College of Arts and Sciences
Political Science
Oakland University

PS354 Global Environmental Governance, 4 Credits
Cross-listed as ENV354
Fall Semester 2006 Syllabus

Instructor: Emmett N. Lombard     E-mail: lombard@oakland.edu
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Class Time:               Office Hours:

Course (Catalog) Description: Overview of inter-related environmental and resource issues at the regional and global levels and current institutions, laws and policies for addressing them. Issues include global warming, climate change, biodiversity/species decline, trade/environment linkages, water resources, depletion of global fisheries and rainforests.

This class satisfies the General Education requirements in the Integration (Knowledge Applications) area.
This class satisfies the General Education requirement either for a writing intensive course in the major or for writing intensive in General Education (but not both).

Course Prerequisites/Co-requisites: none

General Education Learning Outcomes:

1. How knowledge in a field outside of the student’s major can be evaluated and applied to solve problems across a range of applications.
2. Knowledge of the personal, professional ethical and societal implications of these applications.

Cross-Cutting Capacity: Social Awareness

Course Objectives:

Students will demonstrate an understanding of the values that place conflicting demands on ecological resources management and how these demands produce opportunities for conflict and compromise at the national, regional and global levels.

Students will demonstrate in depth knowledge of contemporary issues in global ecological resources management including controversies surrounding the use of the precautionary principle, risk analysis and management, and cost benefit analysis.

Required Text(s) and Supporting Course Material:


Course Procedures: lecture, discussion
**Expectations of Students:** Attendance is expected and will be checked throughout the semester. Since there are only about 30 class sessions this semester, the “rule of three” is implemented (i.e. one-letter grade reduction for each 3 unexcused absences). Tardiness is discouraged: students with presentation responsibilities deserve your respect.

Academic Conduct Policy: Cheating on examinations, plagiarism, falsifying reports/records, and unauthorized collaboration, access, or modifying of computer programs are considered serious breaches of academic conduct. The Oakland University policy on academic conduct dishonesty will be strictly followed with no exceptions. See catalog under Academic Policies and Procedures.

**Add/drops,** The University add/drop policy will be explicitly followed. It is the student’s responsibility to be aware of the University deadline dates for dropping the course.

**Special Considerations:** Students with disabilities who may require special considerations should make an appointment with campus Disability Support Services. Students should also bring their needs to the attention of the instructor as soon as possible.

**Grade Determination:** Evaluations of student performance will be based on the results of two exams (30%), the writing assignments (60%), and student participation (10%). The midterm and final exams are written and consist of a series of short essay questions that are to be answered in the time allotted. The final is comprehensive. Position papers must be 5-6 typed pages with 1-inch margins and no larger than 12 point font (New Times Roman). The paper on risk must be at least 10 typed, double-spaced pages (same margins and font). In this assignment, students are required to develop a paper that informs the public about “risk” in relation to a specific environmental, natural resource, and/or human health issue at the regional and/or global levels. The exercise is designed to prepare students to help others understand global environmental issues by providing sound, basic information. The paper must address the following questions: How serious is the actual risk? What specific health or environmental standards are in jeopardy? Who is responsible? What is being done about it (i.e. what policies are now in effect; how effective they are)? What are the professional, ethical and societal implications of these actions? Are there reasonable alternatives to conditions that pose risks? What are the trade-offs (or benefits), if any? What can readers do about it? The first draft of the 10-page assessment including sources is due in class November 7; this will be returned to students the following week with feedback on how to proceed. The final paper is due on the last day of class (December 5). The last two weeks of class are devoted to presentation of student papers. It is especially important for participation purposes that students attend all presentations.

**Class Schedule and Topical Outline:** The class schedule, below, indicates class dates, exam dates, specific topical material to be covered, and reading/homework assignments. The instructor reserves the right to make minor adjustments to this schedule.

(Week of)

**August 31:** Introduction

**Part I: Global Environmental Problems**

September 5
- Population and Consumption: Lowry 1-3
- Water Scarcity: Lowry 4-7

September 12
- Climate and Atmosphere: Lowry 8-10; Axelrod et.al. 6
- Biodiversity: Lowry 11-13

September 14: First position paper on Population and Consumption due.

**Part II: Thinking About Risk**

September 19
Ackerman and Heinzerling 1-5
Impacts of Markets, Privatization, Deregulation
Use of Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBA)
Ethical Implications of CBA in Environmental Regulation

September 26
Ackerman and Heinzerling 6-9
Environmental and Human Health Risks and CBA
Precautionary Principle
Holistic CBA

September 28: Second position paper on Global Warming due.

**Part III: Using/Abusing Science**

October 3
Mooney 1-10
Threats to the Use of Science in Policymaking
Historical Uses of Science in National Policy
The “Business” of Science

October 10
Mooney 11-14
Religion and Science
The G.W. Bush Administration

October 12: Third position paper on Biodiversity Loss due.

**October 17 Midterm Exam**

**Part IV: Global Institutions, Policies, Laws**

October 19
Axelrod et.al. 1-5
International Environmental Institutions and Regimes

October 24
Axelrod et.al. 6-9
Global Environmental Policy: Cases and Questions

October 31
Axelrod et.al. 10-14
Implementing Global Policy: Controversies in Sustainable Development

**November 7 First Draft of Paper Due**

**Part V: Solutions**

November 14
Lowry 14-17
Neo-tropical Restoration Biology
Valuing Ecosystem Services

November 21
Lowry 18, 20
Environmentally Sustainable Business Practices
Impacts of Household Consumption

**November 23 Thanksgiving Recess**

November 28: Presentations
December 5 Presentations (Final Draft of Paper due)

**Final Examination: TBA**