



Course and Examination Fact Sheet: Autumn Semester 2020

7,379: Global Environmental Politics

ECTS credits: 4

Overview examination/s

(binding regulations see below)

Decentral - Portfolio (100%)

Examination time: term time

Attached courses

Timetable -- Language -- Lecturer

[7,379,1.00 Global Environmental Politics](#) -- Englisch -- [Dingwerth Klaus](#)

Course information

Course prerequisites

This course is offered by the MIA programme but open to students from other Master programmes at HSG as well as to exchange students. Students who are not yet familiar with theories of International Relations are encouraged to familiarize themselves with major strands of thinking before the term.

Learning objectives

- Students know and understand the basic structures of global environmental problems.
- Students know major international environmental institutions, including their emergence, structures and development and make sense of these institutions in the light of major International Relations theories.
- Students assess and compare the performance of international environmental institutions and critically evaluate proposals for governance innovations.
- Students communicate their own ideas and arguments effectively both orally and in writing.

Course content

Whether it is global warming, the loss of biological diversity or deforestation, the depletion of ocean fisheries, the thinning of the ozone layer or the accumulation of chemical and organic pollutants in various parts of our environments: global environmental challenges have made many headlines in recent years.

Over the past decades, however, societies have also made strong efforts to confront to such challenges. Helped by science, environmental movements and progressive business interests, governments have constructed a dense web of international environmental institutions. It includes global rules on endangered species and habitats, regulations on hazardous wastes substances and their trade as well as on the protection of the atmosphere to which the 2015 Paris Agreement is only the latest addition.

In this course, we look at both: the global environmental problems our world confronts, and the responses states and societies have collectively given. We ask where major environmental challenges come from, how the institutions states have established to address these changes have emerged and developed over time, and how and why they contribute (or fail to do so) to problem-solving. In a final part, we also look at recent innovations in global environmental governance and ask how they may replace or complement traditional ways of doing global environmental politics.

Course structure

The course is organized as a weekly seminar. The first part (weeks 1 to 6) is meant to provide a solid foundation. Through readings, short presentations and discussions, students gain an overview of major aspects of and debates in global



environmental politics

The overview we gain in this part will serve as a basis for addressing selected topics in greater depth in the second part (weeks 7 to 12). Students will be able to address a specific topic and question of their interest in small groups and under the supervision of the lecturer. Seminar time in this part will therefore be divided between classroom discussions of core readings in global environmental politics and discussion with and within groups.

Course literature

Required readings will be made available on Canvas. Students are expected to carefully read all required readings before coming to class. For one session, they will prepare a reading response; for one other sessions, they will be present an additional article drawn from a list prepared by the lecturer or selected by themselves.

Additional course information

In the case of the President's Board having to implement new directives due to the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic in AS2020, the course information listed above will be changed as follows:

- The course is conducted online via the platform Zoom.
- The recordings of the course will not be saved.
- The lecturer informs via Canvas/StudyNet on the changed implementation modalities of the course.

The examination information listed below would be changed as follows:

- The presentations are conducted online and are being recorded.

Examination information

Examination sub part/s

1. Examination sub part (1/1)

Examination time and form

Decentral - Portfolio (100%)

Examination time: term time

Remark

Three graded parts and one ungraded part

Examination-aid rule

Portfolio

In case of a "Portfolio" a mixed examination format (not a one-off single examination) is meant, which is composed as follows:

- The Portfolio examination consists of at least three examination parts.
- The individual parts are connected or based on each other respectively. At least one part is concerned with self-reflection and the process of learning.
- The examination parts function as a material or artefact collection.
- They have to cover a period of at least one semester.
- The Portfolio contains written and oral examination parts (e.g. essays, term papers, presentations, moderation of a debate, open-book reflection).
- Achievements can be performed as individuals or in groups, a combination of individual components and group



performance is possible.

- Grading of the examination parts is possible but not required.
- A component that is not graded is considered pass/fail (according to specific criteria) or submitted/not-submitted (without criteria)
- In the end, a (final) grade is mandatory.

Term papers must be written without anyone else's help and in accordance with the known quotation standards, and they must contain a declaration of authorship which is a published template in StudentWeb.

The documentation of sources (quotations, bibliography) has to be done throughout and consistently in accordance with the chosen citation standard such as APA or MLA.

For papers in law, the legal standard is recommended (by way of example, cf. FORSTMOSER, P., OGOREK R. et SCHINDLER B., *Juristisches Arbeiten: Eine Anleitung für Studierende*, newest edition respectively, or according to the recommendations of the Law School).

The indications of the sources of information taken over verbatim or in paraphrase (quotations) must be integrated into texts in accordance with the precepts of the applicable quotation standard, while informative and bibliographical notes must be added as footnotes (recommendations and standards can be found, for example, in METZGER, C., *Lern- und Arbeitsstrategien*, newest edition respectively).

For any work written at the HSG, the indication of the page numbers is mandatory independent of the chosen citation standard. Where there are no page numbers in sources, precise references must be provided in a different way: titles of chapters or sections, section numbers, acts, scenes, verses, etc.

Presentations/Moderation: In presentations, aids for visual presentation can be used. These aids can be specified or restricted by the lecturers.

Practical examination: No examination-aid rule is necessary for such examination types. The rules and regulations of the University of St. Gallen apply in a subsidiary fashion.

Supplementary aids

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Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

Examination content

The Portfolio consists of **four parts** that build on each other:

1. Reading response (individual): Write a summary and critical response to the readings covered (max. 1.500 words) for one of the course weeks. In this summary, you will be expected to clearly explain the arguments in the articles and offer comparative critical reflections upon the strengths and weaknesses of the readings.

This assignment will be due in the first part of the term, with reading responses submitted via Canvas by Wednesday, 2:00 pm before class. A revised version may be submitted until 08 January 2021.

The purpose of this examination form is two-fold: to add depth to class-room discussions and to practice the summarizing of and critical engagement with academic texts that will be required in the group presentation and policy brief (see below).

2. Article presentation (individual): Students present an academic article on a topic of their choice but related to global environmental politics broadly understood. In their presentation, students summarize the research question, the theoretical approach, the research design and major results of the study and critically comment on the merits of the study. They complement their presentation (5-8 minutes) with a written summary of max. 1.500 words (including references). This assignment can be delivered in the first or second part of the term but preparation until the end of the term break is recommended. The written summary can be submitted via Canvas on the day of the presentation.



The purpose of this examination form is two-fold. First, it adds thematic breadth to class-room discussions - we can simply cover more ground if each presents one additional piece of research relevant to the topic we discuss in a given week. Second, students further practice their skills in summarizing and critical engaging with academic texts. These skills will be required in the third part.

3. Either an interview podcast (groups of two) or a policy brief (individual).

a. Interview podcast: Students will select a research topic in global environmental politics and prepare a podcast interview (audio or video) with a researcher who has written on the topic. The format follows the template of the Philosophy Bites series (<https://philosophybites.com/>); if possible, we will make the interviews available as a sort of "Global Environmental Politics Bytes". If necessary, the lecturer will offer help with selecting topics and contacting colleagues in the relevant fields.

The audio or video files will be complemented by a written documentation (max. 2.500 words) that outlines the reasoning behind the selection of the topic and interview partner and documents the preparation of the topic and questions. Both the audio or video interview and the written documentation will be due on 08 January 2021.

b. Policy brief (individual): Students write a policy brief (max. 3.000 words) offering a recommendation about how they would "fix" an environmental problem, assessing the challenges that you might face in doing so. To do this, students will need to find a recent newspaper or magazine article from a reputable publication (e.g. Foreign Affairs, Foreign Policy, The Guardian, Le Monde, The Economist, New York Times) that discusses a current environmental problem. They will then prepare a policy brief that introduces the problem, explains the challenges current efforts to address it face, offers a potential solution to this problem (a "reform" or "innovation" of some kind), and, most important, reflects upon the problems that a policymaker - a government, an environmental NGO or social movement organizations, an international organization - might encounter in trying to implement this reform. In doing this, students will be expected to draw on the articles and lectures as well as readings that are not on the syllabus (these may be academic articles directly related to the problem you choose) and at three to four original sources (such as newspaper articles, interviews, or relevant policy documents). Students may draw up a 1-page memo outlining your plan and discuss it during office hours before Christmas. Individual papers will be due on 08 January 2021.

4. Self-reflection (ungraded): You will write a short reflection (max. 1.250 words) on (a) *what* you have learned, (b) *how* you have learned (including what has helped or hindered progress in your learning efforts in this course), and (c) *which lessons* you draw for your future studies (e.g. in relation to things you wish to further strengthen, work on more or do differently in coming terms). The purpose of this reflection is to make you aware of your own learning process and to help you "learn to learn". The self-reflection will be due on 08 January 2021.

Information on grading: The first three parts will be graded (30% for reading response; 30% for article presentation; 40% for either interview podcast and documentation or policy brief); the fourth part will be ungraded:

Examination relevant literature

The first assignment (reading response) is based exclusively on the required reading. The second assignment (article presentation) is based on an article selected from a list prepared by the lecturer or selected by the student herself/himself. For the third assignment (podcast interview or policy brief), students will need to select the relevant texts themselves. The final assignment (self-reflection) does not require additional literature.



Please note

Please note that only this fact sheet and the examination schedule published at the time of bidding are binding and takes precedence over other information, such as information on StudyNet (Canvas), on lecturers' websites and information in lectures etc.

Any references and links to third-party content within the fact sheet are only of a supplementary, informative nature and lie outside the area of responsibility of the University of St.Gallen.

Documents and materials are only relevant for central examinations if they are available by the end of the lecture period (CW51) at the latest. In the case of centrally organised mid-term examinations, the documents and materials up to CW 42 are relevant for testing.

Binding nature of the fact sheets:

- Course information as well as examination date (organised centrally/decentrally) and form of examination: from bidding start in CW 34 (Thursday, 20 August 2020);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for decentralised examinations: in CW 42 (Monday, 12 October 2020);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised mid-term examinations: in CW 42 (Monday, 12 October 2020);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised examinations: two weeks before the end of the registration period in CW 44 (Thursday, 29 October 2020).