

University of Florida  
INR 4350  
Spring 2014

## International Environmental Relations

Instructor: Kendra Patterson  
Office: TBD  
Office Hours: Thursdays 11:15-1:15, or by appointment  
Email: [patterson@ufl.edu](mailto:patterson@ufl.edu)

Class Meeting Times: Tuesday 8:30am-10:15;  
Thursday 9:35am-10:25

Location: Fine Arts C, 127

### Course Description and Objectives

This course is an introduction to the international relations of transboundary and global environmental challenges, including but not limited to climate change, atmospheric pollution, ocean fisheries depletion, deforestation, decreasing biodiversity, and water scarcity. Environmental challenges are complex, involving political, economic, and social dimensions, and addressing these challenges must take into account the perspectives and interests of many different actors.

The course begins by defining the problem, introducing the different actors involved, reviewing the role of the global economy and science in the policy process, and examining how the international community addresses environmental challenges through institutions and regimes. It then applies this knowledge to a series of case studies. It concludes with a look at alternative perspectives of environmental challenges, including sustainability and the North-South debate, environmental security, and social justice.

No political science background is required for this course. Students who complete the course should gain both an in-depth knowledge of international and global environmental challenges, and the ability to apply various perspectives and theoretical approaches to understanding how these challenges are addressed.

### Course Readings

There are two required textbooks, which can be purchased in the UF bookstore and other local textbook bookstores, or online:

Chasek, Downie, and Welsh Brown. 2010. *Global Environmental Politics*. Boulder: Westview Press. **\*fifth edition**

Conca and Dabelko. 2010. *Green Planet Blues*. Boulder: Westview. **\*fourth edition**

All other required readings are listed in the course outline below, and are available through the UF library course reserves website or online (if online, website is listed).

**The instructor reserves the right to change this syllabus as needed during the course of the semester. As much advance notice as possible will be given.**

## **Course Requirements**

- Attendance and Participation: 15%
- Writing Assignment One: 20%
- Exam 1: 20%
- Writing Assignment Two: 20%
- Exam 2: 25%

### Attendance and Participation (15%)

Do your readings on time, attend class, and be prepared to participate in discussions and group activities. I will take attendance throughout the semester. If you know you will miss a class, please let me know ahead of time. **Regular attendance is advised – we will often have activities or discussions that I will use to write exam questions. You will miss this information if you miss class, as it is not always contained in the readings.**

### Writing Assignment 1: Policy Brief (20%)

Due at the beginning of class, in electronic and hard copy, on February 27<sup>th</sup>. For this assignment you will choose a topic relevant to international environmental relations, to be confirmed with me by the end of the third week of class, which you will research and write about in the form of a policy brief of 1000 words. Further details of the assignment will be discussed in class.

### Exam 1 (20%)

To be held in class on February 20<sup>th</sup>. Attendance of the exam review is advised, as I supply a list of topics to study during the review.

### Writing Assignment 2: Op-Ed (20%)

Due at the beginning of class, in electronic and hard copy, on April 17<sup>th</sup>. For this assignment you will choose a topic relevant to the course, and write an op-ed of 800 words in which you establish a critical perspective. Further details of the assignment will be discussed in class.

### Exam 2 (25%)

To be held in class on April 22<sup>nd</sup>. Attendance of the exam review is advised, as I supply a list of topics to study during the review.

## **Classroom Conduct**

Respect me, your fellow students, and the classroom environment. Instructors notice when you are disengaged, dozing off, talking with your neighbor, playing on your phone or computer, or habitually late – this kind of thing is distracting to us, which is why you can be assured that we see it. If it happens consistently your participation grade will suffer.

## **Grading Scale**

94% - 100% = A 90% - 93% = A- 87% - 89% = B+ 84% - 86% = B 80% - 83% = B-  
77% - 79% = C+ 74% - 76% = C 70% - 73% = C- 67% - 69% = D+ 64% - 66% = D

## **Late Assignments and Make-Up Exam Policy**

Writing assignments must be submitted electronically and in hard copy by/at the beginning of class on the due date. In absence of an official excuse, late assignments will be penalized by 5% of the grade for every day after the due date that it is late. No make-up exams will be given unless the student presents an official excuse. Please inform me in advance, or as soon as possible, when you have an excuse not to take an exam on time.

## **Academic Honesty**

Academic dishonesty, including cheating on exams and plagiarism, will not be tolerated. Any student engaging in such activities will be dealt with in accordance with University policy. It is your responsibility to know what constitutes plagiarism, and what the university policies are. Please refer to the current Undergraduate Catalogue for more information on the Student Honor Code (<http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/students.html>). Students who have questions about these policies should contact the undergraduate advisement center for additional information.

## **Students with Disabilities**

If you have a disability that may affect your performance in this class, you should contact the Dean of Students Office so that special arrangements can be made to accommodate you. It is your responsibility to do so at the beginning of the semester and to communicate directly with the professor during the first week of classes (or as soon as the disability occurs). These students are encouraged to contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC). They are also welcome to talk to the instructor whenever it is necessary for facilitating the accommodation process.

## **Counseling and Wellness**

Students who need help with personal challenges can benefit from contacting the University Counseling & Wellness Center. The Center has numerous resources to help students deal with everything from stress and anxiety to relationship problems and depression. Visit their website (<http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/>) for a wealth of information and resources.

## **Course Outline**

### **Week 1: Introduction and Defining the Problem**

#### Tuesday Jan. 7

- Class introduction

#### Thursday Jan. 9

*Readings:* GPB Introduction and Part I

- Discussion: Fundamental paradigms

## **Week 2: How Should We Study Global Environmental Politics?**

Tuesday Jan. 14

*Readings:*

GEP Chapter 1

- Discussion: How IR views global environmental politics
- Introduce policy brief assignment

Thursday Jan. 16

*Readings:*

Susanne Jakobsen, "International Relations and Global Environmental Change: Review of the Burgeoning Literature on the Environment." *Cooperation and Conflict* vol. 34 (1999), pp. 205-236. (<http://www.astepback.com/IR/IR%20Theory%20and%20GEC%20--%20Lit%20Review.pdf>)

- Discussion: Critical views

## **Week 3: Economics, Development, and the Global Environment**

Tuesday Jan. 21

*Readings:*

GEP Chapter 7

- Discussion: Bretton Woods and the development of the global economy
- Video: "The New Rulers of the World"  
(<http://topdocumentaryfilms.com/the-new-rulers-of-the-world/>)

Thursday Jan. 23

**\*\*Policy Brief Topic Due\*\***

*Readings:*

GPB Chapter 20

- Discussion: Trade and the environment; environmentalism and the global economy

## **Week 4: The International System and Different Actors**

Tuesday Jan. 28

*Readings:*

GEP Chapter 2

- Discussion: The main actors of international environmental governance according to IR
- Demonstration: Finding legitimate web-based sources (for policy brief)

Thursday Jan. 30

*Readings:*

GPB Chapters 7, 8, and 9

- Discussion: The actors IR ignores

## **Week 5: The Role of Science in International Environmental Governance**

Tuesday Feb. 4

*Readings:*

Haas, Peter M. "Do Regimes Matter? Epistemic Communities and Mediterranean Pollution Control." *International Organization* 43 #3 (1989), pp 377–403.

- Activity: Decoding an academic article
- Discussion: Epistemic communities and the Med Plan case study

Thursday Feb. 6

*Readings:*

Dale Jamieson, "Scientific Uncertainty and the Political Process." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences* #545 (1996), pp. 35-43.

Raino Malnes, "Imperfect Science." *Global Environmental Politics* vol. 6 #3 (2006), pp. 58-71.

- Discussion: Critical views of science and policy

## **Week 6: Institutional and Regime Effectiveness**

Tuesday Feb. 11

*Readings:*

GEP Chapter 6

Ronald B. Mitchell, "Regime Design Matters: Intentional Oil Pollution and Treaty Compliance." *International Organization* vol. 48, #3 (1994), pp. 425-458.

- Discussion: How IR evaluates effectiveness

Thursday Feb. 13

*Readings:*

GPB Chapters 10, 14, and 15

- Discussion: Different criteria for evaluating effectiveness

## **Week 7: Review and Exam 1**

Tuesday Feb. 18

- Exam review

Thursday Feb. 20

**\*\*Exam 1\*\***

## **Week 8: Air Pollution, Hazardous Wastes, and Toxic Chemicals**

Tuesday Feb. 25

*Readings:*

GEP Chapter 3

- Discussion: LRTAP, Basel Convention, and Stockholm Convention

Thursday Feb. 27

**\*\*Policy Brief Due\*\***

- Video: "Ghana: Digital Dumping Ground"  
([http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/stories/ghana804/video/video\\_index.html](http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/stories/ghana804/video/video_index.html))
- Activity: Why is the Basel Convention ineffective and what can be done about it?

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

## **Week 9: Stratospheric Ozone and Climate Change**

Tuesday March 11

*Readings:*

GEP Chapter 4

Check out IPCC AR5 report (<http://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar5/wg1/#.UqC1myeRLyQ>)

- Discussion: Success versus failure in international regimes
- Introduce op-ed assignment
- Return exam and policy brief

Thursday March 13

*Readings:*

Samuel Barkin, "Discounting the Discount Rate: Ecocentrism and Environmental Economics." *Global Environmental Politics* vol. 6, #4 (2006), pp. 56-72.

- Discussion: The discount rate and ecological economics

## **Week 10: Natural Resources, Species, and Habitats**

Tuesday March 18

*Readings:*

GEP Chapter 5

- Discussion: The difficulties of dealing with natural resources

Thursday March 20

**\*\*Op-Ed Topic Due\*\***

*Readings:*

Ronnie D Lipschutz, "Why Is There No International Forestry Law?: An Examination of International Forestry Regulation, both Public and Private." *UCLA Journal of Environmental Law & Policy* 19 (2001), pp. 153-179.

Lars H. Guldbrandsen, "The Emergence and Effectiveness of the Marine Stewardship Council." *Marine Policy* 33 (2009), pp. 654-660.

Check out Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch

([http://www.seafoodwatch.org/cr/cr\\_seafoodwatch/sfw\\_consumers.aspx](http://www.seafoodwatch.org/cr/cr_seafoodwatch/sfw_consumers.aspx))

- Discussion: Forests and fisheries in focus

## **Week 11: Critical Perspectives on Sustainable Development**

Tuesday March 25

*Readings:*

GPB Chapters 17 and 18

Kate Raworth, "Doughnut Economics" (<http://www.humansandnature.org/economy---kate-raworth-response-30.php>)

John De Graaf, "Workers of the World, Relax!" (<http://www.humansandnature.org/economy---john-de-graaf-response-68.php>)

- Discussion: Who does sustainable development benefit?
- Activity: Are there alternatives to continuous economic growth?

Thursday March 27

**\*\*No class because instructor is at a conference in Toronto!\*\***

## **Week 12: Environmental Conflict and Security**

Tuesday April 1

*Readings:*

GPB Chapter 22

The following 2 web-based resources on Sudan:

<http://internationalwaterlaw.org/bibliography/articles/Salman/SudanWaterResources.pdf>

<http://africanarguments.org/2013/03/14/is-all-well-in-the-teak-forests-of-south-sudan-by-aly-verjee/>

- Discussion: Environmental conflict at the international vs. subnational level
- Activity: How are environmental resources related to conflict (Sudan case study)?

Thursday April 3

*Readings:*

GPB Chapter 23

The following web-based article:

<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/nov/16/climate-change-dangerous-game-enemy-narrative>

- Discussion: Securitization of the environment

## **Week 13: Ecological Justice**

Tuesday April 8

**\*\*Op-Ed First Draft Due (optional)\*\***

*Readings:* GPB Chapters 26, 27, and 28

- Discussion: Environmental justice in Kenya

Thursday April 10

- Video: “Global Priorities Bigger than Climate Change”  
([http://www.ted.com/talks/bjorn\\_lomborg\\_sets\\_global\\_priorities.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/bjorn_lomborg_sets_global_priorities.html))
- Discussion: How can we best ensure environmental justice?

## **Week 14: Looking to the Future**

Tuesday April 15

*Readings:*

Adil Najam, “The Case Against a New International Environmental Organization.” *Global Governance* 9 (2003), pp. 367-384.

Thursday April 17

**\*\*Op-Ed Due\*\***

- Exam 2 review

## **Week 15: Exam**

Tuesday April 22

**\*\*Exam 2\*\***