International Environmental Politics

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1. Course Description

Goals of course:

Nations cannot solve their environmental problems through unilateral action and domestic policy alone. Governments, nongovernmental organizations, and editorial pundits frequently proclaim the need for international solutions to environmental problems ranging from preserving wetlands and wildlife to protecting the global atmosphere. In some issue areas, nations have signed aggressive international treaties but in others they have not. Although environmental problems certainly -- and, we hope, their solutions -- will increase in number in the future, solutions to many existing problems provide the experience to understand the solutions available, the processes by which they can be created, and how effective those solutions have been at solving environmental problems.

This course starts by outlining five perspectives on why environmental problems arise and how we can solve them. It then explores three processes of international policy development: identifying problems, designing and negotiating solutions, and implementing policies to change national behavior. We will use case studies to develop our understanding of these processes and ask questions such as: What conditions help countries negotiate treaties to resolve problems? What types of rules work best? How do we evaluate whether a treaty has been effective or successful? In short, we want to identify how nations will solve global environmental problems.

These questions require careful attention to causal analysis, i.e., to showing that one or more factors caused the outcome we observe and that if that factor had been absent, the observed outcome would not have occurred. Thus, a major element of this course will require that you identify and skeptically evaluate all causal claims (your own, mine, and those of authors you read). For example, this will require being initially dubious of claims that the International Whaling Commission has led to fewer whales being killed since 1980, that growing scientific knowledge caused countries to sign the ozone treaty, or that treaties ever influence behavior. I hope that developing your ability to think causally will be this course's most important contribution to your education.

Word of warning: Most past students have found this course -- and particularly the final paper -- to be quite difficult but also have found it very rewarding. The requirements to do well in this course are quite demanding.

Some Thoughts as You Begin the Course

- Sustainable development means "treating the earth as if we intended to stay" -- (Robert Gray, 1993).
- When asked whether he would like people in India to have the same standard of living as the British, Mahatma Gandhi responded "It took Britain half the resources of the planet to achieve this prosperity. How many planets will a country like India require?" -- (T. N. Khoshoo, 1995).
- A serious research study is "a study by someone whose mind could conceivably have been changed by the evidence" -- (Paul Krugman, 1993).

2. Required Readings

- Ronald B. Mitchell. 2010. *International politics and the environment*. New York: Sage Publications. ISBN: 9781412919753. Referred to as Mitchell.
- Ken Conca and Geoffrey Dabelko. 2010. *Green Planet Blues: Environmental Politics from Stockholm to Johannesburg*, 4th Edition. Boulder: Westview Press. ISBN: 0813344115 Referred to as Conca.

3. Course Requirements and Grading

READINGS (NO PERCENT): ALL READINGS ARE REQUIRED.
If you must make choices, place higher priority on Mitchell and others, and less on Conca. Readings are intended as additional to (rather than redundant with) class lectures. Please ask questions about readings in class.

CLASS PARTICIPATION (10%)
Attend and participate in class. Those who ask questions and make comments will get better grades. Shy people cannot waive this requirement. Even if you are shy, please speak up several times during the term.

2 SHORT (3-4 PAGES) DISCUSSION PAPERS (FIRST: 10%; SECOND: 20%; 30% TOTAL)
Write two essays responding to a brief question regarding the reading and the material in lecture. The one on the Tragedy of the Commons is worth 10% and the other on the Relative Effectiveness of Regimes is worth 20%.

3 ASSIGNMENTS RELATED TO FINAL PAPER (FIRST: 5%; SECOND: 10%; THIRD: 10%; 25% TOTAL)
There are three assignments related to developing the argument of your final paper for the course. Their main value lies in providing you with feedback that will help you improve the final paper you write.

15-20 PAGE RESEARCH PAPER (35%): NO LATE PAPERS ACCEPTED!
Undergraduates: Write a research paper of 15-20 double-spaced pages evaluating whether a particular environmental treaty was effective.

Graduate students: Write a research paper of 25-30 double-spaced pages that carefully and rigorously evaluates whether a particular environmental treaty was effective. The paper must include a thoughtful literature review that cites at least 10 references, a carefully delineated set of hypotheses, and evaluation of those hypotheses with empirical evidence. The paper should be at a level comparable to a first draft of a Masters thesis.

EXTRA CREDIT
The only extra credit I will give in this class is 2% of the total course score to students who present their research on the last day of class. All students who want to present will have 2 to 3 minutes to:
-- discuss your graph AND
-- explain WHY you think your treaty was OR was not effective.

IMPORTANT NOTE FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS:
Graduate students enrolled in PS577 must do more work than undergraduates and at a higher level of quality. Read the syllabus carefully and complete all readings and assignments required of graduate students.

POLICY ON LATE ASSIGNMENTS
Late assignments will lose 2 points per day. Thus, an assignment that is 0-24 hours late would have 2 of 100 points deducted, one that is 25-48 hours late would have 4 of 100 points deducted, etc.

NOTE: Passing the class requires that you turn in ALL assignments. I rarely fail anyone who turns in all assignments. The rare times that I do fail people, however, is when they fail to turn in all assignments (since each is such a large portion of the final grade). So, please, turn in even late assignments. Help me help you pass the course.

4. Class Schedule and Reading Guide

INTRODUCTION

SESSION 1:
Introduction

SESSION 2:
Introduction (continued)

Mitchell, Chapter 1.
"Three Decades of Global Environmental Politics" in Conca ch. Intro.
Mitchell, R. B. 2002. International environment. *Handbook of International Relations*, edited by W. Carlsnaes, T. Risse and B. Simmons: 500-516. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

SESSION 3:
Identifying the influence of policy solutions: preparing for your paper

These readings are crucial for understanding the final paper requirements and for doing a good job in evaluating the treaty you choose to study. You should read these for this class but also re-read them several times during the term.

Mitchell, Chapter 2. Mitchell, R. B. and T. Bernauer. 1998. Empirical research on international environmental policy: designing qualitative case studies. *Journal of Environment and Development* 7(1): 4-31.
Jacobson, H. K. and E. Brown Weiss. 1998. A framework for analysis. *Engaging countries: strengthening compliance with international environmental accords*, edited by E. Brown Weiss and H. K. Jacobson: 1-18. Cambridge, MA: MIT
Press. Jacobson, H. K. and E. Brown Weiss. 1998. Assessing the record and designing strategies to engage countries. *Engaging countries: strengthening compliance with international environmental accords*, edited by E. Brown Weiss and H. K. Jacobson: 511-554. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

PERSPECTIVES ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS

SESSION 4: -- IF YOU HAVE A LAPTOP PLEASE BRING IT TO CLASS FOR USE IN THE SIMULATION!
Economic and Legal Perspectives

DISCUSSION PAPER: "Tragedy of the Commons" due at beginning of class (< 1500 words – provide a word count).

Garrett Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons" in Conca ch. 03.
Susan J. Buck, "No Tragedy of the Commons" in Conca ch. 04.

We will simulate the Tragedy of the Commons online during class. Prepare your strategy BEFORE class. Start by playing the "Optimizing a Private Farm" game on the website. During the in-class game, you will decide how many cows you want to put on a commons to which all other students have access. Your goal is to maximize the milk your cows produce (so you can share that milk with homeless people). What strategy will you use to ensure that you and the rest of the class do not overgraze the commons? How will you convince others to adopt your strategy? What should you do in the meantime to make sure you still can give milk to homeless people this year?

SESSION 5:
Ecophilosophical and Political Perspectives

Mitchell, Chapter 3.
Donella H. Meadows, et. al., "Limits to Growth" in Conca ch. 01.
Ken Conca, "Rethinking the Ecology-Sovereignty Debate" in Conca ch. 05.

PROCESSES OF INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Identifying Environmental Problems

SESSION 6:
Problem Identification and the Role of Science in Policy Making

Mitchell, Chapter 4.
Mitchell, R. B., et al. 2006. Global environmental assessments: information and influence. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
Tesh, S. N. and B. A. Williams. 1996. Identity politics, disinterested politics, and environmental justice. *Polity* 28(3): 285-305.
Skim the IPCC Executive Summary: http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessmentreport/ar4/syr/ar4_syr.pdf.

SESSION 7:
Science for Sustainability and a Scientific Perspective

TREATY ASSIGNMENT #1: due at beginning of class.

Lubchenco, J. 1998. Entering the century of the environment: a new social contract for science. *Science* 279: 491- 497.
Vitousek, P. M., et al. 1997. Human domination of earth's ecosystems. *Science* 277(5325): 494-499.
Kates, R. W., et al. 2001. Sustainability science. *Science* 292(5517): 641-642.

Re-read Mitchell and Bernauer readings, think about causal questions and feedback from professor, and come in with questions prepared. This should help you prepare over the weekend for the next assignment of Outline and Graph of DV, and get started on your paper.

Initial discussion on writing final paper and conducting a good causal evaluation of a treaty's influence.

SESSION 8:
Problem Identification and the Role of Nongovernmental Actors

Chico Mendes, "Fight for the Forest" in Conca ch. 07.
Ethirajan Anbarasan, "Kenya's Green Militant: An Interview with Wangari Muta Maathai" in Conca ch. 08.
Smitu Kothari, "Globalization, Global Alliances, and the Narmada Movement" in Conca ch. 09.

Negotiating International Agreements

SESSION 9:
Negotiation Theory

Norichika Kanie, "Governance with Multilateral Environmental Agreements: A Healthy or Ill-Equipped Fragmentation?" in Conca ch. 10.
Sprinz, D. F. and T. Vaahtoranta. 1994. The interest-based explanation of international environmental policy. *International Organization* 48(1): 77-105.
Betsill, M. M. and E. Corell. 2001. NGO influence in international environmental negotiations: a framework for analysis. *Global Environmental Politics* 1(4): 65-85.

SESSION 10:
Negotiation Practice

Mitchell, Chapter 5. Haas, P. M. 1992. Banning chlorofluorocarbons. *International Organization* 46(1): 187-224.

Ensuring Compliance and Effectiveness

SESSION 11:
Compliance Theory

Mitchell, Chapter 6.
Recommended: Mitchell, R. B. 2007. Compliance theory: compliance, effectiveness, and behavior change in international environmental law. *Oxford handbook of international environmental law*, edited by J. Brunee, D. Bodansky and E. Hey: 893-921. Cambridge, MA: Oxford University Press.

SESSION 12:
Case Study – Relative Regime Effectiveness: Whaling and Ozone Protection

DISCUSSION PAPER: "Relative Effectiveness" due at beginning of session (< 1500 words – provide a word count). I have provided more extensive readings than usual to help you prepare your discussion paper:

Peterson, M. J. 1992. Whalers, cetologists, environmentalists and the international management of whaling. *International Organization* 46(1): 147-186.
Walsh, V. 1999. Illegal Whaling for Humpbacks by the Soviet Union in the Antarctic, 1947-1972. *Journal of Environment and Development* 8(3): 307-327. .
Grundmann, R. 1998. The strange success of the Montreal Protocol: why reductionist accounts fail. *International Environmental Affairs* 10(3): 197-220.
Clapp, J. 1997. The illegal CFC trade: an unexpected wrinkle in the ozone protection regime. *International Environmental Affairs* 9(4): 259-273.
Text of Convention for Protection of Ozone Layer and Text of Protocol.
Text of International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling.
Illegal Trade in Ozone Depleting Substances (UNEP 2001).
Crucial: Data on Montreal Protocol/Whaling Convention Excel file.

ISSUES AND DEBATES IN INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS

SESSION 13:
Free Trade and the Environment

Hugo Cameron, "The Evolution of the Trade and Environment Debate at the WTO" in Conca ch. 13.
Logsdon, J. M. and B. W. Husted. 2000. Mexico's environmental performance under NAFTA: the first 5 years. *Journal of Environment and Development* 9(4): 370-383.

SESSION 14:
FINAL PAPER DISCUSSION

TREATY ASSIGNMENT #2: due at beginning of class.

Please read the online lecture notes for this day and be prepared to bring in any questions you have regarding writing your final paper.

SESSION 15:
Environment and Security

Colin H. Kahl, "Demography, Environment, and Civil Strife" in Conca ch. 21.
United Nations Environment Programme, "Sudan: Conflict and the Environment" in Conca ch. 22.
Daniel Deudney, "The Case Against Linking Environmental Degradation and National Security" in Conca ch. 23.

SESSION 16:
Sustainable Development

World Commission on Environment & Development, "Towards Sustainable Development" in Conca ch. 16.
João Augusto de Araujo Castro, "Environment and Development: The Case of the Developing Countries" in Conca ch. 02.
Sharachchandra M. Lélé, "Sustainable Development: A Critical Review" Conca ch. 18.

SESSION 17:
Population

TREATY ASSIGNMENT #3: due at beginning of class.

Re-read first few pages of Mitchell, Chapter 3.
Daily, G., et al. 1994. Optimum human population size. Population and Environment 15(6): 469-475.
Sen, Amartya. 1994. Population: Delusion and Reality: http://www.marathon.uwc.edu/geography/malthus/sen_NYR.htm
Revkin, Andrew. 2009. Population issues at Copenhagen. http://dotearth.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/12/16/the-missing-p-word-in-climate-talks/
Population control is good but even Sierra Club won't take it up: http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/09/14/AR2009091403308_pf.html
Economist article: Go forth & multiply a lot less. http://www.economist.com/displaystory.cfm?story_id=14743589

SESSION 18:
Climate Change, Part 1

Watch one or more of the videos from each of the following NSF links:

- How do we know: http://www.nsf.gov/news/special_reports/degree/how_do_we_know.jsp
- Climate modeling: http://www.nsf.gov/news/special_reports/degree/modeling.jsp
- The IPCC: http://www.nsf.gov/news/special_reports/degree/ipcc.jsp

Oreskes, N. 2007. The scientific consensus on climate change: how do we know we're not wrong? Climate change, edited by J. F. C. DiMento and P. Doughman: 65-99. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Anderegg, W. R. L., et al. 2010. Expert credibility in climate change. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 107(27): 12107-12109. . Why should we believe the science #2?

SESSION 19:
Climate Change, Part 2

EXTRA CREDIT Deadline: Powerpoint slide for those presenting in class.

Victor, D. G. 2006. Toward effective international cooperation on climate change: numbers, interests and institutions. Global Environmental Politics 6(3): 90–103.

Røgeberg, O., et al. 2010. International climate treaties: The case for pessimism. Climate Law 1(1): 177–197.

Recent Climate Change meeting documents
What Happened (and Why): An Assessment of the Cancun Agreements
http://enews.belfercenter.org/ct.html?rtr=on&s=lj1i,ofqa,7oo,7cxg,5zio,fg8z,69wo

CONCLUSIONS

SESSION 20:
The Future of Global Environmental Governance – Problems we will face and Solutions we will have

Mitchell, Chapter 7.

FINAL PAPER DUE at the beginning of session 20.