



**GVPT 306 -Global Environmental Politics
Spring, 2023 semester.**

Instructor:

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 11.30a -12.30p or by appointment.

Class Information:

Meeting Times: Tu-Thu 12.30p-1.45p
Class location: TYDS 1101

Course Description

The world is interconnected with increasing breakthroughs in technology, communication, and transportation, and so are the environmental impacts from human activities across the globe. Today, environmental policy issues are taking center stage in numerous countries across the world. Policymakers globally, are seeking solutions to environmental degradation with some countries achieving relative success, while others struggle to reach agreements which are equal and effective.

Our shared global ecology means that countries have common environmental interests that need to be addressed through agreements, which are approved upon policies and procedures on how to deal with environmental concerns.

This course aims to expose students to the complexity of the policymaking process in environmental issues across the world. It focuses on the processes of international environmental policy development, including identifying problems, negotiating solutions, and implementing agreements through a range of case studies to include global climate change.

This is an integrative course that allows students to effectively explore, analyze and discuss specific global environmental problems. To ensure that students have an in-depth perspective of global environmental politics, the course will include guest speakers, team presentations, in-class debates, as well as a student-led round table discussion at the end of the semester.

At the end of this course, you should have an in-depth comprehension of global environmental challenges and be able to develop informed opinions on how governments and organizations can adapt to environmental political and policy challenges.

Learning Outcomes:

At the end of this course, students should:

1. Understand efforts to address environmental problems at the international level.
2. Understand the complexity of rights and policy with respect to the environment.
3. Develop an understanding on arguments around environmental challenges, including the different actors and interests involved.

Textbooks

- Kütting Gabriela and Herman Kyle (2018). *Global environmental politics: concepts, theories and case studies (2nd ed.)* (Ser. Global environmental politics). Routledge.

- We will also use a variety of sources for our class readings, including research articles, policy reports from organizations.
 - All these readings will be available to you on ELMS under the respective week's **modules**.

Grades

In this class you will be assessed based on the following:

1. Participation (during lectures and discussions)	10%
2. Film Studies Reflection Papers	10%
3. Teamwork	25%
4. Research paper	15%
5. Mid-term Exam	20%
6. Final Exam	20%

Total 100%

Grading Scale

Final grades will be assigned on the following scale:

A	90-100%
B	79-80%
C	69-70%
D	59-69%
F	59% or lower

Mid-Term Exam – The Mid-term exam will reflect course materials from the first half of the semester. You will select four of seven questions to answer through short answer responses. You will be asked to examine key concepts, themes and debates covered from the first half of the semester. The mid-term exam will be on **Thursday, March 16th in class from 12.30p-1.45p**

Final Exam – The Final exam will reflect on course materials from the second half of the semester. You will select four of seven questions to answer through short-answer responses You will be asked to examine key concepts, themes and debates covered in the second half of the semester (after Spring Break). The final exam will be in class on **Thursday, May 18, 2023, from 1.30p-3.30p.**

Assignments & Papers:

1. Research Paper

Students will be required to write a 5-page research paper (excluding images, graphs, tables, and references) on an **international environmental agreement**. A list of these agreements is provided on a separate assignment sheet on ELMS. The paper should be 10-point, double-spaced, Calibri Body 10-pt font with 1-inch margins.

The research paper should include a background to the environmental issue, why this agreement was formulated to address the issue, actors involved, obligations, and enforcement mechanisms (or lack thereof). In other words, who is responsible for implementing the agreement at the national and international level? A comprehensive analysis on the challenges faced in implementing the agreement should be included, and how the actions of one country affects others, including the impacts on the broader global community.

Although a draft is not required, students are encouraged to speak to Dr. Kazungu about your paper during the semester on your progress. More details will be provided separately on ELMS. The paper is due on **Thursday, May 4th before midnight.**

2. Film Study Series

Understanding environmental issues using film and documentaries is an interactive and informative way students can process the complexity of Global Environmental Politics. As such, students will be required to watch three short films during the semester.

Film 1: E-Waste Tragedy (by Cosima Dannoritzer).

- Illegal electronics recycling is a toxic business on a global scale. This efficient investigation by Cosima Dannoritzer (The Light Bulb Conspiracy) into several European countries, Asia and the U.S., reveals the apparatus of large-scale trafficking, as well as a complex chain of responsibility and collusion.
- Upon completion of watching this film, **a two-page reflection paper will be due on ELMS by Thursday, February 9th before midnight.** Further details on what is expected in the reflection paper will be provided on a separate assignment sheet, on ELMS.

Film 2: I Am Greta; Force of Nature.

- This film follows the story of teenage activist, Greta Thunberg. It highlights the importance of political action and advocacy.
- Upon completion of watching this film, **a two-page reflection paper will be due on ELMS by Thursday, April 6th before midnight.** Further details on what is expected in the reflection paper will be provided on a separate assignment sheet, on ELMS.

Film 3: FILM "2040". 93 minutes, by Australian director Damon Gameau.

"A Journey to explore what the future could look like by the year 2040 if we embraced the solutions already available to us to improve the planet. An accessible, informative and optimistic look at solutions to the climate crisis."

- The film is available on your ELMS under "Modules".
- Upon completion of watching the film, we will have an in-class discussion on the film (**no reflection paper is required for this Film**).

3. Teamwork

This is an interactive, project-based course with **significant** group work. You must be prepared to work in a team during the semester. You will have a total of **four** presentations during the semester. Each presentation will be based on teams, and you will be divided into your groups during the first day of class.

Team Leads.

On day one of class, I will allow you time to meet your teams, exchange contact information, and assign a team leader. The team leads will contact me if you have questions or concerns as you work on projects. They will also be very useful in getting everyone together to work on the project. I will need each team lead to e-mail me confirming this no later than **February 2, 2023.**

a) Global Environmental News Presentations

In recent months, environmental issues have taken center stage amongst policymakers, interstate organizations and social movements. Governments worldwide are attempting to make policy changes towards environmental degradation, while coping with the social, political, cultural, and economic pressures of a global pandemic. The purpose of this assignment is to critically analyze ongoing environmental events news across our world.

At the beginning of the semester, students will be divided into teams of three. Each team will select a day over the course of the semester to lead a 15-minute class discussion about an ongoing global environmental issue. Students must select an ongoing issue that reflects the topic we are discussing that week.

The *current events news* articles must be from a **reputable** news source. A separate assignment sheet with a list of recommended sources and more details about the presentation are provided on ELMS.

b) Product Lifecycle Analysis Presentations

The purpose of this group assignment is for students to gain an in-depth understanding of the **lifecycle of a market good**. This will help us understand health and the environmental impact of the production of the good, and consumption in the context of a global economy.

Students will be divided into teams of five. As a group, you may select **any** market good (can of soda, cardboard box, laptop computer, cell phone). Each group will be expected to have a presentation, including **at least two discussion questions** for the broader classroom.

The video (also on ELMS under Modules). "The Story of Stuff" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9GorqroigqM>. will be helpful as you prepare for your presentations which will be on **Thursday, February 16th**.

c) GMO Debate.

The GMO debate is an open discussion on the safety, socio-economic impacts, and politics of the production and use of GMOs. Students will be assigned a position to represent in the debate. Participation in this debate will require some outside research on your assigned position. As a team, you will be required to conduct external research on your assigned position.

Prior to the debate, we will cover a two-part lecture on GM's and the politics surrounding the issue. Therefore, you will be informed on the perspectives involved with GMO's.

On **Thursday, March 30th**, we will have a debate. Students will be assigned a position to represent in the debate. You will be evaluated on how accurately you represent your assigned position in the debate. Each team will have a position statements (one per team) due on the ELMS discussion board by **Tuesday, March 28th before midnight**.

d) Round Table Discussion

The round table is a student-led discussion based on a topic assigned from the semester. Students are divided into teams at the beginning of the semester and will guide the class in a discussion of the key themes, lessons, perspectives, and theories. Students may use notes from class lectures, readings.

The round table discussions will be on **Tuesday, May 9th and Thursday, May 11th**. More details will be posted on ELMS.

*****Note that missed attendance without documentation during in-class presentations will result in a non-negotiable 10% impact on your final grade.***

Participation

This course is based on collaboration and group work that specifically involves engagement and preparation. I expect students to be engaged during each class session, meaning coming to class prepared and on time. Preparation means coming to class with ideas, comments and questions, so that you can actively participate in small group work, and larger class discussions. It also means respectfully listening to the ideas and perspectives of your classmates even if you may not agree with them.

Diversity of thought is encouraged in this class. Inappropriate comments, yelling, or interrupting others because you do not agree with their perspectives will not be tolerated.

Tardiness

Students arriving in class **repeatedly** late will be penalized. **Repeatedly** late means that you are consistently coming to class more than **10 minutes** after class has begun. Students repeating this behavior will result in a non-negotiable 5% impact on your final grade. If you know you will be late to class for a special reason, you can e-mail Dr. Kazungu at least 24 hours beforehand.

Technology in the Classroom

Cell phone usage is **prohibited** in class. Students will be required to turn off their phones or put their phone on silent. Students who are caught texting, looking at their phones during class will be subject to a non-negotiable 5% impact on your final grade.

Note taking devices including laptops are allowed in class for in-class purposes. Students using laptops/tablets for browsing the web, online shopping, social media, and other non-class related purposes will be penalized against their participation grade for that class session.

Make-up Policy

Assignments: Late assignments will not be accepted under any acceptance. Please do not ask me for an extension or request a late submission.

Exams: If a student has a **university-approved** excuse, you must notify me in **writing** prior to the **examination**. The allowance of such arrangements remains at the discretion of your instructor.

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism, cheating, and/or not citing another person's ideas or work will be subject to the university's policy on [academic integrity](#) to include but not limited to the following:

- **Cheating:** fraud, deceit, or dishonesty in any academic course or exercise in an attempt to gain an unfair advantage and/or using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic course or exercise.
- **Fabrication:** unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in any academic course or exercise.
- **Facilitating Academic Dishonesty:** knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate any provision of this Code.
- **Plagiarism:** representing the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic course or exercise. In all of your assignments, presentations, drafts of papers, you may use words or ideas written by someone else in publications, news sources, reports etc. but properly cite them. Always refer to [UMDs citation](#) help tools when in doubt.
- **Self-Plagiarism:** the reuse of substantial identical or nearly identical portions of one's own work in multiple courses without prior permission from the current instructor or from each of the instructors if the work is being submitted for multiple courses in the same semester.

UMD Resources

For COVID related illnesses, please follow the guidelines stipulated by the university [here](#).

For a comprehensive list of UMD resources including COVID-19 click [here](#).

Alteration of the Syllabus

The instructor reserves the right to revise or amend this syllabus. Should any alterations be made, students will be notified via e-mail and in-class.

Course Schedule (Subject to Change as I See Fit)

This schedule is subject to change, and you will be **notified in advance of any changes to policies, lecture, assignments, or readings. ***Please do not plan out your semester ahead of time with the assumption that no changes will be made this schedule.***

<u>Week</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Current Events Team Presentations</u>
Week 1	1/26: Course introduction & overview **Division into groups for the semester. A list of teams is also available on ELMS under "Modules". *Syllabus quiz (available on ELMS) due by 1/31*.	<u>No current events presenters this week</u>
Week 2	1/31: International Relations Theory and the Environment. Kütting Chapter 1. *Syllabus Quiz is due. 2/02: Transnational Actors in Global Environmental Politics. Kütting Chapter 2.	
Week 3	2/07: Sustainable Consumption. Kütting Chapter 5. Watch video: "The Story of Stuff". https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9GorqroigqM 2/09: Asynchronous Class. Watch: E-Waste Tragedy. Video available on ELMS under " <u>Course Reserves</u> ". *Reflection papers due on ELMS before midnight.	
Week 4	2/14: No Class. Meet in teams to review video and finalize presentations. Product Lifecycle Analysis. 2/16: Product Lifecycle Analysis Class Presentations.	<u>No current events presenters this week</u>
Week 5	2/21: Product Lifecycle Analysis Class Presentations. 2/23: International Environmental and Ecological Justice. Kütting Chapter 6. Kütting Chapter 11. Endangered Species, Biodiversity and the politics of Conservation.	<u>No current events presenters on 2/21</u>
Week 6	2/28: Kütting Chapter 10. The Politics of Energy and the Environment: Bridging the Divide. 3/2: Environmental Actors in India: Issues, Actors, and Politics.	

<p>Week 7</p>	<p>3/7: As China goes, so goes the planet: the environmental implications of the rise of China. Kütting Chapter 8.</p> <p>3/9: The Effects of Dams in S. E Asia. Focus on the Mekong River.</p>	<p><u>No current events presenters on 3/9</u></p>
<p>Week 8</p>	<p>3/14: The Global Politics of Food System Sustainability I.</p> <p>Perspectives from Developing Countries. "<i>The Mboga na Matunda Project</i>". (A Lecture in conjunction with Dr. Lilian Mbuthia -Senior Agronomist, ICL Fertilizers, East Africa).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch Video(also on ELMS under Modules) : https://youtu.be/EnJalxXMyg4 • Listen to Podcast: The Mawazo Institute-KE. A Podcast. <p>Season 4: How Climate Change Impacts Food Security In sub-Saharan Africa — The Mawazo Institute</p> <p>3/16: Mid-Term Exam In class</p>	<p><u>No current events presenters this week</u></p>
<p>Week 9</p>	<p>3/21: Spring Break</p> <p>3/23: Spring Break</p>	<p><u>No current events presenters this week</u></p>
<p>Week 10</p>	<p>3/28: The Global Politics of Food System Sustainability II.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kütting Chapter 12. • Environment and Development: The Case of the Developing Countries. <i>International Organization</i>, 26(2), 401-416. • Joao Augusto de Araujo Castro. (1972). Environment and Development: The Case of the Developing Countries. <i>International Organization</i>, 26(2), 401–416. http://www.jstor.org/stable/2706009 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>It's time we all come together to address the global food crisis (msn.com)</u> • <u>We're in a global food crisis that will wreak havoc on local economies and trigger civil unrest (msn.com)</u> <p>3/30: GMO Debate</p>	
Week 11	<p>4/4: Kütting Chapter 9. The Role of Technology in the Global Environment.</p> <p>4/6: Asynchronous Class. The importance of Activism: Political Action, Advocacy as well as speaking truth to power I.</p> <p>Watch Video on ELMS. "I Am Greta: A Force of Nature" by Swedish director Nathan Grossman From back of video: "the story of teenage climate activist Greta Thunberg."</p> <p>*VIDEO AVAILABLE ON ELMS (Under Library Streaming Services) *Reflection Paper due on ELMS before midnight.</p>	<u>No Current Event Presenters this week</u>
Week 12	<p>4/11: The importance of Activism: Political Action, Advocacy as well as speaking truth to power II.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spash, Clive. (2016). This Changes Nothing: The Paris Agreement to Ignore Reality. • Class Discussion "I Am Greta". <p>4/13: The importance of Activism: Political Action, Advocacy as well as speaking truth to power III.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Analysis of Environmental Movements in Germany. 	<u>No current events presenters on 4/13</u>
Week 13	<p>4/18: Case Study I: Land Rights in Australia Effectiveness in Social Impact Assessment Aboriginal Peoples and Resource Development in Australia. (New South Wales, the Kimberley Region).</p>	

	<p>4/20: Global Environmental Politics and Policymaking in Australia.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carbon tax policy • Restriction of foreign ownership of critical minerals and resources • Distinguishing Australia's role in Kyoto vs. Paris Climate Accords. 	
<p>Week 14</p>	<p>4/25: Land Rights. Case Study II: Land Rights in East Africa. Maasai land Rights.</p> <p>Women in Conservation: Reshaping the future of Conservation at the Maasai Mara.</p> <p>Read: Voice of the Mara 6th Edition small (1).pdf</p> <p>4/27: Forest Politics, Neoliberalism and the Limits of International Environmental Policy. Kütting Chapter 13.</p>	
<p>Week 15</p>	<p>5/2: International Environmental Agreements and Governing Complexities; Multilateral Agreements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hoch, S., Michaelowa, A., Espelage, A., & Weber, A.-K. (2019). Governing complexity: how can the interplay of multilateral environmental agreements be harnessed for effective international market-based climate policy instruments? <i>International Environmental Agreements: Politics, Law and Economics</i>, 19(6), 595–613. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10784-019-09455-6 • Why We Need A Global Environmental Organization HuffPost The World Post <p>Watch film Film: "2040". Take notes as you watch the film.</p> <p>5/4: Is There a Way Forward? Film: "2040". Group In Class Discussion.</p> <p>*Research paper is due on ELMS before Midnight</p>	

Week 16	<p>5/9: Round Table Discussion Part I.</p> <p>5/11: Round Table Discussion Part II.</p> <p>*Last Day of classes.</p> <p>5/12: No Class. Reading Day (Final Exams begin 5/13-5/19).</p>	<p><u>No current events presenters this week</u></p>
Week 17	<p>5/18: Final Exam at 1:30pm - 3:30pm in-person in class.</p>	<p><u>No current events presenters this week</u></p>