International Environmental Politics
ESPM W169
Summer 2021*
4 semester credits

**Course Description**

What makes global environmental problems such as climate change so complicated? Why can’t countries just work together to solve these pressing problems? In this class, we examine the dynamics of global environmental politics and governance. We will learn about the basic structures of global governance, and the roles of nation states, environmental activists, scientists, and corporations in global politics. We examine when global environmental governance actually works, as well as when it does not. We also look at the politics that shape responses to specific problems, including climate change, ozone layer depletion, forests, biodiversity, oceans, chemicals, and wastes.

**Prerequisites**

None.

**Course Objectives**

After successfully completing this course, you will be able to:

1. identify the basic structures of global governance, and the roles of nation states, environmental activists, scientists, and corporations in global politics.

2. Understand when global environmental governance works, as well as when it does not, and why.

3. Identify the politics that shape responses to specific problems, including climate change, ozone layer depletion, forests, biodiversity, oceans, chemicals, and wastes.

4. Further your own knowledge of the field of global environmental politics, for example, online data sources and analysis, the secondary literature and major thinkers/writers in the field.
Instructor Information, Contact, Office Hours, & Communication

Course Instructor

Professor Kate O’Neill

Graduate Student Instructors (GSIs)

While the instructor will interact with the whole class and will oversee all activities and grading, as well as being available to resolve any issues that may arise, the GSIs will be your main point of contact. Your GSIs are responsible for assisting you directly with your questions about assignments and course requirements, as outlined in the Assignments and Calendar. The GSIs will also facilitate ongoing discussion and interaction with you on major topics in each module.

Office Hours

The course instructor and GSIs will offer virtual office hours via Zoom, a video conferencing program. These office hours allow for synchronous interaction with the instructor and GSIs and are a good opportunity to discuss your questions relevant to the course.

Day: TBD

Hours (PT): TBD

Links to the appropriate Zoom room will be available in bCourses.

Course Mail

You can also contact your GSI and instructor using bCourses emailing system, accessed via your Inbox. Make sure to check the Inbox for messages from the instructor and GSIs. You can also choose to have your bCourses mail forwarded to your personal email account or your cell phone.

Question & Answer Discussion

Please use this discussion to post questions relevant to the entire class. This can include questions about the course materials and topics.
or mechanics around assignments. The instructor and GSIs will monitor this discussion, but you should also feel free to answer questions posted by other students. This helps to create a general FAQ so that all students in the course may benefit from the exchange.

**Course Materials and Technical Requirements**

**Required Materials**

Each week you will find the assigned reading materials posted in bCourses.

**Technical Requirements**

This course is built on a Learning Management System (LMS) called Canvas and UC Berkeley’s version is called bCourses. You will need to meet these computer specifications to participate within this online platform.

**Optional**

bCourses allows you to record audio or video files of yourself and upload them in the course. Although doing so is not required for any of the activities, using these features will enhance your engagement in the course. If you would like to use these features, you will need to have a webcam and a microphone installed on your computer.

**Technical Support**

If you are having technical difficulties please alert one of the GSIs immediately. However, understand that neither the GSIs, nor the instructor can assist you with technical problems. You must call or email tech support and make sure you resolve any issues immediately.

*In your course, click on the "Help" button on the bottom left of the global navigation menu.* Be sure to document (save emails and transaction numbers) for all interactions with tech support.
Learning Activities

You are expected to fully participate in all the course activities described here.

1. Read the weekly reading assignments.
2. Watch, listen to, and read the weekly instructor lectures.
3. Watch and listen to any additional media provided for the week.
4. Fully participate in synchronous and asynchronous discussions.
5. Complete weekly short assignments.
6. Complete course-long research and negotiations exercise.
7. Complete a take home final.

Reading Assignments

Each week includes assigned readings relevant to the topics covered. You can access all of the assigned readings via bCourses and they are listed week by week at the end of this syllabus.

Lectures and Discussion Sections

Each week you’ll find lectures that provide important information and insights on the week’s topics. You are required to engage with all lecture materials and will be responsible for addressing the concepts in your course assignments.

Also, you will be expected to attend one or two discussion sections, moderated by your GSI which will review the week’s material and work on the climate negotiations assignment.

Assignments

1. Climate Negotiations Assignment: 40% of final grade (individual assignment 10%; joint assignments 10%; Exercise participation 15%; Debrief 5%)

You will be assigned to represent a country, whose positions on global environmental issues and negotiations – most specifically on climate change – you will be researching all semester. This exercise culminates in three in-class sessions of mock climate change negotiations, where you will represent your country’s positions and “negotiate” on its behalf. This exercise is part individual and part group work. We will assign somewhere between 2-6 people per country.
(based on country size and political clout), all your group members will be in the same discussion section. While some assignments are individual, others will be per group, and you are expected to draft your final negotiating position as a group. We expect you to undertake independent research on your country, and will be providing resources and starting points. Group allocations and assignments will be discussed in Week 1.

**Specific Assignments:**

a. Informational assignment: basics of politics; environmental and climate challenges – one per person, b. National climate politics and position in negotiations – one per group; c. Negotiating position memo – one per group; d. Opening Statement – one per group; e. Interactive exercise: In-class negotiating simulations in Week 6; Debrief assignment due end of Week 6.

**2. Mini-Case Studies: 20% of grade.**

There will be 4 short question assignments that will test your comprehension of topics in the course. More details in the course outline, below.

**Exams**

There will be one take-home final exam, consisting of short answer questions and a short essay.

**Grading and Course Policies**

**Your final course grade will be calculated as follows:**

**Table 1: Final Grade Percentages**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage of Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussion participation (sections and open office hours)</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Assignments (4 at 5% each)</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate Negotiations Exercise</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Percentage of Grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take Home Final</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 2: Grading Scheme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>98 to 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>91 to 97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>81 to 90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>71 to 80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>61 to 70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>51 to 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60 to 69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>59 points or fewer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Late Work Policy

You are expected to submit all assignments on time. If circumstances arise that prevent you from submitting an assignment on time or attending a mandatory class session, you must contact either your GSI or myself by email at the latest by 8 am PT on the day the assignment is due to explain your situation, and tell us when you expect to have the assignment completed. Otherwise, except under highly extenuating circumstances, you will have points deducted from your assignment. Accommodations for students with disabilities will be made in accordance with DSP policies.

### Course Policies

#### Collaboration and Independence

Reviewing lecture and reading materials and studying for exams can be enjoyable and enriching things to do with fellow students. This is recommended. However, all assignments are to be completed independently and should be the result of one’s own independent work.
Academic Integrity and Ethics

**Cheating:** Anyone caught cheating on a quiz or the Final Exam will receive a failing grade in the course and will also be reported to the University Center for Student Conduct.

**Plagiarism:** To copy text or ideas from another source without appropriate reference is plagiarism and will result in a failing grade for your assignment and usually further disciplinary action. For additional information on plagiarism and how to avoid it, read the UC Berkeley Library Citation Page, Plagiarism Section.

**Honor Code:** The student community at UC Berkeley has adopted the following Honor Code: "As a member of the UC Berkeley community, I act with honesty, integrity, and respect for others." The expectation is that you will adhere to this code. Read the entire Berkeley Honor Code for more information.

Incomplete Course Grade

Students who have substantially completed the course but for serious extenuating circumstances, are unable to complete all assignments may request an Incomplete grade. This request must be submitted in writing to the instructor. You must provide verifiable documentation for the seriousness of the extenuating circumstances.

According to university policy, the course work completion date is:

- **Fall Semester:** 30 days prior to the first day of instruction of the following fall semester or the instructor provided deadline, whichever is earlier
- **Spring Semester and Summer Sessions:** 30 days prior to the first day of instruction of the following spring semester or the instructor provided deadline, whichever is earlier.

Refer to the Office of the Registrar's website for more information on the university's policy on Incomplete Grades.

Students with Disabilities

If you require course accommodations due to a physical, emotional, or learning disability, contact UC Berkeley's Disabled Students' Program (DSP). Notify the instructor and GSI through course email of the accommodations you would like to use. You must have a Letter of
Accommodation on file with UC Berkeley to have accommodations made in the course.

UC Berkeley is committed to providing robust educational experiences for all learners. With this goal in mind, we have activated the ALLY tool for this course. You will now be able to download content in a format that best fits your learning preference. PDF, HTML, EPUB, and MP3 are now available for most content items. For more information visit the alternative formats link or watch the video entitled, "Ally First Steps Guide."

End of Course Evaluation

Before your course ends, please take a few minutes to participate in the course evaluation to share your opinions about the course. Information about the course evaluation will be made available in bCourses.

Course Outline

Below is a weekly course schedule.* All readings, lectures, and assignments are provided in the week assigned in bCourses. Check bCourses for specific assignment due dates.

Week 1: Global Environmental Problems, Actors and Governance

Cross Cutting Theme: Nation States and Global Environmental Governance

Reading

1. Textbook, Chapters 1 and 2 ("The Emergence of Global Environmental Politics," "Actors in the Environmental Arena")

Lectures

1. Introduction to the Course
2. Global Environmental Problems
3. Global Environmental Governance
4. International Environmental Law
5. Countries and their Roles
6. The Global South
7. Cases and Preview of the Course Structure

Assignments

- **Mini-Case Study 1**: the UN Environment Program
- **Climate Exercise**: Country Allocation to be made by Professor and GSIs

**Week 2: Governing the Atmosphere – Ozone Layer Depletion and Climate Change**

**Cross-Cutting Theme**: Science and Knowledge

**Reading**

1. Textbook, Chapter 3, pp. 87-top of 117 ("The Development of Environmental Regimes, Sections on Ozone Layer Depletion and Climate Change)
5. Tina Birmpili, “The Kigali Amendment: The New Year’s Resolution We Must Not Break” Guest Commentary for the International Institute of Sustainable Development SDG Blog (on-line)

**Lectures**

- Lecture 1: The Atmosphere and Global Environmental Governance
- Lecture 2: Ozone Layer Depletion – Early Science and Politics
- Lecture 3: Ozone Layer Depletion – 1990 to the Present
● Lecture 4: Climate Change as Global Problem
● Lecture 5: Climate Governance from Rio to Paris
● Lecture 6: Climate Governance, Paris and Beyond
● Lecture 7: Science and Politics

Assignments

● **Mini-case-study 2:** Climate geoengineering (guest lecture), short questions/discussion points
● **Climate Negotiations:** Short Assignment 1 – Your Country’s Politics

**Week 3: Governing Terrestrial Biodiversity, the Oceans and the Polar Regions**

**Cross-cutting theme:** Activism

**Readings**

1. Textbook: Chapter 4 (The Development of Environmental Regimes: Natural Resources, Species and Habitats)
2. How Maritime Law Works at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N7CvEt51fz4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N7CvEt51fz4)
3. Dan Morgan, “200 years of exploring Antarctica – the world’s coldest, most forbidding and most peaceful continent” The Conversation, (January 24, 2020)

**Lectures**

- Lecture 1: Overview of Biodiversity and Natural Resources and Global Environmental Governance
- Lecture 2: The Convention on Biological Diversity
- Lecture 3: Global Governance of Wildlife Trade and Migration
- Lecture 4: The Oceans and the Law of the Sea
- Lecture 5: The Arctic, Antarctica and Global Governance

**Assignments**

- **Climate Negotiations Exercise:** Short Assignment 2 – National Climate Vulnerabilities and policies
**Week 4: Governing Waste, Plastics and Chemicals**

**Cross-cutting theme:** The Corporate Sector

**Readings**

1. Textbook: Chapter 3, pp. 117-152 (“The Development of Environmental Regimes,” sections on hazardous wastes, toxic chemicals, and mercury
2. Text of the Basel Convention and its Amendments

**Lectures**

- Lecture 1: Wastes, Plastics and Chemicals as global environmental problems
- Lecture 2: The Global Political Economy of Waste
- Lecture 3: Efforts to control toxic chemicals
- Lecture 4: The Basel Convention: Reading a Treaty
- Lecture 5: What to do about plastics?

**Assignment**

- **Mini case-study assignment 3:** Reading the Basel Convention on Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Waste and their Disposal
- **Climate Negotiations Assignment:** Negotiations Memo

**Week 5 The Global Environment and the Global Economy**

**Cross-cutting theme:** Impacts and effectiveness of global environmental governance

**Readings**

1. Textbook: Chapters 5 and 6 (“Effective Environmental Regimes” and “Environmental Politics and Sustainable Development”)

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Lectures
- Lecture 1: Globalization and the Environment
- Lecture 2: The World Bank and the World Trade Association
- Lecture 3: The impacts and effectiveness of global environmental governance
- Lecture 4: The Sustainable Development Goals

Assignments
- **Mini Case-study 4:** Environment and security/conflict (guest lecture)
- **Climate Negotiations Assignment:** Opening Statement

Week 6: Conclusions, and the Future

Cross cutting theme: Sustainable transitions in the post-COVID era

Readings
1. Textbook: Chapter 7 ("The Future of Global Environmental Politics")
3. Linn Biorklund Belliveau, “From COVID-19 to the climate emergency: Lessons from this global crisis for the next one” The Conversation October 5, 2020

Lectures
- Lecture 1: Just and Sustainable Transitions in a Warming World
- Lecture 2: Challenges and Opportunities in 2021
- Lecture 3: Course Takeaways and Conclusions
Assignments

- **Climate Negotiations Assignment:** In-section live negotiations plus debrief

*Subject to Change*