CIEE Global Institute – Buenos Aires

Course name: Global Environmental Policy
Course number: (GI) ENVI 3004 BAAR
Programs offering course: Buenos Aires Open Campus
Open Campus Track: Sustainability and Environmental Sciences
Language of instruction: English
U.S. semester credits: 3
Contact hours: 45
Term: Fall 2018

Course Description

This course explores international environmental politics at local, regional and global levels. It poses questions of global environmental changes -including climate change- and it relation with economic, political, and social processes. The course uses a broad interdisciplinary approach to reach a deep understanding of central issues of global environmental politics and it challenge and solutions to global environmental changes. The main goal of the course is to provide students with a sophisticated understanding of global environmental issues and effective policies to deal with them. Students will reach the tools to evaluate the international political order, international environmental law, human-environment interactions in the context of market and politics, political and societal challenges of sustainability, and dynamics of human values and rules.

Learning Objectives

The learning objectives for this course will be:

- Deeply understand international environmental politics at local, regional and global scales
- Evaluate the strengths and limitations of international law in dealing with environmental issues
- Deeply understand gains and constraints of former international environmental agreements, including the Paris agreement
● Build up from local to global governance and how policy tracks these changes in scale
● Examine ways of countering harmful policies, like harmful environmental subsidies
● Identify and analyze the role culture plays in environmental policy
● Incorporate issues like government corruption, environmental and related human rights issues when formulating international treaties
● Apply a understanding of human behavior and drivers of environmental degradation to future policy

Course Prerequisites

None

Methods of Instruction

The course will be highly interactive between the instructor and the students. Students are expected to do the required readings before class so they can present and discuss the class material among themselves and the instructor. PowerPoint presentations will be used by the instructor to introduce the material required and enhanced by the reading material given to students before class so they have time to read, digest and prepare questions, and interact intelligently in class. Additional, non-required but recommended readings and online sources will be given to the students for further independent research and information pending their individual interests. These links are meant to provide additional material relevant to the texts to be read each week (see “Weekly Schedule” below).

Assessment and Final Grade

Students will be assessed according to the following criteria:

● Defining International Environmental Policies Essay 20%


Course Requirements

(1) Defining International Environmental Politics (20%): Each student is required to collect qualitative and quantitative data that illustrate her or his personal relationship to international environmental politics and the nature. All items that are used by student should be entered into data sheet. This data collection effort is worth 5% of total grade for this assignment. After collecting data, students will select three items they are interested in analyzing to show (1) how they illustrate the student’s personal relationship to international environmental politics and policy making processes and (2) how their livelihoods link to nature. Each student is required to write an essay between 3-4 single spaced pages that explains why these three items are selected and how they illustrate a personal relationship to the nature and international environmental politics and policy.

(2) Country Position Paper on the Future of Climate Change Treaty (25%): This is a policy paper to assess and compare the international policy positions of Argentina, the U.S. and China. Students will: (1) identify the policy of selected country on the Kyoto Protocol, Copenhagen and the Paris Agreement; (2) analyze the country’s current standing in terms of ratification and implementation of Kyoto Protocol, (3) provide critical assessment of the country’s policy on environment, including Paris Agreement and ongoing negotiations; and (4) analyze and project what the selected country’s future position on climate change might be. This assignment is for students to analyze and understand which countries’ issues and interests dominate ongoing diplomatic efforts. Students will find Dessler and Parson’s The Science and Politics of Global Climate Change: A Guide to the Debate as a reference to write this paper.

(3) Group Project Paper (25%): Based on the individual essays on definition of international environmental politics and data collected for the assignment, a group of four students will select an item and conduct analysis of commodity chain processes. Each group will select one item or product that the group is interested in researching further. There are four components to the assignment. The first step is to map out the material processes defined by history, geography, and the movements of these items
from the state of nature to a finished product you buy from a local store. Each group will first identify and describe each nodes of the commodity chain of the item from raw material extraction node to waste site of the item. The second step is to discuss economic processes that govern production and supply chain of the item. The third step is to identify political and legal institutions that govern both material and economic processes. Finally, the paper will analyze: (1) how commodity chain analysis challenges the local and regional approaches to international environmental politics; (2) what nodes within the chain have most complex networks of economic, political, and environmental consequences; and (3) what type of policy and institutional arrangements your group recommend to minimize negative environmental consequences.

(4) Group Presentations (10%): Each group will present the research findings of the commodity chain of the group item. The groups are required to submit presentations. Based on your group presentation and an edit your final draft of the group paper, you will submit a final manuscript for the group project.

Participation

Participation is valued as meaningful contribution in the digital and tangible classroom, utilizing the resources and materials presented to students as part of the course. Meaningful contribution requires students to be prepared in advance of each class session and to have regular attendance. Students must clearly demonstrate they have engaged with the materials as directed, for example, through classroom discussions, online discussion boards, peer-to-peer feedback (after presentations), interaction with guest speakers, and attentiveness on co-curricular and outside-of-classroom activities. Late arrivals and early departures disrupt the flow of class and are unacceptable. Completion (on time and in the proper form) of all the assignments required by the professor will be part of the final evaluation. Students are expected to discuss with their classmates and the instructor their experience as researchers and analysts. Class participation will be assessed through group discussion, debate and individual presentations.

Attendance Policy

Regular class attendance is required throughout the program, and all unexcused absences will result in a lower participation grade for any affected CIffE course. Due to
the intensive schedules for Open Campus and Short Term programs, unexcused absences that constitute more than 10% of the total course will result in a written warning.

Students who transfer from one CIEE class to another during the add/drop period will not be considered absent from the first session(s) of their new class, provided they were marked present for the first session(s) of their original class. Otherwise, the absence(s) from the original class carry over to the new class and count against the grade in that class.

For CIEE classes, excessively tardy (over 15 minutes late) students must be marked absent. Attendance policies also apply to any required co-curricular class excursion or event, as well as to Internship, Service Learning, or required field placement. Students who miss class for personal travel, including unforeseen delays that arise as a result of personal travel, will be marked as absent and unexcused. No make-up or re-sit opportunity will be provided.

Attendance policies also apply to any required class excursion, with the exception that some class excursions cannot accommodate any tardiness, and students risk being marked as absent if they fail to be present at the appointed time.

Unexcused absences will lead to the following penalties:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Total Course Hours Missed</th>
<th>Equivalent Number of Open Campus Semester classes</th>
<th>Minimum Penalty</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to 10%</td>
<td>1 content classes, or up to 2 language classes</td>
<td>Participation graded as per class requirements</td>
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</table>
10 – 20%  
2 content classes, or 3-4 language classes  
Participation graded as per class requirements; written warning

More than 20%  
3 content classes, or 5 language classes  
Automatic course failure, and possible expulsion

**Weekly Schedule**

NOTE: this schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor to take advantage of current experiential learning opportunities.

**Weekly 1**  
International Political Order
Class 1:1  Introduction – Politics, Policy and Environment

The course will be introduced and expectations will be discussed. The professor will introduce the main topics of the class and give a general overview of politics, policy and environment. The syllabus will be read and the requirements and assignments will be discussed. Parts of the required reading for the next class will be introduced.

Class 1:2  International Environmental Politics, Globalization and Climate Agreements

This module explores the relevant notions of international environmental politics. The professor will present the relation between globalization and environmental politics, and the impacts of the globalization in the environment. The status, fate and future of current climate agreements will be discuss during the class.

Readings:
Downie et al. (2014) Chapter 1 and 2.
Eccleston and March (2011) Chapter 1 and 2.

Week 2

Class 2:1  International environmental law

The module addresses successes and failures of international environmental law and its dynamics with the local level (local-global dynamic of the environmental law and policy). Students will rethink the international environmental law possibilities.

Readings:
Eccleston and March (2011) Chapter 4 and 5
Class 2:2

Downie et al. (2014) Chapter 3

Local environmental rights

This module describes the local environmental rights, law and policies.

Guest speaker: An expert on local environmental policies will present local environmental rights and policies through a local study case, discussing it dynamics with international environmental laws.

Reading:
TBC

❖ Written Assignment 1 due: Defining International Environmental Politics

Week 3

Class 3:1

Human - environment interactions with market and politics.

The module explores the global environmental change and social change. The students will explore community-based global conservation, local politics of global sustainability. Students will analyze the commodity chains supersede local and regional environmental policy.

Reading:
Eccleston and March (2011) Chapter 3 and 9
Downie et al. (2014) Chapter 4 and 6

Class 3:2

Market and commodity chains

The module go in deep in commodity chains. By visiting a local company,
students will observe and understand the commodity chains system and it environmental consequences.

Site visit:
Local company TBC

Reading:
TBC

Week 4

Class 4:1  Who Participates in Global Environmental Governance?

Students will analyze the concepts of Global Environmental Governance and its stakeholders.

Guest lecture: A member of the local civil society will present the concept of environmental governance sharing his/her experience in the C20 (engagement group of international civil society organizations) in the context of G20 Argentina 2018 (Group of Twenty is the forum for the world’s vital economies to collectively assess and address the most pressing issues and global shape policy).

Reading:
Eccleston and March (2011) Chapter 6
https://g20.argentina.gob.ar/en/overview-argentinas-g20-presidency-2018

❖ Written Assignment 2 due: Country position paper

Class 4:2  Political and Societal Challenges to Sustainability I

The professor will lecture about international agreements and environmental challenges. The class will analyze the policy limits to dealing with global environmental problems exploring study cases.
Reading:
Eccleston and March (2011) Chapter 7
Downie et al. (2014) Chapter 5
Fischer et al. (2012)

Week 5

Class 5:1  Political and Societal Challenges to Sustainability II

An invited researcher will go in deep in the international agreements limits to deal with the local environmental problems, and the local policies limits to deal with global environmental problems.

Reading: TBC

❖ Written Assignment 3 due: Group Project Paper on Commodities, Supply Chains and Environmental Policy

Class 5:2  Dynamics of Human Values and Rules

By examining the human values, culture and its relations with the environment, this module analyze the possibilities and limits that the values and culture represents for policy solutions to environmental issues. Through a dynamic playrole student will explore the relation between culture and environmental issues and policies.

Reading:
Eccleston and March (2011) Chapter 8, 10, 14

Week 6

Class 6:1  Group Presentations

Students will present to the rest of the class, their group project on commodities, supply chains and environmental policy.

❖ Written Assignment 4 due: Group presentations
Class 6:2 The future of the environment issues and policies.

Professor will analyze the future of environmental degradation, climate agreements, and environmental policy. It will be followed by a brief debate, reflections and conclusion about the course.

Reading:
Downie et al. (2014) Chapter 7

Readings


Online resources:

