

International Environmental Politics

Political Science 364

College of Charleston

Spring 2022

Day/Time: T/H 12:15-1:30

Location: Maybank 111

Course Website: OAKS

Instructor: P. Brian Fisher

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Office: JC Long, #223

Office Hours: by appt or virtual apt

Course Background

This course examines the relationship between global political forces and environmental change. The focus is on the implications of local-global interactions for environmental management as well as the implications of environmental change for world politics. Changes in the political and economic systems have not only contributed to the rise of global environmental issues, but they have enormous implications for those suffering from pre-existing vulnerabilities and insecurity. Often, those suffering the most are those that also sit at critical intersections of race, gender, and class, creating multiple levels of insecurity to increasing environmental issues. This also fundamentally affect potential solutions and the pathway toward solutions. This course therefore represents an introduction to this realm of the politics surrounding the increasingly complexity of environmental issues. We will examine global environmental problems and their causes, how people and societies are affected by these problems and the institutional framework designed to address them.

Course Format

The Course will be divided into seven parts or modules:

1. Brief History of Human Development: The opening part of the course will review history of human development, essentially exploring one basic question: how we got to this point where everything we have built is unsustainable.
2. Global Governance and International Relations in Environmental Context: In this module, we will examine institutions within a global governance context and theoretical approaches to understand how environmental issues are enhanced by limited governance and how they can be better addressed through institutional leverage
3. State of Earth and Megatrends: We will examine the effects of population growth and post-industrial take-make-waste systems on the planet. As part of this module, we will also examine the large trends in our systems to determine their local-global consequences and projected trends as part of futures

thinking.

4. **Philosophical Approaches to Environmental Politics:** In this module, we will explore some of the foundational literature that drove the philosophy and politics to recognize environmental issues.
5. **Institutional Responses to Unsustainability:** In this module, we will explore the current approaches to Unsustainability and their effects on other systems. This will help set up the next module on debating environmental issues as not only a topical problem, but also one of mental models, institutions, and policy/law.
6. **Inequality and Injustice:** In this module, we will explore how environmental issues operate at critical intersections that manifest increased inequality and injustice. We will explore vulnerability as variable for understanding intersections of race, class, gender, ethnicity and culture around environmental issues.
7. **Building Livable Solutions: From Person to Planet:** In the final module, using the knowledge and experience from the debates, students will engage literature on addressing and solving these complex environmental problems at scale.

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

In light of the course format, the goals and learning outcomes of this course are to:

1. To explore the theoretical literature on sustainability, from the philosophy of environment to eco-design and governance.
2. To utilize this literature to critically analyze ways to address complex problems, which are largely defined as unsustainable.
3. To develop divergent and creative thinking that builds a synthesis of knowledge to promote pragmatic solutions to the problems identified.
4. To experiment with practical ways to attain sustainable practices in every day life, and to identify the obstacles to achieving consistent sustainability—individually and societally.
5. To engage active experiential learning to understand sustainability on a personal and pragmatic scale.
6. To synthesize this knowledge in ways that has a visual outcome through the design and production of their own sustainability video.
7. To identify the ways to incorporate student's practical lessons into society (local, national and global) to create a more sustainable way of life.
8. To hone professional development skills through public speaking, public service, and engaging the public on sustainability issues.

CofC Honor Code and Academic Integrity

Lying, cheating, attempted cheating, and plagiarism are violations of our Honor Code that, when identified, are investigated. Each incident will be examined to determine the degree of deception involved.

Incidents where the instructor determines the student's actions are related more to a misunderstanding will be handled by the instructor. A written intervention designed to help prevent the student from repeating the error will be given to the student. The intervention, submitted by form and signed both by the instructor and the student, will be forwarded to the Dean of Students and placed in the student's file.

Cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be reported directly by the instructor and/or others having knowledge of the incident to the Dean of Students. A student found responsible by the Honor Board for academic dishonesty will receive a XF in the course, indicating failure of the course due to academic dishonesty. This grade will appear on the student's transcript for two years after which the student may petition for the X to be expunged. The student may also be placed on disciplinary probation, suspended (temporary removal) or expelled (permanent removal) from the College by the Honor Board.

Students should be aware that unauthorized collaboration--working together without permission-- is a form of cheating. Unless the instructor specifies that students can work together on an assignment, quiz and/or test, no collaboration during the completion of the assignment is permitted. Other forms of cheating include possessing or using an unauthorized study aid (which could include accessing information via a cell phone or computer), copying from others' exams, fabricating data, and giving unauthorized assistance.

Research conducted and/or papers written for other classes cannot be used in whole or in part for any assignment in this class without obtaining prior permission from the instructor.

Students can find the complete Honor Code and all related processes in the Student Handbook at: <http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/honor-system/studenthandbook/index.php>.

Course Materials

Required Books

- Conca and Debelko (2019). *Green Planet Blues: Critical Perspectives on Global Environmental Politics*, Routledge.
- Wapner and Nicholson (2015). *Global Environmental Politics: From Person to Planet*. Routledge.
- Chaskek and Downie (2020). *Global Environmental Politics*, 8d. Routledge.

Books (found online)

- UNEP (2017). *Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. United Nations.
- National Intelligence Council (2013). *Global Trends 2030: Alternative Worlds*. NIC.
- National Intelligence Council (2021). *Global Trends 2040: A More Contested World*. NIC
- United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2019). *Global Sustainable Development Report 2019: The Future is Now*. United Nations.
- United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2021). *Back to Our Common Future: Sustainable Development in the 21st Century*. United Nations.

Reading for Application

In this class, I am more concerned with how things connect and how you begin to “construct” your ideas and perceptions of sustainability. Your readings are meant as a guide in this process, not material to be memorized for an exam. It's about application and analysis.

Course Format

Format: The course is broken into **7 modules**. Each module will have sub-modules based on topics. Each of these will be organized around readings, resources (e.g. video lectures), and possible chats. Check the “content” section on OAKS for this course for the course materials. At the end of each module, students will engage in an applied assignment to engage the material as a conclusion to the module.

Announcements: Check the “news” section of the course (in OAKS) regularly to ensure that you have the most up to date information. Use this in conjunction with the course schedule to determine important deadlines and required assignments.

Course Materials: All materials will be found on OAKS and videos accessed through the links provided (through mediasite interface). Use your CofC username and password to log in.

Turning in Assignments: All assignment should be turned in via dropbox on the OAKS coursepage by the assigned deadline. Formats for the assignments can be MS Word, rich text, or pdf.

COVID and Attendance: A couple aspects of the course to take note of given the Pandemic:

1. Masks must be work in class at all times (until the Provost changes the policy)
2. We MAY switch to a ZOOM mode for some classes as needed or desired to accommodate students who are out with Covid or to limit its transmission.
3. You are still required to attend class regardless of modality and responsible for the material covered.

Progress toward Final Paper: There will be a series of mini-projects that are specifically designed to help guide and ultimately be incorporated into your final paper. You will write reflection papers at critical junctures to capture the essence of the material but also will serve as a section of your final paper. While they should not be copied and pasted in their entirety as a substitute for a complete draft of the paper, they should provide ample material to help draft that section. We will have reflection papers, treaty analysis, and a data analysis (from global databases) that will help provide support for your final paper.

Research Paper: The final paper will be due **Friday, April 29, by Midnight**. Papers will need to be 5-8 pages (single-spaced). Graphs and charts are part of that page limit. Each paper should: i) How SD/Country fits into the larger IR context; ii) provide some research on SDG/Country on a specific case; iii) compile a data section; and iv) some analysis of the SDG/country in policy or law context with a v) conclusion.

Assessment

The following weight is assigned to determine final grades:

Coursework	Value
Exam 1	20%
Exam 2	20%
Projects (Reflections & Presentations)	40%
Final Paper (country, topic or SDGs)	20%

Grading Scale: A 94-100; A- 90-93; B+ 87-89; B 83-86; B- 80-82; C+ 77-79; C 73-76; C- 70-72; D 65-69; F >65

Student Resources and Accommodations

Material and Technological Resources: Students are required to have basic access to technology, including regular internet service and a computer with requisite software to take this online course. If you do not have access to sufficient material or technological resources for this purpose, please let me know. Resources are available to provide students with or access to these essential tools.

Accommodations: Any students who have special learning needs or concerns are encouraged to speak with me directly. If accommodations are needed, please let me know as soon as possible. Finally, the Center for Disability Services provides a comprehensive list of accessibility resources available at: <http://disabilityservices.cofc.edu/>

Financial Security: If your performance in the course is affected by significant financial difficulties (e.g., affording groceries, textbooks, or sufficient food to eat each day; securing a safe and stable place to live), consider contacting the Dean of Students for support (Food/Temporary Housing Assistance), and please notify me, if you are comfortable doing so.

<http://deanofstudents.cofc.edu/student-food-temp-housing-asst/index.php>

Mental Health and Wellbeing: These are challenging times on many fronts, and our mental and physical wellbeing can be compromised with additional stress. If you experience mental health challenges such as depression, heightened anxiety, sleep deprivation, etc. please consider contacting CofC's Counseling Center at <http://counseling.cofc.edu> or 843.953.5640 or the Students 4 Support (certified volunteers through texting "4support" to 839863, visit <http://counseling.cofc.edu/cct/index.php>, or meet with them in person 3rd Floor Stern Center).

Course Schedule

Class	Date	Topic	Readings	Due
1	1-11 (t)	intro		
2	1-13 (h)	History of Human Development	No Readings	
3	1-18 (t)	History of Human Development	* Kolbert, "Enter the Anthropocene", GEP, 1 * Kingsolver, "How to be Hopeful", GEP, ch 37	DUE: Reflection on History of HD and Anthropocene
4	1-20 (h)	IR/GG	* Chapter 1 IR (pdf) * Chap 1, GEP Int'l History (pdf) * Rio Declaration on Enviro and Development, GEP, ch 12 * Clapp & Dauvergne, "Brief History of Int'l Enviro Cooperation", GEP, ch 13 * Conca & Debelko, "Intro From Stockholm to Sustainability?" GPB Intro	
5	1-25 (t)	IR/GG	*Chap 2, GEP actors * IEL, "Development of International Enviro Law" (pdf) * Falk, "State Sovereignty Threatens the Planet" GEP, Ch 15 * Sachs, "The Free Market Fallacy," Price of Civilization (pdf)	
6	1-27 (h)	IR/GG/IL	* Harris, "What's Wrong with Climate Politics", GEP ch 14 * Klein, "Capitalism v Climate", GEP ch 18	Due: Reflection on GG and IR in enviro context

			* Augusto and Castro, "Enviro & Development: Case for Developing Countries" GPB *COICA (Indig Pops), Two Agendas on Amazon Development, GPB	
7	2-1 (t)	State of Earth	* Mann, State of the species, GEP, ch 2 * Sachs, "Our Crowded Planet," Common Wealth, pp 17-31 *McNeil, Something New Under Sun, "pp, 3-17; 357-62 * McKibben, "End of Nature" (pdf) * Friedman, Too Many Americans? * State of the World, Chapter 1	
8	2-3 (h)	State of Earth: Perspectives	* McKibben, "A Finite Earth?" GEP, ch 9 *Meyer, End of the Wild," GEP ch 5 *Assadourian, "Consequences of Consumerism" GEP Ch 10 *Brown, "Global Food Crisis", GEP ch 7 * McNeil, "Humans Overwhelming" (pdf)	
9	2-8 (t)	Megatrends	* Global Trends 2030, Exec Summary *Tierney, "Use Energy, Get Rich, and Save the Planet," GEP, ch 11 * McKibben, "Global Warming's Terrifying New Math", GEP ch 4	
10	2-10 (h)	Megatrends 2040	* NIC, "Global Trends 2040," Summary (pdf) * NIC, "GT2040: Environment" (pdf) * NIC, "GT2040: Economics" (pdf) * NIC, "GT2040: Technology" (pdf) * NIC, "GT2040: Demographics" (pdf)	Due: Reflections on State of Earth
11	2-15 (t)	Systems	* Meadows, "Limits to Growth", GPB 1 * Hardin, "Tragedy of the Commons", GPB 3 * Meadows et al, "The Nature of Exponential Growth" (pdf) * Basurto & Ostrom, "Beyond the Tragedy", GPB Ch 6 * Conca, "Rethinking the Ecology-Sovereignty Debate", GPB Ch 7 * Dauvergne, "The Problem of Consumption", GPB, Ch 17	
12	2-17 (h)	Cycles of Collapse	* Diamond, "The Last Americans" (pdf) * Tainter, Complexity, Ch 1 (pdf) * Tainter, "Complexity Problem Solving" (1996) (pdf)	
13	2-22 (t)	EXAM 1		EXAM 1 (2 parts)
14	2-24 (h)	Institutional Responses: Climate	* Raman, "Climate Change Battle in Paris," GPB *Kinley, "Change after Paris: Turning Pt to Transformation", GPB *Spash, "This Changes Nothing," GPB * Harris, "What's Wrong with Climate Politics", GPB * Fukuda-Parr, "SDGs: Shifts..." GPB * Dimitrov, "Paris Agr behind Closed Doors"	
15	3-1 (t)	Institutional Responses: Markets and Activism	* Hawken, "The Power of Environmental Activism" GEP, Ch 19 * Wapner, "Forcing Cultural Change," GEP, 20 * Krugman, "Environmental Econ: Overcoming Market Failures", GEP, ch 17 * Lister & Dauvergne, "Promise of Corporate Environmentalism," GEP Ch 16 * Schellenberger & Nordhaus, Death of Environmentalism (2010) (pdf)	

16	3-3 (h)	Institutional Responses: Democracy	* Mert, "Democracy in the Anthropocene" (pdf) * Mert, "Challenges to Democracy in the Anthro" (pdf) * Obrien, et al, "Desirable Futures" (pdf)	DUE: Final Paper Topic
	3-8 (t)	SPRING BREAK	NO CLASS	
	3-10 (h)		NO CLASS	
17	3-15 (t)	Institutional Responses: SDGs	* UN, "Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" (2015) (pdf) * UN, "SD Goals Report 2021" (pdf) * UN, "SD Goals Report 2020" (pdf) * Sachs, "6 Transformations to Achieve the SDGs" (pdf)	
18	3-17 (h)	Institutional Responses		DUE: Response Paper on Institutional Responses to Enviro
19	3-22 (t)	Inequality & Injustice	*Agarwal & Narain, "Environmental Colonialism", GEP 25 *Bullard, "Environmental Racism" ch 26 * Singer, "One Atmosphere, Two Worlds", GEP Ch 24	
20	3-24 (h)	Inequality & Injustice	*Kay and Franco, "The Global Water Grab" GPB * Global Witness, "Deadly Environment" GPB	
21	3-29 (t)	Solutions: Treaties		DUE: Analyze a Treaty
22	3-31 (h)	Solutions: Governance	*Kahler, "GG: Three Futures" (pdf) *Ostrom, "Polycentric Sys for Collective Action and GEC" (pdf) *Jang, "GG: Present and Future" (pdf) * Auld, et al, "Green Pluralism" GPB, ch 11	
23	4-5 (t)	Solutions: SDGs	* UN, "Back to Our Common Future: SD in the 21 st Century" Summary (pdf) * Sachs, et al "Six Transformations to Achieve SDGs" (pdf) * Pichler, et al., "Drivers of Society-Nature Relations and Implications for Sustainability" * Senge, "Life Beyond the Bubble," Necessary Revolution (pdf)	
24	4-7 (h)	Solutions: Data	Use databases from EXAM 1 to probe data on your chosen topic and research Q	DUE: Analyze Data for Final Paper
25	4-12 (t)	Solutions: Ecological Justice	*Oxfam, "Climate Wrongs and Human Rights: Putting People First", GPB * Bell and Braun, "Coal, Identity and Gendering in Central Appalachia", GPB * Stiglitz, "Inequality and Enviro Policy" GPB	
26	4-14 (h)	Solutions: Thinking of the future	*Shellenberger and Nordhaus, "Technological Salvation" GEP 34 *Nicholson, "Geoengineering..." GEP 35 * Berry, "The Future is Local" GEP 33 * Nash, "Island Civilization: 1000 Years into the Future" GEP, Ch 31 * Wapner, "Humility in a Climate Age," GEP 36	
27	4-19 (t)	Exam 2		Due: Exam 2
28	4-21 (h)	Presentations		Due: Presentations on Final Paper
	4-30 (sat)	Final Paper: Saturday, April 29, Midnight		