

PLS 460/560: Environmental Politics

Course Instructor:

Jessica Neafie

Assistant Professor

Political Science and International Relations

Email: Jessica.neafie@nu.edu.kz

Office Hours: T 1:30-4:30, Th 2:30-4:30

Sign up here for priority: <https://calendly.com/jessica-neafie/15min>

You may sign up for multiple sessions if you need to talk for a while.

Course Description:

This course is a comprehensive overview of the international and comparative politics and policy dimensions of the natural environment. We will examine the political forces that shape how governments, organizations, and citizens across the globe respond to environmental problems and the consequences of those approaches. The course begins with a detailed review of the links between the environment and politics (at the state and international level), economics, science, and philosophy. We will discuss the different theories and debates around the environment and what makes political approaches to the environment so unique. In the second part of the course, we will look in more detail at specific problems including air pollution, water pollution, waste, biodiversity, energy, and climate change. Throughout the semester, we will focus on the necessary skills and knowledge that will allow us to critically evaluate environmental policy approaches and formulate evidence-based arguments around environmental questions.

During this course students will:

- To learn key concepts, theories, and debates on the issues of environmental politics.
- To develop the ability to critically assess different policy approaches to environmental politics.
- To exercise problem-solving skills against

Course Learning Outcomes:

- 1) Understand and demonstrate knowledge of environmental concepts and debates.
- 2) Develop a critical evaluation of ongoing debates about environmental policy.
- 3) Write individual evidence-based arguments to support different policy approaches.
- 4) Apply relevant concepts and theories of IR and comparative politics to explain environmental politics.
- 5) Awareness of different ideas and cultures and being tolerant to different ideas and arguments.
- 6) 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.

I reserve the right to change this syllabus, including the course schedule, readings, and due dates. All changes will be announced in class and via Moodle.

Course Texts will be accessed through ProQuest or EBSCO books, and other readings will be made available in Moodle.

Recommended textbooks to accompany the class:

Conca, Ken, and Geoffrey D. Dabelko. 2019. *Green planet blues: four decades of global environmental politics*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

McCormick, John. 2018. *Environmental politics and policy*. New York, NY: Bloomsbury.

Comparative Environmental Politics: Theory, Practice, and Prospects, edited by Paul F. Steinberg, and Stacy D. VanDeveer, MIT Press, 2012. *ProQuest Ebook Central*, <https://ezproxy.nu.edu.kz:2236/lib/astana/detail.action?docID=3339399>.

Both 460 and 560-Course Requirements:

News Presentations: Students will each make one class presentation during the term that is ~5-10 minutes long + a Q&A session. Slides are due to the professor by email by the start of class. Each presentation will have a theme, and students will need to pick a news item of interest to them (local, national, or international). The presentations should have four parts: 1) **Summary and background:** a summary of the event in your own words, please provide a brief history; 2) **Relevance:** discussion of the relevance of this news item to the class and to the theories and debates of the course; 3) **Key Takeaways:** What can we learn from this event that's relevant to the course? New policy creation? Poor policy implementation? 4) **Q&A:** a question(s) for the class for discussion or debate.

460-Course Requirements:

Group Project (3-4 people): 45% of grade- Your group will be able to pick a topic related to the course, and you will be doing research related to that topic as it applies to a particular case study.

1. Outline 10%: (8-10 pages, 4000 words)

- a. Based on the policy area that your group chooses (i.e., trade and environment regulation, green finance, SDGs, climate governance, water management, air pollution management), you will introduce the course concepts to analyze the environmental problem and policy responses in your case study. You need to have **at least 12 sources** in an annotated bibliography at this time, of which **4 must be academic sources**.

2. Group Presentations, 15%

- a. In groups students will make one class presentation at the end of term that is at least 20 minutes long + a Q&A session about their final project. Slides are due to the professor by email by the start of class. You should have **at least** 10 slides other than the title slide and bibliography. Slides for you group project should be emailed to me by the start of class on the day of presentation.
- 3. Group Policy Paper, 20%: Due Finals Week (7-8,000 words)**
- a. The final paper will be the full case study policy research paper. You are going to be doing a full review of the policy you want to implement. You need to introduce the environmental problem in detail (including stakeholders), present a policy that will solve the problem, why that policy will solve the problem, why it is better than alternatives, and how it may be implemented. 10 academic sources

460 Class Participation: The participation marked will be based on attendance and the quality of your in-class comments and written assignments. There will be in-class assignments involving group work and individual work, so it is imperative that you attend class to participate in these assignments. You should come prepared to every class to answer the following prompts: 1) What is the most important/interesting insight you gained from the readings? 2) Propose a question about the assigned reading that you would like to discuss with your classmates. **You may be called upon at any time to participate in the class discussion.**

560-Course Requirements:

Final Project

- 1. Outline Final Paper, 10%: (~2500 words)**
 - a. the term paper should be in the style of an academic article for a public policy journal. It should include an introduction, literature review, research design and methods, results, and conclusion for your chosen case study. Your case study will be analyzing the policy approach implemented in your case study, and the success or failure of that approach in achieving its policy objectives. You need at least **8-10 academic sources** in an annotated bibliography.
 - b. Additional details will be provided during the course, but for an example of an academic journal article analyzing water governance in Africa please see Okpara et al 2018
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1462901117300722>
- 2. Presentations, 15%:**
 - a. 560 students will make one class presentation at the end of term that is 15-20 minutes long + a Q&A session about their final project. Slides are due to the professor by email by the start of class. You should have **at least** 10 slides other than the title slide and bibliography. Slides for you group project should be emailed to me by the start of class on the day of presentation.
- 3. Final Research Paper, 20%: Due Finals Week (15-20 pages, minimum 4,000 words)**

560 Class Participation: As a graduate student there is an additional group of readings on the course schedule. Not only do you need to participate like all other students, but you will need to choose one of the topics and lead discussion about those readings. This will include a 15–20-minute presentation + Q&A session. Explaining those readings to the undergraduates, and this should include: 1) the main points; 2) how they contribute to our overall understanding of the subject; 3) key terms/concepts; 4) 2-3 discussion questions. During this time, you will be leading the class, and you will be responsible for handing in a 2-3 page paper before class summarizing the additional readings for that week, the important arguments and the contribution on the literature.

Assignment Breakdown:

| Assignment | Date | Percentage |
|--|--|------------|
| Quizzes | | 30% |
| Quiz 1 | Week 4 | 10 |
| Quiz 2 | Week | 10 |
| Quiz 3 | Week | 10 |
| Class Presentations | | 10% |
| Presentation - ~10 minute presentation + Q&A, 6 to 8 slides | Starting Week 4 | 20 |
| Final Project | | 45% |
| 560- (Individual Essay) 15–20 page academic journal article (min 4000 words) | Outline Due Final Version Due Finals Week | 30 |
| 460- Group Project Presentations | Week 12-13 | 15 |
| Participation (Please see details below for PLS 460 and 560) | Continuous | 15% |

Grading Scale (note that there is no rounding of these grades):

PLS 460:

| | | | | | |
|---------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| <u>Points</u> | <u>Grade</u> | <u>Points</u> | <u>Grade</u> | <u>Points</u> | <u>Grade</u> |
| 100 – 95.0 | = A | 79.9 – 75.0 | = B- | 59.9 – 55.0 | = D+ |
| 94.9 – 90.0 | = A- | 74.9 – 70.0 | = C+ | 54.9 – 50.0 | = D |
| 89.9 – 85.0 | = B+ | 69.9 – 65.0 | = C | 49.9 – 0 | = F |
| 84.9 – 80.0 | = B | 64.9 – 60.0 | = C- | | |

PLS 560:

| <u>Points</u> | <u>Grade</u> | <u>Points</u> | <u>Grade</u> |
|---------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| 100 – 95.0 | = A | 79.9 – 75.0 | = B- |
| 94.9 – 90.0 | = A- | 74.9 – 70.0 | = C+ |
| 89.9 – 85.0 | = B+ | 69.9 – 65.0 | = C |
| 84.9 – 80.0 | = B | 64.9 – 60.0 | = C- |
| | | 59.9 – 0 | = F |

Course Schedule See Moodle

Course Policies and Procedures:

Make-up Test Procedures - No make-up tests will be given unless arranged for in advance. It is the student's responsibility to notify me before the examination is given if they are unable to take the exam and provide an acceptable reason for the absence. Failure to follow this procedure will result in an automatic one-letter grade reduction for the test, and an additional one-letter grade per day missed.

Late Assignments - All assignments are due by midnight on the dates listed in the Course Schedule. Failure to turn in the assignment on time, or to provide prior notification (with acceptable excuse), will result in a 3 point per day grade reduction EXCEPT HOMEWORK which is an automatic 0 if turned in late.

Grade Appeals or Challenges: I am not infallible and may make grading errors. You may then email me to make an appointment to discuss the problem and fill out the grade appeal form. If you do not use the form and wait 48 hours your challenge will not be accepted. The only exception to 48 hours is if you believe your grade was calculated incorrectly, please still fill out the form. If you have fully read and understand the syllabus and would like 3 bonus points on your final grade, please send me a cat meme by email with the subject line "PLS 460/560_Syllabus Read"!

If you have a question or concern regarding your performance on an assignment or an exam, **you must wait 48 hours** after the exam or assignment has been handed back to the class to contact me. You should also present an email statement that concisely expresses a substantive and legitimate reason for the request. "Substantive and legitimate" reasons include a grade miscalculation or a misunderstanding between the instructor and student, specifically in terms of the content of the student's work. Your appeal will be rejected if it does not satisfy these conditions. You have two weeks to appeal the assignment once the work is handed back to the entire class, and no grade challenges will be entertained afterward. Please also note that if you appeal a grade on an assignment and I decide to reexamine the assignment, the grade may go up or down. It will be treated as a new grade on the assignment, and all aspects of the assignment are open to reexamination.

Communication with the Instructor: If you have any suggestions, comments, and questions about the course, political science, or graduate school, feel free to email me to set up an appointment to chat. Please allow 24 hours for a response when contacting me during the week, and up to 48 hours on the weekends. I will use email and our Moodle site to communicate with you about course assignments, activities, and any changes to the course schedule or syllabus.

Academic Integrity: Plagiarism and other academic dishonesty/misconduct will not be tolerated. Cheating and dishonesty on tests/ assignments (using unauthorized sources of information, and/or providing or receiving unauthorized assistance of any form of academic work), and plagiarism (presenting someone else's material as your own) will result in an F for the assignment, and possible failure of the class and disciplinary action by the university.

It is your responsibility to know and abide by the Student Code of Conduct for Nazarbayev University. Violations of this policy may include, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism (including "patchwriting"), aid of academic dishonesty, fraud check-in, fabrication, and threatening behavior. These instances and other academic dishonesty/misconduct will be handled according to the requirements and procedures in the Student Code of Conduct for Nazarbayev University. Students should also be familiar with the university's official statement on academic misconduct, plagiarism, cheating, and falsification of documents:

Academic misconduct is an act in which a student:

1. Seeks to claim credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization or citation (plagiarism);
2. Uses unauthorized materials or fabricated data in any academic exercise;
3. Forges or falsifies academic documents or records;
4. Intentionally impedes or damages the academic work or others;
5. Engages in conduct aimed at making false representation of any student's academic performance;
6. Engages in any form of cheating on an exam or assignment;
7. Assists other students in any of these acts.

Plagiarism is intentionally or carelessly presenting the work of another as one's own. It includes submitting an assignment purporting to be the student's original work which has wholly or in part been created by another person. It also includes the presentation of the work, ideas, representations, or words of another person without customary and proper acknowledgement of sources. Plagiarism occurs when a person:

1. Directly copies one or more sentences of another person's written work without proper citation. If another writer's words are used, you must place quotation marks around the quoted material and include a footnote or other indication of the source of the quotation. This includes cut and paste from the internet or other electronic sources;
2. Changes words but copies the sentence structure of a source without giving credit to the original source, or closely paraphrases one or more paragraphs without acknowledgement of the source of the ideas, or uses graphs, figures, drawings, charts or

other visual/audio materials without acknowledging the source or the permission of the author;

3. Submits false or altered information in any academic exercise. This may include making up data for an experiment, altering data, citing nonexistent articles, contriving sources, etc.;
4. Turns in all or part of assignment done by another student and claims it as their own;
5. Uses a paper writing service, has another student write a paper, or uses a foreign language translation and submits it as their own original work;
6. In computer programming class, uses computer code written by another student.

Cheating. Cheating harms the very fiber of the University community. Honest students are put at a disadvantage due to the unfairness of the act and the potential that the grading structure of the class may be altered to their disadvantage. Students who cheat do not receive a real education, depriving themselves of the experience of how to learn. Cheating also damages the reputation of the University as well as the fabric of society. Finally, cheating damages the ethics of the individual, teaching them a wrong approach to life that will not be sustainable in their future careers. Cheating occurs when a person:

1. Gains or provides unauthorized access to examination materials;
2. Uses notes, mobile phones, books, calculators or other materials/devices during an examination without the permission of the instructor;
3. Copies from another student's exam sheet with or without their permission or allow a student to copy from their exam sheet;
4. Obstructs or interferes with another student's efforts in an academic exercise;
5. States a dishonest reason in a request for an extension for an exam or paper;
6. Continue to write even when time is up during an exam;
7. Talks during an examination period;
8. Asks another student take an examination or quiz;
9. Commits any other action that gives a student an unfair advantage during an examination period or on any assignment being graded for credit;
10. Assists in, facilitates, organizes or arranges any of the above-mentioned actions.

Falsification of documents. Falsification of documents is a form of academic dishonesty that deliberately seeks to misrepresent some aspect of the student. Falsification of Documents occurs when a person:

1. Presents a falsified application form, financial aid form or any other official form submitted to the University;
2. Presents a falsified or misleading medical certificate in order to obtain an excuse for a class absence, examination absence or late work or for any other reasons;
3. Uses a falsified or illegally altered student identification card;
4. Tampers with transcripts or other academic records.