Professor: Dr. Annette LaRocco Office: Social Science Building, Room 391A

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Course Description

Environmental problems are not fringe, but rather sit at the forefront of the political arena. This course examines the philosophical underpinnings, legal frameworks, and policy fora of prominent environmental issues including energy, climate change, biodiversity, food security, natural resources use, pollution, and environmental rights and justice. The goal of this course is to provide an overview of the key concepts, actors, debates, and issues in environmental politics, exploring the richness and complexity of both the problems and the potential solutions. It will address and account for the myriad global institutions and international actors as well as national regulatory legislation and local movements for environmental advocacy, justice, and sustainability. It examines the ways in which international and national environmental priorities are set, the institutions which are empowered (or disempowered), and the fora through which both normative and substantive change are produced, negotiated, or resisted. To do this we need to understand the universe of issues as well as the actors who participate in global, national, and local environmental politics, and what they do. This course analyzes structures, agents, and processes affecting environmental politics at the local, national and international level. We will consider multilateral governance approaches, which largely rely on the authority of nation-states, as well as alternative arrangements that increasingly are initiated and led by non-state actors such as NGOs, corporations, local governments, and communities.

Course Objectives

* To provide an introductory overview of the major themes in environmental politics at both the domestic and international levels.
* To present opportunities for the connection of theoretical and conceptual academic arguments to case-study analysis.
* To promote multi-disciplinary approaches to the study of environmental politics, especially by connecting political science to geography and environmental science.
* To understand and analyze different types of legal, market, and informal policy mechanisms for addressing environmental problems.

Required Reading

There are **three** required texts for this course. Both hardcopy or ebook versions are acceptable:

Neil Carter. *The Politics of the Environment: Ideas, Activism, Policy, Second Edition.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007. \*\*The full text of this book is available online here\*\* <http://137.224.11.174/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/ENR20306Milieueconomie-boek-2-Politics-Of-Environment.pdf>

Carl Death (editor). *Critical Environmental Politics*. New York: Routledge, 2014.

Paul Robbins. *Political Ecology, Second Edition*. New York: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012.

As you read course materials you may want to consider the following:

* What are the central themes/arguments/points being made in the readings?
* What evidence or methods have the authors used to support their arguments?
* How does the material relate to other readings examine in the course?
* What is the author’s positionality and how might it impact the argument?

It is essential that assigned readings are completed **before** class. If it becomes apparent that students are not coming prepared and/or class discussion is inadequate, I will require students to turn in reading responses each week and/or administer pop quizzes.

Course Requirements

*Participation*

This course consists of a combination of lecture, class discussion, and small group activities. As such, your attendance and engaged participation is vital. Arriving late and leaving early is not acceptable, doing so will be noted and reflected in your participation grade

Students are required to actively participate in the class; you will have the opportunity to do so both during and outside of classroom hours via office hours. The most important aspect of class participation is demonstrating respect for your fellow classmates and professor. We will be discussing some controversial issues in class, and I expect that you will conduct yourself in a civil, respectful, and conscientious manner.

Simply  sitting in the class sessions will not earn you full marks on participation; coming to class with questions and comments will. Unexcused absences will result in a grade of “zero” (0) for that class (see full attendance policy below). Other factors to be taken into consideration in evaluating the quality of your participation include preparation for class, being attentive during class discussions, and raising thoughtful comments and questions. Productive participation can take many forms including:

* initiating a topic or question
* providing examples/empirical evidence to clarify a point
* trying to synthesize or summarize a part of the discussion
* seeking clarification when one is unsure
* adding to and amending what other students have said
* respectfully offering positive and negative reactions to others’ points
* seeking the positions (or clarification of positions) from other students
* attending office hours with substantive questions

*Assignments*

* Issue Brief

Each student is required to write a briefing memo about a local, national, or global environmental issue of your choosing. More specific information will follow on the assignment sheet, but here are general guidelines as to what the briefing memo should include:

* Background and history of the issue
* Countries/States/Localities involved
* Interest groups, businesses, industries involved
* Important figures like scientific experts, notable legislators
* International organizations or national regulatory bodies involved
* Regulatory regimes and/or legislation established or in process
* Your analysis and predictions

Your issue brief should be a maximum of 1,500 words in length (not including the bibliography). Citations using the APA method along with a full bibliography are required.

* Legislation Brief

Each student is required to write a briefing memo about a national or international environmental law or treaty of your choosing. More specific information will follow on the assignment sheet, but the options from which you will choose your piece of legislation are below:

US Legislation

* Clean Air Act
* National Environmental Policy Act
* Clean Water Act
* Endangered Species Act

International Treaties

* Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)
* Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
* United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)
* International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling

Your legislation brief should be a maximum of 1,500 words in length (not including the bibliography). Citations using the APA method along with a full bibliography are required.

* Environmental News Briefing

Each student will give a 5-minute in-class oral presentation about a piece of contemporary environmental news. You will be expected to present a journalistic article about an environmental current event and provide context in order to situate the issue within the larger themes of the course.

* Documentary Film Response

As a class we will watch one environment-related documentary. You will be asked to write a 750 word response to the film evaluating both your assessment of the documentary (like a film review) as well as connect it to concepts and ideas presented in the course. This will be assessed as part of your participation grade.

*Examinations*

The course is divided into three broad sections, with an exam accompanying each section. The exams will test knowledge of themes discussed in course readings as well as information covered during class sessions and discussions. Class lectures and discussion will often cover material that is not covered in the texts alone, so receiving a good grade in this course requires that you attend class *and* do the readings. You will be expected to bring a blue book, which can be purchased at the campus bookstore, on the day of examination.

* Midterm Exams (Midterm I and Midterm II)

These examinations are based on the required readings, lecture materials, and class discussions. They will consist of a combination of multiple-choice, short-answer questions, and identifications.

* Final Exam

This examination will take place from **XX to XX on Date**. It will consist of short answer, identifications, and an essay question. The short answer and identifications will be focused on the final third of the course. The essay will be broadly cumulative.

Course Evaluation

Final grades will be calculated based on the following weighted average of each course requirement:

Environmental News Brief – 5%

Participation – 5% (includes documentary film response)

Issue Brief – 15%

Legislation Brief – 15%

Midterm I – 15%

Midterm II – 20%

Final – 25%

Grading Scale

Students will be evaluated on the following grade scale:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A 94-100  A- 90-93 | B+ 87-89  B 83-86  B- 80-82 | C+ 77-79  C 73-76  C- 70-72 | D+ 67-69  D 63-66  D- 60-62 | F below 60 |

Course Rules and Regulations

*Classroom etiquette*

Being a respectful classmate means limiting the potential distractions that may disturb your colleagues’ learning processes. In light of this, if you wish to use a laptop for note-taking purposes you must sit in the back row of the classroom. Once these seats are filled you, no other students will be permitted to use laptops on that day. Laptop use outside of the last row of seats will be reflected negatively in your participation grade. Similarly, cell phones and other electronic devices are prohibited during class time. They should be kept in your pocket or bag, and earbuds must be removed.

*Attendance and missed classes policies*

Attendance is required for this course. I will have attendance sign-in sheet for every class. Please make every effort to be seated promptly at the start of class so as not to disrupt your classmates, and frequent late arrivals/early departures will be reflected in your participation grade. Unexcused absences will negatively impact your participation grade. However, making the effort to attend office hours after an absence will be reflected in your participation grade, though office hours *are not* a substitute for regular, good attendance. An unexcused absence on an exam day will result in a failing grade for that exam.

Students are expected to attend all of their scheduled University classes and to satisfy all academic objectives as outlined by the instructor. The effect of absences upon grades is determined by the instructor, and the University reserves the right to deal at any time with individual cases of non-attendance. Students are responsible for arranging to make up work missed because of legitimate class absence, such as illness, family emergencies, military obligation, religious observation, court-imposed legal obligations or participation in University approved activities. Examples of University-approved reasons for absences include participating on an athletic or scholastic team, musical and theatrical performances and debate activities. It is the student’s responsibility to give the instructor notice prior to any anticipated absences and within a reasonable amount of time after an unanticipated absence, ordinarily by the next scheduled class meeting. Instructors must allow each student who is absent for a University-approved reason the opportunity to make up work missed without any reduction in the student’s final course grade as a direct result of such absence.

*Make-up work*

Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the dates specified in this syllabus or on the assignment sheet. Late work will receive a full letter grade deduction for every 24 hours it is late. I will not accept work submitted 72 hours after the original deadline. If you are unable to complete an assignment on time due to illness or personal emergency, you can request an extension with the supporting documents such as a medical note from a doctor. I reserve the right to grant or deny an extension.

*Honor Code Violations*

Good academic work requires citation of sources and the ability to put one’s own thoughts into context. Citations are required for ideas as well as facts, and are necessary even if you are paraphrasing from academic research. The APA style of citation is compulsory and must be used for all materials incorporated into you work. When in doubt, cite. **If you are unclear about the rules for academic citation please see me during office hours.**

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this course and any instances will be dealt with in full accordance with University policy. Students at Florida Atlantic University are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards. Academic dishonesty is considered a serious breach of these ethical standards, because it interferes with the university mission to provide a high quality education in which no student enjoys an unfair advantage over any other. Academic dishonesty is also destructive of the university community, which is grounded in a system of mutual trust and places high value on personal integrity and individual responsibility. Harsh penalties are associated with academic dishonesty. For more information, see <http://wise.fau.edu/regulations/chapter4/Reg_4.001_5-26-10_FINAL.pdf>

*CAPS*

Life as a university student can be challenging physically, mentally and emotionally. Students who find stress negatively affecting their ability to achieve academic or personal goals may wish to consider utilizing FAU’s Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) Center. CAPS provides FAU students a range of services -- individual counseling, support meetings, and psychiatric services, to name a few -- offered to help improve and maintain emotional well-being. For locations and appointments, go to <http://www.fau.edu/counseling/>

*Disability policy*

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA), students who require reasonable accommodations due to a disability to properly execute coursework must register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS)—in Boca Raton, SU 133 [(561-297-3880](tel:%28561-297-3880)); in Davie, LA 131 [(954-236-1222](tel:%28954-236-1222)); or in Jupiter, SR 110 [(561-799-8585](tel:%28561-799-8585)) —and follow all SAS procedures. If you require a special accommodation, please make an appointment to discuss this with me at the beginning of the semester.

*Email Etiquette*

I will always do my best to answer your questions in a timely manner (usually within 48 hours), but please keep the following in mind:

* You must use your FAU email and include the course name in the subject line.
* Follow basic norms of professionalism (don’t start an email with ‘hey’), if you have questions about what is appropriate this is a helpful resource <http://www.wikihow.com/Email-a-Professor>.
* Check the syllabus and/or Canvas before sending questions on class logistics. I will not answer emails about information that can be found in the syllabus.
* Do not expect instant replies (especially in the evening) or replies over the weekend.
* Email is great for clarification and for setting up appointments. More substantive questions about course material are best handled face-to-face. I encourage you to come see me during office hours.
* I will not discuss grades over email.
* If you need to submit an assignment via email this must be done as a Word document or PDF. I will not open shared documents from DropBox or Google Drive.

**Course Schedule – Readings, Assignments and Examinations**

Class 1 – Course Overview and Logistics

*SECTION I: POLITICAL ECOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PHILOSOPHY*

Class 2 – *Introduction: Where to start?*

**Readings**

Carter, *Introduction*

Death, *Critical, environmental, political: an introduction*

Robbins, *Introduction*

Class 3 – *Political Ecology: A Frame*

**Readings**

Robbins, *Political versus Apolitical Ecologies*

Robbins, *A Tree with Deep Roots*

Rudy and White, *Hybridity*

Class 4 – *Political Ecology: A Frame*

**Readings**

Robbins, *The Critical Tools*

Robbins, *Political Ecology Emerges*

Class 5 – *Political Ecology: A Frame*

**Readings**

Robbins, *Challenges in Ecology*

Robbins, *Challenges in Social Construction*

Robbins, *Challenges in Explanation*

**ISSUE BRIEF FIRST DRAFT DUE**

Class 6 – *Political Ecology: A Frame*

**Readings**

Robbins, *Degradation and Marginalization*

Robbins, *Conservation and Control*

Class 7 – *Political Ecology: A Frame*

**Readings**

Robbins, *Environmental Conflict*

Robbins, *Environmental Subjects and Identities*

Robbins, *Political Objects and Actors*

Class 8 – *Themes in Environmental Political Thought*

**Readings**

Carter, *Environmental philosophy*

Carter, *Green political thought*

Class 9 – *Themes in Environmental Political Thought*

**Readings**

McShane, *Ecocentrism*

Hobden, *Posthumanism*

Cudworth, *Feminism*

**ISSUE BRIEF DUE**

Class 10 – *Themes in Environmental Political Thought*

**Readings**

Hinton, *Citizenship*

Kütting, *Limits*

Bond, *Justice*

Class 11

**MIDTERM I**

*SECTION II: ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS AND POLICY*

Class 12

**DOCUMENTARY FILM SCREENING**

Class 13 – *Environmental Governance*

**Readings**

Carter, *Green parties: the rise of a new politics?*

Carter, *Party politics and the environment*

Class 14 – *Environmental Governance*

**Readings**

Baker, *Governance*

Kuehls, *States*

Class 15 – *Modes of Environmental Control and Policymaking*

**Readings**

Carter, *Environmental groups*

Litfin, *Localism*

Price, Saunders, Olcese, *Movements*

Class 16 – *Modes of Environmental Control and Policymaking*

**Readings**

Grove, *Biopolitics*

Lövbrand and Stripple, *Governmentality*

**DOCUMENTARY FILM REVIEW DUE**

Class 17 – *Modes of Environmental Control and Policymaking*

**Readings**

Carter, *The environment as a policy problem*

Class 18 – *Modes of Environmental Control and Policymaking*

**Readings**

Carter, *Sustainable development and ecological modernisation*

Whitehead, *Sustainability*

Class 19 – *Modes of Environmental Control and Policymaking*

**Readings**

Brooks and Bryant, *Consumption*

Luke, *Technology*

**LEGISLATION BRIEF FIRST DRAFT DUE**

Class 20 – *Modes of Environmental Control and Policymaking*

**Readings**

Wapner, *Sacrifice*

Methmann and Oels, *Vulnerability*

Class 21

**MIDTERM II**

*SECTION III: ENVIRONMENTAL PROCESSES ON GLOBAL AND NATIONAL SCALES*

Class 22 – *Global Environmental Politics*

**Readings**

Carter, *Global environmental politics*

Death, *Summits*

Class 23 – *Global Environmental Politics*

**Readings**

Okereke and Charlesworth, *Climate Change*

Class 24 – *Global Environmental Politics*

**Readings**

Carter, *Globalisation, trade and the environment*

Paterson, *Commodification*

**LEGISLATION BRIEF DUE**

Class 25 – *Global Environmental Politics*

**Readings**

Büscher, *Biodiversity*

Igoe, *Conservation*

Class 26 – *Global Environmental Politics*

**Readings**

Watts and Peluso, *Resource Violence*

Dalby, *Security*

Class 27 – *Future Directions in Domestic Politics*

**Readings**

Carter, *Greening government*

Class 28 – *Future Directions in Domestic Politics*

**Readings**

Carter, *Policy instruments and implementation*

DATE TBA

**FINAL EXAM Time XX to Time XX**

**Summary of Assignments and Examination Outline**

Class 5: Issue Brief first draft

Class 9: Issue Brief due

Class 11: Midterm I

Class 12: Documentary screening

Class 16: Documentary review due

Class 19: Legislation Brief first draft

Class 21: Midterm II

Class 24: Legislation Brief due

TBA: Final Exam

*The date for the Environmental news brief presentation will be individually assigned.*