

PIA4201: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: CONFLICT AND COOPERATION ON ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES PROBLEMS

Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

International Relations: Conflict and Cooperation on Environment and Resources Problems

Subject Code

PIA - Public and International Affairs

Course Number

4201

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

B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

AIS4201 International Relations: Conflict and Cooperation on Environment and Resources Problems

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

Drawing primarily on theories and insights from international relations and environmental politics, this course examines the ways in which environmental challenges are being addressed by means of ‘global governance’ -that is, states, international organizations, and non-state actors face environmental challenges. The course aims to (a) introduce students to the historical context of global environmental governance and current policy making on environmental protection and institutional reform; (b) explore perspectives of the conflict and cooperation on international environment and resources problems as well as the different roles that key actors of global environmental politics (e.g., states, IGO, NGOs, and private corporations) play; (c) foster understanding of why global environmental conflicts and cooperation should be viewed as a process of creating and implementing issue-specific regimes based on diverging interests of actors through a series of case studies (including but not limited to the United Nations climate change negotiations, dam building along the Mekong, and haze in Singapore); (d) improve students’ ability to identify obstacles to or pitfalls of the effective creation and implementation of current and future multilateral, regional, or bilateral environmental regimes, and to contemplate options for enhancing creation and implementation of these regimes; (e) equip students with a better understanding of what is embedded in the nature of international environmental conflict and cooperation and enable them to engage more effectively in discussing feasible solutions.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if DEC-A1 DEC-A2 DEC-A3 app.)		
1	Recognize the basics and development of global environmental politics.		x	
2	Critically analyze the legislative and legal perspectives of international environmental conflict and cooperation.		x	
3	Assess how main actors of global environmental politics have played different roles when formulating policies.		x	
4	Comprehend why environmental actors, especially the government, have negotiated effective regimes to address some global environmental problems such as ozone depletion, but weak arrangements or none at all for others such as climate change.			x
5	Identify potential barriers to the effective development of current and future international environmental regimes and logically discuss options for it.			x
6	Present possible solutions to various types of global environmental problems			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	Lectures	Deliver basic theories and empirical studies.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	10 weeks
2	Classroom discussions	Classroom discussion during the lectures	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	10 weeks
3	Climate change policy brief	policy paper for which students are required to assess the position of a selected country	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	
4	Term paper	Demonstrate the student's understanding of the theory and empirical cases.	2, 3, 4, 5, 6	
5	Movie review	Watch an environmental documentary and write a brief movie review	1, 2, 3	

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- " for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Term paper	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	25	-	No
2	Climate Change Policy Brief	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	20	-	No
3	Class Participation	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	15	-	Yes
4	Movie Review	1, 2, 3	10	-	No
5	Final Quiz	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	30	-	No

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)

Assessment Task

1. Term paper

Criterion

To demonstrate the understanding of the theories and cases discussed in the course

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Excellent understanding of the theories and cases discussed in the course

Good (B+, B, B-)

Good understanding of the theories and cases discussed in the course

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Adequate understanding of the theories and cases discussed in the course

Marginal (D)

Marginal understanding of the theories and cases discussed in the course

Failure (F)

Fail to demonstrate reasonable understanding of the theories and cases discussed in the course

Assessment Task

2. Climate change brief

Criterion

To analyze position of a selected country

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Excellent analysis of the country' s position

Good (B+, B, B-)

Good analysis of the country' s position

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Adequate analysis of the country' s position

Marginal (D)

Marginal analysis of the country' s position

Failure (F)

Fail to analyze the country' s position

Assessment Task

3. Classroom discussion

Criterion

To involve in classroom discussion about various environmental topics

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Excellent involvement in classroom discussion about various environmental topics

Good (B+, B, B-)

Good involvement in classroom discussion about various environmental topics

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Adequate involvement in classroom discussion about various environmental topics

Marginal (D)

Marginal involvement in classroom discussion about various environmental topics

Failure (F)

Fail to get involved in classroom discussion about various environmental topics

Assessment Task

4. Movie Review

Criterion

To present personal reflection of an environmental documentary

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Excellent personal reflection of an environmental documentary

Good (B+, B, B-)

Good personal reflection of an environmental documentary

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Adequate personal reflection of an environmental documentary

Marginal (D)

Marginal personal reflection of an environmental documentary

Failure (F)

Fail to present personal reflection of an environmental documentary

Assessment Task

5. Final exam

Criterion

To demonstrate the understanding of the theories and cases discussed in the course

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Excellent understanding of the theories and cases discussed in the course

Good (B+, B, B-)

Good understanding of the theories and cases discussed in the course

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Adequate understanding of the theories and cases discussed in the course

Marginal (D)

Marginal understanding of the theories and cases discussed in the course

Failure (F)

Fail to demonstrate reasonable understanding of the theories and cases discussed in the course

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

Global environmental politics; Global environmental conflict and cooperation; Global environmental change; International environmental regime; Natural resource governance; Role of actors in global environmental politics; IGO; NGO; International relations; North-South division; Trade and environment; Common but differentiated responsibilities; Sustainable development; Climate change; UNFCCC; Kyoto Protocol; Montreal Protocol; Global environmental governance; Global environment organization; Transnational politics; International equity; Collective action.

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	Nil

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Chasek, Pamela S., David L. Downie, and Janet Welsh Brown. 2016. <i>Global Environmental Politics</i> . Boulder, CO: Avalon Publishing.
2	Conca, Ken, and Geoffrey Dabelko. 2014. <i>Green Planet Blues: Critical Perspectives on Global Environmental Politics</i> . Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
3	Conca, K., 2006. <i>Governing Water: Contentious Transnational Politics and Global Institution Building</i> . Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
4	Dessler, Andrew, and Edward A. Parson. 2010. <i>The Science and Politics of Global Climate Change: A Guide to the Debate</i> . Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
5	Harris, P. G., ed., 2007. <i>Europe and Global Climate Change: Politics, Foreign Policy, and Regional Cooperation</i> . Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.
6	Glover, D. & Jessup, T., 1999. <i>Indonesia ' s Fires and Haze: The Cost of Catastrophe</i> . Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.
7	Hunter, D., Salzman, J. & Durwood, Z., 2006. <i>International Environmental Law and Policy</i> . 3 ed. New York: Foundation Press.
8	Conca, K. & Dabelko, G. G., 2004. <i>Green Planet Blues: Environmental Politics from Stockholm to Johannesburg</i> . 3 ed, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press.
9	Lipschutz, R., 2003. <i>Global Environmental Politics: Power, Perspectives and Practice</i> . Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.
10	Miyazaki, N., Adeel, Z., & Ohwada, K., eds., 2005. <i>Mankind and the Oceans</i> . Tokyo: United Nations University Press
11	United Nation's Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Paris Agreement. Available at: http://unfccc.int/2860.php
12	Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete Ozone Layer. Available at: http://ozone.unep.org/Treaties_and_Ratification/2B_montreal_protocol.asp
13	Convention on Biological Diversity. Available at: http://www.cbd.int/
14	The Environmental Studies Section (ESS) of the International Studies Association (ISA). Available at: http://environmental-studies.org/?page_id=2
15	Resource for Future. Available at: http://www.rff.org
16	Earth Systems Governance. Available at: http://www.earthsystemgovernance.org/
17	UNEP's Environmental Governance page: http://www.unep.org/environmentalgovernance/