

GVPT 306: Global Environmental Politics

Spring 2018

TuTh 2:00pm-3:15pm

Location: TYD 1108

Syllabus v.1.0



Dr. Jennifer Wallace

Email: jwallace@umd.edu

Office: TYD 1153

Office Hours: M 5:45-6:45pm; Th 12:30-1:30pm and by appointment

Course Design:

As states come to the table with varying levels of responsibility for environmental degradation, uneven resource capabilities, and different levels of exposure to environmental threats, how can they reach agreements that are simultaneously effective, equitable, and enforceable? This is a loaded question, as even the definitions of these terms are up for debate: How do we measure effectiveness? Who determines what is equitable? Is failure to meet environmental targets simply an enforcement issue to be directed against uncooperative states, or is something else preventing them from achieving their goals?

This class is not designed to provide answers to these questions, as in fact these are questions that will continue to be debated in the academic and policy worlds as long as we are facing global environmental problems (i.e., they aren't going away anytime soon!). This class *is* designed to give students an understanding of the complexity of these issues so that they can articulate the major challenges that stand in the way of improved environmental governance, identify the actors involved and what their interests are, and analyze the effectiveness of current environmental regimes in addressing global environmental problems. In addition to studying multilateral environmental agreements, we will also examine contemporary issues in global environmental politics, including food insecurity, conflicts over natural resources, and the application of international law and social justice to environmental disputes.

The success of this course relies heavily on students coming to class prepared to discuss the reading material. I will provide background information on the themes and cases as needed, but many of the readings present different perspectives on that are part of the ongoing debate of how to achieve environmental governance. You should be prepared to think critically about these texts and to formulate your own opinions on the merits of these arguments. There is no better learning environment than a classroom of students who are prepared, engaged, and excited to hear each other. Let's make that happen!

Learning Objectives:

At the end of this course, each student should:

- 1) Know the history of efforts to address environmental problems at the international level, including the changing discourses used to justify these efforts;
- 2) Be familiar with the major international environmental regimes, including their rationale, structure, and effectiveness;
- 3) Understand the complexity of rights with respect to the environment, including tensions between states' rights, human rights, and the rights of marginalized or at-risk groups;
- 4) Be able to present an informed argument on addressing future environmental challenges that takes into account the issues, interests and actors involved.

Course Readings:

- Ken Conca and Geoffrey D. Dabelko, (eds.) *Green Planet Blues*, 5th edition. (Boulder, CO: Westview, 2015). ("GPB" on reading list)
- Pamela S. Chasek, David L. Downie, and Janet Welsh Brown. *Global Environmental Politics*, 7th edition. (Boulder, CO: Westview, 2017). ("Chasek" on reading list)
- Supplementary readings will be available online, either through the course page (on ELMS), links to websites, or academic journals.

Course Requirements:

1. International Regime Presentation and Analysis: 15%
2. Reading Responses (5): 8% each (40% overall) – You may submit up to 6, and I will drop the lowest score.
3. Final Exam: 30%
4. Participation: 15%

International Regime Presentation and Analysis: Each student will be assigned to a group that will study one of the 10 major international environmental regimes (see Weeks 6 and 7 for the topics). The group will put together a 20-30 minute presentation that informs the class on the rationale for and the performance of the regime. The presentation should include background on the environmental problem and what agreements have been formulated to address it, including participants, obligations, and enforcement mechanisms. In addition to providing this background information, the presentation should include an analysis of the regime, including whether it might be considered "successful" according to criteria established by the group and in class discussions. Once all of the presentations have been completed, students will be expected to complete an independent writing assignment analyzing the regimes overall. The presentation and writing assignment will account for 5% and 10% of your overall grade, respectively. More information on the assignment expectations will be provided in class.

Reading Responses: Discussion questions will be provided in advance for course days in which a discussion of reading material is scheduled. These days are marked by an asterisk on the syllabus. You are required to complete 5 written responses to these discussion questions over the duration of the course. Two must be submitted before Spring break. You may submit up to 6 responses, in which case I

will drop your lowest grade, but I will not drop a zero if you fail to submit the two required responses before Spring break. These responses must be submitted online *before* the class in which the readings are discussed or in hard copy at the beginning of class, as they are meant to assist you in preparing for class discussions. The responses are not meant to be lengthy (about 1-2 pages single spaced is sufficient). They are evaluated on three main criteria: 1) answering the questions asked; 2) demonstrating independent analysis; and 3) an understanding of the key points in each of the assigned readings. Under no circumstances, including absences and technical difficulties, will responses be accepted after the class discussion begins.

Final Exam: A final exam will be held on May 16 at 10:30am, in accordance with the university's final exam schedule. The exam will be in essay format, with questions that will resemble the discussion questions that have been covered throughout the course. A review guide will be issued several weeks in advance of the final exam, but students who have kept up with the course readings and prepared for class discussions should be well prepared for the exam.

Participation: Your participation will be measured by your attendance AND your involvement in classroom discussions. Unexcused absences will lower your participation grade. In accordance with university policy, students may, one time per course per semester, provide a self-signed excuse as documentation of an absence from a single class that does not coincide with a major assessment or assignment due date. In addition to a strong attendance record, full participation points will be awarded to students who come prepared to class, are actively involved in discussions, and who do not use phones/laptops for purposes unrelated to the course.

Grading Scale

A = 93-100	C = 73-76
A- = 90-92	C- = 70-72
B+ = 87-89	D+ = 67-69
B = 83-86	D = 63-66
B- = 80-82	D- = 60-62
C+ = 77-79	F = < 60

Course Policies and Expectations

1. Assignments that are turned in past the due date will be penalized **one letter grade per day** or fraction thereof that the assignment is late. Reading response assignments that are turned in after the class begins will **not be accepted under any circumstances**, including absences and technical difficulties. You have many opportunities to submit these assignments, so plan accordingly.
2. With respect to quizzes and exams, there will be **no make-up** unless: 1) there is an official excuse for having missed an exam (proper documentation is required); or 2) prior arrangement is made. Medical excuses will only be accepted with a doctor's note on official letterhead with a contact phone number.
3. Neither cheating nor plagiarism in any form will be tolerated. The penalty for having committed either one of these violations is a **failing grade for the course**. Should you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, please do not hesitate to contact me via email or during office hours.
4. Cell phones and other such disrupting devices must be **turned off** before you enter the classroom. Laptops may be used to access course material as needed, but must be put away during classroom discussions. If you are checking your email or social media, you are not giving this course your full attention. If I see it, you will be considered "absent."
5. Any student with disabilities/special needs or who will miss class due to a religious observance should contact me **during the first week of classes** so that the proper arrangements can be made.
6. I know that some students find class participation challenging. If you have particular concerns or anxieties about participating in class discussion, let's talk about it **early** in the semester. I will gladly work with you over the course of the semester to make your participation less stressful and more effective. But I can only work with you to make that happen if we talk about your concerns and develop a strategy to respond to them. Think of this class as a comfortable place to develop the communication skills you will need later on. Getting more comfortable with participation and public speaking could be a major personal accomplishment this semester, with this class as the vehicle.
7. Please see the **university webpage** <http://www.ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies.html> for additional information about your rights as a student and university procedures regarding misconduct.

Note: The reasons for setting the above, seemingly strict, ground rules are to provide everyone with a **fair and honest** environment for academic pursuits.

Course Structure:

Week 1-2

Jan 25

Emergence of Global Environmental Politics

Syllabus Review

Jan 30	Paradigms and Perspectives in the Study of Global Environmental Politics - <i>Chasek, Chapter 1.</i>
<u>Week 2-3</u>	<u>Actors and Approaches to Global Environmental Governance</u>
Feb 1	Identifying the Key Actors - <i>Chasek, Chapter 2.</i> - <i>GPB #8</i>
Feb 6	Decision-Making Frameworks: The Convention-Protocol Approach - <i>Sprinz, Detlef and Tapani Vahtoranta, (1994) "The Interest-Based Explanation of International Environmental Policy" International Organization. Vol. 48, No. 1, pp. 77-105.</i>
<u>Week 3-4</u>	<u>Defining the Problem</u>
Feb 8	Tragedy of the Commons - <i>GPB #3, 5</i>
*Feb 13	Malthus and the Limits to Growth Hypothesis - <i>GPB #1, 2</i> - <i>Thomas Malthus, An Essay on the Principles of Population, Chapters 1 and 2.</i>
<u>Week 4</u>	<u>Whose Rights, Whose Responsibilities?</u>
*Feb 15	States' Rights vs Human Rights? - <i>GPB, Part Two (all)</i>
<u>Week 5</u>	<u>Global Environmental Regimes</u>
Feb 20	Defining "Success" in Environmental Management - <i>Read about your group's assigned regime in Chasek, chapter 3 or 4, and skim Chapter 5. Also, give some thought to how we know whether an environmental management regime has been successful, and come to class ready to discuss!</i>
*Feb 22	Making Progress or Treading Water? - <i>GPB Part Three (all), also skim reading #6</i>
<u>Week 6</u>	<u>International Regime Analyses 1: Controlling Pollution</u>
Feb 27	Group Presentations: Ozone Depletion and Hazardous Waste - <i>Chasek, pp. 105-138</i>
March 1	Group Presentations: Toxic Chemicals and Climate Change - <i>Chasek, pp. 138-186</i>
<u>Week 7</u>	<u>International Regime Analyses 2: Natural Resources Protection</u>
March 6	Group Presentations: Biodiversity, Endangered Species, Forests - <i>Chasek, pp. 187- 224</i>
March 8	Group Presentations: Desertification, Fisheries, Whaling

- Chasek, pp. 224-256

Week 8

*March 13

The Sustainability Discourse

Defining “Sustainable Development”

- GPB, Part Four (all)

*March 15

Putting Sustainability into Practice

- MacNeil, Robert. (2016) “Death and Environmental Taxes: Why Market Environmentalism Fails in Liberal Market Economies” *Global Environmental Politics*. 16:1
- Schleifer, Philip (2016) “Private Governance Undermined: India and the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil,” *Global Environmental Politics*, 16:1
- Biro, Andrew. (2012) “Water Wars by Other Means: Virtual Water and Global Economic Restructuring,” *Global Environmental Politics*, 12:4

****Friday March 16**

Regime Analysis Due on ELMS by 11:59pm**

***** 😊 ENJOY YOUR SPRING BREAK! 😊 *****

Week 9

*March 27

The Politics of Food

Famines and Food Production: Do We Have Enough?

- Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom*. Chapter 7 “Famines and Other Crises”

March 29

The GMO Debate

- Read background documents on ELMS and prepare your assigned side’s argument.

Week 10

*April 3

Natural Resources: Economic and Political Impacts

Natural Resource Abundance: Blessing or Curse?

- Michael Klare, *Resource Wars*, Chapter 1.
- Paul Collier, *The Bottom Billion*, Chapter 3 “The Natural Resource Trap”

*April 5

Natural Resource Scarcity

- Thomas Homer-Dixon (1994) “Environmental Scarcities and Violent Conflict: Evidence from Cases,” *International Security*. Vol. 19, No. 1.
- Watch: “The Future of Water Conflict” by the Environmental Change and Security Program:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= I VDDjx2QE>

Week 11

*April 10

Environmental Security

Is The Environment a National Security Problem?

- GPB, #22, 24, 26, 27

*April 12

Environmental Peacebuilding

- GPB, #23, 25

- Ken Conca and Geoffrey Dabelko, *Environmental Peacebuilding*, Chapter 1: "The Case for Environmental Peacemaking"

Week 12

April 17

Climate Change Revisited

Movie: *The Cross of the Moment / An Inconvenient Sequel*

- *No reading assigned*

*April 19

Finish Movie and Discussion

- Raymond Clemencon (2016) "The Two Sides of the Paris Climate Agreement: Dismal Failure or Historic Breakthrough?" *Journal of Environment and Development*, 25:1.
- Jorge E. Vinuales, Joanna Depledge, David M. Reine and Emma Lees (2017), "Climate Policy after the Paris 2015 Climate Conference," *Climate Policy*, 17:1.
- Niklas Hohne, et al. (2017), "The Paris Agreement: Resolving the Inconsistency between Global Goals and National Contributions," *Climate Policy*, 17:1.

Week 13

*April 24

International Environmental Law

Principles of International Environmental Law

- *UNEP Training Manual on International Environmental Law*, Chapter 3: "Principles and Concepts of International Environmental Law"
- *Shrimp-Turtle case (India, etc. vs U.S.)*, go to: https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/envir_e/edis08_e.htm
- *Trail Smelter Arbitration (U.S. vs Canada)*, go to: <http://www.lfip.org/laws666/trailsm.htm>

*April 26

The Evolution of International Environmental Law

- Jorge E Vinuales (2008) "The Contribution of the International Court of Justice to the Development of International Environmental Law: A Contemporary Assessment," unpublished
- *Gabcikovo-Nagymaros Project (Hungary vs Slovakia)*, go to: <http://www.tjssl.edu/slomansonb/envHunSlov.html>

Week 14

*May 1

Environmental Justice

Social Justice and Environmental Protection

- *GPB, Part Six (all)*

*May 3

Case Study: *Aguinda v. ChevronTexaco*

- *Maria Aguinda, et. al., v. Texaco, Inc., disposition. United States District Court for the Southern District of New York, May 30, 2001.*
- *See other background documents on ELMS*

Week 15

May 8

Looking Forward

The Future of the Arctic

- Friedman, Uri. (2014) "The Arctic: Where the U.S. and Russia Could Square Off Next." *The Atlantic*, March 28.

- Young, Oran R. (2011), "The Future of the Arctic: Cauldron of Conflict or Zone of Peace?" *International Affairs*, 87(1): 185-193
- Keil, Kathrin. *Spreading Oil, Spreading Conflict? Institutions Regulating Arctic Oil and Gas Activities*, (2015) *The International Spectator*, 50:1.

May 10

The Prospects for Global Environmental Governance

- Chasek, Chapter 7.

Final Exam: Wednesday, May 16 10:30-12:30am