



**INST 275: MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM
(By Understanding the Roots of International Environmental Problems)**

Tuesday, 3:00-3:50
Brown Reading Room
Fall 2013

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Office Hours: Friday 12-4 and by appointment

COURSE OVERVIEW AND MISSION

This course is designed to stimulate you to *think more critically* about the complexities involved in regulating human uses and abuses of international environments and natural resources and to *act more deliberately* on your own environmental priorities. To achieve those ends, this course will introduce you to the sources of international environmental problems, the forces that make those problems so difficult to overcome, and the strategies domestic and international actors use to try to combat these environmental threats. This course will then challenge you to evaluate the relative efficacy of these actors and strategies of environmental action.

My hope is that by understanding the complexities of international environmental policy you will become a more critical consumer of argumentation concerning environmental law and activism. I want this course to help you make savvy choices if you are considering a career in environmental policy. I want this course to help you make smart choices if you make charitable contributions to environmental causes in the future. Yes, we will delve into some political science and environmental theory, but this course is designed to have a *pragmatic payoff*: helping you to make more informed decisions in your own environmental activism.

ACTIVITIES & ASSESSMENT

Reading: 20%

Because this is a one credit course, on several days there is no assigned reading at all and when there is reading I have tried to keep it to about 30 pages of reasonably accessible articles. However, I want you to get the most out of those readings I have assigned both for your own intellectual growth and to ensure we have productive class discussions. For each assigned reading I will therefore ask you to complete a *very* brief “reading summary” worksheet. These summaries should be short and informal; no more than a page of short-hand notes or bullet points. This may seem like a silly exercise but students from past classes have reported that it is useful. These worksheets are meant to help you to read purposefully, to take good notes, and to make sure you

understand the most important elements of assigned readings.

Participation: 20%

Your participation grade will be based on both quantity and quality. I will assess and also rely on peer reviews to determine your grade using a Participation Grading Rubric which you will be given at the beginning of the term. As you will see, it rewards mastery of assigned material, risk taking in critical analysis of that material, as well as respect for and encouragement of your peers. You do not have to be confident about your opinions or ideas to voice them, but those opinions and ideas should be informed by an earnest attempt to comprehend the assigned material.

Case Study Preparation and Delivery: 30%

In the second half of the course each week will be dedicated to a different environmental issue of your own choosing. You are responsible for becoming our resident “expert” on one such issue (depending on the number of students enrolled you may have to share this duty with other students). This requires doing some preparatory research on the sources of that environmental problem, the actors most involved in that environmental issue, the strategies that have been employed to address that problem, and the state of international laws and regimes pertinent to that issue. (By research I mean reading a few news articles and think tank memos – not entire books.) You will choose one or two articles to assign to your classmates for that week. I will work with you individually to help identify useful information on your chosen environmental issue and select the most appropriate assigned readings to the class.

NGO/ Activist Group Evaluation: 30%

At the end of the term every student will pick one environmental activist group/ actor working within the issue they chose for their case study presentation for further analysis. I will ask you to do some light research into that group’s practices (e.g. cruising their web site) and to write a short memo (3-5 pages) addressing the following questions: 1) What is the group’s primary goal or aim? 2) What strategies does the group use to achieve that goal, to instigate change in national or international environmental policy/ practices? 3) What are these strategies’ greatest strengths and weaknesses? 4) Do you see any ways to overcome those weaknesses? In other words, given what we’ve learning in this class, if you had a \$10,000 to give to an environmental activist group, would you give it to this one? Why and why not? Students will share a draft with each other and get feedback during our second-to-last class. The final evaluation will be due December 10th.

CLASS SCHEDULE

** Subject to change once I know how many students are enrolled and your interests.

WEEK	TOPIC	DISCUSSION QUESTIONS	READINGS
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Sept. 3	Welcome and Introductions	We'll review the syllabus, and consider adjustments that will help you get the most out of the course.	Speth, "The Global Environmental Agenda: Origins and Prospects" (17 pp) World Federation of United Nations Associations, Why We Need A Global Environmental Organization (2 pp)
Sept. 10	Sources of International Environmental Destruction & Impediments to Cooperation	What are the sources of international environmental problems? Why are international environmental problems so hard to overcome?	Hardin, The Tragedy of the Commons (6 pp) Homer-Dixon, Cornucopians and Neo-Malthusians. (3 pp) Lomborg, "Environmental Alarmism, Then and Now" (12 pp)
Sept. 17	But Somehow, Sometimes, We Succeed: Sources of Cooperation and Progress	Why, given the Tragedy, do some environmental problems get resolved? What strategies and institutions allow us to rise above the Tragedy?	Ostrom and Field, Revisiting the Commons: Local Lessons, Global Challenges. (9 pp) Feeny, Berkes, McCay and Acheson, The Tragedy of the Commons: Twenty-Two Years Later (14 pp)
Sept. 24	Who Succeeds and How: Actors and Their Tools pt. 1	Individuals and Epistemic Communities Corporations/ Firms Non-Governmental Organizations Transnational Action Networks	<i>Half of class will read:</i> Keck and Sikkink, Activists Beyond Borders, pp. 1-37 and 121-163. <i>The other half will read:</i> Peter M. Haas, "Banning Chlorofluorocarbons: Epistemic Community Efforts to Protect the Stratospheric Ozone" (40 pp) <i>Light Extras – pick one or two:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Betting on Green" - Vinod Khosla profile, The Economist (3 page) • "Solving Solar's Biggest Problem Didn't Take Technology Development," The Atlantic (2 page) • Raising Elijah and The Case for

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<p>** Sept. 27</p>	<p>Emily Hunter Talk</p> <p>This is mandatory as it makes up for the first class of the term, which we did not hold. In preparation skim: Ted Nordhaus and Michael Shellenberger, "The death of environmentalism: Global warming politics in a post-environmental world" (19 pp)</p> <p>Optional extra: watch this video of Emily Hunter speaking about activism: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KsB2qtDaiRw</p>		
<p>Oct. 1</p>	<p>Actors and Their Tools pt. 2: International Environmental Laws and Regimes</p>	<p>States International Institutions and Inter-Governmental Organizations</p>	<p>O'Neill, <i>State-Led Global Environmental Governance</i>, 71-89 and 101. Skim 89-101. (19 pp plus)</p> <p>Ivanova. "Designing the United Nations Environment Programme: A Story of Compromise and Confrontation" (23 pp – this is very skimmable)</p>

Oct. 15	Assessing Strategies of Environmental Activism and Progress	<p>What are the relative pros and cons of strategies we have encountered such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicity and Norm Diffusion • Boycotts and Sanctions • Market Manipulation/ Technological Investments • Coercion and Inducements • Institutions, Laws, and Regulations 	<p>This class brings together the findings from readings we have already done. Instead of assigning new reading I want you to come to class with a list of the strategies we have identified and those strategies' pros and cons/ circumstances when they work or fail.</p>
Oct. 22	<p>Case Study Prep Week</p> <p>I will work with you individually to find articles for your presentation and for fellow students to read.</p>		
Oct. 29	Case Study 1	TBD – Students Choose Issue/ Regime	TBD – Students Choose Reading.
Nov. 5	Case Study 2	TBD – Students Choose Issue/ Regime	TBD – Students Choose Reading.
Nov. 12	Case Study 3	TBD – Students Choose Issue/ Regime	TBD – Students Choose Reading.
Nov. 19	Case Study 4	TBD – Students Choose Issue/ Regime	TBD – Students Choose Reading.
Nov. 26	<p>NGO/ Activist Group Analysis</p> <p>During class time I want students to research an activist group/ NGO and identify their goals, their strategies for achieving those goals, and think about some strengths and limitations of that strategy.</p>		
Dec. 3	Share NGO Analysis and Get Feedback	In class students will share what they learned about their chosen NGO/ activist and get	Read peers' NGO analysis and bring them written comments

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Dec. 10	Revisiting the Question of a Global Environmental	Do we need a Global Environmental Organization?	Haas, "Addressing the Global Governance Deficit"