ERS 604 / GGOV 620 / PSCI 604 – Advanced Topics in Global Environmental Governance  
Course Outline

Course instructor: Ian Rowlands (EV2-2026; ext. 32574; irowlands@uwaterloo.ca); office hours: tba

Meetings: Thursdays from 8:30am-11:20pm in ML-311.

Course website: Course information will be delivered through the UW-LEARN system. Students will make submissions through LEARN, and also receive feedback through LEARN.

Pre-requisite: Graduate studies enrollment.

Course purpose:  
The recognition that some environmental challenges transcend national boundaries has encouraged peoples from different countries to work together in response. Consequently a range of international and transnational – and often global – structures to address environmental challenges are now in place. These include formal organisations (like the United Nations’ Commission on Sustainable Development) as well as informal institutions (that is, implicit ‘rules of the game’).

These global structures inevitably interact with other ‘levels’, like the national and the local. Not only do sub-global positions influence the shape of global agreements (for example, one country’s or one company’s views may be particularly influential in the development of an international agreement), but so too do global structures impact sub-global activities (for example, that same global agreement may restrict the options from which a local business or city hall may choose). A better understanding, therefore, of international, transnational and global responses to environmental challenges is useful for many different kinds of ‘environmental activity’.

Thus, the purpose of this course is to examine the ways in which world society is striving to address environmental challenges by means of ‘global governance’ – that is, international, transnational and global institutions and organisations intended to deal with international and global environmental issues. It will do so by examining the ways in which international, transnational and global structures have evolved over time, as well as examining specific organisations and other actors active in global environmental governance today. The management of specific global environmental challenges will also be investigated.

Course assessment:  
The course will be assessed by seven elements. Full details regarding expectations for each are provided in individual ‘rubrics’, available on the course website.

1) Attendance 5%  
   Students are expected to attend every meeting (lecture and tutorial).

2) Participation 20%  
   Students are expected to arrive at meetings fully-prepared (completed and thought about required readings, reviewed relevant lecture notes, etc.) and to engage constructively in the discussion.
3) Article evaluation 20%
Students will prepare an ‘article evaluation’, summarising and critiquing one of a select number of articles on ‘global environmental governance’. This is to be submitted (in the appropriate LEARN drop-box) before 11:59pm on Friday, 10 February.

4) Research paper outline and annotated bibliography 10%
Students will complete a brief outline of their proposed research paper. This is to be submitted (in the appropriate LEARN drop-box) before 11:59pm on Friday, 17 February.

5) Draft of research paper 2%
Students will complete a draft of their research paper (Details about the research paper may be found below.) This is to be submitted (in the appropriate LEARN drop-box) before 11:59pm on Friday, 9 March.

6) Research paper presentation 8%
Students will present key elements of their research paper – in class on either Thursday, 15 March or Thursday, 22 March.

7) Research paper 35%
Students will complete a research paper on some aspect of global environmental governance. This is to be submitted (in the appropriate LEARN drop-box) before 11:59pm on Monday, 2 April.

Note on late submissions:
Late submissions will be penalised 5 per cent (of the 100 per cent available for that particular assignment) for each day (or part thereof) late. Submissions will not be accepted after seven days (beyond the due date) have lapsed. Exceptions will be made in exceptional circumstances (usually related to medical emergencies supported by documentation). As soon as students realise that their assignment may be submitted late, they are encouraged to contact the course instructor.

Appropriate student behaviour and other notes:

Consequences of academic offences:

A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offenses, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offense, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offenses (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm

Within ENV, those committing academic offences (e.g. cheating, plagiarism) will be placed on disciplinary probation and will be subject to penalties which may include a grade of 0 on affected course elements, 0 on the course, suspension, and expulsion.
Students who believe that they have been wrongfully or unjustly penalized have the right to grieve; refer to Policy #70, Student Grievance, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm

Students are strongly encouraged to review the material provided by the university’s Academic Integrity office (see: http://uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/Students/index.html).

Research ethics: Please also note that the ‘University of Waterloo requires all research conducted by its students, staff, and faculty which involves humans as participants to undergo prior ethics review and clearance through the Director, Office of Human Research and Animal Care (Office). The ethics review and clearance processes are intended to ensure that projects comply with the Office’s Guidelines for Research with Human Participants (Guidelines) as well as those of provincial and federal agencies, and that the safety, rights and welfare of participants are adequately protected. The Guidelines inform researchers about ethical issues and procedures which are of concern when conducting research with humans (e.g. confidentiality, risks and benefits, informed consent process, etc.).’ If your research involves humans as participants, then please contact the course instructor for guidance and see http://iris.uwaterloo.ca/ethics/.

Note for students with disabilities: The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), 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 the OPD at the beginning of each academic term.

Religious observances: As appropriate, students need to inform the instructor at the beginning of term if special accommodation needs to be made for religious observances that are not otherwise accounted for in the scheduling of classes and assignments.

Course readings: All readings are available electronically – either through UW course reserve (CR) or at a particular website (WEB).

Course schedule:

Overview
5 January – History and concepts
12 January – Intergovernmental organisations
19 January – Transnational corporations
26 January – Not-for-profit organisations
2 February – International financing
9 February – International trade
16 February – Global energy governance
23 February – No class (Reading Week)
1 March – Global climate change
8 March – No class (Instructor away)
15 March – Student presentations
22 March – Student presentations
29 March – Prospects for global environmental governance
5 January – History and concepts
– introduction to course
– what are the different kinds of ‘international environmental issues’?
– the UN Conference on the Human Environment (Stockholm, 1972)
– the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (Brundtland Report, 1987)
– the UN Conference on Environment and Development (Rio de Janeiro, 1992)
– the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, 2002)
– the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio de Janeiro, 2012)
– ‘Summitry’ as a strategy
– the present agenda
– introduction to theory and concepts related to global environmental governance
– how might/could international environmental politics unfold?
– what contribution does ‘theory’ make in the study of international/global environmental politics?

Required readings:

12 January – Intergovernmental organisations
– in-depth discussion of readings from 5 January
– what should be expected of an intergovernmental organisation?
– introduction to the United Nations system

Required readings:

19 January – Transnational Corporations
– in-depth discussion of readings from 12 January
– what forces have encouraged and discouraged the ‘greening of business’?
– how have businesses responded to the ‘new environmentalism’?
– do transnational corporations (TNCs) operate differently in different countries?
– are TNCs reactive or proactive in the political debates?
– what influence do groups like the WBCSD have?
– how have ‘voluntary initiatives’, on the part of business, developed at the international level, and what impact have they had?
Required readings:
Peter Dauvergne and Jane Lister, ‘Big Brand Sustainability: Governance Prospects and Environmental Limits’, *Global Environmental Change* (in press) – CR.

26 January – Not-for-profit organisations
– in-depth discussion of readings from 19 January
– what kinds of nongovernmental organisations are involved in global environmental governance?
– what are some specific examples of each kind?
– how do they try to increase their power and exercise influence?
– compare and contrast their ‘grass-roots activities’ and their ‘corridors of power activities’.
– are they a ‘transformative influence’ in global environmental governance?

Required readings:

2 February – International financing
– in-depth discussion of readings from 26 January
– do North and South have different responsibilities in the area of global environmental governance?
– should the North pay the South?; if so, why, how much and in what form(s)?; if not, why not?
– the World Bank’s role in sustainable development
– the Global Environment Facility

Required readings:

9 February – International trade
– in-depth discussion of readings from 2 February
– are free trade and environmental protection compatible?
– what is the position of the WTO on this issue?
– what are the criticisms of this position?
– in what cases have trade and environmental concerns conflicted?
– how have each of these cases been resolved (or not)?
– how are regional trading blocs (like NAFTA) addressing the trade and environment issue?

Required readings:

16 February – Global energy governance
– in-depth discussion of readings from 9 February
– what are the issues in ‘global energy governance’?
– do we need ‘global energy governance’?
– what organisations are most active?
– the International Energy Agency (IEA) and the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) compared
– how have each of these cases been resolved (or not)?
– should Canada join IRENA?

Required readings:

1 March – Global climate change
– history of international climate change negotiations
– prospects for international agreements on carbon taxes
– prospects for international agreements on tradeable emissions permits
– alternative approaches for global climate governance
Required readings:

15 March – Student presentations

22 March – Student presentations

29 March – Prospects for global environmental governance
– what should happen next, and why?
– what will happen next, and why?

Required readings:

Ian Rowlands, December 2011.