PUP 3203 Environmental Politics

Fall 2023

School of Politics, Security, and International Affairs
College of Sciences
University of Central Florida
3 credit hours

Instructor Information

- Instructor: Ozgur Kayaalp
- Office Location: HPH 102
- Office Hours: Wednesday and Thursday, 11:00 am- 13:00 pm (with appointment). Zoom meeting is the best option.
- Digital Contact: Webcourses@UCF messaging. For urgent issues: oz140289@ucf.edu

Course Information

- Term: Fall 2023
- Course Number & Section: PUP 3203
- Course Modality: W (online)

UCF Catalogue Course Description

An examination of politics and policymaking concerning issues of conservation, pollution, and development of land, air, and water resources.

Course Purpose

The overall argument of this course is that humanity, by virtue of its numbers and the impact of economic and technological development, is dangerously pushing against bio-physical limits we will call planetary boundaries. Planetary boundaries demarcate safe operating spaces for humanity in relation to the Earth's biological and physical subsystems and processes. By pushing against these boundaries, human activities in their present forms threaten life-supporting equilibrium and social breakdown. To avoid severe degradation of human well-being, the tension between environmental integrity and economic growth must be lessened through sustainable solutions, transformative government policies and collective action.

Webcourses

Webcourses is an online course management system (accessed through my.ucf.edu and then the "Online Course Tools" tab) that will be used as a medium for turning in assignments and a forum for communicating with your teammates. Under the "Discussion" section, you will have a designated forum section. My recommendation is to check Webcourses every 2-3 days for updates from your teammates or myself.

Required Materials/Resources (Make sure to obtain the correct editions)

- Judith Layzer and Sara Rinfret, *The Environmental Case: Translating Values into Policy*. 2020, Fifth edition only, CQ Press. ISBN: 978-1-5063-9696-5. **Renting this book might be a good option since you will be reading only three chapters from it.**
- Peter Jacques. Sustainability: The Basics, 2021, 2nd Edition. Published December 31, 2020 by Routledge, ISBN 9780367365172. **Available online through UCF library:**

  https://go.openathens.net/redirector/ucf.edu?url=https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/mono/10.4324/9780429346613/sustainability-basics-peter-jacques

Additional material (not mandatory): Daniel J. Fiorino, *A Good Life on a Finite Planet: The Political Economy of Green Growth*. Oxford University Press, 2018. ISBN: 978-0-19-060581-0.

Course objectives:

1. By the end of this course, students will gain a comprehensive understanding of planetary boundaries, their current state globally and in the United States, and the implications of crossing these boundaries. They will be able to describe, with a high degree of accuracy, the concept of planetary boundaries and critically assess the extent to which various boundaries have been crossed. Moreover, students will be able to identify and analyze the consequences of surpassing these thresholds, particularly in relation to the carbon cycle, the nitrogen cycle, and the decline of biodiversity.

2. Students will be able to analyze and understand concrete case studies of environmental politics and policy in the United States. They will explore the typical anatomy of political conflicts surrounding environmental issues, including the value conflict between environmentalist and cornucopian viewpoints. Moreover, students will comprehend the significance of problem definition, institutional fragmentation, and the dynamics of pluralist versus neo-corporatist policymaking in shaping environmental policy. Additionally, they will critically examine the tension between current economic growth practices and environmental integrity.
3. Students will develop a comprehensive understanding of the core principles of sustainability, the key ethical considerations related to sustainability questions, the methods for measuring sustainability, the critical obstacles to achieving global

sustainability, and the consequences societies face when failing to observe principles of sustainability. The course will delve into the concepts of environmental sustainability and green growth, exploring their complexities and implications for contemporary environmental challenges.

Course Activities

There will be three assignments during the course: Weekly quizzes, weekly discussion post, and two short essays. All due dates are detailed in the course schedule.

- **Quizzes**: they are designed to verify understanding of assigned materials with multiple choice questions each week.
- **Discussion prompt:** I will assign biweekly prompts. Write your comment(s) on this topic, try to provide unique insights. After posting your response, read through your classmates' comments and reply to at least one of them. Engage in constructive discussions, ask questions, and offer additional perspectives or support for their viewpoints.
- **Short essays:** Throughout the course, you will be required to complete two short essays.
    - The first essay will be assigned after completing Part 2 of the course, and you will have the option to select one case study from Layzer and Rinfret's book. The chosen case study will be analyzed, and you will write a short essay on one of the following topics:
        - Water quality and nitrogen. (Chapter 4) OR
        - Climate change and the carbon cycle (Chapter 12) OR
        - Biodiversity (Chapter 6)
    - After completing Part 3 of the course, you will proceed to the second short essay. In this assignment, you can choose one of the questions provided in Jacques' book **OR** EU Green deal / Green Growth topics and craft a short essay about it. The available question from the Jacques book for the second essay are as follows:
        - What are the core principles of sustainability?
        - What are the key ethical considerations for questions of sustainability?
        - How do we measure sustainability?
        - What are the critical obstacles to achieving global sustainability?
        - What happens when societies fail to observe principles of sustainability?

As this assignment is an essay, there are no definitive right or wrong answers. Instead, I will assess your submissions based on the following evaluation criteria:

Formatting and Style:

- Use a clear and concise writing style and maintain a formal tone throughout the essay.

- Organize the essay into well-structured paragraphs, each addressing a specific point or argument.
- Provide evidence and examples to support your claims and cite your sources using a consistent referencing style (e.g., APA, MLA).
- Include a bibliography/ reference.
- Aim for a coherent and logical flow of ideas throughout the essay.

Submission Guidelines:

- Submit your essay in a standard document format (e.g., Microsoft Word or PDF).
- Word count will be 750-1000 words with double space (without references)
- Include a title page with your name, course, and the date of submission.
- Proofread your essay thoroughly to eliminate any grammatical errors or typos.

Please note: *I kindly request that you refrain from utilizing any AI applications for this task. Instead, I encourage you to embrace your own creativity, draw from your experiences, and rely on your intellectuality. Remember, this is not a competition; it's an opportunity for learning and growth! Let your unique perspective and insights shine through as you complete this assignment. Enjoy the process of learning and exploring new ideas!*

Make-up Exams and Assignments

Per university policy, you are allowed to submit make-up work (or an equivalent, alternate assignment) for university-sponsored events, religious observances, or legal obligations (such as jury duty). If this participation conflicts with your course assignments, I will offer a reasonable opportunity for you to complete missed assignments and/or exams. The make-up assignment and grading scale will be equivalent to the missed assignment and its grading scale. Please contact me ahead of time to notify me of upcoming needs.

Can’t make the deadline for other reasons than those listed above? Contact me with an explanation **and** a request for a specific deadline extension. I cannot accept open ended extension requests. Note also that my flexibility on deadlines vanishes with the approach of the end of the semester.

Assessment and Grading Procedures

The table shows the weight distribution for each assignment.	
Assignment	**Percentage of Grade**
Quizzes	20%
Discussion posts	20%
Essay 1	30%
Essay 2	30%
Total	100%

The table shows the range for each letter grade and uses a plus/minus system.	
Letter Grade	**Points**
A	93 – 100 points
A-	90 – 92 points
B+	87 – 89 points
B	83 – 86 points
B-	80 – 82 points
C+	77 – 79 points
C	73 – 76 points
C-	70 – 72 points
D+	67 – 69 points
D	63 – 66 points
D-	60 – 62 points
F	59 and below
The table shows the range for each letter grade and uses an A,B,C,D,F grading system.	
Letter Grade	**Points**
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	59 or below

Consult the latest Undergraduate or Graduate catalog for regulations and procedures regarding grading such as Incomplete grades, grade changes, and grade forgiveness.

Course Schedule

Week/Dates	Topic	Assignment 1	Assignment 2	Assignment 3
PART1 **TAKING STOCK OF THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT**				
WEEK 1 -2	**TOPIC: Planetary Boundaries and Societal Collapse** Assigned materials: - Jared Diamond, *Why Societies Collapse*, a 20-minute Ted Talk Available at: https://fod-infobase-com.eu1.proxy.openathens.net/p_ViewVideo.aspx?xtid=48374 - Johan Rockstroem et al., *A Safe Operating Space for Humanity*. This is a brief article explaining the concept of planetary boundaries, published in *Nature*, 24 September 2009. A longer version of this article is available in Files in - *Pandemics and the Environment*. This pdf file contains a few media articles from different sources on the connection between pandemics and environmental pressures. - Bill McKibben, *Our Final Warning*. A book review on climate change published in the *New York Review of Books,* August 20, 2020). The carbon cycle is one of three areas where planetary boundaries are overstretched.	QUIZ Due: Sep 1, 11:58pm	DISCUSSION POST Due: Sep 1, 11:58pm	

WEEK 3 - 4	**TOPIC: Examining Cornucopians Arguments** Stephen Meyer, *The End of the Wild.* A short essay focused on biodiversity. The rate of biodiversity lost constitutes a second area where planetary boundaries are overstretched. The Nature Conservancy, *Gulf of Mexico Dead Zone*. This is one example of pollution by excessive run off of nitrogen. The nitrogen cycle is a third area where planetary boundaries are overstretched. Avalable at: https://www.nature.org/en-us/about-us/where-we-work/priority-landscapes/gulf-of- mexico/stories-in-the-gulf-of-mexico/gulf-of-mexico-dead-zone/ Lester Milbrath, *Envisioning a Sustainable Society*, 1989. Selected excerpts critically examining cornucopian arguments for conventional growth.	QUIZ Due: Sep 15, 11:58pm	DISCUSSION POST Due: Sep 15, 11:58pm	
PART 2 **ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY IN THE USA**				
Week 5 - 6	**TOPIC: Frameworks for Analyzing Environmental Policy in the U.S. Early Environmental Policymaking in the U.S.** - Layzer/Rinfret, chapter 1: A Policy-Making Framework. - Layzer/Rinfret, chapter 2: The Nation Tackles Air and Water Pollution. - Excerpts on the National Environmental Policy Act.	QUIZ Due: Sep 29, 11:58pm	DISCUSSION POST Due: Sep 29, 11:58pm	

Week 7 - 9	**Case Studies of Environmental Policy Conflict** - Water quality and the nitrogen Layzer/Rinfret chapter 4. Chesapeake Bay and updates. - Climate change and the carbon Layzer/Rinfret chapter 12 and updates. - Biodiversity. Layzer/Rinfret chapter 6 and updates.	QUIZ Due: Oct 20, 11:58pm	DISCUSSION POST Due: Oct 20, 11:58pm	**ESSAY 1** Due: Oct 20, 11:58pm
PART 3 **ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY**				
Week 10-12	**TOPIC: Sustainability and Green transformation** - Peter Jacques, Sustainability: The Basics, Introduction-Chapter 5	QUIZ Due: Nov 10, 11:58pm	DISCUSSION POST Due: Nov 10, 11:58pm	
Week 13-15	**Sustainability and Green transformation 2** - Peter Jacques, Sustainability: The Basics, Introduction-Chapter 6-7 - Hickel, Jason, and Giorgos Kallis. "Is green growth possible?" *New political economy* 25.4 (2020): 469-486. - EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL: https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal/delivering-european-green-deal_en - Fiorino, Daniel J. *A good life on a finite earth: The political economy of green growth*. Oxford University Press, 2018.	QUIZ Due: Dec 2, 11:58pm	DISCUSSION POST Due: Dec 2, 11:58pm	**ESSAY 2** Due: Dec 2, 11:58pm

University Services and Resources

Academic Services and Resources

A list of available academic support and learning services (coaching, tutoring, etc.) is available at Student Learning and Academic Success. Click on "Academic Support and Learning Services" on the right-hand side to filter.

Non-Academic Services and Resources

A list of non-academic support and services (counseling, financial or housing crisis, etc.) is also available at UCF Student Services.

If you are a UCF Online student, please consult the UCF Online Student Guidelines for more information about your access to non-academic services.

Policy Statements

Academic Integrity

Students should familiarize themselves with UCF's Rules of Conduct. According to Section 1, "Academic Misconduct," students are prohibited from engaging in:

- *Unauthorized assistance*: Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information or study aids in any academic exercise unless specifically authorized by the instructor of record. The unauthorized possession of examination or course-related material also constitutes cheating.
- *Communication to another through written, visual, electronic, or oral means*: The presentation of material which has not been studied or learned, but rather was obtained through someone else's efforts and used as part of an examination, course assignment, or project.
- *Commercial Use of Academic Material*: Selling of course material to another person, student, and/or uploading course material to a third-party vendor without authorization or without the express written permission of the university and the instructor. Course materials include but are not limited to class notes, Instructor's PowerPoints, course syllabi, tests, quizzes, labs, instruction sheets, homework, study guides, handouts, etc.
- *Falsifying or misrepresenting* the student's own academic work.
- *Plagiarism*: Using or appropriating another's work without any indication of the source, thereby attempting to convey the impression that such work is the student's own.
- *Multiple Submissions*: Submitting the same academic work for credit more than once without the express written permission of the instructor.
- *Helping another violate* academic behavior standards.

For more information about Academic Integrity, students may consult The Center for Academic IntegrityLinks to an external site..

For more information about plagiarism and misuse of sources, see "Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism: The WPA Statement on Best PracticesLinks to an external site.".

Responses to Academic Dishonesty, Plagiarism, or Cheating

Students should also familiarize themselves with the procedures for academic misconduct in UCF's student handbook, The Golden Rule. UCF faculty members have a responsibility for students' education and the value of a UCF degree, and so seek to prevent unethical behavior and when necessary respond to academic misconduct. Penalties can include a failing grade in an assignment or in the course, suspension or expulsion from the university, and/or a "Z Designation" on a student's official transcript indicating academic dishonesty, where the final grade for this course will be preceded by the letter Z. For more information about the Z Designation, see http://goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/zgrade.

Course Accessibility Statement

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing access and inclusion for all persons with disabilities. Students with disabilities who need disability-related access in this course should contact the professor as soon as possible. Students should also connect with Student Accessibility Services (Ferrell Commons 185, sas@ucf.edu, phone (407) 823-2371). Through Student Accessibility Services, a Course Accessibility Letter may be created and sent to professors, which informs faculty of potential access and accommodations that might be reasonable. Determining reasonable access and accommodations requires consideration of the course design, course learning objectives and the individual academic and course barriers experienced by the student.

Deployed Active Duty Military Students

Students who are deployed active duty military and/or National Guard personnel and require accommodation should contact their instructors as soon as possible after the semester begins and/or after they receive notification of deployment to make related arrangements.

Title IX

Title IX prohibits sex discrimination, including sexual misconduct, sexual violence, sexual harassment, and retaliation. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find resources available to support the victim, including confidential resources and information concerning reporting options
at https://letsbeclear.ucf.edu and http://cares.sdes.ucf.edu/.

Copyright

This course may contain copyright protected materials such as audio or video clips, images, text materials, etc. These items are being used with regard to the Fair Use doctrine in order to enhance the learning environment. Please do not copy, duplicate, download or distribute these

items. The use of these materials is strictly reserved for this online classroom environment and your use only. All copyright materials are credited to the copyright holder.

Third-Party Software and FERPA

During this course you might have the opportunity to use public online services and/or software applications sometimes called third-party software such as a blog or wiki. While some of these could be required assignments, you need not make any personally identifying information on a public site. Do not post or provide any private information about yourself or your classmates. Where appropriate you may use a pseudonym or nickname. Some written assignments posted publicly may require personal reflection/comments, but the assignments will not require you to disclose any personally identity-sensitive information. If you have any concerns about this, please contact your instructor.