

POLS 255-01 Global Political Ecology

Pablo Toral

Fall 2014, TH 10:00AM-11:50AM

Room: MI 209

Phone, x2166

Email, toralp@beloit.edu

Office hours: MI 112A, Tuesday and Thursday, 3:00PM-4:00PM and by appointment.

Prerequisite: any 100-level POLS course.

This course fulfills the following requirements: W, C, Q, 3B, LAP-1

It may also be used to fulfill requirements for the following majors and minors

Majors: international relations, political science, environmental studies and health and society.

Minors: area studies, environmental studies, health and society, political science.

It may also count for the minors in critical identity studies and legal studies with permission of the director of this program. If you intend to use this course for this minor, you need to talk to me and to the minor's director during the first week of the semester.

Course description

Students will read about different ecologies, ecocentric and anthropocentric, as well as the actors, issues, and mechanisms of environmental policy-making and environmental law-making at different levels, from the local to the global. We will review the role of Congress, the judiciary, and civil society groups. The course pays special attention to energy policies across the world and the politics of climate change from a global perspective. The assignments in this course are practical and include an activism project conducted on campus, an internship and simulation of a United Nations-sponsored climate summit that seeks to pass international climate legislation. The course fulfills the liberal-arts-in-practice requirement. Offered every Fall.

Structure of the course

We first study environmental politics and environmental law in the United States, with a focus at the federal and state levels. We then move to the international level to understand international regimes, the framework within which international environmental law is passed and enforced. This section is illustrated with a case study of the international regime for climate change. In the last section of the course we review different environmental worldviews. Since one of the main goals of the course is to prepare the students for environmental activism, most of the course will be based on an analysis of the actors whose actions have a bigger impact on the environment and the challenges for collective action.

Course goals

This course has three major goals. (1) The first one is to understand the relationship between development (in its myriad forms) and protection of the environment. Political ecological accounts of social activity argue that costs and benefits associated with environmental change are for the most part distributed among the actors unequally. This

reinforces or reduces existing social and economic inequalities, in turn altering the power of some actors in relation to others. We will analyze the meaning of “sustainable development” and its implications.

(2) The second goal of the course is to prepare the students for environmental activism. To achieve this, the course will help them understand the environmental implications of the activities by which actors pursue their economic and political interests. Since different actors have different degrees of power, we will study how they use their power to push their political ecology. We will study the main actors involved in environmental activism, from the global level to the local level, including the role of civil society groups, especially the scientific community, activists such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and grassroots groups.

The role of international organizations such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the regional development banks, the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), among others, will shed some light on the constraints and the opportunities afforded to developing countries and activists in the developing world. We will also study the powerful influence of firms, especially multinational enterprises.

(3) The third goal is to understand the use of diplomacy and international to address some of the most pressing global environmental problems, such as climate change, the depletion of the ozone layer, deforestation, protection of biodiversity, water management, and food security, among others. This will allow us to explain “international environmental regimes”. International regimes are one of the most important political and legal institutions to address international and global environmental problems.

Course readings

The books are in the bookstore and on reserve in the library. Additional readings are provided on Moodle.

Giddens, Anthony (2011), *The Politics of Climate Change*. Cambridge (UK): Polity (ISBN 9780745655154).

Held, David, Charles Roger and Eva-Maria Nag (eds.) (2013), *Climate Governance in the Developing World*. Cambridge (UK): Polity Press (ISBN 9780745662770).

O'Neill, Kate (2009), *The Environment and International Relations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (ISBN-13: 9780521603126).

Proescholdt, Kevin, Rip Rapson, Kevin Rapson (1995), *Troubled Waters: The Fight for the Boundary Waters Canoe Area*. St. Cloud (MN): North Star Press (9780878391004).

Rosenbaum, Walter A. (2013), *Environmental Politics and Policy*. Washington: CQ Press (ISBN 978-1-4522-3996-5).

In addition, I will post some articles on Moodle.

Course Requirements

All submissions via Moodle. Only one student from each group needs to submit group assignments.

-**Activism on campus project** (40%). Develop, implement and assess a plan to make our campus more sustainable. The main goal of the project is to try to get the college to

institutionalize green practices. You will submit several documents through the course of the semester. In the ***prospectus*** (1 page), you will discuss the project. Explain the problem you are trying to address, your goals, your strategy and your assessment mechanism to prove the effectiveness of the project. Your ***action plan*** (5 pages) will analyze the four corners of the “holy diamond” as it applies to your project. You should support your analysis of each corner with data and evidence from your case study. For example, you need to provide scientific data to illustrate the problem you are trying to solve and to justify your proposed solutions. For the economics, you need to analyze costs and benefits. The politics should spell out who will bear the costs and benefits of your project and discuss the key decision-makers. Your ethics section should provide ethical justification for your project and should address potential ethical arguments that might be raised against it.

You will put your plan into action through the semester, providing regular ***updates*** in class. Your group will deliver a ***final presentation*** before the end of the semester and will submit a final report spelling out the goals of your project, the challenges you faced, your accomplishments, some recommendations/reflections for future projects.

The ***final report*** should focus on “the politics” of implementation of the project on campus: why did some of your strategies work but not others? It is very important that you make your final report analytical by relating your own experience to our readings. How does your own experience support the lessons we have learned from our readings and class discussions? How was your own experience similar to or different from the cases we studied in the texts? For example, relate your project to some of the principles of environmental policy that we study in class and some of the experiences, successful or not, discussed in the textbooks. What would you do differently in the future? What would you suggest to the college to push your ideas further in the future?

Your final grade will be a function of the originality of the idea, your ability to make our college adopt your project, your ability to provide evidence of institutional sustainability into the future, the analytical quality of your presentations and documents (are you explaining or just describing?) and the evidence of reflection and learning about environmental activism.

The grade for this assignment breaks down as follows: action plan (15% of final grade) + class updates (15%) + final report and final presentation (15%) + peer evaluations (5%) = 50% of final grade.

-Internship/consulting report (25%). You will be working with a team of students for an organization that is conducting a project on an environmental issue. This assignment has four main ***learning goals***. The first one is to teach you how to write a consultant report. The second goal is to show you what it would be like to work as a consultant. The third goal is to develop teamwork skills. The last two goals are to help you sharpen your research and writing skills. I will include tips for writing a consulting report on Moodle. You need to schedule a time to deliver a final presentation of your project before Thanksgiving break.

-Climate change simulation (25%), The class will be simulating a UNFCCC/COP Conference. The purpose of the conference will be to formulate a resolution to inspire a new treaty to replace the Kyoto Protocol that expired at the end of 2012. You will be

divided into states and will need to research the characteristics and positions of your state. You will attempt to negotiate an agreement that includes the objectives of your state to mitigate climate change. I will provide the instructions for this assignment on Moodle. The deadlines are in the “course outline” section below.

All research papers (this includes consulting report and policy proposal for the climate change summit) must include both citations and a bibliography; without both, you will fail this assignment. Late papers will be subject to a substantial grade penalty for each day late (5 points per 24 hours), unless arrangements are made with me at the beginning of the semester.

The main *learning goal* of this assignment is to help you understand the challenges of collective decision-making by participating in a simulation of an international summit. Another learning goal is to familiarize yourself with the worlds of international law and diplomacy. By drafting policy papers and engaging in negotiations with students representing other countries you will learn about some important rules of international diplomacy. This assignment will also help you sharpen your public-speaking skills. Finally, this summit will strengthen your knowledge of some of the key scientific, economic, political and cultural impacts of climate change.

-Final essay (10%). Write a five-page essay in which you articulate your own ecological worldview. There are two main *learning goals* to this assignment. First, it intends to help you reflect on your own relationship with nature. Secondly, it serves as a capstone assignment to the course and intends to facilitate an ethical analysis of the topics covered in the previous sections of the course. Your grade will be a function of your ability to: (1) make reference to the ecological worldviews discussed in class to justify your arguments; (2) analyze environmental problems, legislation and institutions as discussed in previous sections of the course; and (3) articulate a sophisticated ecological worldview.

HOW TO AVOID COMMON MISTAKES!

1. ALWAYS spellcheck AND proofread your papers. Spellcheck cannot catch every mistake.

2. Document your sources. Citations are required whenever you use a direct quote, borrow ideas from a source, paraphrase, or cite statistics / numbers (the number killed in an attack in Iraq, GNP, inflation rate, population, electoral results, etc). You do not need a citation if the information is considered “common knowledge” (the name of the Iraqi prime minister, the date of the election) or is reported in multiple sources. If you are quoting directly from a source, you must enclose the quote in quotation marks and include a citation. Quotes of four or more lines should be indented and single-spaced, and do not require quotation marks. Using someone else’s words either verbatim or with only minor changes without a citation constitutes plagiarism. Students caught plagiarizing will fail the course.

3. Please follow the *Chicago Manual of Style* (I prefer footnotes). The names of newspapers, books, magazines, and journals are *italicized*.

SAMPLE CITATION: Sidney Crosby, “Canadian Prime Minister Resigns,” *New York Times*, 13 January 1998. (after the first cite: Crosby, 13 January 1998.)

SAMPLE BIBLIOGRAPHY ENTRY: Crosby, Sidney. “Canadian Prime Minister Resigns.” *New York Times*, 13 January 1998.

The bibliography includes articles you read on the subject but did not cite in the text of the paper. It is organized alphabetically.

4. Please paginate your paper. Include a separate title page with your name, the course, and the date of submission and an abstract. The cover page and bibliography do not count towards the page limit.

STYLE RULES

Please observe the following rules; failure to do so will result in a reduction in your paper grade. It’s = it is. Its = possessive pronoun. Avoid the use of contractions in a formal paper and you will not have this problem.

1. States are singular nouns, and take singular pronouns. Iraq = it, its. Iraqis = they, their. States also do not have genders, so France is an “it” not a “she.”
2. Plural forms take an * s * and possessive forms take an * ’s ** – Africans, Africa’s war.
3. It is June 2009, not June of 2009; it is the 1990s, not the 1990’s.
4. Do not start a sentence with a numeral – spell it out.
5. Use a person’s full name (and if appropriate title) the first time you mention them. Thereafter you may use the last name only – Rwandan President Paul Kagame, then Kagame.
6. The first time you mention an organization, give its full name and put its acronym in parentheses, and thereafter you may use the acronym only – Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).
7. You do not need to include a comma before a quote, unless you would have used a comma there regardless – Sources report that “over 1,000 troops were involved.” OR According to sources, “over 1,000 troops were involved.”
8. Avoid excessive capitalization – proper nouns should be capitalized (Congress), but not abstract concepts (freedom) or regular nouns (rebels). So it is “Obama administration.”
9. If you are using a quote of four or more lines, the quote should be single-spaced and indented, with a double space preceding and following it. The quote itself does not need quotation marks.
10. Citations (with a few exceptions, such as a string of statistics) belong at the end of the sentence. If using two sources, separate them with a semi-colon.
11. The correct format for a sentence with a citation is period, quotation mark (if needed), superscript, as in .”
12. Citations should end in a period.

13. The first time you cite a source, you should provide the full citation; thereafter, use the author's last name and the page number / year of the article/book/report. If it is a source with a collective author, give the full cite first time, and thereafter use the organization's name, the date of the source, and when available the page number. (International Crisis Group, 2009, 17).
14. Use "Ibid" for successive references to the same quote. If it's the same source and a different page number, use "Ibid., 18."
15. "Led" is the past tense of "lead." – He leads the team. He led the team last year.
16. The correct phrase is "deep-seated," not "deep-seeded."
17. The correct phrase is "for all intents and purposes," not "for all intensive purposes."
18. "Economical" means thrifty or frugal.
19. While exacerbate and exasperate can both mean "worsen," exacerbate is more useful for situations (to make more violent or severe, as in "Easy access to weapons exacerbated the conflict.") while exasperate is more useful when describing a person's reaction/mood (to really irritate, as in "You are so exasperating!").
20. Check the spellings of people, places, and organizations – use the handouts I give you, look it up in the reading, check a dictionary, use spellcheck. Don't guess.
21. Be consistent in your spellings. If you use "Qadafi" the first time, do not switch to "Gaddafi" (unless the different spelling is in a direct quote).
22. No one page or one sentence paragraphs.
23. "Comprise" means to "to consist of" so it comprises, comprising, comprised...not comprised of. So either "It is composed of" or "it comprises."
24. Followers of liberalism are "liberals" NOT "liberalists."
25. Avoid generic opening sentences and/or sweeping generalizations such "Throughout history."

-Late assignments. I will accept assignments up to a week after the deadline, but the grade will fall by half a letter grade each day.

-Submissions will only be accepted through **Moodle**. Let's save some trees! Make sure you activate your account ASAP.

-Extra credit: You can help boost your grade by turning in up to three assignments for **extra credit**. These assignments are just a one-page critique of a talk you attend at the college (it could be one of the student presentations at student symposium.) You could also review a movie or a documentary that is related to our class topics. In your assignments, you need to address the following: provide full citation (name of presenter, title, place and time and name of program/lecture series if this event is part of a series, summarize the main arguments provided, relate them to our class readings, and provide your own critique (strengths and weaknesses of the presenter's argument and suggestions to make the presentation stronger). I will accept extra credit assignments up to a week after the event on which you write until the last Friday of class. I will not have time to read and provide feedback on extra credit assignments after that date.

-Class attendance and participation (+-30%): Your involvement in class will make your final grade go up or down by as much as +-30%. This offers a great opportunity for those who feel you have not done as well as you could in your assignments. If you work hard in class, you can make up! I expect you to participate in **class discussions** actively. Learning is not a passive exercise, in which you listen to your professor lecture on a particular topic. I expect you to participate in class discussions by asking questions about the readings, by analyzing the topics critically and by questioning the views of the authors, the professor, and those of your own peers. Critical thinking is an ongoing process of continuous assessment and reassessment of the dominant views in a field of study. My goal of is to engage everybody in a permanent dialogue with the readings and with each other. I value the quality of your comments. Do not just repeat what has been said in class. Provide an **analysis** of the readings. I will also ask you to give **presentations** in class, in which you will analyze the readings critically. I will also expect you to participate in **online debates**. We will be using **Moodle** on a regular basis for submissions and debates. Take some time to familiarize yourself with it.

-Academic honesty policy. Assignments must be based on original research and creative thought, and all sources used must be cited. *Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will be dealt with according to College policy and procedures.*

-If you need help with your **research** in the **library**, try the “Ask a Librarian” link on the library home page, <http://www.beloit.edu/~libhome> or contact Chris Nelson at ext. 2544 or via email at nelsoncn@beloit.edu.

If you have a disability and need accommodations, contact the Learning Enrichment and Disability Services Office located on 2nd floor Pearsons (north side) or call x: 2572 or email learning@beloit.edu. For accommodations in my class, you must bring me an Accommodation Verification Letter from the Director of that office and then we will discuss how to meet your needs. Contact that office promptly; accommodations are not retroactive.

Free peer tutoring is available for most classes. For a tutor, apply by going to your Portal, to the Student Life tab, and then apply using the Tutoring Forms (on left) and Request a Tutor. If you have any questions, contact Learning Enrichment and Disability Services.

The information provided in this syllabus is subject to change. I will invite some guest speakers to class and we will need to adjust accordingly.

Course Outline

T: reading will be discussed on Tuesday

H: reading will be discussed on Thursday

Week 1 Introduction: a Politicized Environment

Aug. 26-28

Syllabus (T)

Rosenbaum, chap. 1 (H)

Activism reports (H) (available on the website of the Environmental Studies Program, under “student projects”)

Week 2 The Policy-Making Process Sept. 2-4
Rosenbaum, chap. 2-3 (T)
Activism project (H)

Week 3 Principles of Environmental Policy Sept. 9-11
Rosenbaum, chap. 4-5 (T)
Rosenbaum, chap. 6 (H)

Submit activism project prospectus, Monday @ 9:00AM. One submission per group. The prospectus should include the name of the members of the group, the title of your project and a brief description that will emphasize the problem to solve as well as your goals.

Activism project presentations: present your prospectus (T)

Week 4 Environmental Policy and Law in Practice: the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness Sept. 16-18

Proescholdt, Introduction and chaps. 1-2 (T)

Proescholdt, chaps. 3-5(H)

Activism project: Action Plan (5 pages). Analyze the “holy diamond” as it applies to your project. The four corners of the diamond need to be supported with evidence from your own case study. Due on **Monday at 9:00AM.**

Activism update: presentation of “action plan” (10 minutes each team) (T)

Week 5 Environmental Policy and Law in Practice: the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness Sept. 23-25

Proescholdt, chaps. 6-8 (T)

Internship update (T)

Week 6 International Environmental Governance: International Regimes Sept. 30-Oct. 2

O’Neil, chaps. 1-2 (T)

O’Neil, chap. 3-4 (H)

Activism update: (T)

Week 7 International Environmental Governance: International Regimes Oct. 7-9

O’Neil, 5-6 (T)

O’Neil, 7-8 (T)

Giddens, 9 (H)

Internship update (T)

Fall break Oct. 14-18

Week 8 Climate Change: Arguments and Economics Oct. 21-23

Giddens, chaps. 1-2 (T)

Giddens, chap. 3 (H)
Internship update (T)

Week 9 Climate Change: New Approaches

Oct. 28-30

Giddens, chaps 5-6 (T)
Giddens, chaps 7, 8, 9 (H)
Activism update (T)

Week 10 Climate Change

Nov. 4-6

Giddens, chaps. 4, 8 (T)

All of Thursday's readings are available on line. They are chapters from *Climate Change Science and Policy*, edited by Stephen Schneider, Armin Rosencranz, Michael D. Mastrandrea, and Kristin Kuntz-Duriseti. Washington, D.C., Island Press, 2010 (ISBN 9781597265676).

Rosencranz and Conklin, "National Policy" (H)
Mark and Luers, "Policy in California" (H)
Pavley, "California's Battle for Clean Cars" (H)
Bushinsky, "US State Climate Action" (H)

Internship update (T)

Climate change simulation: sign up for your country by Monday at 9:00AM.

Week 11 Climate Change

Nov. 11-13

Held, Roger and Nag, group work, reading assignments to be decided in class.

Submit your electronic binder on Monday @ 9:00AM

Climate change summit, Monday at 7:00PM, SC 349

Activism update (T)

Week 12 The idea of wilderness

Nov. 18-20

Max Oelschlaeger, "Ancient Mediterranean Ideas of Humankind and Nature" and "The Alchemy of Modernism" in Max Oelschlaeger, *The Idea of Wilderness*. New Haven, Yale University Press, 1991 (Moodle) (T)

Internship update (T)

Debrief due on Wednesday @ 3:00PM

Week 13 Ecological Worldviews.

Nov. 25

Leferrière and Stoett, "Ecological Thought. A Synopsis". In Eric Leferrière and Peter J. Stoett, *International Relations Theory and Ecological Thought*, London, Routledge, 1999, chapter 2 (Moodle) (T)

Happy Thanksgiving!

Week 14 Building an ecological worldview

Dec. 2-4

Chris Fink visit, 11:00AM (T)

Activism project update (T)

Jo Otel visit, 10:00AM (H)

Week 15 My own ecological worldview
Activism report due at 9:00AM (T)
Final essay due on exam day

Dec. 9