

International Environmental Policy

EVST 3010

Loyola Marymount University, Spring 2021

Location: Online

Time: Tues/Thurs 1:50-3:20pm PT (live Zoom attendance required on Thurs only)

Instructor: Professor Tyler Harlan

Email: tyler.harlan@lmu.edu

Office hours: Thurs 3:30-5:30pm PT and by appointment



Photo Credit: CNN

Course description

This course examines the challenges of governing complex global environmental problems. With each passing year, issues of climate change, biodiversity loss, food production, water provision, and pollution grow more acute. These problems are not confined within geographical or political boundaries, nor are they understood, experienced, and acted upon by everyone in the same way. Indeed, global environmental problems are inextricably bound to broader political and economic institutions and power relations that confound simple policy solutions. This course thus requires us to situate international environmental policy-making in a broader context of ongoing social and environmental change, and the relationships between them.

To do so, we will engage deeply with diverse scholarly and theoretical perspectives, drawing from geography, environmental studies, international relations, development studies, economics, political science, and many others. We will analyze historical and contemporary case studies of international environmental policy-making, paying special attention to debates and policies that are currently in the news. We will explore examples at the global, transboundary, and national scales. This course requires extensive weekly reading, discussion, research, and writing.

Learning outcomes

1. Articulate key topics, concepts, and debates in international environmental policy and governance.
2. Analyze the power asymmetries and institutional barriers that permeate and shape international environmental policy-making and its outcomes.
3. Evaluate the effectiveness of different types of legal, regulatory, market, and informal mechanisms for addressing global environmental problems.
4. Cultivate critical thinking skills – through extensive reading, writing, and discussion – and apply them to a research project on a global environmental issue of your choice.

Course format

This course begins with a survey of key concepts and worldviews, and applies them to understanding the evolution of global environmental governance (Weeks 1-2). We next examine state-led international environmental treaty regimes and their effectiveness (Weeks 3-4), before analyzing the politics of market mechanisms (Week 5) and knowledge production (Week 6). We then turn to three political-economic domains that strongly influence environmental policy: investment, trade, and finance (Weeks 7-9). Finally, we devote the latter part of the course to specific environmental governance scenarios, including transboundary governance, democratic and authoritarian governance and policy structures, environmental security and conflict, and climate adaptation (Weeks 10-14). In Week 15, we will consider the future of international environmental policy and the key role of cities (like Los Angeles!).

Each week, we will tackle one theme using both asynchronous (recorded) and synchronous (live) online formats.

Tuesdays will consist of a **recorded introductory lecture** and associated web links (for example, links to short videos or audio recordings). We will not hold a live Tuesday class. All recordings and links will be available on Brightspace. You should watch the lecture, visit all links, and record a brief VoiceThread response (see below) by the end of the day on Wednesday.

Thursdays will consist of a **live Zoom discussion** that digs further into one specific aspect of the week's theme – such as the Paris Agreement, sustainable palm oil, and sea-level rise in cities. We will analyze case studies, engage in debate, conduct group activities, and hear from guest speakers. Attendance at our Thursday Zoom discussion is **required**.

Required text and readings

This course has two required textbooks, both of which are available as **free e-books** through the LMU library. Make sure that you access the 2nd edition of both books.

1. Clapp, J., Duvergne, P. (2011) *Paths to a Green World: The Political Economy of the Global Environment*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. 2nd edition.

2. O'Neill, K. (2017) *The Environment and International Relations*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. 2nd Edition.

Other readings will consist of a mix of scholarly articles, book chapters, reports, and articles by reputable journalistic outlets. Podcasts will also be assigned from time to time. All assigned materials will be available on Brightspace, and you are expected to read them prior to class.

Assignments and grading

Assignment	Weight	Points	Due
Participation (responding to Tuesday lecture, attending and contributing to Thursday discussion)	15%	75	Weekly
Discussion forum posts	12%	60	Thurs 1pm
Quizzes			
– Quiz #1	5%	25	Feb 11
– Quiz #2	5%	25	Mar 25
– Quiz #3	5%	25	Apr 29
Sustainable development essay	8%	40	Jan 31
International treaty regime effectiveness assessment	10%	50	Feb 28
Group commodity chain podcast	10%	50	Apr 4
Term paper			
– Abstract and references	5%	25	Apr 28
– Final paper	25%	125	May 7

Participation (15%)

Your participation is essential to make this a rewarding course – especially when we're online!

Each class period will count 0.5% towards your final grade. For **recorded Tuesday classes**, you will receive full credit if you watch the entire video lecture, visit all associated links, and record a VoiceThread response by the end of the day Wednesday (I will show you how to record a response on the first day of class). For **live Zoom Thursday classes**, you will receive full credit if you attend and actively contribute to discussion and activities.

It is essential that you complete all readings before our Thursday class, and that you come prepared to talk about each in detail. You are also encouraged and expected to enrich our in-class discussions with material you have covered in other classes, activities outside of class, on-campus events, and current environmental news.

Note that cumulative participation grades will be posted twice during the semester: once at the beginning of Week 8, and again at the beginning of Finals Week. Not responding to lecture videos, unexcused absences and habitual lateness to Zoom sessions, and a pattern of not contributing to Zoom discussions will be reflected in your participation grade.

Discussion forum posts (12%)

Due every Thurs @1pm PT (12 posts total)

Each week, you should post a ~200 word response to the assigned Thursday readings on the online discussion forum through Brightspace. Posts are due on Thursdays at 1pm PT, so that myself and your classmates can read them before the start of class. There are 12 required posts throughout the semester; check the schedule and readings list for exact dates. Each post is worth 1% of your final grade.

Discussion forum posts should **critically engage** with the readings, rather than simply summarize them. They should be intentional and thoughtful, not stream-of-consciousness. You are welcome to use the first-person and provide your own (substantiated) views from your own experience. You can also relate what you learned to previous readings, other courses, or the news. Posts should demonstrate that you have read all of the required readings.

Quizzes (15%)

Feb 11, Mar 18, and Apr 29 (online during class time)

You will take three quizzes evenly spaced throughout the semester: one in Week 5, one in Week 10, and one in Week 15. Quizzes will be taken online during class time. They are open-book and have a 25-minute time limit.

Quizzes will be based on **lectures and Tuesday readings**; there will not be any questions that draw on Thursday readings. Quizzes are non-cumulative, meaning that they only cover material since the last quiz (max 5 weeks of material). Questions will be a mix of multiple-choice, short answer, and paragraph-length answer.

Further details will be provided on Brightspace well in advance of the first quiz. Each quiz is worth 5% of your final grade.

Sustainable development essay (8%)

Due Sun Jan 31 @11:59pm PT

You will write a ~600 word essay analyzing the concept of “sustainable development” and how it is employed in global environmental governance. To write the essay, you will need to first read a short scholarly article and watch a TED talk. Your essay should then draw on these materials to critically reflect on sustainable development and whether or not you think it is a useful concept for international environmental policy.

Instructions, expectations, and a grading rubric will be provided on Brightspace. The essay is worth 8% of your final grade.

International treaty regime effectiveness assessment (10%)

Due Sun Feb 28 @11:59pm PT

You will write a ~750 word assessment of the effectiveness of an international environmental treaty of your choice. You are expected to draw on class readings and discussion (especially from Week 4) in defending your assessment. You may choose any multilateral treaty; I will provide a

list of potential treaties, but you are welcome to choose one that is not on the list as long as you check with me first.

Your assessment should show evidence of research into the treaty, describe how you evaluated the treaty, and make one or more recommendations for how to strengthen the treaty. Moreover, your assessment should critically examine the political-economic context in which the treaty was negotiated and signed, with particular attention to institutions and power relations. Assessments should cite at least three sources, including one scholarly source. Instructions, expectations, and a grading rubric will be provided on Brightspace. The assessment is worth 10% of your final grade.

Group commodity chain podcast (10%)

Due Sun Apr 4 @11:59pm PT

In groups of 3, you will collectively record a ~12-minute podcast on the global environmental governance dimensions of a commodity of your choice. You can choose any agricultural or raw material commodity that is (at least partly) governed by an eco-certification scheme.

Your commodity chain podcast should describe and critically examine the policies and institutions that govern your commodity across its life cycle. The commodity's life cycle includes production/extraction, distribution (exports, imports, and transportation), and consumption (marketing, waste). Your podcast should not just explain what these policies and institutions are, but also analyze how they are shaped by power relations between different countries and groups, and how they in turn shape environmental outcomes.

Your podcast should be recorded in a colloquial (i.e. easy to understand) style. You can use any built-in computer microphone and free audio software to record the podcast; I will provide a demonstration video well before the due date. Podcasts do not need to seem like they are professionally produced – that's hard to do! – but should show that they have been scripted out and practiced.

I will randomly assign students to groups several weeks before the due date using Brightspace. Instructions, expectations, and a grading rubric will be provided on Brightspace. The podcast is worth 10% of your final grade.

Term paper (5% abstract and references, 25% final paper)

Abstract and references due Weds Apr 28 @11:59pm PT

Final term paper due Fri May 7 @11:59pm PT

For your final project, students will write a term paper on the international policy dimensions of an environmental issue of their choice. We will spend the final five weeks of the semester working intensively on this paper. This will include a required one-on-one meeting with me during office hours or another suitable time.

This assignment has two parts. First, an abstract and at least 6 scholarly annotated references that you intend to use in your paper. Your abstract should include a brief overview of your topic (~2 sentences), a thesis statement (~1 sentence), and initial insights and conclusions (~2-3

sentences). Your annotation for each reference should include ~2 sentences about the source's purpose/thesis/finding, and then ~2 sentences evaluating its usefulness to your paper.

Second, an 8-10 page (2000-2500 word) final paper on your environmental issue of choice. Papers should describe the historical and contemporary context of the issue; survey existing scholarly literature on the issue; critically analyze the formation, effectiveness, and outcomes of policies, institutions, and regulations that govern the issue; and provide conclusions (and if applicable, recommendations).

Instructions, expectations, and a grading rubric will be provided on Brightspace. The abstract and references are worth 5% of your final grade; the final paper is worth 25%.

Policies

Academic integrity

You are welcome and encouraged to share ideas, perspectives, and resources with your classmates. But your assignments must be your own work or the work of your group. LMU takes cheating and plagiarism very seriously, and either can result in your dismissal. Cheating is taking advantage of the work of others. Plagiarism is representing the work of others as your own without giving appropriate credit.

Attendance and absences

Attendance is required for all Thursday class sessions. I will make note of attendance at the beginning of each Thursday class. Habitual lateness will cause your participation grade to suffer. Please make sure you turn on your webcam and that your face is visible so that I can count you as present! If there's a reason you can't use your webcam during a class session, please let me know by email or using the chat function in Zoom.

If you cannot attend class due to an unforeseen problem, let me know before class. I may ask for a doctor's note or other documentation. If you have a scheduled conflict, let me know as far in advance as possible. Please talk to me at the beginning of the semester if you have concerns about your ability to meet attendance requirements – we all need to be flexible during this crisis.

Emails

Professors have many responsibilities, and we are not always available to answer urgent emails. I will do my best to reply to emails within 24 hours; if I receive them on a weekend, I will reply by the end of the day on Monday. Please include your name and the course name in all emails.

Office hours

I will hold office hours on Zoom every Thursday from 3:30-3:50pm PT (right after our Thursday Zoom discussion). You must use a **sign-up sheet** (available on Brightspace) to reserve a time to meet with me during office hours.

If you have an unavoidable conflict during office hours (such as another class or work), please let me know and we can find another time to meet.

Grading scale

A	93% to 100%
A-	90% to 92.99%
B+	87% to 89.99%
B	83% to 86.99%
B-	80% to 82.99%
C+	77% to 79.99%
C	73% to 76.99%
C-	70% to 72.99%
D	60% to 69.99%
F	0% - 59.99%

Late work

All assignments should be uploaded to Brightspace by the due date. Hard copies are not required. Late work will be counted off 10% for each day late.

If a medical, family, or other emergency occurs that may prevent you from completing an assignment on time, please talk with me about the circumstances as soon as you can. I am always willing to consider a reasonable extension request, so there is no harm in asking.

Cultivating mutual respect

Each of us come from different backgrounds, and may have different perspectives on topics that we discuss in this course, including issues of personal and community identity such as race, ethnicity, gender, and class. It is essential that we all cultivate mutual respect and generosity towards one another. We will listen to others and allow everyone to speak. We will speak with respect for our listeners. In this way, disagreement will be a welcome and valuable part of our discussions and debates. If you ever feel like there are barriers to expressing yourself openly in class, please let me know immediately.

Accommodations for students with disabilities

Students with special needs as addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act who need reasonable modifications, special assistance, or accommodations in this course should promptly direct their request to the Disability Support Services Office. Any student who currently has a documented disability (physical, learning, ADD/ADHD, psychiatric disabilities, and those on the autism spectrum) needing academic accommodations should contact the Disability Services Office (2nd Floor of Daum Hall, 310-338-4216) as early in the semester as possible. All discussions will remain confidential. Please visit <http://www.lmu.edu/dss> for additional information.

Writing help and citation guidelines

If you need help with writing, I encourage you to take advantage of the LMU Writing Center. You can get one-on-one writing help through regular (online!) appointments or a weekly "Writing Lab" (ENGL 1115). Their website is <https://academics.lmu.edu/arc/writingcenter/>.

You are required to properly document the sources of your work. You may choose any common citation format (MLA and APA are the most common). Further citation guidelines will be discussed in class in advance of assignment due dates.

A note on learning during a pandemic

Life absolutely sucks right now. None of us is really okay!

You most likely know people who have lost their jobs, have tested positive for COVID-19, have been hospitalized, or perhaps have even died. You all have increased (or possibly decreased) work responsibilities and increased family care responsibilities—you might be caring for extra people right now, and you are likely facing uncertain job prospects (or have been laid off!).

I'm fully committed to making sure that you learn everything you were hoping to learn from this class. I will make whatever accommodations I can to help you finish your writing, do well on the quizzes, and learn and understand the class material. Under ordinary conditions, I am flexible and lenient with grading and course expectations when students face difficult challenges. Under pandemic conditions, that flexibility and leniency is intensified.

If you tell me you're having trouble, I will not judge you or think less of you. I hope you'll extend me the same grace.

You never owe me personal information about your health (mental or physical). You are always welcome to talk to me about things that you're going through, though. If I can't help you, I usually know somebody who can.

If you need extra help, or if you need more time with something, or if you feel like you're behind or not understanding everything, **don't suffer in silence!** Talk to me! I will work with you.

I want you to learn lots of things from this class, but I primarily want you to stay healthy, balanced, and grounded during this crisis.

Schedule and readings

Week	Date	Topic	Readings	Post?
W1	Jan 12	Welcome and introductions	No reading	No
	Jan 14	Four environmental worldviews	Clapp & Dauvergne Chap 1	
W2	Jan 19	Globalization and the evolution of environmental governance	Clapp & Dauvergne Chap 3	Yes
	Jan 21	Skill: Reading an academic article	Gonzalez (2015)	
W3	Jan 26	States and international environmental regimes	O'Neill Chap 4	Yes
	Jan 28	Case Study: UNFCCC Paris Agreement	Dimitrov (2016); NDRC (2020)	
W4	Feb 2	International environmental regime effectiveness	O'Neill Chap 5	Yes
	Feb 4	Activity: Comparing Montreal and Kyoto	Skjærseth (2012); Rosen (2015)	
W5	Feb 9	Knowledge production in global environmental governance	Dressler & Parson (2012)	Yes
	Feb 11	Case study: Indigenous knowledge	Mistry & Berardi (2016); Fort et al. (2019); Rosa-Aquino (2018)	
W6	Feb 16	Market mechanisms in global environmental governance	O'Neill Chap 8	Yes
	Feb 18	Debate: REDD+	Bertazzo (2019); Fletcher et al. (2016); Angelsen et al. (2017)	
W7	Feb 23	Global investment and the environment	Clapp & Dauvergne Chap 6	No
	Feb 25	Guest speaker: China's Belt and Road Initiative	Ascensão et al. (2018)	
NO CLASS MAR 2 or MAR 4 – SPRING BREAK				

W8	Mar 9	Global trade and the environment	Clapp & Dauvergne Chap 5	Yes
	Mar 11	Activity: Palm oil certification	Dauvergne (2018); RSPO (2014); Greenpeace (2013)	
W9	Mar 16	Global financing and the environment	Clapp & Dauvergne Chap 7	Yes
	Mar 18	Debate: Green finance	Sachs et al. (2019); The Economist (2020); Razzouk (2018)	
W10	Mar 23	Transboundary environmental governance	Liverman et al. (1999)	Yes
	Mar 25	Case study: Pollution on the U.S.-Mexico border	James (2019)	
W11	Mar 30	OPTIONAL: Environment, security, and conflict	OPTIONAL: Homer-Dixon et al. (1993); Hartmann (2001)	No
	Apr 1	NO CLASS – EASTER BREAK	No reading	
W12	Apr 6	Democratic environmental governance	Fischer (2017)	Yes
	Apr 8	Case study: Pipeline politics	Reveal podcast (2017); Johnson (2019)	
W13	Apr 13	Authoritarian environmental governance	Beeson (2016)	Yes
	Apr 15	Guest speaker: Environmental civil society in China	Mertha (2009); China Dialogue (2020); ChinaFile (2020)	
W14	Apr 20	Governing climate change adaptation	UNFCCC (2010); Klepp & Chavez-Rodriguez (2017)	Yes
	Apr 22	Case study: Sea level rise in Jakarta	Salim et al. (2019); Guest (2019)	
W15	Apr 27	Cities and climate change	Halais (2020); Rosenzweig & Solecki (2018)	No
	Apr 29	Wrap up / Research discussion	No reading	