Instructor: Dr. Michele Betsill
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Office Hours: W 1-2:30; and by appointment

“I will respond to class-related e-mails between the hours of 11pm and 2:30pm Monday through Friday. You may receive a reply at other times but you should not depend on it. If you have an emergency, call my office phone or consult one of your classmates.”

Course Description
This course introduces students to the study and practice of global environmental politics, with particular emphasis on the issue of global climate change. Despite advances in scientific understanding of the natural dimensions of climate change, humans have had considerable difficulty developing effective policy responses to one of the greatest challenges of the twenty-first century. The central premise of this course is that deciding how to respond to climate change is a highly political process involving conflicts over competing values and interests. These conflicts and the subsequent outcomes are shaped by a variety of factors, including how we understand the role of humans in causing greenhouse gas emissions, the use of science in decision making, the link between climate change and the global economy as well as other pressing issues, the meaning and importance of equity and justice, the nature of collective action problems, questions of power and authority, the role of the market in solving global environmental problems, etc. This course explores these “human dimensions” issues, through a review of general theories of global environmental politics as well as a detailed examination of climate change policy debates from the global to the local level, involving governments, the private sector and civil society. Students also will be challenged to think about the role of universities in responding to climate change. Much of the semester will be devoted to analyzing climate change politics and policy making as it unfolds in real time in the international arena (culminating with the Copenhagen climate change negotiations in December) as well as in the U.S. Senate.

This course relies heavily on active student participation. Lectures will be kept to a minimum. Instead, students will work as a community of individual learners seeking to develop and communicate knowledge and understanding related to global environmental politics and the issue of climate change. Course sessions will typically consist of interactive discussions of course readings, reflection activities, student presentations, simulations, etc. designed to help students critically engage course material, enhance students’ comprehension of course concepts as well as oral and written communication and critical thinking skills.

Goals and Objectives
This course is designed to encourage students to think critically about global environmental politics (especially related to the problem of climate change) and to evaluate different strategies for addressing such problems. Students will also develop a set of analytical, methodological and communication skills that can be transferred to other settings.

Upon completion of this course, students will:
- have a basic understanding of the biophysical and human dimensions of global climate change;
- be able to explain the general and specific challenges related to policy making on global environmental issues;
- be familiar with a range of policy instruments for controlling greenhouse gas emissions;
- be able to compare and evaluate different approaches to climate policy;
- be able to communicate complex ideas in a variety of oral and written formats.

Texts

All additional readings will be available electronically via RamCT.

Students should also subscribe to The Daily Climate newsletter which compiles news stories from around the world on all things climate change related. To subscribe, go to [http://www.dailyclimate.org/](http://www.dailyclimate.org/)

**Requirements and Evaluation**

**Attendance and Participation (10%; 40 points).** A successful student-centered course requires that students contribute to the active learning process in a meaningful way. Students are expected to attend class and actively engage in course activities. Each student will start with 32 points (80%) for this portion of the grade. Students will lose points for missing more than 2 class sessions without a university-approved excuse. Students can gain points by making regular and *thoughtful* contributions to class discussions, actively engaging in group projects, participating in online discussions about climate change news or local events, and generally displaying a willingness to help others work through course concepts. Students may consult with the instructor at any time for an assessment of participation.

**Reading Summaries and Homework Assignments (20%; 80 points).** The reading load for this class is heavy (80-100 pages/week). All assigned readings are required and should be completed before the class for which they are assigned. We live in an information age and future professionals need to learn how to wade through large volumes of information to identify important ideas. To help develop this skill and facilitate productive class discussions, students are expected to complete reading summaries for each assigned reading (unless otherwise noted). Summaries should be written in paragraph form and submitted electronically via RamCT. Summaries should address the following questions:

1. What is the central argument or main point of the reading?
2. How well is the argument supported/point developed?
3. What assumptions are embedded in the reading and what implications does this have?
4. How does this reading relate to other readings in the course and/or class discussions?
5. (Optional): Is there a particular part of the reading you’d like to discuss further in class?

On occasion, students will be asked to complete a homework assignment (the syllabus will indicate whether this is in place of or in addition to the reading summaries). These should also be submitted electronically via RamCT unless noted otherwise. Summaries and homework assignments will be evaluated periodically on a pass/fail basis. Students who successfully complete 90% of the evaluated reading summary/homework assignments will receive full credit for this portion of the final grade. Those completing fewer than 90% will receive a score equal to the percentage of summaries/assignments completed. **No late summaries or homework assignments will be accepted unless the student has a university-approved excuse.**

**Mid-term exam (25%; 100 points).** A take-home mid-term exam will be due on October 7. The exam will be distributed in class 1 week before the due date.

**Research paper (30%; 120 points).** Each student will write a research paper (3,000-4,000 words) on climate change politics and policy making in one of the countries listed below. Final papers will be due on November 13 (a peer-review of paper drafts will be completed the week before the papers are due). Specific guidelines to be distributed separately.

- Australia
- Canada
- Denmark
- Mexico
- Saudi Arabia
- United Kingdom
- Bangladesh
- China
- India
- Nigeria
- South Africa
- United States
- Brazil
- Czech Republic
- Japan
- Russia
- Tuvalu
Negotiation simulation (15%; 60 points). Working on the same country selected for the research paper, students will participate in a multi-day simulation of the Copenhagen climate change negotiations. Students will work in teams representing their country’s interests with respect to particular issues on the negotiating agenda. Students will turn in a negotiation portfolio due on December 11. Specific guidelines to be distributed separately.

Final grades will be calculated by determining percentage of total points possible (400) using the following scale:

- A+ 97-100
- A (Excellent) 93-96
- A- 90-92
- B+ 87-89
- B (Good) 83-86
- B (Average) 70-79
- C (Poor) 60-69
- F (Fail) 0-59

NOTE: No political science course earning a grade lower than a C will be permitted to fulfill political science major requirements.

Policies

Part of what makes the study of political science interesting is the opportunity to engage in debates about controversial issues. In order to facilitate open debate and exchange, it is essential that students recognize and respect the right of each individual to “engage in discussion, to exchange ideas and opinions, and to speak, write and publish freely, in accordance with the guarantees and limitations of our state and national constitutions” (University General Catalog, p. 37).

Extensions and make-ups will be given ONLY IN THE EVENT OF AN UNFORESEEN EMERGENCY (e.g. illness, death in the family, etc.) or with a university approved excuse. Computer malfunction does not constitute a valid excuse. Every effort should be made to make arrangements PRIOR to the due date (and may require written documentation).

Assignments are due at the BEGINNING OF CLASS (within first 5 minutes). In some instances, the instructor may not allow students to turn in assignments late. When permitted, late papers will be marked down one 1/3 of a letter grade (e.g. B+ to a B) for each 24-hour period they are late (including weekends).

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED. Cheating (using unauthorized sources of information and providing or receiving unauthorized assistance on any form of academic work) and plagiarism (using another’s words or ideas without proper acknowledgment) are serious offenses and may result in a failing grade for a particular assignment, failing grade for the course and/or disciplinary action by the university. For clarification on what constitutes cheating and plagiarism, see the University’s General Catalog (pp. 35-36). All incidents of academic dishonesty will be reported to Conflict Resolution and Student Conduct Services for possible further disciplinary action.

STUDENTS WHO DO NOT COMPLETE ALL COURSE REQUIREMENTS WILL FAIL THE COURSE.

Tentative Schedule

This schedule is subject to change for several reasons such as student interest and research demands. Changes will be announced in class and posted on RamCT. It is the student’s responsibility to be informed of changes in the schedule.

I. INTRODUCTION TO GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS

8/24 Introduction and Overview

8/26 Climate Wedges
- Review handout on wedges game (no summary required)
8/28 Historical Context
- Clapp and Dauvergne, ch. 3, pp. 45-82.
- Conca and Dabelko, Introduction, pp. 1-12

Homework (in addition to reading summaries): Submit three choices for the country you would like to focus on for the research project and negotiation simulation.

8/31 Global Environmental Problems on the International Agenda
Depending on the first letter of your last name, read one of the following:
- A-K: GEO-4 Chapter 3: Land (pp. 39-80)
- L-R: GEO-4 Chapter 4: Water (pp. 81-114)
- S-Z: GEO-4 Chapter 5: Biodiversity (pp. 157-194)

Homework (in place of reading summaries): Answer the following questions and be prepared to report to the rest of the class:
- What are the major trends related to environmental degradation of [land/water/biodiversity]?
- What are the key drivers of environmental change?
- What kinds of evidence do we rely on to identify these trends and drivers? Are there key areas of uncertainty?
- What are the central challenges/opportunities for addressing these problems?

9/2 Worldviews for Understanding Global Environmental Problems
- Clapp and Dauvergne ch. 1, pp. 1-17
- Meadows et al., The Limits to Growth, in Conca and Dabelko, pp. 24-28.

9/4 Worldviews (con’t)
- Clapp and Dauvergne, ch. 8, pp. 221-243

9/7 NO CLASS-Labor Day

II. UNDERSTANDING CLIMATE CHANGE: THE BIOPHYSICAL AND HUMAN DIMENSIONS
A. The Scientific Basis
9/9 The Greenhouse Effect
- Hare, A Safe Landing for the Climate, in Worldwatch Institute, pp. 13-29.
- The National Academies. 2008. Understanding and Responding to Climate Change: Highlights of National Academies Reports. (23 pp)

9/11 Attend one of the following sessions of the International Colloquium on Global Environmental Sustainability.
For details on location, go to http://wsprod.colostate.edu/cwis30/2007/main/files/adtest.asp
- Pathways to Sustainable Business
- Long-Term Agricultural Growth and Soil Sustainability
- Comparative Approaches in Human Sciences to Sustainability and Poverty

(Note that the sessions run from 9-10:30. You may leave early if you have a 10:00 class)

Homework: Submit a bibliography of 10 sources related to climate change politics and policy making in your assigned country (See guidelines posted on RamCT in the “Research Project” folder).
9/14 Climate Impacts and Vulnerability
- Three readings in the Worldwatch volume (do one reading summary for all three)
  - Aguilar, Women and Climate Change: Vulnerabilities and Adaptive Capacity, pp. 59-62
  - Cameron, Small Island Developing States at the Forefront of Global Climate Change, pp. 71-74
  - Osman-Elasha, Building Resilience to Drought and Climate Change in Sudan, pp. 92-95.

Homework (in addition to reading summaries): Submit two paragraph on the session you attended of the International Colloquium on Global Environmental Sustainability. Your response should 1) summarize the main topics covered in the session and 2) consider whether/how the session relates to global environmental politics.

B. Science and Policy
9/16 Use of Science in Decision-making
- Oreskes-Pielke discussion on consensus in climate change (one reading summary for all)

9/18 Climate Skepticism

C. Drivers of greenhouse gas emissions
9/21 Where do emissions come from?
- World Resources Institute Climate Analysis Indicator Tool: http://cait.wri.org/

Homework: For your assigned country, answer the following questions (be sure to bring a copy to class):
- What were the total GHG emissions in 2005?
- What percent of the 2005 world total GHG emissions is your country responsible for?
- Where does your country rank in terms of total GHG emissions? Per capita GHG emissions?
- How much have your country’s emissions changed between 1990 and 2005?
- What were CO2 emissions by sector in 2005?
- How does this compare to the world CO2 emissions by sector in 2005?
- Write 1-2 paragraphs reflecting on the implications of this data for climate change politics and policymaking at the international level and/or within your assigned country.

9/23 Globalization
- Clapp and Dauvergne ch. 2, pp. 19-43.
- Wang and Watson, Trade, Climate Change and Sustainability, in Worldwatch Institute, pp. 88-89.
9/25 Population
- Sen, Women Poverty and Population: Issues for the Concerned Environmentalist, in Conca and Dabelko, pp. 358-367

Homework (in addition to reading summaries): Calculate your personal carbon footprint at [http://www.nature.org/initiatives/climatechange/calculator/](http://www.nature.org/initiatives/climatechange/calculator/) Bring a hard copy of results to class instead of posting to RamCT.

9/28 Consumption

D. Links to other social concerns
9/30 Economics and Sustainable Development
- Clapp and Dauvergne ch. 4, pp. 83-117.
- Sharachchandra M. Lélé, Sustainable Development: A critical review, in Conca and Dabelko, pp. 252-264.

10/2 Security

10/5 Equity and Justice
- Conca and Dabelko pp. 333-338;
- Chawla, Climate Justice Movements Gather Strength, in Worldwatch Institute, pp. 119-121.

10/7 NO CLASS-Mid-term Exam Due

III. GOVERNING CLIMATE CHANGE
10/9 Tragedy of the Commons
- Garrett Hardin, The Tragedy of the Commons, in Conca and Dabelko, pp. 37-44.
- Susan J. Buck, No Tragedy of the Commons, in Conca and Dabelko, pp. 45-53.
- Ken Conca, Rethinking the Ecology-Sovereignty Debate, in Conca and Dabelko, pp. 71-81
- Lyuba Zarsky, Stuck in the Mud? Nation-States, Globalization, and Environment, in Conca and Dabelko, pp. 82-93.

A. Multilateral Treaty Negotiations
10/12 The Kyoto Protocol
- UNEP, Multilateral Environmental Agreements: A Summary, in Conca and Dablko pp. 147-155
Engelman, Sealing the Deal to Save the Climate, in Worldwatch Institute, pp. 169-188.

10/14 The Kyoto Protocol (con’t)

_Homework (in place of reading summary):_ Based on O’Neill’s discussion, how would you rate the effectiveness of the Kyoto Protocol?

10/16 The Road to Copenhagen

B. National Government Responses

10/19 Industrialized Countries

10/21 The Energy Transition
- Sawin and Moomaw, An Enduring Energy Future, in Worldwatch Institute, pp. 130-150.

10/23 The United States

10/26 Carbon Markets
- Kaufman, Using the Market to Address Climate Change, in Worldwatch Institute, pp. 103-106.

10/28 Developing Countries
- Readings in the Worldwatch Institute volume (one reading summary for all):
  - Mehra, India Starts to Take on Climate Change, in Worldwatch Institute, pp. 80-83.
  - Liu, A Chinese Perspective on Climate and Energy, in Worldwatch Institute, pp. 84-87.
10/30 New Technologies

C. Beyond National Governments
11/2 Business responses
- Clapp and Dauvergne ch. 6, pp. 157-187

11/4 NO CLASS

**Homework:** Turn in a draft paper to your peer-review group no later than 5pm (use the “Discussion Tool” on RamCT).

11/6 Peer review of Research Paper

**Homework:** Complete peer-review form for two papers from your group. Come to class prepared to provide constructive comments to your group.

11/9 NGOs

11/11 Individual action

**Homework Assignment (in addition to reading summary):**
Look at the following websites:
- TerraPass
- NativeEnergy
- ClimateCare
- Colorado Carbon Fund

A friend has asked you for advice regarding the purchase of carbon offsets for a flight from Denver to New York. Which of these companies (if any) would recommend and why? Be clear about the criteria used in your evaluation and how the different companies rank on these criteria.

11/13 NO CLASS—**Research Papers Due**

11/16 State and local responses
11/18  Campus climate action
   - American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment website

11/20  Climate Change at CSU
   - Colorado State University. 2008. The Green University Website
   - Jennifer Hattam. 2008. 10 Schools that Get It. Sierra. (Sept./Oct.).

   Homework (in place of reading summaries): How does CSU compare to some of the schools in the country?

11/23-11/27  NO CLASS-Fall Break

11/30-12/7  Negotiation Simulation
   - Readings TBD

12/9-12/11  Report from Copenhagen
   - Review Earth Negotiations Bulletin reports of the Copenhagen conference. Available at
   http://www.iisd.ca/process/Climate_atm.htm#climate

   Negotiation Portfolio Due 12/11

12/16  Optional meeting (7-9am) to discuss developments at the Copenhagen conference