POLS 290B: Introduction to Global Environmental Politics
DePauw University
Spring 2013

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Office Hours: Mon (1-2), Wed (12-2), and by appointment.

Course Meetings: MW, 2:20-3:50, JSC 152

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Global environmental problems, from acid rain to climate change, to biodiversity loss and sustainable use of natural resources, have become pressing political concerns in an increasingly globalized world. In response, a sophisticated structure of global environmental governance has emerged, in which sovereign nation‐states have begun to cooperate to an extent unprecedented in world politics. Such cooperation does not come without significant obstacles and challenges, however. This course examines the different types of actors, politics, and processes that have emerged in contemporary global environmental governance.

The course proceeds in three main stages. The first sets the context for the course, tracing the history of international environmental cooperation, and sketching the international policy process. The second section examines several current controversies in global environmental governance, including debates surrounding the effectiveness of global environmental governance and the desirability of major institutional reform (e.g., do we need a World Environment Organization to counterbalance other institutions such as the World Trade Organization?).

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Each student’s final grade will be calculated using the following criteria:

Midterm Exam #1 (15%)
Midterm Exam #2 (15%) non-cumulative
Final Exam\* (20%) cumulative

Writing Assignment #1 (10%) Tragedy of the Commons Essay\*\*
Writing Assignment #2 (15%) Research Design Essay on Treaty Effectiveness\*\*
Writing Assignment #3 (15%) Final Essay on Treaty Effectiveness\*\*

Participation\*\*\* (10%)

\*Students who finish the course with fewer than three absences will have the option **not** to take the final exam, if they are satisfied with their existing grade.

\*\* More information about each of the essays will be posted to Moodle

\*\*\* Course participation means, primarily, contributing to course discussions, demonstrating critical engagement with readings. Posting questions to Moodle discussion boards, and responding to questions posed by others is another form of course participation. Students who feel less comfortable with being vocal during course meetings will want to take advantage of this opportunity.

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

Mitchell, Ronald B. 2009. International Politics and the Environment. Los Angeles: Sage.

Conca, Ken and Geoffrey D. Dabelko (eds). 2010. Green Planet Blues, 4e. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Axelrod, Regina S., et al (eds). 2010. The Global Environment: Institutions, Law, and Policy. Washington, DC: CQ Press.

Additional readings will be posted directly to Moodle.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

**JANUARY**

Wk 1 Mon 28 **Introduction to Course**

Wed 30 **What Are the International Politics of the Environment?**
 *Read: Mitchell, Ch. 2
 “The Tragedy of the Commons” [GPB, 38-45]
 “No Tragedy on the Commons” [GPB, 46-54]*

**FEBRUARY**

Wk 2 Mon 4 **A Brief History of Global Environmental Governance**
 *Read: “Global Institutions and the Environment” [ILP Ch. 2]
 “Introduction” [GPB, 1-14]*

Wed 6 \*\* no meeting, PEIO \*\*

Wk 3 Mon 11 **Sources of Global Environmental Problems**
 *Read: Mitchell, Ch. 3
 Due: Short Essay on Tragedy of the Commons*

Wed 13 **Sources . . . Other Perspectives**
 *Read: “Consumption . . .” [ILP, Ch. 15]
 Additional Readings TBD, will post to Moodle*

Wk 4 Mon 18 **Actors in Global Environmental Policy I (States)**
 *Read: “The United States . . .” [ILP, Ch. 10]
 Read: “The View From the South . . .” [ILP, Ch. 12]*

Wed 20 **Actors in Global Environmental Policy II (IOs)** *Read: “Does Bureaucracy Really Matter?” (Moodle)
 Read: “UN Environmental Machinery” (Moodle)*

Wk 5 Mon 25 **Actors in Global Environmental Policy (IOs, cont’d)**
 *Read: Moving Forward by Looking Back [GPB, 143-160]
 Read: Reforming Global Environmental Governance (M)
 Watch: Vimeo video on UN reform*

Wed 27 **Midterm #1**

**MARCH**

Wk 6 Mon 4 **Actors in Global Environmental Policy III (NGOs)**
 *Read: “Politics Beyond the State” (Moodle)
 Read: “NGO Influence in Global Environmental Politics” (Moodle)
 Read: “The Role of Environmental NGOs” [ILP, Ch. 5]*

Wed 6 **Actors in Global Environmental Policy III (NGOs, cont’d)**
 *Read: Rethinking the Ecology-Sovereignty debate [GPB, 65-75]
 Read: Fight for the Forest [GPB, 94-98]
 Read: Kenya’s Green Militant [GPB, 99-105]
 Read: Globalization . . . and the Narmada Movement [GPB, 106-115]
 Due: Research design essay*

Wk 7 Mon 11 **International Law & International Regimes**
 *Read: “Environmental Protection . . .” [ILP, Ch. 3]
 Read: “Global Environmental Policy” [ILP, Ch. 4]*

 Wed 13 **Compliance and Effectiveness in Int’l Environmental Law**
 *Read: “Compliance With Global Environmental Policy” [ILP, Ch. 9]*

Wk 8 Mon 18 **Negotiating International Environmental Law/Regimes**
 *Read: Mitchell, Ch. 5
 Read: Marcoux & Urpelainen (M)*

 Wed 20 **Effectiveness of International Environmental Law/Regimes**
 *Read: Mitchell, Ch. 6
 Read: Governance with MEAs . . . [GPB, 126-142]*

**\*\* SPRING BREAK \*\***

**APRIL**

Wk 9 Mon 1 **Comparative Case Study #1: Whaling and Ozone**
 *Read: TBD, will be distributed via Moodle*

 Wed 3 **Comparative Case Study #2: Chemicals and Climate**
 *Read: “International Climate Change Policy . . .” [ILP, Ch. 6]*
 *Read: “Global Politics of Hazardous Chemicals” [ILP, Ch. 7]*

Wk 10 Mon 8 **Open Date – finish comparative case studies**

 Wed 10 **Midterm 2**

Wk 11 Mon 15 **Future Challenges in International Environmental Policy**
 *Read: Mitchell, Ch. 7*

 Wed 17 **Trade and the Environment**
 *Read: “The Evolution of the Trade and Environment Debate” [GPB, 168-176]
 Additional Readings TBD, will distribute via Moodle*

Wk 12 Mon 22 **Environment and Conflict**
 *Read: Part 5 of Green Planet Blues (entire) [GPB, 256-305]
 Optional: Introduction to Part V [GPB, 247-255]*

 Wed 24 **Environment & Conflict** (finish); **World Environment Organization** (start)
 *Read: TBD, will be distributed via Moodle* ***Due: Effectiveness essay***

Wk 13 Mon 29 **World Environment Organization** (finish) **Environment & Development** (start)
 *Read: TBD, will be distributed via Moodle*

**MAY**

Wed 1 **Environment & Development** (finish)

Wk 14 Mon 6 **Whither Sustainable Development?**
 *Read: Part 4 of Green Planet Blues (entire) [GPB, 207-246]
 Optional: Introduction to Part 4 [GPB, 201-206]*

 Wed 8 **Sustainable Development** (finish) / **Final Exam Review**(?)