population Trends, and Reflections on an Aging Global Population”, Pirages, chaps 1-3, pp. 1-58
- Nov. 15 Gleick, “Water and Conflict, Freshwater Resources and International Security, International Security, 1993, pp. 79-112 (Blackboard), “Global Water Prospects Food Policy: Underfed or Overfed?, Pirages, pp. 69-104
- Nov. 20 “Energy, Security, and Cooperation over the Next Quarter Century and Renewable Energy Technologies, Pirages, Chaps. 6-7, pp. 105-144
- Nov. 22 “Forest Degradation, the Timber Trade, and Tropical-Region Plantations, Biodiversity and Ecological Security, and Twenty-Nine Days: Responding to a Finite World” Pirages, chaps 10-12, pp. 187-226

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND INTERGENERATIONAL EQUITY

- Nov. 27 The Sustainability Debate, Conca, pp. 229-282
- Nov. 29 Ecological Justice, Conca, pp. 333-372 and **TERM PAPERS DUE IN CLASS**