

ERS 404/PSCI 432 – Global Environmental Governance
Winter 2016
Wednesdays 2:30 – 5:30 p.m.

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:30 – 3:30 p.m. EV2-2007

Our contemporary environmental crises do not operate in a political vacuum. Though efforts are made at all levels of society to address environmental and ecological issues, all levels of government and modes of governance face competing demands and influences. This course begins to unpack the various power centres at which environmental issues are governed – both formally and informally. Students will learn about conventional sites of state-based government and international organizations like the United Nations and its various agencies. However, students will also learn about informal governance and non-state actors, for instance the power wielded by corporate actors and civil society.

Students will develop a sense of the various political interests that influence global environmental governance and the challenges to enacting meaningful governance. Students will practice writing short response papers as well as working towards an in-class presentation and major research paper.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Define key concepts in contemporary global governance
- Describe the different kinds of global governance actors and their roles
- Understand global environmental issues in greater depth and the presence or absence of appropriate governance mechanisms
- Summarize key debates about contemporary environmental governance
- Analyze and compare different forms of global environmental governance and assess their effectiveness

Skills Development

This course will help students develop the following skills:

- Organization and time management
- Reading comprehension, including identifying arguments and counter-arguments
- Analyzing and communicating complex issues and ideas
- Public speaking and communication
- Constructing academic arguments, supported by research, logic, and clear writing

Academic integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. [Check [the Office of Academic Integrity](#) for more information.]

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read [Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4](#). When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department's administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. [Check [the Office of Academic Integrity](#) for more information.] A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about "rules" for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course instructor, academic advisor, or the undergraduate associate dean. For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to [Policy 71, Student Discipline](#). For typical penalties, check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](#).

Appeals: A decision made or penalty imposed under [Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances](#) (other than a petition) or [Policy 71, Student Discipline](#) may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to [Policy 72, Student Appeals](#).

Note for students with disabilities: [AccessAbility Services](#), located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with AccessAbility Services at the beginning of each academic term.

Mark Breakdown:

Class Preparation and Participation: 20%

Reading Reviews: 5 x 6% = 30%

Paper Proposal Presentation (Weeks of March 14 and 28): 10%

Final Paper (Due During Exam Period): 40%

Class Preparation and Participation

As this is a senior level seminar, there is a heavy emphasis on class participation. All students are expected to attend class having completed all of the required readings and ready to discuss them.

Students are also expected to submit (via LEARN) at least one discussion or clarification question before each class based on that week's topic or readings. Questions submitted after 2:30 p.m. on the day of class will not be counted towards the participation grade.

Students will receive their participation grade at the end of the term, taking into account the quantity and quality of participation over the whole course.

Reading Reviews

Students are required to submit 5 reading reviews during Weeks 2 – 9 of the course. At least TWO reading reviews must be submitted during Part I (Weeks 2-6).

These reviews should synthesize key concepts or debates discussed in the readings and highlight interesting themes. There will be no one “right” approach to analyzing the themes. Reviews should be no longer than one single-spaced page with 1-inch margins and 12 pt. font. As these papers are short, you will not have space to summarize the readings. No bibliography is required, but please use in-text citations as appropriate.

Paper Presentation

During the Weeks of March 23 and March 30, all students will deliver a 10-minute presentation on their research topic and thesis statement to the class. The presentations will allow everyone to share the topics they have been working on and receive feedback and ideas they can use in their paper.

Presentations will be graded on the student’s ability to articulate their thesis statement and describe their topic clearly. Students may use presentation software such as PowerPoint or Prezi if they wish, but it is not required. Students should also come prepared to answer questions about their research topic in the discussion portion following presentations.

Final Paper

Weekly Course Schedule

Week 1 – Jan. 4: Introduction – What is “governance”?

PART I – ACTORS IN GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE

Week 2 – Jan. 13: States: Weak and Strong

Week 3 – Jan. 20: Beyond the Nation-State: Regional Governance, Municipalities, and Indigenous Governance

Week 4 – Jan. 27: Intergovernmental Organizations, Regimes, and Multilateral Governance

Week 5 – Feb. 3: Transnational Corporations

Week 6 – Feb. 10: Non-Governmental Organizations, Social Movements, and Civil Society

Feb. 17 Reading Week – No Class

Part II – ISSUES IN GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE

Week 7 – Feb. 24: Global Food and Agricultural Governance

Week 8 – March 2: Global Climate Governance

Week 9 – March 9: Governing Transnational Environmental Crime

Week 10 – March 16: Class Cancelled

Week 11 – March 23: Paper Presentations x 13

Week 12 – March 30: Paper Presentations and Concluding Thoughts