
INTERNAT'L POLITICS OF THE ENVIRONMENT in Fall 2020 (PO3033)

Course Code	PO3033	Professor(s)	Oleg Kobtzeff
Prerequisites	None	Office Number	G-L16
Class Schedule	F: 10:50-12:25 in Q-A101 T: 16:20-17:55 in Q-A101	Office Hours	Tuesdays 13:00-14:00 & Fridays 15:00-16:00
Credits	4	Email	okobtzeff@aup.edu
Semester	Fall 2020	Office Tel. Ext.	688(during off.,hrs)

Course Description

Most class sessions will be illustrated by a Power Point presentation of 50 to 100 slides, all available on Blackboard with many other documents supporting the course and your experience in environmental studies

IN A PRESENT OR FUTURE SITUATION OF REMOTE LEARNING: FOLLOW THE SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS IN RED THROUGHOUT THIS SYLLABUS

< — (LOOK FOR THIS LIGHTHOUSE ICON)

IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO BE IN CLASS DUE TO TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS AND/OR QUARANTINE YOU CAN FOLLOW LIVE or RECORDED VIDEOS OF ALL CLASSES. IF THIS COURSE IS FORCED TO MOVE ENTIRELY ON LINE DUE TO COVID EMERGENCY MEASURES,

teaching will be provided through 1) live broadcasts from the instructor's home and the 2) recordings of those live sessions; 3) special documentaries produced for the course

After the Chernobyl' accident (April 1986), hundreds of deaths and thousands of cases of fallout-related disease struck

Ukrainian, Byelorussian and Slovak populations and many territories in Western Europe. For the first time in history, an

exodus of nearly a quarter of a million "environmental refugees" caused a sensation that brought environmental politics

out of its hippy and radical left-wing ghetto. More recently, the debate on climate change created so much pressure

that decision-makers worldwide, even the least concerned by ecology, could no longer ignore the risks of geographic,

economic and political instability since environmental degradation coincided with the collapse of the Soviet bloc. From

then on, the notion of "environmental security" would be explicitly defined in diplomatic circles.

Chernobyl' is, however, the most spectacular, but not the only illustration of a major geopolitical situation we have finally realized: the challenge of environmental politics is the ultimate

evidence of how globalization has already reshaped all of our lives.

This realization is in great part the result of decades of influence of environmentalist activism over public opinion. The Chernobyl' disaster, followed almost two centuries of struggles in Western societies where industrial interests were opposed by environmentalist groups but where they were also at odds with other economic and even industrial interests (i.e. communities dependent on tourism and sports, transportation, colonial products, the military, etc.). During these political struggles, the environmentalist movements became less and less marginal in worldwide politics as demonstrated in France and Germany where the "Greens" have been a key element in government coalitions and in many other European countries where they represent an important proportion of the electorate. Environmentalism gained a special place in the popular culture of many societies with the help of NGOs such as the National Geographic Society, the WWF, the Sierra Club, the Audubon Society or the more radical Greenpeace.

The integration of the environment on all international and domestic political agendas was made possible by yet another essential factor: the capital role of tourism in the economy of every existing nation-state. New and exciting economic activities are also emerging, opening new problems but also very optimistic perspectives.

Among the actors involved in the politics of the natural environment, we will identify as many opposing agendas over many new political issues international and domestic. The popularization of environmental issues is illustrated by figures like Jane Goodall, Diane Fossey, Capt. Jacques-Yves Cousteau, or other "adventurer-naturalists" with strong support from governments, NGOs or publishers and film companies. These and hundreds of others are now key actors in international politics. But are these seminal figures serving the interests of African, Latin American or Asian communities or do they represent a form of neo-colonial paternalism? Is environmentalism always what it seems?

The need to find solutions to such catastrophes as global warming, receding rainforests, the disappearing of thousands of vegetal and animal life-forms, air and water poisoning or many other disasters is urgent: the survival of millions of humans depends on it in this generation. The urgency is creating new opportunities for international cooperation. On the other hand, environmentalism (as human rights) can serve as a political tool to exercise pressure on other nations or human communities. A small but potentially powerful number of Western analysts seems determined to exploit the fear of environmental catastrophes for purposes that have little in common with a concern for trees and animals. Could the fear of a new Chernobyl' and compassion for disappearing species become an alibi for a new type of "politically correct" Cold War? Or are there more opportunities to create world peace?

Course Learning Outcomes

Master basic concepts and methods from ecological and physical sciences and their application in environmental problem solving (this essentially aims to assist humanities students, non-scientists)

Master core concepts and methods from economic, political, and social analysis as they pertain

to the design and evaluation of environmental policies and institutions.

Appreciate the ethical, cross-cultural, and historical context of environmental issues and the links between human and natural systems.

Understand the transnational character of environmental problems and ways of addressing them, including interactions across local to global scales.

Apply systems concepts and methodologies to analyze and understand interactions between social and environmental processes.

Reflect critically about their roles and identities as citizens, consumers and environmental actors in a complex, interconnected world.

Demonstrate proficiency in quantitative methods, qualitative analysis, critical thinking, and written and oral communication needed to conduct high-level work as interdisciplinary scholars and/or practitioners.

General Education

Course Outline

COURSE CONTENTS

All class activity will be focused on how to successfully present arguments – in the form of written essays, book reports/critiques of documents or oral presentations – when treating theoretical or practical, political issues involving environmental affairs. Two preliminary class sessions will present the outline of the course and will immediately introduce students to a writing technique that will give them the ability to defend their ideas on the environment in a powerful way.

This will be followed by introductory class sessions presenting the general issues, questions, and political choices challenging all societies faced by rapidly a radically changing natural environment. The next class sessions will analyze this from a historic retrospective, with a focus on the conflicting ideologies that still influence environmental policy-making. We will then study some of the most important aspects of the damage sustained by the planet's natural environment and their political consequences. We will then focus on particular issues concerning the entire planet (global warming for example) or specific local cases. Unfortunately, time restrictions have forced the instructor to omit several regions, even those he has studied at length; however, students are encouraged to complete the course with their own presentations.

Basic outline of class sessions

PROLOGUE. Opening remarks. An introduction to our working methods: learning how to structure our thoughts orally and in written form in the course of two debates, one on the pros and cons of veganism, one on the pros and cons of banning zoos.

CHAPTER 1: Introduction to the fundamental theoretical approaches of environmental studies. Definition of the problems in the politics of the environment and their political relevance.

CHAPTER 2: History of environmentalism, of environmental thought and of environmental politics: analyzing The origins; relations between nature and human communities in the past: "war against nature" or sacredness of nature?

Part 1. France as a model.

Part 2. Other countries compared to France.

Part 3. Central and Eastern Europe: from the romantic era to Chernobyl

CHAPTER 3: Global warming: how to easily introduce the debate.

CHAPTER 4: The politics and economics of sustainable development.

CHAPTER 5: The problem of population, consumption and scarcity of resources and their political consequences.

CHAPTER 6: Nuclear power as a clean and climate friendly source of energy? Pros and cons.

CHAPTER 7: Human rights and the environment. Indigenous societies and ecopolitics.

CHAPTER 8: The protection of animal lives and wellbeing.

CHAPTER 9: Animal rights vs. people rights? The case of the Aleut indigenous population and the fur seals of the Pribilof islands.

CHAPTER 10: Peacebuilding through wildlife management and other environmental projects

CHAPTER 11: the Amazon Jungle: the geopolitical/ecopolitical situation.

Detailed outline of class sessions

Each topic will be treated in the time frame of one, two or three class sessions

PROLOGUE. Opening remarks. An introduction to our working methods.

- Debate # 1: veganism :

- o Is it relevant to discuss veganism in political science?

- o Should the agenda of vegans become a social and legal norm?

- Debate # 2: zoos :

- o Should zoos be banned as in Costa Rica?

Documentation to study:

- View video "How to write the most powerful essays: Part 1: T-A-S: the 3 chapter method". (available on Blackboard)

- Read: Alan Aftonfalker & Yaroslav Rovenskikh, "Zoos: Who Needs Them?", Nature & Cultures, Issue 1

CHAPTER 1: Introduction to the fundamental theoretical approaches of environmental studies.

Definition of the problems in the politics of the environment and their political relevance.

- LEADING QUESTIONS and exam subjects:

- o Define the tragedy of the Commons.

- o In the domain of environmental politics, what political issues are involved when shared natural resources are discussed

- o Define and discuss the notion of "transboundary externalities" in the domain of environmental politics

- o Define and discuss the notion of "linked issues" in the domain of environmental politics

- o How accurate is the classic cartoon by Scott Willis known as the "Yo amigo" cartoon?

Documentation to study:

- View video "How to write the most powerful essays: Part 2: the best method for writing reviews of books, articles, films and other documents". (available on Blackboard)

- Articles in The Dictionary of Human Geography: nature, ecology, ecosystem, human ecology, tragedy of the commons, environmental justice, contextual approach, urban ecology, cultural

ecology, biodiversity, biopower, sustainable development, energy, and all linked articles.

- Owen Green, "Environmental Issues", in Baylis, John & Steve Smith, *The Globalization of World Politics: an Introduction to International Relations*, 2nd edition, Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press, 200, pages 387-414 (handout posted on Blackboard)
- Held, David, Anthony McGrew, David Goldblatt, & Jonathon Perraton, *Global Transformations: Politics, Economics and Culture*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2000, pages 376-413 (Chapter 8, "Catastrophe in the Making: Globalization and the Environment") (available on line and on Blackboard)

- Brown: chapters 1 and 2

CHAPTER 2: History of environmentalism, of environmental thought and of environmental politics: analyzing The origins; relations between nature and human communities in the past: "war against nature" or sacredness of nature?

- LEADING QUESTIONS and exam subject:

o Is it useful to study environmental politics from a historic retrospective approach?

o Is environmentalism a left-wing ideology?

o Is religion responsible for human civilizations' aggressive attitude to nature by promoting an anthropocentric ideology of "man" being "fruitful and multiplying" and "submitting nature" ?

o How do the interests of governments, industry, commerce and media blend into a common agenda promoting public awareness of and advocacy for conservation and environmentalism.

Documentation to study:

- Environmental history timeline > pre-industrial

- J.M. Powell, "Origins of Environmentalism", *Companion Encyclopedia of Geography, The Environment and Humankind*, Routledge, (posted on Blackboard) read pp. 274-282

Part 1. France as a model.

Documentation to study:

- "Luc Ferry - interview with the French philosopher, educator and essayist by Bahgat Elnadi and Adel Rifaat", *UNESCO Courier*, April 1993, <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000093729?posInSet=2&queryId=5fba530c-91b7-4745-9c92-2c0ad429474c>)

- Oleg Kobtzeff, "France's culture of outdoors leisure and environmentalism" (posted on Blackboard on October 7)

- Brown: chapters 3 and 4

Part 2. Other countries compared to France.

Documentation to study:

- Brown: chapters 5 and 6

Part 3. Central and Eastern Europe: from the romantic era to Chernobyl

- LEADING QUESTION and final exam subject:

o Did the environmental degradation destroy the Soviet system and lead to the end of the Cold War?

Documentation to study:

- Oleg Kobteff, "Environmental Security and Civil Society", in- Gardner, Hall, ed., *Central and South-central Europe in Transition*, Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 2000, pp. 219-296. (available on Blackboard)

CHAPTER 3: Global warming: how to easily introduce the debate.

- LEADING QUESTIONS and exam subject:

o How accurate is Al Gore's classic documentary "The Inconvenient Truth"?

o How accurate is the documentary "The Global Warming Swindle"?

Documentation to study:

- the dossier on global warming on Blackboard
- View two documentaries : "The Inconvenient Truth"? (at the AUP Library) and "The Great Global Warming Swindle" (on Youtube)

CHAPTER 4: The politics and economics of sustainable development.

- LEADING QUESTION and exam subject:

o how sustainable are the techniques and products labeled as sustainable?

Documentation to study:

- Brown chapter 10
 - Lester R. Brown, "Exciting News About Renewable Energy", Mother Earth, October/November 2012
 - special issue of Scientific American posted on Blackboard
 - Article in The Dictionary of Human Geography: sustainable development, and all linked articles
- CHAPTER 5: The problem of population, consumption and scarcity of resources and their political consequences.

- LEADING QUESTION and exam subject:

o Are there too many inhabitants on the planet? Will reducing its human population save the planet from the environmental damage it has sustained and is still suffering from?

Documentation to study:

- Brown, chapters 7 and 9
- Robert Kaplan, "The Coming Anarchy", The Atlantic Monthly, February 1994, Volume 273, No. 2; pages 44-76. (posted on Blackboard).
- Are there too many inhabitants on the planet? section in Nature & Cultures.

CHAPTER 6: Nuclear power as a clean and climate friendly source of energy? Pros and cons.

- LEADING QUESTION and exam subject:

o Should nuclear energy be banned as in Sweden?

Documentation to study:

- Article in The Dictionary of Human Geography: "energy" and all linked articles. Also:
- Thesis from anti-nukes activists):
- The Greenpeace web page on nuclear energy
- David Toke, "Nuclear power is expensive everywhere!"
- Anti-thesis from pro-nuke authors:
- Baroness Worthington, "Why we really do need nuclear power"
- Mark Diesendorf, "Renewable energy versus nuclear: dispelling the myths"
- From the World Nuclear Association: "Nuclear Power in Sweden"
- Moniz, Ernest, "Why We Still Need Nuclear Power", Foreign Affairs, 90(6): 83-94
- A synthesis:
- Charles D. Ferguson, "Think Again: Nuclear Power" (available on Blackboard)

CHAPTER 7: Human rights and the environment. Indigenous societies and ecopolitics.

- LEADING QUESTION and exam subject:

o How important are indigenous populations in international geopolitics in general and in environmental politics in particular

o What is the correlation between the politics of human rights, the politics of the environment and the politics of indigenous societies?

Documentation to study:

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- Grenier, Louise. Working with Indigenous Knowledge : A Guide for Researchers.
 - Ottawa, ON, CAN: IDRC Books, 1998. p 12 (available online through the AUP Library website: <http://site.ebrary.com/lib/auparis/Doc?id=10137752&ppg=12>) Read: Introduction + Section 1 - "What about Indigenous knowledge"?
 - Heather Myers, "Changing Environment, Changing Times : Environmental Issues and Political Action in the Canadian North" (posted on Blackboard) ;
 - Anthony Triollo and Oleg Kobtzeff article on St. Paul Island Bicentennial (posted on Blackboard)..
 - Australian Aborigines. Read "Cosmic Ecology : An Aboriginal View of the World" (posted on Blackboard).

CHAPTER 8: The protection of animal lives and wellbeing.

- LEADING QUESTION(S) and final exam subjects:
 - o Should the issue of animal rights be a priority for local and national governments and international institutions?

Documentation to study:

- The BBC Animal Rights page

CHAPTER 9: Animal rights vs. people rights? The case of the Aleut indigenous population and the fur seals of the Pribilof islands.

- LEADING QUESTION(S) and final exam subjects:
 - o Should human rights prevail over animal rights ?

Documentation to study:

- Dossier with collection of articles on the Pribilof Islands on Blackboard

CHAPTER 10: Peacebuilding through wildlife management and other environmental projects

- LEADING QUESTION(S) and final exam subjects:
 - o Is it reasonable and/or efficient to implement environmental programs as a tool of conflict resolution?

Documentation to study:

- Dossier "National Parks and conflict resolution
- Our work | International Gorilla Conservation Programme (IGCP)
- Virunga: Preserving Africa's National Parks through People-Centred Development
- Greater Virunga Landscape
- View documentary "Virunga" on Netflix (if available to you)

CHAPTER 11: the Amazon Jungle: the geopolitical/ecopolitical situation.

- LEADING QUESTION(S):
 - o How important for international geopolitics in general and environmental politics in particular to preserve environmental security in the Amazon jungle
 - o Is it legitimate to compare environmental destruction to genocide?

Documentation to study:

- Blackboard dossier on the Amazon

Textbooks

This course doesn't have any textbook.

Attendance Policy

Students who are in Paris are obligated to attend in-person on-campus all LIVE classes as scheduled. This rule will remain in place unless authorities shut down the AUP campus (like last spring). This rule is imposed by the instructor of this particular course, and may not apply to other classes and instructors. HOWEVER, WHILE ON CAMPUS, ALL AUP students and personnel must follow rules of social distancing and other measures of safety (masks, etc.), unless sanitary measures force the course to students will have the option of attending classes remotely when special circumstances apply. For example when students are placed under quarantine by the French authorities or by their doctor, or when students present symptoms of Covid-19 and are directed, by their doctor or the AUP Health Office, to remain home. It is still the student's responsibility to be aware of any specific attendance policy that their professor might have set in the course syllabus. In particular, Students attending remotely from distant Time Zones should check with their professors about the specific attendance policy for remote learners. Attendance at all exams is mandatory.

IN ALL CASES OF MISSED COURSE MEETINGS, THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMMUNICATION WITH THE PROFESSOR, AND FOR ARRANGING TO MAKE UP MISSED WORK, RESTS SOLELY WITH THE STUDENT.

Whether an absence is excused or not is ALWAYS up to the discretion of the professor or the department. Unexcused absences can result in a low or failing Participation grade. In the case of excessive absences, it is up to the professor or the department to decide if the student will receive an "F" for the course. An instructor may recommend that a student withdraw, if absences have made it impossible to continue in the course at a satisfactory level.

Students must be mindful of this policy when making their travel arrangements, and especially during the Drop/Add and Exam Periods.

Grading Policy

EVALUATION OF STUDENTS

#1. Proposal: 10%. Before the midterm; students must submit a proposal for the research project they wish to pursue: a scholarly paper, a magazine article or a presentation. It will include an abstract of a minimum of 600 words* + a bibliography of at least 10 titles of scholarly books or articles, see "assignments" section on

Blackboard to study how to present a proposal). (to give you an idea: the course description section in this syllabus is 593 words)

#2. Mid-term take-home exercise: 20%: a 4 or 5 page (minimum 2500 words) essay or review of a document

on the great questions discussed in class (Prologue + chapters 1 and 2). The exam subjects you may be

assigned by the instructor are listed in each chapter (see "Leading questions"). After it has been graded

Students will be able to schedule appointments with the instructor to discuss the grade and how to improve

the essay. You will be assigned a choice of subjects on October 28. Deadline to submit the assignment:

Tuesday 10 November.

#3. Final exam (take-home): 20% will be provided to students on the last day of class. Any exam subject

listed in the syllabus (see "Leading questions") or any other subject that you have become familiar with

during the course may be chosen by the instructor. You will have 48 hours to submit the written assignment

by email.

#4. Research. 30%.

Students will choose one of the following 5 options:

1. A 6 to 7 page article on the subject presented in the proposal or

2. a Presentation or

3. a journalistic article (intended if the student pleases, for publication in N&C, the geographic and

environmental webzine produced by AUP staff and students (5 to 10 pages + illustrations).

4. Participation. 20%.

Students who are in Paris are obligated to attend in-person on-campus all LIVE classes as scheduled. This rule will remain in place unless authorities shut down the AUP campus (like last spring). This rule is imposed by the instructor of this particular course, and may not apply to other

classes and instructors. HOWEVER, WHILE ON CAMPUS, ALL AUP students and personnel must follow rules of

social distancing and other measures of safety (masks, etc.), unless sanitary measures force the course to go on line.

Students studying remote are expected to either

1) be present online during each live session (online presence will be verified by checking the list of

participants on Microsoft-Teams sessions and random questions will be frequently asked).

2) Watch the recordings proposed on Teams and Blackboard and schedule an appointment with the

instructor to discuss those recordings

Other
