The Global Governance of Energy, Food, and Climate Change  
(Spring 2017)  
(Draft 27 February 2017)

Lecturer: Andrew Cock (andrew.cock@unu.edu)

Timing: 15 May – 16 June, 2017 (Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 9:30am - 11:00am)

Background Texts


Course Requirements: Two papers, on topics to be set. Each will respond to a major problem or idea discussed in the course. Each should have a minimum of 15 and a maximum of 20 double-spaced pages and will count for 40% of the grade. The first will be due by 16 June and the second by 30 June. 10% of the final grade will be awarded for an in-class presentation of 10 minutes based around the first paper. 10% will be awarded for class participation.

Course description
This course provides an overview of the main institutions and practices involved in the process of global governance, and explores their application to three pressing issues central to the maintenance of a viable economy and environment as the world’s population expands from its current 7.4 billion to likely more than 9 billion by 2050. It takes as its starting point the dramatic shifts in the politics of the West in 2016, and encourages students to think about the possible implications of these shifts for cooperation at an international level.

Prior to the 1980s, the notion of governance was barely, if ever, deployed with reference to the international realm. Had it been, it probably would have been treated as synonymous with balance-of-power politics moderated by a veneer of international law dealing with a small number of issues such as diplomatic representation, treaty making and the rules of war. During the nineteenth century, as a by-product of the industrial revolution, states created technical agencies, to help facilitate and manage the implications of the rising density of cross-border communications and the speed and scope of transportation. Broader international organizations – the League of Nations and the United Nations – were created in the wake of two world wars. A more complex set of international regimes and organizations covering security, trade relations, monetary policy, development, environment, human rights, transnational crime and so on has evolved in the period since. In addition, a range of civil society groups and transnational corporations have come to operate in setting policy agendas, supplying information, and shaping production networks and
communication channels above and beyond the states that have traditionally played those roles.

This course is divided into three sections. The first frames the “global problematique” associated with population growth and resource constraints in historical perspective. The second summarizes the central features of the post-World War II system of global governance and the third analyses the nexus between food, energy, and climate change and how the interlinked constraints they entail may be managed.

**Aims**

This course has three specific aims:

1. To introduce students to the role of the institutions of global governance in addressing the world’s core problems concerning energy, food and climate change.

2. To encourage students to think critically about the issues of order, justice, distribution, sustainability and economic growth from a variety of angles and perspectives in the context of global population growth, environmental degradation, and dwindling access to natural resources.

3. To help students establish well-informed links between theory and policy, so that both the problems they identify and the possible solutions course takers offer for them rest on empirical evidence and consistent argument, rather than anecdote and assertion.

**Objectives**

On completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the central tenets of the “international societal” perspective on the international system.

- Critically evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of global governance theories and arguments.

- Explain how and why access to carbon-based energy resources has shaped patterns of international politics.

- Analyse some of the causes, contexts, and consequences of unequal access to the world’s resources, and the impact of climate change on these trends.

- Apply political economy reasoning in the formulation of basic policy issues.

**Course structure**

1. Introduction
2. Malthusian & neo-Malthusian environmental connections: origins and historical relevance
3. The modern population question
5. The Postwar governance architecture
6. Emerging powers and shifting patterns of governance
7. Conventional sources of energy and the international system.
9. Directed reading session.
10. The global food situation: abundance or impending crisis?
11. Mekong Region Case Study.
12. Tropical forests, biofuels, agricultural expansion, and climate change.
13. Climate change negotiation – North and South as contenders.
14. Governing climate change.
15. Global environmental governance and change in the international system.
(Indicative list of weekly themes and readings – to be updated)

PART ONE - INTRODUCTION

1. The rise of illiberalism in advanced and developing economies: implications for thinking about international cooperation.


3. The modern population question.

PART TWO - THEORY


5. The Postwar governance architecture


6. Emerging powers and shifting patterns of governance.


PART THREE – MATERIAL CONNECTIONS

7. Conventional sources of energy and the international system.


8. The impact of emerging powers on global energy governance.


9. Directed reading session

Details to follow....

10. The global food situation: abundance or impending crisis?


11. Mekong River Basin - case study in the conflicts between energy, environment, and food security.


12. Tropical forests, biofuels, agricultural expansion, and climate change.


13. Climate change negotiation.


14. **Governing climate change.**


15. **Global environmental governance and change in the international system.**
