OVERVIEW

Environmental problems like climate change, deforestation, biodiversity loss, and ocean acidification transcend national borders. Solving these problems will require global cooperation on an unprecedented level. In this course, we will explore the challenges of contemporary global environmental governance and innovative solutions being advanced at the community, municipal, provincial, national, and international levels.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this course, students will:

- Have an understanding of the key environmental challenges facing humanity
- Understand how theories of international relations apply to global environmental challenges
- Be able to apply theoretical insights to diagnose environmental challenges and propose appropriate solutions
- Gain fluency in the diverse areas of global environmental governance that exist at multiple scales and be able to critically assess the strengths and weaknesses of different types of governance
- Enhance their critical reading, writing, and presentation skills
- Sharpen their capacity to be critical consumers of political and environmental media

COURSE FORMAT

Lectures will meet twice weekly for 1.5 hours for most of the term. From Week 4 onward, TA conferences will meet weekly for an hour. In order to maintain an average of three hours course time per week, we will skip one lecture every two weeks from Week 4 onward. Please consult the course schedule below for dates when lectures will and will not take place.
REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

There is one required book for this course. It is available at the Le James Bookstore:


Other readings will be made available online through MyCourses.

EVALUATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>% of final grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TA Conference Participation</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam (in class)</td>
<td>Feb. 12</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term Paper</td>
<td>Mar. 28</td>
<td>35</td>
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<tr>
<td>COP 24 Simulation (in class)</td>
<td>Apr. 4</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td><strong>100</strong></td>
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ASSIGNMENTS

Participation (10%)

You are expected to complete each week’s readings and contribute actively to discussion in your weekly TA conference. Participation in these conferences is MANDATORY. Your TA will be taking attendance and keeping a record of the quantity/quality of your participation. If you cannot attend a conference, it is your responsibility to notify your TA BEFORE the scheduled absence. Students will be excused from attendance only in cases where they can provide written documentation from a credible source outlining a valid reason for missing class/conference. Credible sources include medical professionals and appropriate McGill University staff.

Midterm Exam (15%)

The Midterm will be held in class time on **Monday Feb 12**. The exam will be a combination of multiple choice questions and short answers. All readings and lecture materials covered up until Feb. 12 may be tested on the exam.
**Term Paper (35%)**

Students will write a max. 3500 word (excl. bibliography) double-spaced paper to be submitted before the beginning of class on **Wednesday Mar 28**. Papers should be formatted for 1-inch margins, use a standard 12 pt font (e.g., Times New Roman, Arial, Calibri), include page numbers, and adhere to an accepted citation style (MLA, APA, Chicago, etc). Papers should also include a separate title page with an original title, the student’s name, student number, the class name, and the instructor’s name. Papers must also include a properly formatted bibliography that cites a minimum of ten credible academic sources. Are you unsure about what is/is not a credible source? Check out this resource guide or talk to a librarian. Librarians rock!

Paper Assignment: Choose a specific global environmental challenge (e.g., air pollution, biodiversity loss, climate change, fisheries depletion, etc) and answer the following questions:

1. What is the underlying cause of this challenge?
2. Which theory of international relations best explains the underlying cause of this challenge and why?
3. Based on your answers to questions 1&2, will existing efforts to address this challenge be successful? Why or why not?

In your answer to question 2, be sure to contrast your answer with at least one theoretical alternative.

You must upload your final paper through MyCourses before the beginning of class on Wed Mar 28. **Name your file as follows:** lastname_firstname_POLI 359.docx. Please submit your paper in either Word, RTF, or Adobe PDF format, no other types of files are permitted.

A note on style: Academic papers are not mystery novels. By the end of the first paragraph, you should clearly and directly summarize your answers to the three assignment questions. There is nothing wrong with using phrases like “I will argue…” Clarity is of the utmost importance. Do not use a five-syllable word when a two-syllable one will do. Semi-colons are generally not your friends. If English/French is not your first language or you have trouble writing, consider making an appointment with the [McGill Writing Centre](http://www.mcgill.ca/).  

**COP 24 Simulation (10%)**

A month before the simulation, students will be split into groups by the instructor and assigned a country. Each group is tasked with accurately representing a country at the next round of UNFCCC negotiations. On **Wednesday Apr 4**, each group will deliver a 3-minute speech (don’t go over!) to the assembled parties of the UNFCCC. Imagine this is the first day of negotiations and your group is trying to outline a vision for what you would like to achieve by the end of the COP. Groups will be collectively assessed based on the accuracy of their positions, the clarity and poise of their delivery, and their originality and creativity.
Final Exam (30%)

The final exam will be cumulative and will combine multiple choice questions with short essays. The exam will be held within the final examination period at a time/location TBD.

COURSE POLICIES

Absences/Late Papers

Late papers will be penalized 3% per calendar day. Papers are due before the beginning of class on Wed Mar 28, anytime thereafter will be deemed late. If you are unable to meet this deadline, come see me ASAP. Extensions will be granted only for valid reasons supported by documentation from credible sources. Credible sources include medical professionals and appropriate McGill University staff.

Accessibility

As the instructor of this course, I endeavor to provide an inclusive learning environment. However, if you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with me and the Office for Students with Disabilities, 514-398-6009.

Additional policies governing academic issues which affect students can be found in the McGill Charter of Students' Rights (see the Handbook on Student Rights and Responsibilities).

Appeals

Students in this course have a right to an impartial and competent review of any mark. If you are concerned about your mark on an exam, paper, or group assignment, please follow these procedures:

1. Wait 48 hours after the mark is returned before appealing. This is a “cool-down” period for you to re-read your work and reflect on the accuracy of the grader’s comments.
2. Write a max. one page double-spaced response to your grader, indicating any areas you feel were incorrectly marked in the initial assessment. Your response should only deal with the content of your work and not any other conditions (i.e., I need an ‘A’ to get into law school!)
3. Either the TA or myself will review your mark. It may go up, down, or stay the same.

Cell Phones

Cell phones are not permitted to be used in class without my explicit permission. Accommodations will be made only for students with accessibility concerns. Please consult the Policy Concerning the Rights of Students with Disabilities to determine if you qualify for an exception. Please turn your ringer off before the start of class.
Email Etiquette

I will do my best to answer emails quickly (usually within 48 hours), but professors lead lives outside the classroom too. Setting reasonable work-life boundaries is something we are all going to have to learn to do in the age of smartphones and 24-hour jobs. As such, you should not expect instant replies to emails in the evenings or over the weekend. Before emailing, please read the syllabus to see if your question is answered in there. If I don’t reply to your query in 48 hours, it might be because you’re asking a question that I’ve already answered elsewhere. Longer questions about substantive stuff (e.g., essay material) are better handled in person. I encourage you to come see me during office hours. Lastly, do your part to preserve good email etiquette – do not begin your emails with “hey” or “dude.” Save the emojis for your brojis.

Language of Submission

In accordance with McGill University’s Charter of Students’ Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded. This does not apply to courses in which acquiring proficiency in a language is one of the objectives.

Conformément à la Charte des droits de l’étudiant de l’Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté (sauf dans le cas des cours dont l’un des objets est la maîtrise d’une langue).

McGill Statement on Academic Integrity

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity/ for more information).

Put more simply, DO NOT PLAGIARIZE. You will get caught. If you are unclear about whether or not to cite something, follow this simple rule: when in doubt, cite-it-out!

Sustainability

This course has been designed to adhere to McGill’s policies on sustainability. For more information, please consult the Office of Sustainability.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Part I  Diagnosing the problem

Week 1  Course introduction. What are we up against?
The course in a nutshell
Climate change, collective action, and the commons. Oh my!


Week 2 Keeping it real: realism and global environmental politics
states, national interest, hegemonic stability theory, and regime formation
W Jan 17 Securitization of the environment and the specter of geoengineering


Week 3 Can’t we all just get along? Liberalism and global environmental politics
M Jan 22 Neoliberal institutionalism and environmental regimes
W Jan 24 The English School


Week 4 Staying woke: critical theory and global environmental politics
M Jan 29 Neo-Gramscianism and the environment.
W Jan 31 Eco-feminism


Week 5 Enter the matrix: constructivism and global environmental politics
M Feb 5 NO CLASS. TA CONFERENCES.
W Feb 7 Norms, liberal environmentalism, and the global public domain


Part II Exploring solutions

Week 6 Acronym soup: international organizations pt. 1
M Feb 12 ***MIDTERM EXAM***
W Feb 14 Regimes and regime complexes

**Week 7**

**Started from the bottom now we’re here: international organizations pt. 2**

M Feb 19  NO CLASS. TA CONFERENCES.
W Feb 21  Is orchestration the answer?

**Readings**  Pattberg and Zelli Chs. 60 & 62. van der Ven, Hamish, Steven Bernstein, and Matthew Hoffmann. 2017. “Valuing the Contributions of Nonstate and Subnational Actors to Climate Governance.” *Global Environmental Politics* 17(1): 1–20

**Week 8**

**Why is my coffee cup covered in labels? Transnational standard-setters**

M Feb 26  Non-state actors: who put these guys in charge?
W Feb 28  Separating greenwash from governance


***MAR 5-9 READING BREAK – NO CLASS***

**Week 9**

**Takin’ it to the streets: social movements**

M Mar 12  NO CLASS. TA CONFERENCES.
W Mar 14  From #nodapl to eco-terrorism


**Week 10**

**The business of sustainability: corporate environmentalism**

M Mar 19  Why do companies ‘go green’?
W Mar 21  Wal-Mart: Villain or Savior?


**Week 11**

**The dream of the 90s is alive in Portland: subnational and regional initiatives**

M Mar 26  NO CLASS. TA CONFERENCES.
W Mar 28  Cities to the rescue!
### Readings


### Week 12

**COP 24 Simulation**

- **M Apr 2**  
  EASTER HOLIDAY – NO CLASS
- **W Apr 4**  
  ***COP 24 SIMULATION EXERCISE IN CLASS***

**Readings**  
No readings, but you should thoroughly review the UNFCCC interactive guide in advance of your simulation exercise [http://bigpicture.unfccc.int/](http://bigpicture.unfccc.int/).

### Week 13

**Well that was depressing...Where do we go from here?**

- **M Apr 9**  
  NO CLASS. TA CONFERENCES.
- **W Apr 11**  
  Taking action: from the individual to the collective.

**Readings**  

### Week 14

**Final Exam Review**

- **M Apr 16**  
  Jeopardy! (Exam Prep Version)