PS 477/577—International Environmental Politics and Policy (4 credits)

A. INTRODUCTION
Solving global environmental problems such as climate change, ozone depletion, trade in hazardous waste, protection of biological diversity and overfishing will require nations to cooperate. In recent decades thousands of international agreements and hundreds of international institutions have been developed with the goal of protecting the global environmental commons. This course will examine whether these efforts have made much difference by exploring concepts in international relations theory, such as the impact of power and ideas on the structure of international politics. It will examine the interactions between international agreements on environmental protection and changes in technology, and it will give special attention to the growing power of business and environmental non-governmental organizations in world politics. Some attention will also be given to the interactions between the World Trade Organization, the process of “globalization” and the quality of the environment.

This course is organized around key analytical issues, such as the impact of nongovernmental and governmental actors on the kinds of agreements that are negotiated, the relative effectiveness of binding and non-binding legal
instruments, and the techniques for establishing that an international regime has actually caused a change in behavior that has improved the quality of the environment. We will introduce basic concepts of international relations theory as applied to international environmental politics, utilize case studies as illustrations, and provide information about most of the major instances of international environmental cooperation as well as how to analyze those cases. Should you need additional information on a particular case, please look at my brief environmental website at: http://oregonstate.edu/dept/pol_sci/fac/steel/cl/www449/websites.htm

Topics to be covered this course include:

- Climate Change
- The European Acid Rain Regime
- Ozone Depletion
- Trade in Hazardous Waste
- Protection of Biological Diversity
- Whaling
- Trade in Endangered Species
- Forests
- Desertification
- Persistent Organic Pollutants
- Population
- World Trade Organization
- NAFTA and Regional Trade Agreements

B. EXPECTATIONS

Students will be expected to read all assigned materials. The course will emphasize not only learning about the subject matter but also the development of communication skills—written and electronic. There will be four policy response assignments, an international environmental briefing memo, and course participation required. Depending on the class size, several sessions will be given over to on-line debates on current policy topics, such as whether the U.S. should ratify the Kyoto Protocol on global warming. Teams and topics will be selected during week 2 of class.

Graduate students enrolled in the class will be expected to read and provide written summaries of all supplemental readings listed in the course schedule below. These materials are essential for a fuller understanding of the field.

- Policy Response Assignments—100 points each [400 total points possible]
- Course participation—50 points
- International Environmental Briefing Memo—100 points
- Graduate student written summaries of supplemental readings—100 points

Student Research Project: Each student is required to write a briefing memo on some international environmental issue—the memo is important both for your own
learning and as a source of information for others. Student memos will be shared with the class and will take the form of an actual memo that might be researched and written for a policymaker (e.g., president, governor, etc.). These guidelines should be viewed as a point of departure in your efforts; they do not cover everything you will need to do, but should get you started. Briefing memos should include: 1. Brief background and history of the issue; 2. Countries Involved; 3. Interest Groups and Business/Industry; 4. Major Figures (such as leading experts, etc.); 5. International Organizations; 6. Regimes Developed/in Process of Development; and 7. Trends, Analysis and Predictions. Briefing should be approximately 1,000 words in length, with three to five of the best sources cited for those students who would like to learn more about the topic.

C. LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Both Undergraduate and Graduate Students:

- To learn about the major international environmental issues facing the world today (including overfishing, tropical forests, whaling, climate change, ozone depletion, trade in endangered species, etc.)
- To develop an understanding of international environmental policy processes, including the various governmental and non-governmental actors involved in these processes.
- To gain knowledge of the various “driving factors” of international environmental politics and policy including population change, economic development, changing attitudes and beliefs, political culture, globalization, etc.
- To understand how various cultural (e.g., religion, etc.) and secular (e.g., neo-liberalism) perspectives shape individual group, and country orientations toward international environmental issues.
- To comprehend how the number of actors involved in international environmental issues affects the nature and development of international environmental protocols, treaties and regimes.

Graduate Students:

- To evaluate existing international environmental regimes (e.g., whaling, climate change, etc.) to determine effectiveness using assessment criteria developed in course reading materials.
- To synthesize various socioeconomic and political factors that influence international policy processes, and then apply this synthesis to develop a long-term plan for international environmental cooperation to solve environmental issues.
- To analyze and then apply various theories encountered in the course to explain the development (or non-development) of international environmental regimes.
D. READING MATERIALS:
Almost all of the assigned readings for this course are included in a course reader, available at the OSU Bookstore. Undergraduates should purchase the main reader; graduate and advanced students should also purchase the supplemental reader.

Also available for purchase at the bookstore is the one assigned book:

Porter, Garth, Janet Welsh Brown, and Pamela S. Chasek (2000). *Global Environmental Politics*, (Boulder: Westview Press). *(Referred to throughout the syllabus as PBC)*

E. COURSE POLICIES:

- Advanced notice is required for late assignments/exams.
- Extra credit will not be allowed in this course.
- All OSU academic regulations will be followed in the course. Academic regulations are available at: [http://catalog.oregonstate.edu/](http://catalog.oregonstate.edu/). This includes the university policy concerning incompletes: "When a requirement of a course has not been completed for reasons acceptable to the instructor and the rest of the academic work is passing, a report of I may be made and additional time granted. The I is only granted at the discretion of the instructor.

- You are expected to do all required reading.
- *Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated in this course. Engaging in such behaviors will result in a failing course grade.* You are to do ALL of your own work. Appropriate citation must be used for all materials incorporated into your work.

- Proper spelling, grammar, and citation should be used in all assignments/exams.

F. ESSAY/EXAM EVALUATION CRITERIA:

The following criteria will be used for evaluating written assignments and exams:

[1=Poor; 2=Average; 3=Good; 4=Excellent]

- COMMITMENT-did you cover all relevant materials/questions?
- AMBITION-did you take each issue to task?
- ENGAGEMENT-did you make connections between issues?
- CLARITY-was the paper readable and well organized?
G. FINAL GRADE DISTRIBUTION:

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H. Reading Topics and Schedule:

WEEK 1:  Driving Forces of Environmental Degradation: Population, technology, affluence, values, externalities and failure to cooperate

PBC – Chapter 1

Course reader:


Web-based readings:


Lomborg, Bjørn. 2001. The Skeptical Environmentalist. Cambridge:
Supplemental reading for graduate students and others interested in further examination of the issues:


**Web-based Supplementary Readings:**


**WEEK 2**

International Cooperation: Why cooperate, who cooperates, what are the requisites of cooperation, and how do scholars determine when cooperation is effective?

**Course reader:**


**Web-based Readings:**

| WEEK 3 | International Cooperation: Bilateral to Multilateral: Regional and Global binding treaties (Part 1).  
|        | PBC – Chapter 3  
|        | **Course reader:**  
|        | **Web-based Supplemental Readings:**  

| WEEK 4 | **Supplemental reading for graduate students and others interested in further examination of the issues**  
|        | Cooperation with Numerous Actors: Global, legally binding treaties (Part 2) and Cooperation with Non-binding Agreements.  
|        | **Course Reader:**  


**Web-based Readings:**


**Web-based Supplemental Readings:**


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**Supplemental reading for graduate students and others interested in further examination of the issues**

**WEEK 5**

**Cooperation with Compensatory Mechanisms and “Issue Linkages”. Cooperation by Changing Underlying Values and Norms**

- **PBC – Chapter 4**

  **Course Reader:**


  **Web-based Readings:**


### WEEK 6

**Unilateral Action, Globalization of Interest Groups: Industry, Environmental groups, and Consumer organizations**

**Course Reader:**

**Web-based Supplemental Readings:**

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### WEEK 7

**Scientific Experts and Networks of Elites. Integrating “environment” into development and trade institutions**

**Course Reader:**

**Web-based Readings:**
- Steel, Brent S., Peter List, Denise Lach, and Bruce Shindler, "The Role of


**Web-based Supplemental Readings:**


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**WEEK 8**

**Focus on the WTO: Do trade agreements require countries to abandon health and safety regulation? The Obsolete State?**

**Course Reader:**


**Web-based Readings:**

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<th>Are International Obligations Enforceable and have the legalistic approaches run their course?</th>
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<td><strong>Course Reader:</strong></td>
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Note: “Students with documented disabilities who may need accommodations, who have any emergency medical information the instructor should know, or who need special arrangements in the event of evacuation, should make an appointment with the instructor as early as possible (use email for this class), no later than the first week of the term. In order to arrange alternative testing the student should make the
request at least one week in advance of the test. Students seeking accommodations should be registered with the Office of Services for Students with disabilities.”

For textbook accuracy, please check the textbook list at the OSU Bookstore website (http://www.osubeverstore.com/). Syllabi may not have the most up to date textbook information!