GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS
ENVST-UA 445 | TUE/THU 11:00AM–12:15PM | CLASSROOM: 194M_205
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INTRODUCTION

Environmental problems are increasingly taking on a trans-national and global dimension. But the absence of a central global government means environmental problems are addressed through a combination of international treaties, multilateral institutions, environmental non-governmental organizations, and private multinational corporations. In this course, we engage the complexities of global environmental problems and solutions. We will examine the main institutions, dominant actors, and debates that frame global environmental politics. We will discuss how the geographic unevenness of money, resources, and power shape how international environmental negotiations play out. Overall, students should expect to develop an overview into existing global governance mechanisms and think critically about what works and what needs work.

The course comprises of four modules.

**Module 1:** We review how the environment is framed as a topic of concern at a global concern. We identify key environmental problems and discuss the term ‘global environmental commons’.

**Module 2:** We will explore the nation-state as the foundational organizing mechanism in global environmental and economic governance. Using the concept of ‘international regimes’ and working through a set of examples such as acid rain and climate change management, we will map the interactions and power dynamics that shape multi-lateral institutions like the UN Environment Program.

**Module 3:** Over the last three decades, there is growing recognition of the importance of non-state actors to global governance. Non-state actors include both environmental–NGOs like WWF and Greenpeace and private corporations such as Walmart and Patagonia. We explore the changing role if non-state actors and how their unique cross-boundary dealings allows them to transfer ideas, norms, and technologies in a way that states cannot.

**Module 4:** In the final Module, we will address innovative efforts at building new environmental governance institutions. We will also consider recent environmental debates across transnational road building, climate refugees, and land grabbing.
COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Grading Components and Weights

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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<td>Reading responses</td>
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<td>Prelim and Final</td>
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<td>Final Research Paper</td>
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REQUIRED TEXT


*Please purchase a copy through Amazon.com or Strand Bookstore. Also note that the 2009 edition of the book is available through NYU E–Library. I encourage you to buy or borrow the 2017 edition but the 2009 would work as well. The 2017 version has updates on the Paris Climate Agreement and a chapter on Market–based policies. We will cover these topics in class as well. A copy of Chapter 1 will be uploaded to the Module 1 Resources folder.

1. PARTICIPATION (10%)

Participation in the course comprises of attendance, active engagement in in–class discussions, and one presentation of a relevant news article. Attendance for all classes is compulsory. Expectations for participation go far beyond responding to questions when asked. You should actively ask and solicit questions not only from the instructor but also your classmates. Quite regularly, you will be asked to write a response to a pre–circulated prompt or do an in–class writing exercise. You are required to read course materials in advance and come to class prepared to ask and respond to questions. Reading expectations will vary from week to week, but something around 50 pages per week will be the norm. Please complete the readings BEFORE arriving at class on the day they are listed in the syllabus (or you’ll find it hard to follow what’s going on in class, and may find yourself unprepared for in–class activities). During in–class activities, you may be asked to come to class with a written note responding to a pre–circulated prompt. Our weekly meetings will be far more valuable if everyone participates actively.

Once during the semester you will be asked to share and present a recent news article related to global environmental politics. The objective of the exercise is to encourage reading the news and engaging critically with environmental geo–politics. You must select the news piece yourself from the within the past month. Students will sign up for their preferred presentation date in the second week of classes. Presentations should be not more than 5 minutes and the articles must be pre–circulated through NYU Classes.
2. READING RESPONSES (20%)
Students will submit 5 short essays (~750 words) in response to pre-circulated prompts. Essays topics will draw directly from course materials (lectures and readings). In this manner, course readings, lectures, in-class discussions, and writing assignments will be complementary and integrated. In your essay, you must respond to the specific prompt posed to you and aim to demonstrate independent, critical engagement with ideas. Essays will be graded on a check minus, check, and check plus basis.

3. EXAMS (30%)
The course has a mid-term and a final. Both exams will be held in class. The exams are meant to force a review function, and encourage integration/reflection across all areas of the course. Questions will draw directly from readings, lectures, and discussions but independent critical thinking will be expected. Prior to the exams, I will hold a review session where you may pose questions to me about the exam, course themes, and specific materials.

4. FINAL RESEARCH PAPER (40%)
You will be required to write a 15–20 page double spaced research paper on a specific environmental problem and analyze the institutional structures that manage the problem. You are encouraged to take up issues not discussed in the course. The paper should focus on the different actors and pose a question about environmental politics. To avoid leaving the paper to the end of the semester, we will follow a staggered writing process. This will allow me and your peers to offer you feedback early. More instructions will be provided as the semester progresses.

COURSE POLICIES
This is a ‘living document’, which means I will regularly update the document and upload the most recent version on NYU Classes. You will also find additional documents on NYU Classes laying out specifics of all the assignments and the discussion sessions. Assignments are to be submitted directly through NYU Classes.

COMMUNICATION
This syllabus contains most of the information you will need about class logistics, readings, deliverables, deadlines etc. As a general policy, first look to the syllabus for answers to your question. If not in the syllabus, check NYU Classes. If you do not find an answer to your question here or online, you should definitely write to me. I will be available during office hours, by appointment, and on-email. You are also invited to stop by my office for a chat – casual or formal. It would be most productive for you and me to ensure that our interactions are toward substantive themes rather than about logistics.
SUBMISSION AND DEADLINE POLICY
All assignments must be submitted electronically (MS-word compatible formats only) through NYU Classes. No handwritten work will be accepted without prior consent. More information about the actual submission process will be outlined closer to the deadlines.

Assignments turned in after the deadline will be reduced at the rate of one point per day (i.e. a paper that would otherwise receive 90 would receive 89 one day later, 88 two days later etc.). It is important to respect the deadline for our own self-discipline and in fairness to the trade-offs made by others to submit on time. Consider the point deduction system also a way to balance your own trade-offs.

Under a limited set of conditions, a deadline extension may be granted. Conditions include documented emergencies (illness, family emergencies etc.) or circumstances cleared with the instructor (e.g. religious holidays). Extension requests will not be considered if the request is based on poor preparation or negligence.

LAPTOP AND SCREEN POLICIES
I do not follow any particular laptop or phone policy (laptops banned, laptops in first or last rows, etc.). But it is important that we establish some group rules early in the semester. I want us all to be mindful of the potential impact of laptops and phones on the quality of the learning experience and those around you. Used well, computers and phones are powerful tools for learning – for note taking, for collaborative group work, and for looking up class-relevant questions and items on the fly (which I encourage you to do). However, when used poorly, they distract you and those around you. I encourage all students to exercise common sense and respect for those around you. However tempting it may be, shopping or checking social media during our meetings will be penalized.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
Students are encouraged to work and study together within the bounds of NYU’s academic integrity policy. Sharing questions, ideas, and consulting with other students is important for learning. However, this permissible cooperation should never involve a student possessing a copy of all or part of work done by another student, in the form of an e-mail, an e-mail attachment file, a flash drive, diskette, cloud storage, or a hard copy. Should copying occur, both the student who copied work and the student who gave material to be copied would automatically receive a zero for the assignment. Penalty for violation of this Code can also be extended to include failure of the course and University disciplinary action.

Every student in the course must abide by New York University’s Policy of Academic Integrity (https://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/academic-integrity-for-students-at-nyu.html). As the policy states, “NYU expects and requires its students to adhere to the highest standards of scholarship, research and
academic conduct. Essential to the process of teaching and learning is the periodic assessment of students' academic progress through measures such as papers, examinations, presentations, and other projects. Academic dishonesty compromises the validity of these assessments as well as the relationship of trust within the community. Students who engage in such behavior will be subject to review and the possible imposition of penalties in accordance with the standards, practices, and procedures of NYU and its colleges and schools. Violations may result in failure on a particular assignment, failure in a course, suspension or expulsion from the University, or other penalties.”

I encourage you to be mindful of the different kinds of academic integrity violations as detailed on the website. Always make sure in this class and elsewhere that the work you submit or present is entirely your own and any references to the work of others is clearly reported.

During the prelims, you must do your own work without talking to other students or use of any notes, other computers, or any other form external help. Talking is not permitted, nor may you compare papers, copy from others, or collaborate in any way. Any collaborative behavior during the examination will result in failure, and may lead to failure of the course and university disciplinary action.

**Course Schedule**

**Jan 29: Course Introduction and Overview**

**MODULE 1: GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE**

**Jan 31: Framing Global Environmental Problems**
- O'Neill Chapter 1

**Feb 5: Global Commons**
- Clapp and Dauvergne, “Chapter 1: Peril or Prosperity? Mapping Worldviews of Global Environmental Change”

**Feb 7: Is globalization the problem?**
- Clapp and Dauvergne– “Chapter 2: The Ecological Consequences of Globalization”
The Conversation – “Globalization may actually be better for the Environment”
http://theconversation.com/globalization-may-actually-be-better-for-the-environment–95406


Feb 12: Actors in Global Environmental Governance
- O’Neill Chapter 2 and 3

MODULE 2: STATE-CENTERED GOVERNANCE

Feb 14: Introduction to State-centered global governance
- O’Neill Chapter 4

Feb 19: Where did the world order come from?

Feb 21: Are International Treaties Effective? And for whom?
- O’Neill Chapter 5

Feb 26: Global Economic Governance Structures
- O’Neill Chapter 6

Feb 28: Problem of non-compliance

Mar 5: UN Environmental Program + Paper Workshopping

**Mar 7: Creating a new international law regime**

**Mar 12: IPCC and the Global Environmental Science**
- Mid–Term Review – Please bring questions

**Mar 14: Mid–Term**

**Mar 19: SPRING BREAK**

**Mar 21: SPRING BREAK**

**MODULE 3: NON–STATE ACTORS**

**Mar 26: Who are non–state actors and what do they do?**
- O’Neill Chapter 7

**Mar 28: Do non–state actors have legitimacy?**
- Recent news articles on sexual abuse by heads of large NGOs
  - [WWF China Sexual Abuse Scandal](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/WWF_China_Sexual_Abuse_Scandal)

**Apr 2: Elite world of International NGOs**
- Task: Come to class prepared with the following:
  - Identify a major environmental NGO
  - What is their main purpose and what governance gap do they fill?
  - Who funds the NGO and who are they accountable to?
Apr 4: Can businesses save the global environment?

Apr 9: Hybrid Arrangements: Public–Private Agreements

Apr 11: Hybrid Arrangements: REDD+, CITES
- Watch [video](#) before class:

Apr 16: Sustainable Palm Oil

Apr 18: Paper Workshopping

MODULE 4: NEW DEBATES IN GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS

Apr 23: Climate Refugee Debate
- More Readings TBD

Apr 25: Trans–national Road Building and its Environmental Consequences
- Readings TBD

Apr 30: City–centered global efforts

May 2: Land Grabbing

May 7: Watch Movie “Land Grabbing”
    NO CLASS MEETING

May 9: Final Exam