



GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE
ERS 404
Winter 2018

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Office Hours:

Our contemporary environmental crises do not operate in a political vacuum. Though efforts are made at all levels of society to address environmental issues, many of the challenges we face require transboundary coordination and governance. This course begins to unpack the various the challenges of governing environmental issues across international borders. Students will learn about conventional sites of state-based government, international organizations and agencies as well as emerging forms of governance, including private governance and the role of non-state actors. Students will develop a sense of the various political interests that influence global environmental governance and the challenges to enacting effective governance.

Course Objectives

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

- Define and apply 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
- 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 through regular written assignments
- Reading comprehension, including identifying arguments and counter-arguments
- Analyzing and communicating complex issues and ideas
- Effective 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.

Turnitin.com: Text matching software (Turnitin®) will be used to screen assignments in this course. This is being done to verify that use of all materials and sources in assignments is documented. Students will be given an option if they do not want to have their assignment screened by Turnitin®. In the first week of the term, details will be provided about arrangements and alternatives for the use of Turnitin® in this course.

Note: students must be given a reasonable option if they do not want to have their assignment screened by Turnitin. See: <https://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/guidelines-instructors> for more information.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

O'Neill, Kate. *The Environment and International Relations*. 2nd Edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017. [Available in the UW Bookstore or online]

Selected articles and book chapters, available on UWLearn.

MARK BREAKDOWN:

Class Preparation and Participation	10%
Three Research Reports:	
• Research Report #1	20%
• Research Report #2	20%
• Research Report #3	20%
Research Presentation	10%
Final Take Home Exam	20%

Late Policy:

All late written assignments will be deducted 10% per day and will not be accepted 7 days after the initial due date. Late submissions will also be returned later than submissions made on time.

CLASS PREPARATION AND PARTICIPATION – 10%

As this is a senior level class, there is an emphasis on class participation. All students are expected to attend classes having completed that week’s required readings and prepared to engage with course content, whether presented by the instructor or fellow students. There are several aspects of your participation grade:

Attendance:

Weekly attendance will be recorded and factored into the final grade, however, attendance alone will not determine the participation grade. i.e. Perfect attendance does NOT mean a perfect score. Students must be actively participating in class throughout the term to earn a high grade.

Discussion Questions:

During Weeks 2 – 11, students must submit a discussion question about the readings on **SIX (6)** different weeks. The question should be submitted to the appropriate dropbox no later than 24 hours before class begins. Questions will not be individually graded, but will be used to assess preparation over the course of the term. Failure to submit *any* discussion questions will result in an automatic 5% deduction from the final course grade.

Weekly News Briefings and Discussion:

Each class will begin with an opportunity to discuss environmental governance or global environmental issues that have surfaced in the past week. In addition, students are expected to engage in class discussions throughout the term. In the first few weeks, we will have breakout group discussions, and in the later half, students are expected to attend and engage with material being presented by their fellow students through asking questions.

TERM RESEARCH PROJECT

For this class, you will slowly build a profile of a complex global environmental issue and the various ways in which it is governed through writing several short research papers.

Each student will pick one topic from the following list and focus on this issue all term, applying concepts and lessons learned in class. If you would like to research a topic that is not on this list, please consult with the professor for approval.

Climate & Air Issues

1. Global Greenhouse Gas Emissions
2. Cities and Climate Change
3. Climate Refugees
4. Ozone Depletion
5. Transboundary Air Pollution
6. Glacial Melting and the Arctic

Water & Fisheries

7. Transboundary Water Pollution
8. Ocean Acidification
9. Coral Bleaching
10. Global Water Governance
11. Global Fisheries Management
12. Whaling
13. Water Scarcity

Land, Food & Agriculture

14. Land Rights and Governance
15. Transnational Agricultural Investment
16. Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)
17. National Food Security
18. Food Sovereignty
19. International Food Safety and Standards
20. Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs)
21. Climate Smart Agriculture
22. Labour Rights in farming

Energy, Oil, Gas & Mineral Resources

23. Transparency in Oil, Gas & Mineral Extraction
24. Global Energy Governance
25. Renewable Energy
26. 'Conflict' Minerals
27. Labour Rights in mining

Wildlife and Biodiversity

28. Biological Diversity
29. Habitat Loss
30. Invasive species
31. Wetlands
32. Wildlife Conservation
33. The Trade in Endangered Species
34. Desertification
35. Deforestation
36. Eco-tourism

Waste, Consumption & Disaster

37. Electronic Waste (E-Waste)
38. Hazardous Waste
39. Nuclear power and waste management
40. Nuclear weapons
41. Overpopulation
42. Environmental Disaster Management

RESEARCH REPORTS:

Each student will write 3 research reports that apply concepts learned from the course to your area of research. These papers should include a core argument/thesis statement that synthesizes your findings. Based on what you have found, your thesis statement should answer the question

“so what?”: What is interesting/important about the governance (or lack of governance) of this issue area?

Each paper should be **1000-1200 words long**, double-spaced, written in 12 pt. font and submitted to the appropriate dropbox. Please include a separate references page formatted according to APA formatting standards. Your references page does not count towards the word count.

Research Report #1: Multilateral Environmental Agreements and/or Treaties (or the lack thereof) – 20%

Are there multilateral environmental agreements, conventions, rules, regimes or institutions that govern your particular issue area? If so, how and when did they emerge? Who participates in these regimes and institutions? Are they effective? What challenges are there in enforcing these agreements or rules?

If there is not a multilateral agreement or set of rules on your specific issue area, consider the following questions for your paper:

- What are the political and/or logistical obstacles that have prevented the development of an MEA in this issue area?
- Are there possible international arena/forums that might be appropriate to addressing this issue? Are there regional or bilateral (i.e. between two states) agreements that might serve as a blueprint for successful global governance in this area?
- Is there advocacy to create a set of rules on your issue area? Who is advocating for more rules? Is it state-led? Or are there non-state organizations calling for more governance?

Research Report #2: The Role of States – 20%

Explore the various ways that state governments have typically addressed your issue, both in the past and in the present. Why have states been more or less eager to create global environmental rules around your issue area? What pressures do states face (i.e. internal economic or political pressures) that limit what they can – or want to – accomplish? Do states appear to be working strictly in their own self-interest, or do they have different motivations? (Recall O’Neill, Ch. 1)

You may want to highlight one or more different states in some detail to highlight differences between states and different responses to global environmental problems. Where applicable, be sure to distinguish between states of different levels of industrialization, economic strength, political structures, commitment to human rights, etc. as we will discuss in class.

Research Report #3: The Role of Non-State Actors: Corporations, NGOs, Scientists, Social Movements, and Civil Society – 20%

Consider how non-state actors influence the governance of your issue area. Focus on one or more non-state actors and describe the ways in which they govern or influence your issue area. Do

they participate directly in governance processes? Have they created their own governance processes? Do they play a role in framing how we think about your issue?

Do different non-state actors collaborate or conflict with each other? Do they interact with states or intergovernmental organizations you studied in previous reports?

RESEARCH PRESENTATION – 10%

During Weeks 5-12, all students will deliver an 8-10-minute presentation on their research topic to the class. The presentations will allow everyone to share the topics they have been working on and what they have learned so far. Presenters should also come prepared to answer questions about their research. We will also spend time in class on how to build an effective research presentation.

Importantly, the exam question(s) will be based in part on the research presentations, so it is everyone's interest to attend all of the presentations.

More information on what the research presentation should cover will be available on Learn

FINAL TAKE HOME EXAM – 25%

The final exam will ask you to integrate lessons from the term lectures, readings, your research papers, and the student presentations. The questions for the final exam will be based in part on the student presentations, so please take thorough notes and reflect on the term's lessons in the weeks prior to the exam. The exam questions will be provided on the final day of class.