

IS 431: Global Ecopolitics
Fall 2008
MWF 2:00pm-2:50pm
Buckman 105 – CRN 19545

Professor: Dr. Jennifer Sciubba

Office: Buckman 116

Phone: 901.843.3571

Email: sciubbaj@rhodes.edu

Office hours: MWF 10:00-12:00 and by appointment

Course description: This course is designed to introduce you to the ecological politics paradigm, an alternative way of viewing international politics that is becoming increasingly popular and relevant in international relations. We will explore how environmental issues, population, disease, technology, and globalization create problems and solutions to traditional questions of IR—like war and peace, sovereignty, and power—and raise new areas of inquiry.

If you have a documented disability or other issue that requires assistance, please let me know by the end of the second week of classes and I will be happy to help or refer you to Student Disability Services (SDS).

Readings:

Readings are listed on the day they are DUE.

Texts:

Diamond, Jared. 1997. *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies*. New York: W.W. Norton.

Brown, Lester R. 2008. *Plan B 3.0: Mobilizing to Save Civilization*. Earth Policy Institute. Online: <http://www.earth-policy.org/Books/PB3/Contents.htm> (not at bookstore!)

We will rely primarily on articles, which are organized by topic on Moodle. In the interest of the environment—and given that this is an environmental politics course—I ask that you try to read online as much as possible and refrain from printing unless absolutely necessary!

Resources:

Because this is an international relations course, in addition to the required textbooks and articles students are expected to read on a regular basis from the *New York Times* (www.nytimes.com), *Washington Post* (www.washingtonpost.com), *BBC World News* (www.bbc.co.uk), the *Economist* (found in the library), or another reputable print news source to be informally approved by the instructor. I highly recommend the blog from *Foreign Policy Magazine*, found at <http://blog.foreignpolicy.com>, for a quick way to catch up on the day's events and also the New Security Beat blog (<http://newsecuritybeat.blogspot.com>) to keep up with environmental security

issues. There are many other fine environmental blogs, websites, and listservs that you should explore and should feel free to share with the class, including <http://www.grist.org>, <http://www.enn.com>, and <http://www.scidev.net>. And to be fair, if you want a completely anti-ecological politics paradigmatic viewpoint, see the Planet Gore blog by *The National Review* at <http://planetgore.nationalreview.com>.

Class policies:

- This syllabus is subject to change.
- Students are strongly encouraged to consult the Writing Center for help with their writing assignments.
- Attendance is mandatory and you are expected to arrive before class begins so that we can start promptly. Any illnesses must be documented by a medical professional.
- Assignments are due at the beginning of class so I suggest that you print your assignments several hours before they are due to avoid any technical difficulties.
- Turn your cell phones off.
- No use of laptops in class.
- I take the Honor Code very seriously and you should, too. No cheating or plagiarizing. More detail will be given when we go over writing assignments but you should familiarize yourself with the College's Honor Code policy, which can be found at www.rhodes.edu/campuslife/1478.asp.
- Participation: I expect you to be an active participant in the class and so you should do the readings before class and keep up with the news daily. The participation grade for the course is an earned grade so it is possible to fail this portion of the course. Our course may cover many controversial and emotional issues—I expect respectful class discussion at all times.
- Make-up policy: If you miss deadline for a documented illness or college-sponsored event you may submit your assignment *before* the scheduled due date when possible, or soon after in rare, documented instances.
- If you are a student athlete, you are responsible for informing me of when there will be conflicts and prepare to complete assignments early.
- The best way to get in touch with me is via email. However, do not *expect* that I will check or answer email after 5pm each day or on the weekends, though I often do. 99.9 percent of class business should be able to be taken care of during regular work hours.

Grading:

94-100	= A	74-76	= C
90-93	= A-	70-73	= C-
87-89	= B+	67-69	= D+
84-86	= B	64-66	= D
80-83	= B-	60-63	= D-
77-79	= C+	59 & below	= F

Guidelines for determining grades on papers will be disseminated by the instructor in advance of assignment deadlines and students will be required to initial that they have received this information.

Requirements:

30% - Presentation of readings/leading discussion and short reaction papers (3 each)

- You should spend 10 minutes or so describing the main points of the reading and then lead discussion for the remainder of the class, reserving the last 10 minutes for me to wrap up.
- Students are encouraged to speak with me about their presentations/discussion plans beforehand.
- Reaction papers will be 2-4 pages in length and should focus on *reaction and critiques*, rather than summation of the readings. Assume we have both read the assignments and then tell me what kinds of thoughts the authors provoke, critiquing the readings.

40% - Research paper (8-10 pgs; grade is a composite)

- Topics due in class on 10/10
- First draft due in class on 11/7
- Final paper due in class on 11/24

20% - Final presentation of research

10% - Participation

Course calendar and schedule of topics, readings, and assignments:

Wednesday, 8/27 - Introduction to course

Discussion: Course requirements and role of paradigms

Friday, 8/29 – Ecological paradigm

Discussion: *The Upside of Down* by Thomas Homer-Dixon (2006)

- (1) Prologue (pgs. 1-8)
- (2) Ch. 1, “Tectonic Stresses” (pgs. 9-30)

Wednesday, 9/3 – Ecological paradigm

Discussion: Ecological paradigm then and now

- (1) “The Coming Anarchy” by Robert Kaplan, *The Atlantic Monthly* (May 1994) (pgs. 44-74)
- (2) Brown Ch. 1, “Entering a New World”

Friday, 9/5 – Environment

Discussion: Energy

- (1) Homer-Dixon, *The Upside of Down*, Ch. 2, “A Keystone in Time,” (pgs. 31-55)
- (2) Michael T. Klare, “The New Geopolitics of Energy,” *The Nation*, May 1, 2008

Monday, 9/8 – Environment

Discussion: Biofuels

- (1) Brown Ch. 2, “Deteriorating Oil and Food Security” (pgs. 27-47)
- (2) “How Biofuels Could Starve the Poor,” C. Ford Runge and Benjamin Senauer, *Foreign Affairs* May/June 2007
- (3) “How Ethanol Fuels the Food Crisis,” C. Ford Runge and Benjamin Senauer, *Foreign Affairs* 5/28/08

Wednesday, 9/10 – Environment

Discussion: Climate change

- (1) Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Fourth Assessment Report, “Summary for Policymakers”
- (2) Testimony of Sherri Goodman before the Committee on Energy & Commerce, Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, U.S. House of Representatives, June 26, 2008
- (3) *Suggested: An Inconvenient Truth* (2006). Directed by Davis Guggenheim

Friday, 9/12 – Environment

Discussion: Water

- (1) Brown Ch. 4, “Emerging Water Shortages” (pgs. 68-84)
- (2) “Managing Water Conflict and Cooperation” (2005) by Wolf, et al. in *State of the World 2005* (pgs. 80-97)

Monday, 9/15 – Environment

Discussion: No readings. Open discussion/review day.

Wednesday, 9/17 – Environment

Discussion: Climate change in the early modern world.

- (1) John Richards, *The Unending Frontier*, Ch. 2 (pgs. 58-85)

Friday, 9/19 - Environment

Discussion: Environment and conflict

- (1) *Afghanistan: Post-Conflict Environmental Assessment* (2003). UNEP.

Monday, 9/22 – Population

Discussion: China’s environment

- (1) China Environment forum (TBA)

Wednesday, 9/24 – Population

Discussion: The basics of population

- (1) McFalls (2007) “Population: A Lively Introduction” (pgs. 3-29)
- (2) Kent and Haub (2005) “Global Demographic Divide” (pgs. 3-22)

Friday, 9/26 - Population

Discussion: Population boom

- (1) Thomas Malthus (1798) *An Essay on the Principle of Population*
- (2) Paul Ehrlich (1968) *The Population Bomb* (pgs. 15-35)

Monday, 9/29 – Population

Discussion: Youth bulge

- (1) Sarah Staveteig (2005) “The Young and the Restless: Population Age Structure and Civil War” (pgs. 12-17)
- (2) Overview of World Bank’s *World Development Report 2007: Development and the Next Generation* (23 pgs)

Wednesday, 10/1 – Population

Discussion: Demographic transition and aging

- (1) Section on “Mature Age Structures” from *The Shape of Things to Come* by Leahy, et al. (pgs. 54-64)
- (2) View: “Demographic Winter” streaming on Moodle

Friday, 10/3 - Population

Discussion: Migration

- (1) Interview with Jason Bremner on Environmental Change: What Are the Links With Migration? 30 July 2008, 1:00 PM EDT, <http://discuss.prb.org/content/interview/detail/2580/>
- (2) Reuveny, Rafael. (2007). “Climate change-induced migration and violent conflict.” *Political Geography* 26(6), 656-673.

Monday, 10/6 – Population

Discussion: Urbanization in developed states

- (1) Watch *The End of Suburbia* streaming on Moodle

Wednesday, 10/8 - Population

Discussion: Urbanization in less developed states

- (1) UN Habitat’s *State of the World’s Cities 2006/7*, sections 1-15 at least (only about 2 pgs each).

Friday, 10/10 – Population

Discussion: No readings due. Open/review day in class.

****Paper topics due in class!!**** (Less than 1 page, single spaced.)

Monday, 10/13 – Disease

Discussion: Historical impact of disease

- (1) Henry Hobhouse. 1989. “Introduction” and “Ch. 1: Ill Winds across the Land and Sea, “ from *Forces of Change*. New York: Arcade Publishing.

Wednesday, 10/15 – Disease

Discussion: Contemporary impact of disease

- (1) Dennis C. Pirages. 2007. "Nature, Disease, and Globalization: An Evolutionary Perspective." *International Studies Review* 9: 4 (pgs. 616-628).
- (2) Andrew T. Price-Smith. 2002. The Health of Nations: Infectious Disease, Environmental Change, and Their Effects on National Security and Development. Read Intro (pgs. 1-20). An Ebook that you can get through the library.

Friday, 10/17 – Disease

Discussion: World Health Report

- (1) World Health Organization. 2007. "The World Health Report 2007: A Safer Future."

Monday, 10/20 (no class) FALL BREAK!!

Wednesday, 10/22 – Disease

Discussion: Environmental change and disease

- (1) Andrew T. Price-Smith. 2002. The Health of Nations: Infectious Disease, Environmental Change, and Their Effects on National Security and Development. Read Ch. 5, "Environmental Change and Disease Proliferation" (pgs. 141-170). An Ebook that you get through the library.
- (2) Laurie Garrett, "The Next Pandemic." *Foreign Affairs* July/August 2005.

Friday, 10/24 – Disease

Discussion: Yellow Fever

- (1) Selection from Molly Crosby's *The American Plague*

Monday, 10/27 – Disease

Discussion: Open/review day in class.

Wednesday, 10/29 – Technology and globalization

Discussion: North-South divide

- (1) Reuveny, Rafael X. and William R. Thompson. 2007. "The North-South Divide and International Studies: A Symposium, Introduction." *International Studies Review* 9:4 (pgs. 556-564)
- (2) Arie M. Kocozwicz. 2007. "Globalization, Poverty and the North-South Divide," *International Studies Review* 9:4 (pgs. 565-580).

Friday, 10/31 – Technology and globalization

Discussion: Intellectual property

- (1) Persaud, Arinash. 2001. “The Knowledge Gap.” *Foreign Affairs*.
- (2) Evans, David S. 2002. “Who Owns Ideas? The War Over Global Intellectual Property.” *Foreign Affairs*.

Monday, 11/3 – Technology and globalization

Discussion: Food problems

- (1) Paarlberg, Robert. 2000. “The Global Food Fight.” *Foreign Affairs* May/June.
- (2) Runge, C. Ford and Benjamin Senauer. 2000. “A Removable Feast.” *Foreign Affairs* May/June.

Wednesday, 11/5 – Technology and globalization

Discussion: Technology and food

- (1) Strauss, Mark. 2000. “When Malthus Meets Mendel.” *Foreign Policy Magazine*.
- (2) Hertsgaard, Mark. 1997. “Our Real China Problem.” *The Atlantic Online*.

Friday, 11/7 – Technology and globalization

Discussion: Open/review day in class

****First draft of paper due in class!****

Monday, 11/10 – Guns, Germs, and Steel

- (1) Diamond, “Prologue” and “Yali’s Question” (pgs. 9-32)

Wednesday, 11/12 – Guns, Germs, and Steel

- (1) Diamond, “Part I: From Eden to Cajamarca” (pgs. 33-83)

Friday, 11/14 – Guns, Germs, and Steel

- (1) Diamond, “Part II,” Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7 (pgs. 83-130)

Monday, 11/17 – Guns, Germs, and Steel

- (1) Diamond, “The Rise and Spread of Food Production” (pgs. 131-192)

Wednesday, 11/19 – Guns, Germs, and Steel

- (1) Diamond, Chapters 11-12 (pgs. 193-238)

Friday, 11/21 – Guns, Germs, and Steel

- (1) Diamond, “From Food to Guns, Germs, and Steel” Chs. 13, 14 (pgs. 239-292)

Monday, 11/24 – Guns, Germs, and Steel

****Final papers due!****

- (1) Diamond, “Around the World in 5 Chapters” (pgs. 403-427)

Wednesday, 11/26 (no class – Thanksgiving break)

Friday, 11/28 (No class – Thanksgiving break)

Monday, 12/1 – Presentations

Wednesday, 12/3 – Presentations

Friday, 12/5 – Presentations

Monday, 12/ 8 – Presentations

Wednesday, 12/10 – Presentations and wrap-up