PSCI 4809A: Honours Seminar in Selected Topics in Political Science
THE STATE AND GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE
Thursday 11:35-2:25 p.m.; Room: A602 Loeb

Professor: James Meadowcroft
Office: Dunton Tower 1018
Office Hours: Tuesday: 3.00-4.00; Thursday 3.00-4.00
Telephone: 520-2600 x 2214
Email: jmeadowc@connect.carleton.ca

This course examines the potential of states to come to grips with environmental problems. The institutions and practices of modern environmental governance date from the early 1970s, and over the past three and a half decades programmes and initiatives to manage environmental burdens have proliferated. Yet the total pressure industrialised societies place on the global environment continues to rise. Hence the questions: Can states do better? And if so how?

The course will draw together approaches and arguments from comparative politics, international relations, and political theory. Issues to be explored during the semester include: the evolution of environmental governance and the comparative performance of national states; changing configurations of problems, approaches and policy instruments; globalization and trans-national environmental governance; civil society and the green public sphere; ‘ecological democracy’ and ‘greening the state’.

Course Objectives

This course aims to provide students with an understanding of the role, potential and limitations of the state in managing environmental issues. By the end of the course students will be able to:

- demonstrate an understanding of state engagement with environmental problems;
- apply different perspectives to analyse this issue;
- demonstrate appropriate cognitive, communicative and transferable skills, including understanding complex concepts and theories, exercising critical judgement, making effective oral and written presentations, utilising specialist primary and secondary sources, and deepening their capacity for independent learning.

Organisation

Twelve 3 hour classes to be held Thursdays 11:35 to 2:25.

Assessment

Assessment is based on the following:
15%  1500 word short paper, due Tuesday, October 9, 2007 (please hand in during office hours)
15%  group presentation
55%  5000 word research paper, due Monday December 3, 2007
15%  class participation
**Short paper:*** This involves analysis of one of the major doubts about the possibility of 'greening' the state -- the anarchic character of the international system; or the lack of scalar 'fit' between states and environmental problems; or the imperatives of capital accumulation; or the requirements of bureaucratic rationality; or the character of liberal democracy.

**Group presentation:*** The presentation will focus on assessing the comparative performance of industrialized countries in the domain of the environment and sustainable development. The projects will compare different approaches to measuring environmental performance and sustainability, focusing on different composite indexes that have tried to operationalize ‘environmental quality’ and ‘sustainability’. Detailed guidelines will be provided by the instructor.

**Research paper:*** This is to be an original piece of work that exams a theme related to this course in more detail. Topics must be approved by the instructor by Thursday 21 October. In preparing this project students are expected to examine material on their specialist subject well beyond that cited in the reading list.

**Class participation:*** This mark reflects the contribution made to classes over the course as a whole. This includes seminar presentations, debates, and class discussion. Attendance, keeping up with the readings, and the quality and consistency of participation are all relevant. Students are expected to read the assigned material before class, and to attend all sessions.

All assessed components must be completed if credit is to be awarded for this course. Late essays without prior arrangement or documented medical leave will be penalized at the rate of one grade point per day. Written work should be properly referenced and annotated -- consult the Carleton University Department of Political Science Essay Style Guide – at: http://www.carleton.ca/polisci/undergrad/Essay%20Style%20Guide.pdf

**Reading**

The reading listed under each topic is intended to provide an introduction to the issues involved, an anchor for the class discussion, and a basis from which students can extend their investigations. There is no single textbook for this course, but three books provide coverage of many of the themes to be addressed:


**Seminar Program**

Part 1: Defining the problem

Week 1: Introduction (September 6)
Week 2: The evolution of states and the emergence of environmental governance (September 13)
Week 3: Patterns of contemporary environmental governance (September 27)
Week 4: Democratic processes and driving forces (October 4)

Part 2: ‘Greening’ the state?

Week 5: Policy challenges 1: strategies, interactive policy making, integration (October 11)
Week 6: Policy challenges 2: ecological fiscal reform, emission trading (October 18)
  Group presentation A
Week 7: Policy challenges 3: technological innovation and sustainable production (October 25)
  Group presentation B
Week 8: Policy challenges 4: confronting consumption (November 1)
  Group presentation C
Week 9: Global governance 1: environmental regimes and climate change (November 8)
  Group presentation D
Week 10: Global governance 2: climate change (November 15)
Week 11: Global governance 3: the ‘greening’ sovereignty? (November 22)
Week 12: Friend or foe: the state and environmental politics (November 29)

Week 1: Introduction (September 6)

The purpose of this session is to examine the basic structure of the course, organize seminar presentations, and initiate preliminary reflection upon substantive issues. Questions to think about: How successful has state engagement with environmental issues been to date? Is the state still at the centre of global environmental politics?

Week 2: The evolution of states and the emergence of environmental governance (September 13)

This session considers the historical development of the modern state, recent trends in state/societal interaction, and the emergence of modern environmental governance. Questions to think about: what have been the most important changes in the role of the state in the last few decades? How has the state engaged with environmental issues?

Core reading:


Patterson, M., *Understanding Global Environmental Politics: Domination, Accumulation and Resistance* (Palgrave, 2001), Chapter 3: ‘The “normal and mundane practices of modernity”: global power structures and the environment’

Further reading:

**Week 3: Patterns of contemporary environmental governance (September 27)**

This class traces the evolution of state engagement with environmental problems and identifies key features of contemporary approaches to environmental issues. Questions for reflection: What are the most pressing environmental issues faced by developed societies? How have government approaches to environmental problems changed over time?

**Core reading:**


**Further reading:**


**Week 4 Democratic processes and driving forces (October 4)**

The concern here is with the forces that may encourage the ‘greening’ of the modern state, and with the potential of democratic political systems to undergo the necessary transformation. Questions for reflection: What is propelling the ‘greening’ of the modern state?

**Core reading:**


**Further reading:**

Barry, B., *Rethinking Green Politics* (Sage, 1999), Chapter 5: ‘The state, governance and the politics of collective ecological management’.
Barry, B., *Rethinking Green Politics* (Sage, 1999), Chapter 7: Green politics and democracy: green citizenship and ecological stewardship’.

**Week 5: Policy challenges 1: strategies, interactive policy making, integration** (October 11)

The seminar focuses on approaches to policy making in a complex work. It considers some of the key issues that must be addressed if the state is to take on the ecological challenges of the 21st century. Questions for discussion: what is the significance of policy integration? Why is ‘participation so central to the new environmental paradigm?

Core reading:


Further reading:


**Week 6: Policy challenges 2: ecological fiscal reform, emission trading** (October 18)

This session examines the potential of two key economic instruments of environmental policy: emissions trading and ecological fiscal reform. Questions for discussion: what are the strengths and limitations of emissions trading? Why are governments so reluctant to undertake ecological fiscal reform?

Core reading:


Week 7: Policy challenges 3: technological innovation and sustainable production (October 25)

This class focuses on technological innovation and the role of the state in promoting green technologies. Questions for discussion? To what extent can we forecast the path of future technological development? Is technology or behaviour the key to resolving environmental problems?

Core reading:


Further reading:


Week 8: Policy challenges 4: confronting consumption (November 1)

This seminar focuses on the issue of consumption. It explores what drives changes in consumption, and the extent to which government can act to shift consumption patterns. Questions for discussion: why are governments so hesitant to address consumption issues directly? What drives changes in consumption patterns?

Core reading:

Week 9: Global governance 1: environmental regimes and climate change (November 8)

This class focuses on international environmental regimes. It considers the ozone regime and opens a discussion on the developing climate change regime. Questions for discussion: What determines the relative success of international environmental regimes? Can state to state regimes address the transnational dimensions of environmental problems?

Core reading:


Further reading:


Week 10 Global governance 2: climate change (November 15)
This session continues the discussion of international climate change politics, focusing on the outlines for a post 2012 agreement. Questions for discussion: What are the obstacles preventing more rapid progress on the international climate change file? What is the likely shape of a post 2012 agreement?


**Week 11: Global governance 3: ‘greening’ sovereignty? (November 22)**

This session considers the ‘greening’ of sovereignty’, exploring how the powers of the nation state can be reconciled with international environmental regulation. Questions for discussion: To what extent is the ‘greening of sovereignty’ possible?

Core reading:


**Further reading:**

**Week 12: Friend or foe: the state and environmental politics (November 29)**

This class concludes the course with a general discussion of the role of the state in managing environmental burdens. Questions for discussion: What the potential for the state in managing environmental problems in coming decades. What are the key issues to address? Are there grounds for optimism?

Core reading:


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Academic Accommodations

For Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course are encouraged to contact the Paul Menton Centre (PMC) for Students with Disabilities (500 University Centre) to complete the necessary forms. After registering with the PMC, make an appointment to meet with the instructor in order to discuss your needs at least two weeks before the first in-class test or CUTV midterm exam. This will allow for sufficient time to process your request. Please note the following deadlines for submitting completed forms to the PMC for formally scheduled exam accommodations: November 9th, 2007 for December examinations, and March 14th, 2008 for April examinations.

For Religious Observance: Students requesting accommodation for religious observances should apply in writing to their instructor for alternate dates and/or means of satisfying academic requirements. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist, but no later than two weeks before the compulsory academic event. Accommodation is to be worked out directly and on an individual basis between the student and the instructor(s) involved. Instructors will make accommodations in a way that avoids academic disadvantage to the student. Instructors and students may contact an Equity Services Advisor for assistance (www.carleton.ca/equity).

For Pregnancy: Pregnant students requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact an Equity Advisor in Equity Services to complete a letter of accommodation. Then, make an appointment to discuss your needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first academic event in which it is anticipated the accommodation will be required.

Plagiarism: The Undergraduate Calendar defines plagiarism as: "to use and pass off as one’s own idea or product, work of another without expressly giving credit to another." The Graduate Calendar states that plagiarism has occurred when a student either: (a) directly copies another's work without acknowledgment; or (b) closely paraphrases the equivalent of a short paragraph or more without acknowledgment; or (c) borrows, without acknowledgment, any ideas in a clear and recognizable form in such a way as to present them as the student’s own thought, where such ideas, if they were the student's own would contribute to the merit of his or her own work. Instructors who suspect plagiarism are required to submit the paper and supporting documentation to the Departmental Chair who will refer the case to the Dean. It is not permitted to hand in the same assignment to two or more courses. The Department's Style Guide is available at: http://www.carleton.ca/polisci/undergrad/Essay%20Style%20Guide.html

Oral Examination: At the discretion of the instructor, students may be required to pass a brief oral examination on research papers and essays.

Submission and Return of Term Work: Papers must be handed directly to the instructor and will not be date-stamped in the departmental office. Late assignments may be submitted to the drop box in the corridor outside
B640 Loeb. Assignments will be retrieved every business day at 4 p.m., stamped with that day's date, and then distributed to the instructor. For essays not returned in class please attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope if you wish to have your assignment returned by mail. Please note that assignments sent via fax or email will not be accepted. Final exams are intended solely for the purpose of evaluation and will not be returned.

Approval of final grades: Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by an instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

Course Requirements: Students must fulfill all course requirements in order to achieve a passing grade. Failure to hand in any assignment will result in a grade of F. Failure to write the final exam will result in a grade of ABS. FND (Failure No Deferred) is assigned when a student's performance is so poor during the term that they cannot pass the course even with 100% on the final examination. In such cases, instructors may use this notation on the Final Grade Report to indicate that a student has already failed the course due to inadequate term work and should not be permitted access to a deferral of the examination. Deferred final exams are available ONLY if the student is in good standing in the course.

Connect Email Accounts: The Department of Political Science strongly encourages students to sign up for a campus email account. Important course and University information will be distributed via the Connect email system. See http://connect.carleton.ca for instructions on how to set up your account.