

POLS 399.501  
International Environmental Politics  
Dr. Mary Hallock Morris



**Course Information**

2 – 3:50 p.m.  
Monday through Friday  
LA 2002

**Instructor Information**

Office: LAC 3066  
Phone: 461-5207  
Email: [mhmorris@usi.edu](mailto:mhmorris@usi.edu)

**Office Hours**

Monday through Thursday  
1-2 p.m.  
Other times by appointment



**Course Description:** POLS 399 is a special topics course. During this summer session, we will examine global institutions, international laws and policies, and issues of sustainable development. We'll talk about American unilateralism, environmental problems in developing nations, and models of environmental policy from the European Union. We'll look at specific case studies from China and the Czech Republic, as well as the world-wide debate over global warming. We'll use various frameworks to analyze the policies, ranging from Kingdon's multiple streams approach, to economic models revolving around negative externalities, to ethical frameworks such as environmental justice and bureaucratic evil. This is a discussion-based, student-directed course; as such, each student will be required to write memos and lead discussion. Other requirements include the completion of a video critique and a final research presentation.

**Required Textbooks:** This course has three required textbooks, which can be purchased from the USI bookstore. Due to the intensive nature of this course, I would recommend purchasing the books by the second class meeting. In addition to readings in the textbook, you may be asked to read articles posted on the Library e-Reserves or on Blackboard.

- Axelrod, Regina S., David Leonard Downie, and Norman J. Vig. 2005. *The Global Environment: Institutions, Law, and Policy*. Washington, DC: CQ Press.
- Kolbert, Elizabeth. 2006. *Field Notes from a Catastrophe*. New York: Bloombury Publishing.
- McCully, Patrick. 2001. *Silenced Rivers: The Ecology and Politics of Large Dams*. New York: Zed Books.

**Important Dates:** Consult the schedule at the end of this syllabus for the readings assignments. You should also be aware of the following dates:

- **Memos:** Variable dates, check the reading schedule.
- **Presentation Topic Sign Up Date:** July 28, 2008.
- **Video Critique:** August 4, 2008.
- **Final Presentations:** August 20, 21, and 22, 2008.

**Attendance Policy:** This is an intensive summer course and attendance is required. Failure to attend will prevent you from reaching your "intellectual potential" in the course, which will also have a direct and negative effect on your final grade. You may be absent two times without penalty – use them wisely. Your final grade will be docked by 2 percentage points for each subsequent absence.



## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

**Video Critique, 50 points:** Early this summer session, we will be watching the documentary *The 11<sup>th</sup> Hour*. Your task will be to critique the documentary by answering three main questions: What is the major premise of the documentary? What are the biases? Is the evidence credible? In the second part of the critique, you may talk about whether you agree or disagree with the premise. For this second part, you will need to do some additional outside research. You will need to cite 2-3 credible sources. Please note that a critique is not a summary of the documentary; while you will use examples from the documentary to prove your point, the paper should not be a listing of events outlined in the video. The movie critique is due on Monday, August 4. The critique should be typed in 12 point Times New Roman; it should be double-spaced and use 1" margins. The papers should be 5-6 pages in length.

**Memos, 100 points:** This summer, each student will be responsible for helping to promote discussion over the chapters from our three textbooks. Each student will write two memos and lead discussion two times during the next five weeks. Please note: Depending on the size of the class, some students may be sharing memo duties. This assignment has two components:

- For the **written** component: You must write a four-page (double spaced, Times New Roman) memo about your assigned chapter (or your assigned section of the chapter). The first two pages of the memo will be a summary of the main points of the reading; the last page should be your own "personal take" on the reading. The written component should also include the two to three discussion questions you will be asking during class. The written component must be e-mailed to Dr. Morris by 6 p.m. on the night before your assigned discussion day. Dr. Morris will make copies of the memos to pass out in class.
- For the **oral** component of this assignment: At the beginning of class, Dr. Morris will ask each individual who was assigned the memo to summarize its main points into a 10-15 minute "mini-lecture." At the end of the mini-lecture, the student must ask the class two to three discussion questions (not fact-based questions). Your challenge is to get the students to talk about the context and implications of the reading.

**Final Project, 100 points:** In lieu of a final exam, each student will complete a final research project for this course on a topic related to international environmental policies. The project will include both an annotated bibliography of your sources and a 15 minute presentation on your topic. The presentations will be held during the last three days of class. We will discuss your topics on Monday, July 28. Guidelines for the project will be handed out at that time.

**Participation, 50 points:** Participation is vital because it will help you to solidify your understanding of the course materials. Please be aware that it is possible to have negative participation (See also: "Classroom Etiquette" in the class policies section). Participation activities include – but are not limited to – pop quizzes, in-class discussions and group work, and Blackboard assignments. Read this carefully: Please note that you cannot make up any participation assignments that you missed by being absent.

### GRADING SCALE

Point Range	Grade
270 and above	A
261 - 269	B+
240 - 260	B
231 - 239	C+
210 - 230	C
201 - 209	D+
180 - 200	D
180 and below	F

## CLASS POLICIES

**Academic Misconduct:** Academic and personal misconduct by students in this class are defined and dealt with according to the procedures outlined in the University of Southern Indiana's Code of Conduct. You can view the "Academic Dishonesty Policy and Academic Affairs Student Grievance Procedure" on the Dean of Students' website.

**Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance:** If you have a disability, you are encouraged to register for disability support services in the Counseling Center. If you require an accommodation, please advise the instructor by the end of the third class. You may be required to provide written documentation to support these accommodations. The instructor will work with you to provide reasonable accommodations to ensure that you have a fair opportunity to perform and participate in class.

**Classroom Etiquette:** Please be respectful and courteous to your classmates and your professor. We may sometimes discuss issues that are controversial because that is the nature of politics. **While debate and discussion are expected and encouraged, personal attacks are not acceptable.** In addition, turn off phones and pagers before class and pick up your papers and trash before leaving the classroom. You need to pay attention in order to understand the concepts we will be discussing: do not expect to read the newspaper, do work for other classes, or sleep without these actions having an impact on your final grade.

**E-Mail Policy:** Please feel free to contact Dr. Morris via e-mail with any questions. During the week, she will answer your e-mails within 24 hours. On weekends, she will answer your e-mail within 48 hours. She will notify the class in advance if she will be traveling and will not have access to e-mail.

**Incompletes:** According to the official university policy, an incomplete grade may be given at the end of the term to a student whose work is passing, but who has left unfinished a small amount of work that can be completed without further class attendance. You must complete the work within one calendar year, or the grade will revert to an "F" in most cases. Incompletes must be negotiated with the instructor.

**Late Memos:** Because this is a participatory class, **late memos will not be accepted.** You must email your memo to Dr. Morris by 6 p.m. on the day before you will be responsible for discussing the chapter.

**Late Movie Critique:** The movie critique is due at the beginning of class. A late critique will be docked 10 percent per day. Assignments that are put in my mailbox after 2 p.m. on the due date will be considered late and will be subject to a 10 percent penalty.

**Late Presentations:** Student presentations are scheduled for the last three days of class. You must be present for all of the scheduled presentations. The only acceptable excuses for missing the presentation are: (1) an illness for which you can provide a doctor's excuse and (2) a family funeral for which you can provide a mass card or program.

**Withdrawals:** No grade is recorded for classes dropped prior to the third day of a summer term. A student who completes a Withdrawal from the Semester/Term procedure beginning the third day of the term through the third week of the term will receive the grade of **W** for all courses dropped. Students who complete the Withdrawal from the Semester/Term procedure during the fourth week of the term through the last day of class before the final exam will receive the grade of **W** if passing at the time of withdrawal. However, if failing at the time of withdrawal, the student may receive a grade of **F**. See this website for more information: <http://www.usi.edu/reg/WITHSUM.ASP>.

## READING SCHEDULE

**Note:** All students should have read through the assigned readings for each day. This will allow for decent discussion of and debate over the various course topics.

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### Week 1 Tuesday, July 22 – Welcome to POLS 399!

- Go over syllabus and course expectations
- Video: *Human Footprint* (National Geographic Channel)

### Wednesday, July 23 – Global Institutions & the Environment

- Read: *The Global Environment*, Chapters 1 & 2
- Lecture by Dr. Morris

### Thursday, July 24 – Sustainable Development, International Law, and Global Policies

- Read: *The Global Environment*, Chapters 3 & 4
- Memo Responsibilities:
  - Student 1, Memo 1: *Global Environment*, Chapter 3
  - Student 2, Memo 1: *Global Environment*, Chapter 4
- Your memos should be e-mailed to Dr. Morris by 6 p.m. on 7/23/2008.

### Friday, July 25 – Are we in the 11<sup>th</sup> Hour?

- Video: *The 11<sup>th</sup> Hour*

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### Week 2 Monday, July 28 – NGOs and Global Climate Change

- Read: *The Global Environment*, Chapters 5 & 6
- Discuss: Individual research projects & assign topics.
- Memo Responsibilities:
  - Student 3, Memo 1: *Global Environment*, Chapter 5
  - Student 4, Memo 1: *Global Environment*, Chapter 6
- Your memos should be e-mailed to Dr. Morris by 6 p.m. on 7/27/2008.

### Tuesday, July 29 – The Politics of Global Warming, Part I

- Read: *Field Notes from a Catastrophe*, Preface – Chapter 3
- Memo Responsibilities:
  - Student 5, Memo 1: *Field Notes*, Preface & Chapter 1
  - Student 6, Memo 1: *Field Notes*, Chapter 2
  - Student 7, Memo 1: *Field Notes*, Chapter 3
- Your memos should be e-mailed to Dr. Morris by 6 p.m. on 7/28/2008.

### Wednesday, July 30 – The Politics of Global Warming, Part II

- Read: *Field Notes from a Catastrophe*, Chapters 4-6
- Memo Responsibilities:
  - Student 8, Memo 1: *Field Notes*, Chapter 4
  - Student 9, Memo 1: *Field Notes*, Chapter 5
  - Student 10, Memo 1: *Field Notes*, Chapter 6
- Your memos should be e-mailed to Dr. Morris by 6 p.m. on 7/29/2008.

### Thursday, July 31 – The Politics of Global Warming, Part III

- Read: *Field Notes from a Catastrophe*, Chapters 7-10
- Memo Responsibilities:
  - Student 11, Memo 1: *Field Notes*, Chapter 7
  - Student 12, Memo 1: *Field Notes*, Chapter 8
  - Student 13, Memo 1: *Field Notes*, Chapters 9 & 10
- Your memos should be e-mailed to Dr. Morris by 6 p.m. on 7/30/2008.

### **Friday, August 1 – The Planet in Peril**

- Video: *Planet in Peril*, Part I
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### **Week 3 Monday, August 4 – The Planet in Peril**

- Video: *Planet in Peril*, Part II
- Due: Video critique on *The 11<sup>th</sup> Hour*.

### **Tuesday, August 5 – Hazardous Chemicals & Economic Integration**

- Read: *The Global Environment*, Chapters 7 & 8
- Memo Responsibilities:
  - Student 14, Memo 1: *Global Environment*, Chapter 7
  - Student 15, Memo 1: *Global Environment*, Chapter 8
- Your memos should be e-mailed to Dr. Morris by 6 p.m. on 8/4/2008.

### **Wednesday, August 6 – Compliance & American Unilateralism**

- Read: *The Global Environment*, Chapters 9 & 10
- Memo Responsibilities:
  - Student 1, Memo 2: *Global Environment*, Chapter 9
  - Student 2, Memo 2: *Global Environment*, Chapter 10
- Your memos should be e-mailed to Dr. Morris by 6 p.m. on 8/5/2008.

### **Thursday, August 7 – Stories from the EU and from Developing Nations**

- Read: *The Global Environment*, Chapters 11 & 12
- Memo Responsibilities:
  - Student 3, Memo 2: *Global Environment*, Chapter 11
  - Student 4, Memo 2: *Global Environment*, Chapter 12
- Your memos should be e-mailed to Dr. Morris by 6 p.m. on 8/6/2008.

### **Friday, August 8 – Dealing with Dams**

- Video: *China's Mega-Dam* (Discovery Channel)
  - Last day to drop or withdraw without evaluation.
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### **Week 4 Monday, August 11 – China and the Czech Republic**

- Read: *The Global Environment*, Chapters 13 & 14
- Memo Responsibilities:
  - Student 5, Memo 2: *Global Environment*, Chapter 13
  - Student 6, Memo 2: *Global Environment*, Chapter 14
- Your memos should be e-mailed to Dr. Morris by 6 p.m. on 8/10/2008.

### **Tuesday, August 12 – Large Dams and Sustainability, Part I**

- Read: *Silenced Rivers*, Introduction – Chapter 2
- Memo Responsibilities:
  - Student 7, Memo 2: *Silenced Rivers*, Preface/Chapter 1
  - Student 8, Memo 2: *Silenced Rivers*, Chapter 2
- Your memos should be e-mailed to Dr. Morris by 6 p.m. on 8/11/2008.

### **Wednesday, August 13 – Large Dams and Sustainability, Part II**

- Read: *Silenced Rivers*, Chapters 3 & 4
- Memo Responsibilities:
  - Student 9, Memo 2: *Silenced Rivers*, Chapter 3
  - Student 10, Memo 2: *Silenced Rivers*, Chapter 4
- Your memos should be e-mailed to Dr. Morris by 6 p.m. on 8/12/2008.

**Thursday, August 14 – Large Dams and Sustainability, Part III**

- Read: *Silenced Rivers*, Chapters 5 & 6
- Memo Responsibilities:
  - Student 11, Memo 2: *Silenced Rivers*, Chapter 5
  - Student 12, Memo 2: *Silenced Rivers*, Chapter 6
- Your memos should be e-mailed to Dr. Morris by 6 p.m. on 8/13/2008.

**Friday, August 15 – Large Dams and Sustainability, Part IV**

- Read: *Silenced Rivers*, Chapters 7 & 8
- Memo Responsibilities:
  - Student 13, Memo 2: *Silenced Rivers*, Chapter 7
  - Student 14, Memo 2: *Silenced Rivers*, Chapter 8
- Your memos should be e-mailed to Dr. Morris by 6 p.m. on 8/14/2008.

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**Week 5 Monday, August 18 – Large Dams and Sustainability, Part V**

- Read: *Silenced Rivers*, Chapters 9 & 10
- Memo Responsibilities:
  - Student 15, Memo 2: *Silenced Rivers*, Chapter 9
  - Dr. Morris will cover Chapter 10.
- Your memos should be e-mailed to Dr. Morris by 6 p.m. on 8/17/2008.

**Tuesday, August 19 – Future Visions, Dystopias, and Pop Culture**

- Video: *Children of Men*

**Wednesday, August 20:** Final Research Presentations, Day I

**Thursday, August 21:** Final Research Presentations, Day II

**Friday, August 22:** Final Research Presentations, Day III