

**INTA 4040/8803: ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS  
FALL 2019**

Professor Anjali Thomas

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Office Location: Habersham 216

Office Hours: Wednesdays 11:15am to 12:15pm, or by appointment

Class Location and Time: Skiles 169; MWF 1:55pm to 2:45pm

**[For the most updated version of the course syllabus, please check the Course Website on Canvas]**

**Description**

This course examines the political forces that shape how governments, organizations and citizens across the globe respond to potential environmental threats and sheds light on the consequences of the actions (and inaction) of these actors. The course will adopt a political economy approach to help us understand why it is often difficult for international institutions and governments to bring about a meaningful change in environmental policies, and to evaluate the debate on whether there is a trade-off between pursuing economic development on the one hand and striving to reduce environmental threats on the other. We will also examine the social and political consequences of climate change and delve deeper into issue arenas that have important implications for the environment such as water and the energy sector. Throughout the semester, we will focus on acquiring the necessarily skills and background that will allow us to critically evaluate the empirical evidence on the key questions in the field and to formulate evidence-based arguments pertaining to these questions.

**Pre-Requisites**

Many of the required readings employ advanced techniques in statistics and econometrics. Previous training in these techniques will not be assumed and you will not be expected to grasp the nuances of the technical material. However, you will still be expected to engage with this type of material. Specifically, for any given reading, you must be able to evaluate the logic of the argument laid out in non-technical terms and must be able to discuss the merits and flaws of the measurement approach and research design employed to address the question at hand.

**Course Goals and Learning Outcomes**

Upon successful completion of the course, you should be able to:

- describe the key economic, social and political factors that have shaped the response of citizens and governments to environmental threats.
- use your knowledge of international affairs to address issues of immediate international concern relating to the environment (Problem-Solving in International Affairs):
  - o evaluate and critique arguments relating to the environment-development nexus

- characterize the key obstacles to achieving co-operation and progress on environmental concerns
- evaluate and critique social science research on the causes and consequences of environmental threats
- become more aware of the diversity of cultural and ethical systems in the world (Cultural and Ethical awareness)
  - describe the challenges relating to the environment experienced by certain countries and regions in the developing world
- express arguments clearly both in written reports and in oral presentations; and work in small groups in a way that demonstrates respect for their colleagues and efficiency in working collaboratively towards projects and goals. (Professional Development.)

### Course Requirements and Grading

| Assignment                                     | Date   | Percentage of Overall Mark |
|--|--|----------------------------|
| <b>Quizzes</b>                                 | Quiz 1: In-Class, October 16 <sup>th</sup> [15%]<br>Quiz 2: In-Class, November 13 <sup>th</sup> [15%]  | 30%                        |
| <b>Presentation on Current Issues</b>          | <i>Schedule Based on Sign-Up Sheet (Starting Week 4)</i><br>12 minute presentation + Q&A, 6 to 8 Slides<br><u>Slides due via Email to Instructor by the Start of Class</u>   | 20%                        |
| <b>Final Project</b>                           | a) Individual Essay (Due November 20 <sup>th</sup> in class, Hard Copy Only): 25%<br>b) Group Presentation (10 to 15 slides): 10%<br><i>Slides Due Via Email by the Start of Class on Which you are Presenting</i> | 35%                        |
| <b>Class Participation+ In-Class Exercises</b> | Continuous   | 15%                        |

### Description of Graded Components

#### Quizzes [30% of Total Course Mark]

The two quizzes will consist of short answer questions and longer essay questions which will be designed to test your knowledge of key concepts covered in the course. You will be provided a study guide in advance of the exams to help you prepare for the quizzes.

#### Presentation on Current Issues [20% of Total Course Mark]

*In-Class Presentation (According to Sign-up Sheet): 12 minutes+Q&A  
Slides Due Via Email to Instructor By the Start of Class.*

Pick a news article related to the environment or to climate change that has appeared in the local, national or international news in the last 12 months that is, in some way, *relevant to the topic of the week in which your presentation takes place*. Please note that although there may be some overlap in the content of news stories that are presented over the course of the semester, you should make sure that you do **not** pick a story that is identical or very similar to a story that one of your classmates has already presented. Your presentation should consist of three parts: 1) A summary of the news article in your own words 2) A discussion of how and why the news article it is relevant to the week's topic 3) Pertinent background information such as a) information on prior events that have shaped the current news story b) information on the broader context surrounding the news story c) further information on concepts, organizations, individuals or entities mentioned in the news story that are relevant to the study of environmental politics and 4) A question posed to the class for discussion or debate.<sup>1</sup> You should have around 6 to 8 slides *excluding the title slide* that cover each of the components listed above. You should send the slides to the instructor before the start of the class in which you are presenting. Your entire presentation - *excluding* the Q&A at the end - should be 10 to 12 minutes long (there will be a hard stop at 12 minutes).

### **Final Project [35% of Total Course Mark]**

*Individual Essay Component: 25%*

*Group Presentation Component: 10%*

Your final project will involve an individual component as well as a group presentation component. Your group will be assigned a topic and your individual component will involve doing research related to that topic as it applies to a particular country. The group presentation will involve integrating the insights from each individual country study to draw broader insights about the topic assigned to your group. Slides for your group project should be emailed to me by the start of class on which you are presenting. Further details on the final project will be provided throughout the semester.

### **Class Participation and In-Class Exercises [15% of Total Course Mark]**

The participation mark will be based on attendance and the quality of your in-class oral comments as well as on the quality of your performance on written exercises that will be handed to you in class. Many of the in-class exercises will involve small group work and you are expected to be an active contributor to your group's discussions. In addition, by the second class pertaining to a given topic (usually a Wednesday) you should come prepared to discuss the assigned readings for the given week. Specifically, you should come prepared with answers the following prompts: a) What is the most important and/or interesting insight you gained from the assigned reading? b) Propose a question about the assigned reading that you would like to discuss with your classmates. *For some or all weeks, you may be asked for your responses to be e-mailed to me by noon on the Tuesday before class in order to receive participation credit. Also you may be called upon at any*

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<sup>1</sup> You should avoid questions that lead to a simple yes/no answer or whose answers require only factual recall. Focus on questions that lead to analysis, synthesis, comparison, or evaluation. Also try to raise a question that is likely to elicit a variety of responses.

*time to share the answers you prepared orally in class.* In addition, you must also be prepared to actively engage in the discussion by offering responses to questions raised by other students in the class and by suggesting follow-up questions for further discussion.

### Participation Grading Criteria

For each week, you will be given a mark between 0 and 10 based on (a) the quantity AND quality of your oral comments and questions through the week and (b) your performance on any written exercises handed in in class. High quality oral comments are those that are *based on the readings and lectures* and those that demonstrate that you have thought deeply about the readings and lectures and developed your own insights, reactions and critiques around them. An unexcused absence will result in your weekly score being lowered by 3 points (Please review the definitions elsewhere on this syllabus for what constitutes an excused vs. unexcused absence). Your final participation mark will incorporate the average of your scores for each week, *after dropping your lowest score*.

### **Grading Scale**

Your final grade will be assigned as a letter grade according to the following scale:

|   |         |
|---|---------|
| A | 90-100% |
| B | 80-89%  |
| C | 70-79%  |
| D | 60-69%  |
| F | 0-59%   |

### **Grade Change Policy**

If you feel that an assignment has been marked incorrectly and you wish to appeal your mark during the semester (i.e. before the final grades have been submitted), you should submit a written request via email within 48 hours of the marked assignment being handed back to you. If your request concerns something other than a clerical error, it should be written in the form of a paragraph that i) identifies what was required in the assignment, ii) describes *precisely* how these requirements were fulfilled at a level above the received grade, and iii) addresses any relevant comments written by the professor on the graded assignment (if applicable) and explains why they do not apply. Please note that I will not consider requests for a grade change that do not follow these guidelines. Also, note that I reserve the right to revise your grade upward, downward or not at all upon reviewing your appeal.

### **Course Materials**

#### **Course Texts**

We will make extensive use of electronic journal articles. To access electronic journal articles through the library website:

- ❖ Go to the Library Home Page (<http://www.library.gatech.edu>);
- ❖ click on 'eJournals' on the left-hand side (under 'research tools');

- ❖ type the name of the journal in the search box;
- ❖ select the database option that includes the appropriate issue of the journal;
- ❖ browse the journal to the appropriate volume and issue

### **Course Website**

I will be using the Course's Canvas Page quite extensively through the course of the semester. On the Canvas page, you should be able to find lots of important information about the course including but not limited to the most updated version of the syllabus, assigned readings other than journal articles, course announcements as well as slides from recent lectures. I will also use the Canvas page to provide feedback on your assignments. Please make sure that you check the email associated with the Canvas system regularly so you do not miss out on important course information.

### **Email Policy**

Email is the best way to contact me. However, I will often not be available to respond to email inquiries outside of regular working hours so please keep this in mind when anticipating response times. To ensure that I accidentally do not overlook your email, it would be helpful if you could include the course number in the subject line "e.g. INTA 4040". Please note that, unless specifically stated otherwise, I will **not** accept electronic copies of assignments via email, Canvas etc.

### **Policy on Electronic Devices**

To foster an environment conducive to learning, I encourage you to put away all mobile devices while in class. Although having a laptop in class may be useful for completing some of the individual and group activities you are assigned in class, you are discouraged from using laptops in class for taking notes<sup>2</sup> or for other purposes. If your use of electronic devices in class proves distracting to others, you may be asked to leave the classroom.

### **Course Expectations & Guidelines**

#### **Accommodations for Individuals with Disabilities**

If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services (<http://disabilityservices.gatech.edu/>) as soon as possible, to make an appointment to discuss your special needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Please also e-mail me as soon as possible if you would like to discuss your learning needs.

#### **Assignment Turn-In**

All written assignments should be turned in at the start of class on the due date, in hard copy only unless specifically instructed otherwise. Please see below for the policy on late assignments.

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<sup>2</sup> Research has shown that students who write their notes out by hand on paper learn more than those who take notes on their laptop.

## **Attendance and/or Participation**

Since the success of the course depends heavily on student involvement and participation, you are expected to attend every class session barring an excused absence.

### *Excused Absences*

Excused absences are those that are a result of a verified illness or emergency or “approved Institute activities”. In order to have an illness or emergency situation verified, you **must** contact the Office of Student Life who will contact me on your behalf to verify your situation. More information on this procedure can be found using the following link: <https://studentlife.gatech.edu/content/class-attendance>. To be excused for participation in Institute activities, you **must** contact the Office of the Registrar to formally approve your absence. Absence due to a religious observance will be excused provided you inform me of the upcoming absence, in writing, within the first two weeks of class. Please note that I cannot, as a matter of policy, excuse any absences outside of these aforementioned channels.

### *Unexcused Absences*

Each class session that is missed due to an **unexcused absence** will result in your weekly participation score being lowered by 3 points. Also, in the event of an unexcused absence, you will not receive any special accommodations (e.g. a tutoring session during office hours, a make-up exam, opportunities for a make-up presentation or in-class assignment) for the class sessions you missed. I do understand, however, that there may at times be obligations or unforeseen circumstances that come up that are important, but that do not fall under the category of an “excused absence”. I cannot make individual exceptions to the general policy for such circumstances. However, since your final participation mark is calculated by averaging your weekly scores after dropping your lowest score, you do have some degree of flexibility to deal with such situations without being penalized.

## **Academic Integrity**

Academic dishonesty in the form of cheating or plagiarism will not be tolerated. According to the Georgia Tech Student Affairs Policy, “Plagiarism” is the act of appropriating the literary composition of another, or parts of passages of his or her writings, or language or ideas of the same, and passing them off as the product of one's own mind. It involves the deliberate use of any outside source without proper acknowledgment. For information on Georgia Tech's Academic Honor Code, please visit <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/policies/honor-code/> or <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/18/>. Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarizing on a quiz, exam, or assignment will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations.

## **Lateness Policy**

Late assignments are strongly discouraged and will incur penalties except in the event of an illness or emergency (documentation will be requested). Any major scheduling

conflicts – including those that arise due to participation in “approved Institute activities” - should be discussed with me *at least two weeks before the assignment due date*. The penalty for a late assignment will be a deduction of 2% of the assignment mark for a paper handed in on the due date but after the time specified and an additional 5% for each subsequent day that the paper is not turned in. A missed seminar presentation will incur a grade of zero except in the case of an “excused absence” due to an illness or emergency (See above for the definitions of what constitutes an excused absence). Thus, it is crucial to prepare in advance for the seminar presentation and accord it the highest priority in your schedule for the given week.

### **Student-Faculty Expectations**

At Georgia Tech we believe that it is important to continually strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgement, and responsibility between faculty members and the student body. See <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/22/> for an articulation of some basic expectations – that you can have of me, and that I have of you. In the end, simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek. Therefore, I encourage you to remain committed to the ideals of Georgia Tech, while in this class.

### **Detailed Course Outline**

#### **PART 1: ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE**

##### **Week 1&2: Overview and the Climate Change Debate**

Monday, August 19<sup>th</sup>: Introduction and Overview

Wednesday, August 21<sup>st</sup>: Climate Change Debate

Friday, August 23<sup>rd</sup>: Climate Change Debate (continued)

Monday, August 26<sup>th</sup>: Climate Change Debate (continued)

Wednesday, August 28<sup>th</sup>: Guest Lecture by Supraja Sudarsan, Ph.D. Candidate

Friday, August 30<sup>th</sup>: No Class

J. Cook, et al, "Consensus on consensus: a synthesis of consensus estimates on human-caused global warming," *Environmental Research Letters* Vol. 11 No. 4, (13 April 2016); DOI:10.1088/1748-9326/11/4/048002

Patrick J. Egan and Megan Mullin. 2016. “Recent improvement and projected worsening of weather in the United States”. *Nature* 532, 357–360 (21 April 2016).

Jamie Druckman, Toby Bolsen and Fay Lomax Cook. 2015. “Citizens', Scientists', and Policy Advisors' Beliefs about Global Warming,” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 658: 271-295.

##### **Week 3: The Environment and the “Tragedy of the Commons”**

Monday, September 2<sup>nd</sup>: No Class, Labor Day – University Holiday

Wednesday, September 4<sup>th</sup>: Tragedy of the Commons

Friday, September 6<sup>th</sup>: Tragedy of the Commons (continued)

Assigned Readings for Week 3

Garrett Hardin. 1968. The Tragedy of the Commons. *Science* 162 (3859): 1243-1248

Ostrom, Elinor, and et al. 1999. Revisiting the commons: local lessons, global challenges. *Science* 284 (5412): 278-282.

**Week 4: International Environmental Governance**

Monday, September 9<sup>th</sup>: The Problem of International Co-operation

Wednesday, September 11<sup>th</sup>: International Agreements

Friday, September 13<sup>th</sup>: *Current Issues Presentations*

Assigned Readings for Week 4

Soroos, Marvin S. 2011. "Global Institutions and the Environment: An Evolutionary Perspective" in *The Global Environment: Institutions, Law and Policy*, Third Edition. CQ Press [Provided on Canvas]

Keohane, Robert O. and David G. Victor. 2011. The Regime Complex for Climate Change. *Perspectives on Politics* 9(1): 7-23.

Bodansky, D. (2016). The Paris Climate Change Agreement: A New Hope? *The American Journal of International Law*, 110(2), 288-319

**Week 5: Economic Development and the Environment: Is there a Trade-Off?**

Monday, September 16<sup>th</sup>: Sustainable Development

Wednesday, September 18<sup>th</sup>: Guest Lecture by Johnni Daniels from the Center of Disease Control in Klaus 1440 (Attendance is Required).

Friday, September 20<sup>th</sup>: Sustainable Development (continued)

Assigned Readings for Week 5

Lipschutz, Ronnie D. 2004. Excerpt of "Chapter 2: Deconstructing 'Global Environment'" in *Global Environmental Politics*, Washington DC: CQ Press, page 59 to 71 [Provided by Instructor on Canvas]

Stern, David I. "The rise and fall of the environmental Kuznets curve." *World development* 32.8 (2004): 1419-1439.

Esty, Daniel C. 2011. "Economic Integration and Environmental Protection" in *The Global Environment: Institutions, Law and Policy*, Third Edition. CQ Press [Provided by the Instructor on Canvas]

**Week 6: Citizen Behavior and Environmental Change**

Monday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>: Citizen Behavior and Environmental Change



Wednesday, September 25<sup>th</sup>: Citizen Behavior (continued)

Friday, September 27<sup>th</sup>: “European Climate Diplomacy Week” Event on Campus,  
Location TBD. (Attendance is Required)

Assigned Readings for Week 6

Allcott, Hunt, and Michael Greenstone. 2012. "Is There an Energy Efficiency Gap?" *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 26 (1): 3-28.

Allcott, Hunt and Sendhil Mullainathan. 2010. “Behavior and Energy Policy” *Science* 327 (5970): 1204-1205.

Roe, Brian. Mario F. Teisl, Alan Levy, Matthew Russell. 2001. US consumers’ willingness to pay for green electricity, *Energy Policy*, Volume 29, Issue 11, 2001, Pages 917-925,

PART II: SPECIAL TOPICS

Week 7: Special Topic I: Water Insecurity

Monday, September 30<sup>th</sup>: Water Crisis

Wednesday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>: Water Crisis (Continued)

Friday, October 4<sup>th</sup>: *Current Issues Presentations*

Eccleston, Charles H. and Frederic March. 2011. “Chapter 10: Coming Water Wars” in *Global Environmental Policy*, CRC Press. [Provided on Canvas]

Nikhil Anand. 2011. “Pressure: The Politechnics of Water Supply in Mumbai” *Cultural Anthropology* 26 (4): 542-564.

Herrera, Veronica and Alison E. Post. 2014. “Can Developing Countries Both Decentralize and Depoliticize Urban Water Services? Evaluating the Legacy of the 1990s Reform Wave” *World Development* 64, Pages 621-641,

Weeks 8&9: Special Topic II: Consequences of Climate Change and Pollution

Monday, October 7<sup>th</sup>: Social and Political Consequences of Climate Change

Wednesday, October 9<sup>th</sup>: Social and Political Consequences (Continued)

Friday, October 11<sup>th</sup>: Health Consequences of Climate Change

Monday, October 14<sup>th</sup>: No Class: Fall Break

Wednesday, October 16<sup>th</sup>: \*\*\*\*\***Quiz 1**\*\*\*\*\*

Friday, October 18<sup>th</sup>: *Current Issues Presentations*

Assigned Readings for Weeks 8 and 9

Hsiang, Solomon M., Marshall Burke, and Edward Miguel. "Quantifying the influence of climate on human conflict." *Science* 341.6151 (2013): 1235367.

USGCRP, 2016: The Impacts of Climate Change on Human Health in the United States: A Scientific Assessment. Crimmins, A. et. al. Eds. U.S. Global Change Research Program, Washington, DC, 312 pp (*You are responsible for only the “Executive Summary” available through this link: <https://health2016.globalchange.gov/downloads>*)

Greenstone, Michael, and Rema Hanna. "Environmental regulations, air and water pollution, and infant mortality in India." *The American Economic Review* 104.10 (2014): 3038-3072.

### **Week 10: Special Topic III: Natural Resource Curse**

Monday, October 21<sup>st</sup>: Natural Resource Curse

Wednesday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>: Natural Resource Curse

Friday October 25<sup>th</sup>: *Current Issues Presentation*

#### Assigned Readings for Week 7

Ross, Michael L. "The political economy of the resource curse." *World politics* 51.02 (1999): 297-322.

Collier, Paul. 2007. *The Bottom Billion*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, Chapter 1 and Chapter 3. [Available on Canvas]

### **PART III: Energy**

#### **Week 11: Introduction to Renewable Energy**

Monday, October 28<sup>th</sup>: Renewable Energy

Wednesday, October 30<sup>th</sup>: Renewable Energy (Continued)

Friday, November 1<sup>st</sup>: *Current Issues Presentation*

#### Assigned Readings for Week 10

Aklin, Michael, Patrick Bayer, S.P. Harish, and Johannes Urpelainen. 2017. Does Basic Energy Access Generate Socio-Economic Benefits? A Field Experiment with Off-Grid Solar Power in India. *Science Advances* 3(5): 1-8.

Eric Martinot et. al. 2002. “Renewable Energy Markets in Developing Countries” *Annual Review of Energy and the Environment* Vol 27, Pages 309-348.

#### **Week 12: Explaining Government Policy in the Energy Sector**

November 4<sup>th</sup>: Energy Policy

November 6<sup>th</sup>: Energy Policy (Continued)

Friday, November 8<sup>th</sup>: TBD

#### Assigned Readings for Week 11

Llewelyn Hughes and Johannes Urpelainen. 2015. "Interests, institutions, and climate Policy: Explaining the choice of policy instruments for the energy sector." *Environmental Science and Policy* Vol. 54, Pages 52 to 63.

Breetz, H., Mildenerger, M. and Stokes, L. 2018. "The political logics of clean energy transitions" *Business and Politics* Vol. 20, Pages 492-522.

**Week 13: Quiz and Work on Final Project**

Monday, November 11<sup>th</sup> – No Class: Prepare for Quiz

Wednesday, November 13<sup>th</sup>: \*\*\*\*Quiz 2\*\*\*\*

Friday, November 15<sup>th</sup>: Overview of Key Themes for Final Project

**PART IV: FINAL PROJECT PRESENTATIONS**

**Week 14: Quiz and Final Project Presentations**

Monday, November 18<sup>th</sup>: No Class: Work on Individual Country Studies

Wednesday, November 20<sup>th</sup>: In-Class: Discussion of Individual Country Studies

Friday, November 22<sup>nd</sup>: TBD

**Week 15: Class Presentations**

Monday, November 25<sup>th</sup>: Final Project Presentations

Wednesday, November 27<sup>th</sup>: No Class – University Holiday

Friday, November 29<sup>th</sup>: No Class – University Holiday

Monday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>: Final Project Presentations