

PIA5038: ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES IN ASIA AND THE WORLD

Effective Term

Semester B 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Environmental Challenges in Asia and the World

Subject Code

PIA - Public and International Affairs

Course Number

5038

Academic Unit

Public and International Affairs (PIA)

College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

P5, P6 - Postgraduate Degree

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

AIS5038 Environmental Challenges in Asia and the World

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

By examining how the international community addresses global environmental challenges, this course will take students to explore the multi-disciplinary environmental studies in both theory and practice. Through discovery-enriched approaches, learning activities will provide students with different chances to analyze various efforts by international stakeholders (state, NGO, industry, civil society, etc) to tackle severe environmental challenges. Students will develop case profiles that link theory with empirical studies and present their own understandings in class discussion both individually and as a group. They will also learn how to analyze relationship between economic growth, international trade, transition in life styles, energy shortage, environmental degradation, institutional transition, and social development.

Students will learn how globalization of production and trade have affected local, regional, and global environmental conditions; how globalization of science and mass media have affected discussions, sharing, and contestation of claims and proposals about environmental impacts; and how international forums and negotiations have affected laws, practices, and movements in particular countries. Students will also learn to apply this knowledge in assessing policies and innovations proposed by local governments, NGOs, business firms, and international organizations in regard to climate change and its consequences, energy supply issues and energy crisis, and ocean-related issues such as overfishing and conflict over resources in areas such as the South China Sea.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs	Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1 relate economic development, production, and international trade to local, regional, and global environmental impacts, using scientific assessments and case studies from various countries.	20	x	x	
2 describe the major types of international processes and engagements which lead to dissemination and sharing of environmental science, policies, and experiences	20	x	x	
3 describe the impact of regional and international environmental agreements and treaties on state policies, local and multi-national corporations, and local and international environmental activism	20	x	x	x
4 identify the major obstacles and difficulties to the approval and implementation of international environmental agreements within states, and between states	20	x	x	x
5 make policy-relevant presentations to stakeholders on environmental problems and issues, using case studies and knowledge from other contexts for reference	20	x	x	x

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

	LTAs	Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	1 Lectures and seminars	Lectures and seminars serve as the foundational elements of the course, providing students with comprehensive knowledge and theoretical frameworks necessary for understanding environmental challenges. Through structured lectures, students will gain insights into the relationship between economic development, production, international trade, and their environmental impacts (CILO 1). Seminars offer an interactive platform for students to delve deeper into specific topics, discuss scientific assessments, and analyze case studies from various countries, thereby enhancing their ability to describe international processes and engagements (CILO 2), understand the impact of environmental agreements (CILO 3), and identify obstacles to their implementation (CILO 4).	1, 2, 3, 4	

2	2 Presentations	Presentations are designed to develop students' skills in articulating and communicating complex environmental issues to diverse stakeholders. By preparing and delivering presentations, students will learn to synthesize information from scientific assessments, case studies, and policy analyses, making them proficient in describing international processes and engagements related to environmental science and policies (CILO 2). This activity also supports CILOs 1, 3, and 4, as students practice making policy-relevant presentations, drawing on knowledge from various contexts to address environmental problems effectively (CILO 5).	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	
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3	3 Class participation	<p>Active class participation encourages students to engage critically with the course material and with each other. Through discussions, debates, and collaborative activities, students will explore the impact of regional and international environmental agreements and treaties on state policies, corporations, and activism (CILO 3). Participation also fosters a deeper understanding of the obstacles and difficulties in implementing international environmental agreements (CILO 4). By contributing to class discussions, students will enhance their analytical and critical thinking skills, which are essential for relating economic development and trade to environmental impacts (CILO 1) and describing the major types of international processes and engagements (CILO 2).</p>	1, 2, 3, 4	
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4	4 Web-based discussions	<p>Web-based discussions provide a flexible and dynamic platform for students to engage with course content and each other outside of traditional classroom settings. These discussions enable students to explore and debate environmental challenges in a global context, facilitating a deeper understanding of the relationship between economic development and environmental impacts (CILO 1), the dissemination and sharing of environmental science, policies, and experiences (CILO 2), the impact of regional and international environmental agreements (CILO 3), and the obstacles to their implementation (CILO 4). Additionally, web-based discussions and movie reviews allow for continuous engagement with case studies and policy issues, supporting students in making informed and relevant presentations to stakeholders (CILO 5). By participating in these online forums and reviewing relevant movies, students can collaborate, share insights, and develop a more nuanced understanding of the course material.</p>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	
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Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("-" for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?	
1	In-class participation In-class participation encourages students to engage actively with course content and discussions, enhancing their understanding of the impacts of economic development and international trade on the environment (CILO 1), the dissemination of environmental science and policies (CILO 2), the impact of environmental agreements (CILO 3), and the complexities of implementing these agreements (CILO 4).	1, 2, 3, 4	10	This AT is formative. The other ATs are summative.	Yes

2	Group presentation Group presentations require students to collaborate and communicate effectively, synthesizing information from case studies and scientific assessments to relate economic development and trade to environmental impacts (CILO 1), describe international environmental processes (CILO 2), analyze the impact of environmental agreements (CILO 3), identify implementation obstacles (CILO 4), and make policy-relevant presentations to stakeholders (CILO 5).	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	30	-	No
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3	Term paper The term paper allows students to conduct in-depth research on specific environmental challenges, enabling them to analyze the relationship between economic development and environmental impacts (CILO 1), describe dissemination processes of environmental science and policies (CILO 2), evaluate the impact of environmental agreements (CILO 3), identify obstacles to their implementation (CILO 4), and propose policy-relevant solutions (CILO 5).	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	40	(~2,500 words)	No
4	In-class test A short test (around one and a half hour) is used to evaluate students' understanding of the key concepts and issues related to environmental challenges, governance and decision-making as covered in lectures (CILO 1-4).	1, 2, 3, 4	20	-	No

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Minimum Continuous Assessment Passing Requirement (%)

40

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

In-class participation (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

To demonstrate the activeness of classroom participation

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Very good to excellent participation in presentations and class discussion

Good

(B+, B, B-) Good participation in presentations and class discussion

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Satisfactory participation in presentations and class discussion

Marginal

(D) Some basic participation in presentations and class discussion

Failure

(F) Lack of attendance or participation in class discussion and presentations; and/or substantial plagiarism

Assessment Task

Group presentation (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

To assess individual presentation

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Demonstration of excellent understanding of the course

Good

(B+, B, B-) Demonstration of good to very good understanding of the course

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Demonstration of general knowledge of the course

Marginal

(D) Demonstration of some basic knowledge of the course

Failure

(F) Fail to demonstrate basic knowledge of the course

Assessment Task

Term paper (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

To assess the ability to write a 2500 words essay

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Demonstration of excellent understanding and critical evaluation of impacts of globalization on environmental problems and policies,

Good

(B+, B, B-) Demonstration of good to very good understanding and critical evaluation of impacts of globalization on environmental problems and policies,

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Demonstration of general knowledge of main features of impacts of globalization on environmental problems and policies, but without good critical evaluation;

Marginal

(D) Demonstration of some basic knowledge of impacts of globalization on environmental problems and policies, but without critical evaluation;

Failure

(F) Failure to demonstrate basic knowledge of impacts of globalization on environmental problems and policies; inability to engage in critical evaluation;

Assessment Task

In-class test

Criterion

To answer short essay-type questions within specified period of time.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Demonstration of profound understanding of key concepts and theories in relation to environmental challenges, governance, and decision-making.

Good

(B+, B, B-) Demonstration of sound understanding of key concepts and theories in relation to environmental challenges, governance, and decision-making.

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Demonstration of an average understanding of key concepts and theories in relation to environmental challenges, governance, and decision-making.

Marginal

(D) Demonstration of an inadequate understanding of key concepts and theories in relation to environmental challenges, governance, and decision-making.

Failure

(F) Demonstration of gross misunderstanding of key concepts and theories in relation to environmental challenges, governance, and decision-making.

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

Globalization of environmentalist discourse; international environmental forums; environmental sociology: global institutionalization of environmental standards; ecological modernization; treadmill of production; economic development, trade, and environmental impact; international organizations: policy institutes, UN, World Bank, NGOs, UNEP; international negotiations, treaties, and conventions.

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	Nil

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Recommended Reading (examples):
2	Kate O' Neil. 2009. <i>The Environment and International Relations</i> . Stanford University Press.
3	Economy, Elizabeth C. 2004. <i>The River Runs Black: The Environmental Challenge to China's Future</i> . Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.
4	Frank, D. J., A. Hironaka, and E. Schofer 2000. 'The nation-state and the natural environment over the twentieth century'. <i>American Sociological Review</i> , 65:96-116.
5	Harris, Paul G.. 2005. <i>Confronting Environmental Change in East and Southeast Asia: Eco-Politics, Foreign Policy, and Sustainable Development</i> . Tokyo, New York, Paris: United Nations Press.
6	Kick, Edward, and Jorgenson, Andrew. (eds). 2005. <i>Globalization and the Environment</i> (special issue of <i>Journal of World-Systems Research</i> , IX, 2, Summer, 2003).
7	Meadows, Donella, Randers, J. and Meadows, Dennis. 2004. <i>Limits to Growth: the 30 Year Update</i> . White River Junction, Vermont, U.S.A.: Chelsea Green Publ. Co.
8	Mol, Arthur P.J., and Buttel, Frederick H. (eds.) 2002. <i>The Environmental State Under Pressure</i> . Amsterdam: Elsevier Science.
9	Schreurs, Miranda A. 2002. <i>Environmental Policy in Japan, Germany, and the United States</i> . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
10	Miranda A. Schreurs and Elizabeth Economy (eds.) 1997. <i>The Internationalization of Environmental Protection</i> . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
11	Miranda A. Schreurs 1996. <i>International Environmental Negotiations, The State, and Environmental NGOs in Japan</i> . Harrison Program on the Future Global Agenda. http://www.gdrc.org/ngo/jp-envi-ngo.html
12	Spaargaren, Gert, Mol, Arthur P.J., and Buttel, Frederick H.(eds.) 2000. <i>Environment and Global Modernity</i> . London: Sage.
13	Stiglitz, Joseph. 2002. <i>Globalization and Its Discontents</i> . Penguin.
14	Web-based resources:
15	<i>Environment and Globalization</i> (International Institute for Sustainable Development): http://www.iisd.org/pdf/2007/trade_environment_globalization.pdf
16	<i>Globalization and the Environment</i> (Dauvergne): http://www.politics.ubc.ca/fileadmin/template/main/images/departments/poli_sci/Faculty/dauvergne/15_Cha14.pdf
17	<i>Green and Brown: Globalization and the Environment</i> (Boyce): http://www.economics.ucr.edu/seminars/spring04/05-28-04JimBoyce.pdf
18	United Nations Environment Program: http://www.unep.org/
19	World Watch Institute: http://www.worldwatch.org/