



LUND
UNIVERSITY

Faculty of Social Sciences

COURSE SYLLABUS

1 July 2020

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SAGM001, Global Environmental Governance Today – Actors, Institutions, Complexity, 3 credits, third cycle

Online Course

The syllabus was adopted and approved by the Board of the Department of Political Science, Lund University. The syllabus is valid from the fall semester 2020.

1. Type of Course & General Information

The course is an interdisciplinary third-cycle course offered by the Department of Political Science and financed by the two-year graduate research school ClimBEco – Climate Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services in a changing world.

Language of instruction is English.

The entire course takes place online.

2. Learning Outcomes

Participants will be able to accomplish the following objectives by the end of the course:

1. Identify and compare different understandings of environment, governance and sustainable development.
2. Describe and critically analyse the development of the UN environmental architecture.
3. Compare governance architectures for different environmental problems like climate change and biodiversity.
4. Distinguish different political dimensions (actors, institutions, interlinkages) and their relevance for the success or failure of global environmental politics.
5. Apply major theories of political science to identify and examine social barriers of global environmental governance.
6. Identify limits of and realistic options for political reform.

Achieving these objectives will be of particular benefit for students with career goals that include serving as a practitioner in environmental politics or providing policy advice and consultancy.

3. Course Content

In September 2015, the United Nations General Assembly adopted 2030 Development Agenda. One essential component of this agenda are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals with their associated 169 targets. Less than three months later, at the UN climate conference in Paris in 2015, countries around the world subscribed to staying below an average warming of 2°C and submitted targets to reduce their carbon footprint.

How effective will these and other ambitious targets of the international community be, and how will regular changes in government, in the US and elsewhere, influence the long-term probability of meeting them? Are economic growth, political interest and human development compatible with environmental conservation? And is scientific knowledge about the state of the environment enough to mobilize a change in behavior?

The course frames this dilemma of global environmental governance as a problem of human interaction. It starts from the premise that, in addition to natural and physical barriers, there are severe social and political barriers that often stand in the way of an effective management of transboundary environmental threats. In other words: political processes and actors are not only the target of scientific advice (science for politics), but part of the problem – and hence objects of examination (science of politics), e.g. due to underlying constellations of power and interests or behavioural norms.

Based on concepts and theories of political science, the course seeks to provide Ph.D. students from different disciplines with an understanding of the current state of global environmental governance, its underlying causes and possible response options. The main modules of the course are:

- Module 1: introducing the state of play in global environmental governance today (icebreaker; key concepts; development of the United Nations system from early 1970s until today; reform discussions);
- Module 2: core dimensions of global environmental governance (actors; institutions; overlaps with other policy fields like security, trade, health, development);
- Module 3: explaining and understanding (rationalist and constructivist theories; quantitative and qualitative methods; and their application).

Each of the modules above will conclude with an intensive simulation or group work session where students apply some of the presented concepts, theories and empirical information. Moreover, students will, after the end of

the course, write short final papers in which they apply selected political theories to help them explain governance developments in their own field of Ph.D. research.

4. Teaching and Assessment

The course will consist of 15 sessions that will all take place in one week, including three interactive seminars where students engage in group work and simulations.

The course is particularly designed to be accessible for students from very different backgrounds, including different natural science disciplines. Therefore, the introduction of key political concepts and international relations theories will include some elementary aspects. Students with a more advanced theoretical background in political science will nonetheless benefit from the application of these concepts and theories in a series of simulations and interactive sessions.

We also ask all participants to block sufficient time in the week before the course begins so that they can prepare the reading material. (Further instructions will be sent around to registered students in due time).

Evaluation will take place on the basis of participation and a short final paper of 1,500 words to be submitted about 3-4 weeks after the end of the course. In the paper, participants will apply the discussed theories and concepts to their own field of research or to an equivalent issue of their choice.

Re-examination is offered after the conclusion of the course. If necessary, a second opportunity for re-examination will be arranged at a later date.

5. Grades

The grades awarded are Pass or Fail. To be awarded a Pass the student must fulfill the learning outcomes specified and also demonstrate an independent, reflective and critical approach to the research field and to the theories presented in the course.

6. Admission Requirements

The course is open to Ph.D. students from all disciplinary backgrounds. The number of participants is limited however; in case of too many applications, priority will be given to students of the ClimBEco graduate research school, the Bolin Centre for Climate Research of Stockholm University, and Ph.D. students of the department of political science at Lund University.

If you are interested in joining, please send an email to nils.droste@svet.lu.se and fariborz.zelli@svet.lu.se by 30th August at the very latest. The e-mail should contain

- Your affiliation and contact details;
- A short motivation statement (ca. 300 words);
- If you are based in Sweden, please also indicate whether you are affiliated with the ClimBEco graduate school (Lund / Gothenburg) or the Bolin Centre (Stockholm).

Before applying (by e-mail to nils.droste@svet.lu.se and fariborz.zelli@svet.lu.se by 30th August), please liaise with your supervisor on the acceptance of course credits in your programme or university. After sending us an application e-mail, we will respond within two weeks.

7. Literature

Recommended readings for preparation:

Axelrod, Regina S., and Stacy D. VanDeveer (eds.), 2019/20. *The Global Environment: Institutions, Law, and Policy*. 5th ed., Thousand Oaks, CA: CQ Press. Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 10, 12. 193 pp.

Baylis, John, Steve Smith and Patricia Owens, 2016. *The Globalization of World Politics: an introduction to international relations*. 7th ed., Oxford: Oxford University Press. Chapters 6, 7, 9 & 10. 51 pp.

O'Neill, Kate, 2017. *The Environment and International Relations*. 2nd ed., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 264 pp.

Stevenson, Hayley. 2018. *Global Environmental Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 366 pp.

Further readings:

Betsill, Michele, Kathryn Hochstetler and Dimitris Stevis (eds.), 2014. *Advances in International Environmental Politics*. 2nd ed., London: Palgrave Macmillan. 424 pp.

Chasek, Pamela S., David L. Downie, and Janet Welsh Brown, 2016. *Global Environmental Politics*. 7th ed., Boulder, CO: Westview Press. 482pp.

Morin, Jean-Frederic, Amandine Orsini, and Sikina Jinnah, 2020. *Global Environmental Politics. Understanding the Governance of the Earth*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press. 400 pp.

Nicholson, Simon, and Paul Wapner, 2014. *Global Environmental Politics. From Person to Planet*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers. 384 pp.