**INTL 280: Global Environmental Issues and Alternatives (meaning solutions!)**

**Fall 2019**

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- Please contact Alex and me through the Discussion Board if you have questions that might be useful to other students
- If you email us please put “INTL 280 ...” in the subject line

*All course materials, including lectures, readings, and assignments, will be posted under “Modules” on Canvas, canvas.uoregon.edu*

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**Large-scale deforestation for industrial farming (soybeans), Santa Cruz, Bolivia.**

Tropical deforestation is a global environmental issue that has dire consequences for climate change, biodiversity loss and cultural survival of native peoples. The World Bank’s “Eastern Lowlands Project” dramatically accelerated forest clearing by large-scale commercial farmers, who export this cash-crop abroad, where it is largely used to feed livestock. Photo by Professor Hindery.

**Small-scale Agroecological farming in China. Photo credit: Jing**

In contrast to conventional industrial farming agroecological approaches can increase food security, meet local livelihoods, conserve soil and biodiversity and reduce pollution. It includes agroforestry (interplanting trees and crops on the same parcel), biological control (controlling pests and diseases with natural predators), water harvesting methods, intercropping and many other practices which are often rooted in traditional farming techniques. [link](#)

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**INTL 280 Course Description**

Human activities have had serious environmental consequences, including climate change/chaos, loss of biological diversity, and contamination of air, land and water (e.g. plastic pollution). In turn, many of these consequences negatively affect human health, and impact political and economic systems. Taking a geographical approach, we’ll examine root causes of so-called “environmental problems” at local, regional, national, and global scales. On the flip side we’ll critically explore innovative solutions to address these issues, from the environmental justice movement to the Green New Deal! Topics include approaches to understanding the environment in relation to development, climate change, resource consumption, population, agriculture (e.g. industrial farming versus agroecology), deforestation, biodiversity conservation, fisheries, fossil fuel
exploitation, alternative energy, mineral exploitation, greening mining, water conservation and conflict, greening the economy, green building and ecotourism.

Learning goals

1) Understand and differentiate paradigms for understanding and addressing environmental issues
2) Identify underlying causes of environmental problems, focusing on links between environment and development and the nexus of culture, technology, economy, politics, and environment
3) Describe how human rights and environment are intimately connected through the framework of environmental justice
4) Describe key environmental and social consequences of global climate change, industrial agriculture, agroecological farming, deforestation, mining, dams and hydrocarbons extraction
5) Distinguish socially generated scarcity from absolute scarcity
6) Explain how environmental problems manifest themselves over time, across geographic scale (e.g. locally, regionally, nationally, globally), and across different social groups and demographic characteristics (e.g. ethnicity, class and gender)
7) Describe alternative energy prospects and challenges with implementation
8) Understand and evaluate alternative mechanisms for measuring "development," such as Green GDP as compared to conventional measure like GDP
9) Create alternatives for addressing environmental issues in a transdisciplinary fashion

The course strives to increase your appreciation for the subject-matter so that you will be motivated to learn more through subsequent studies, as well as outside the classroom setting. In addition to the readings, I encourage you to keep informed of current affairs so as to further ground the knowledge you gain through this class. A variety of resources are listed below.

Online course structure: Since this course is online we will not be meeting in person. This means you need to have self-discipline to perform well. To do so, please keep up with the lectures, readings, assignments and discussions. Also, you'll need access to high-speed internet to watch the videos and lectures.

International Studies Core Courses

The unique character and focus of the University of Oregon Department of International Studies is distinctly captured in the phrase 'Culture and Development'. We integrate theory and practice, drawing pragmatically from many disciplines to find the best mix of approaches to address rapidly changing and complex global issues in our classes.

Our introductory course, INTL 101, Introduction to International Issues, and four 200 level courses (INTL 240: Perspectives on International Development; 250: Value Systems and Cross-Cultural Perspectives; 260: Culture, Capitalism, and Globalization; 280: Global Environmental Issues) are the intellectual core of the IS major, foundational courses where our students learn to link human security and people-centered social change to questions of culture, belonging and meaning. We conceive culture in a broad sense that encompasses social, political, economic, and religious institutions, processes and relations, as well as the environment. Each core course has a different emphasis that enables students to cover the range of themes and issues characteristic of the wide universe of international studies.

Students will find these courses share a common purpose of fostering critical and cross-cultural thinking, encouraging them to seek out and understand diverse perspectives on topics such as globalization, development, environment, communication, health and human rights. In the process students learn to get outside of their preconceived worldviews on these and other matters. These five courses, together, provide the foundation for deeper investigation of issues, regions, and cultures in our 300 and 400 level INTL courses.

Course Requirements and Grading:
The success of this course depends on your participation. The following is the breakdown for your course grade:

15% **Participation:**
Participation is mandatory. Obviously, by participating you will perform better on exams and papers, and in discussions. You will be held responsible for all material covered in lectures and the readings. Studies show that you will do better if you take notes and review them within 24 hours after lecture, readings and discussion. This will also help you avoid last minute studying prior to exams. **Each week (by Friday at midnight) you need to post one question and two answers to other students’ questions on the Discussions page on Canvas. I prefer if you don’t answer your own questions, unless there is a shortage of questions from other students. You can skip 2 weeks, meaning you will post 8 questions and 16 answers altogether. In some of my powerpoint lectures I will ask you to post responses to the discussion board. These responses count toward the requirement of 8 questions and 16 answers.**

20% **Reading responses:** You are required to read all the required readings posted on Canvas, but not the ones that are optional. In addition, for **two** of the required readings each topic you are required to write a one paragraph summary (100 to 150 words) **per reading**, with at least 1 sentence per paragraph critically evaluating one of the major points. For topics when there are less than 3 readings you only have to write a paragraph for however many readings there are for that topic (e.g. if there are 2 readings for a topic then write 2 paragraphs.) Conversely, if there are more than 2 readings you have to read all the readings but you only have to write a paragraph on 2 of the readings (you choose which). Don’t get lost in minutia. Think big picture. This will help you study for the exams, and improve your participation and comprehension during class. **You can skip doing write-ups on 2 topics, meaning you should do 8 write-ups total. There isn’t extra credit if you do write-ups for all 10 topics.**

** your responses for each topic are due by the first day when the topic is covered (not afterward, as the idea is to do the reading before class). Please upload them to Canvas. **Unlike for all other topics, the response for the first topic is due by the second day.** I reserve the right to have pop quizzes during lecture or discussion section.

25% **Research paper:** (5 to 7 pages, double-spaced; paragraph proposal due by Friday of Week 2 at 5pm; due by noon on Friday of Week 9. Extra credit for service learning worth up to 20 percent!) Detailed guidelines will be posted on the course website. You need to write a paragraph proposal and submit it to me by the deadline noted in the research paper guidelines.

40% **Final Exam:** format will be short answer/essay. Again the best way to prepare is to take notes and review them throughout the course, while keeping up on the readings.

Since we will be discussing the readings for each topic, you will need to have done them prior to the day when we cover the topic (as mentioned, all readings will be posted to Canvas, under “Modules”: [canvas.uoregon.edu](http://canvas.uoregon.edu)). This will work to your own benefit, because you will get more out of the lecture, and you will divide your workload evenly throughout the quarter, thereby avoiding “surprises” come exam time. Please focus on major concepts. You might skim each reading rapidly, extract the major points, and then read the piece more carefully with the major points in mind. The class suffers if you’re not prepared and don’t participate to your fullest. In addition, you’ll understand lectures and discussions better.
In addition to the required readings I encourage you to keep informed of current affairs so as to further ground the knowledge you gain through this class. Throughout the course, please feel free to express your ideas and enter into dialogue with myself and your fellow students. Although I do not want to discourage you from expressing your view, I expect that you will be courteous to others, respect different views, and refrain from personal attacks. Through this dialogue, you will encounter perspectives that are different from your own, which will enable you to explore new ideas, challenge your own assumptions, and develop a well-informed position. As a result of such discussion and assignments, you will improve your critical thinking and writing skills--tools that you will carry with you beyond this class.

I also encourage you to contact me to discuss anything related to the class, whether you wish to discuss logistical issues such as grading or conceptual issues related to lecture and readings.

I look forward to working with all of you throughout the course, and encourage you to give me feedback at anytime. I will do my best to incorporate your suggestions.

Course Policies:
- **Course Expectations:** As mentioned, I expect each of you to do assigned readings before class, and turn in all assignments on time.
- **Participation Policy:** I expect you to participate in class fully.
- **Academic Integrity:** Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. You may check the University Catalog and/or the Schedule of Classes for definitions and examples of, and penalties for academic dishonesty. Plagiarism software “Vericite,” provided by University of Oregon, may be used to ensure compliance.
- **Due Dates/Make Up Work:** Examinations must be taken as scheduled. Make-ups will be allowed only if you have contacted me before the scheduled date, with a documented serious excuse.

Required Materials:
All readings will be posted to the course website on Canvas: canvas.uoregon.edu

Students with Special Needs:
Any student with a documented disability who would like to request accommodations should contact the Disability Services Office (346-1155; http://ds.uoregon.edu/) as early in the quarter as possible. Students with physical or learning disabilities should see me to discuss what modifications are necessary. Please request a letter from Disability Services documents your condition and states the accommodations that I can make to improve your learning environment.

Additional Resources
Also, always feel free to contact me if you need additional help. That said, I do expect that you attempt to learn the material on your own first and be prepared.

Below and on Canvas, I have pasted a number of online resources to help you keep informed. Beyond this, I encourage you to peruse the library's physical and online holdings related to the course. In addition there are also some excellent multimedia resources available at the Library as well (videos, DVDs, and CDs).

**COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS**

****The course schedule will be posted on Canvas under “Modules”
In addition, all topics, readings, lectures, assignments etc will be posted on Canvas: canvas.uoregon.edu. You are expected to have done the readings for each topic prior to the first day when that topic is covered (except for Week 1, by the second day).

**Topic 1:** Introduction. Paradigms and Approaches to Global Environmental Issues; Thinking about Environment and Development

**Topic 2:** Regional and Global Climate Change

**Topic 3:** Resource Consumption, Distribution and Population

**Topic 4:** Food & Agriculture: Modernization for whom? and with what consequences?; Genetically Modified Organisms

**Topic 5:** Ocean Resources; Capitalism, Technological Change and Fisheries

**Topic 6:** Deforestation, Habitat Loss and Conservation of Biodiversity

**Topic 7:** Mineral Exploitation and Greening Mining

**Topic 8:** International Dimensions of Fossil Fuel Exploitation and Alternative Energy

**Topic 9:** Global Water Conservation and Water Conflicts; Dams

**Topic 10:** Transitioning to a Global Sustainable Society: Greening the Economy, Green Building Internationally, and Ecotourism ... Loving Nature to Death?

**Final exam:** date to be announced

**Online Resources**
- University of Oregon guide to International Studies resources (subject dictionaries and encyclopedias; yearbooks; directories of organizations; finding articles; finding books and government publications; statistics; news and analysis; web resources): [http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/intlstudies/general.html](http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/intlstudies/general.html)
- UO Latin American Studies guide [https://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/intlstudies/latinamericanguide3.html](https://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/intlstudies/latinamericanguide3.html)

**Jobs/Internships**
[http://people.emich.edu/rstahler/](http://people.emich.edu/rstahler/)

**Community economies:** [www.communityeconomies.org](http://www.communityeconomies.org) “The Community Economies project is a place where new visions of community and economy can be theorized, discussed, represented and enacted. The project grew out of J.K. Gibson-Graham's feminist critique of political economy that focused upon the limiting effects of representing economies as dominantly capitalist. Central to the project is the idea that economies are always diverse and always in the process of becoming. This project developed as a way of documenting the multiple ways in which people are making economies of difference and in the process
building new forms of community. The project involves an ongoing collaboration between academic and community researchers and activists in Australia, North America, and South East Asia.”

International News
- You’re probably familiar with mainstream media outlets, such as the New York Times or BBC. Here are a few others:
The Ecologist: www.ecologist.org (provides broad analysis on politics and economics, as well as social and environmental issues worldwide)
Manchester Guardian Weekly (international news): http://www.guardian.co.uk/
National Public Radio: www.npr.org
The Nation: www.thenation.com
Common Dreams Newscenter: http://www.commondreams.org/
IRC Americas Program http://americas.irc-online.org
World News Network: http://www.wn.com/

Directories of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and a few environmental NGOs
http://www.wango.org/resources.aspx?section=ngodir
http://www.google.com/Top/Society/Organizations/Development/
Pacific Environment: www.pacificenvironment.org
Natural Resources Defense Council: www.nrdc.org
NRDC's Santa Monica Office Green Building Resources List:
http://www.nrdc.org/cities/building/smoffice/resources.asp
Greenpeace: www.greenpeace.org
Amazon Watch: www.amazonwatch.org
Communities for a Better Environment (Environmental Justice): http://www.cbecal.org/
CEED - Green Bldg Center for Environmental Economic Development:
http://www.ceedweb.org/greenbuilding/
IFOAM, the International Federation for Organic Agriculture Movements. http://www.ifoam.org/
The Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems at UCSC (where Steve Gliessman and Miguel Altieri are based): http://www.agroecology.org/
Maitreya Ecovillage (5 minute bike ride from Eugene city-center): www.maitreyaecovillage.org
Rare: Resource Assistance for Rural Environments (does Oregon community dev. projects) rare.uoregon.edu
Aprovecho: non-profit based in Cottage Grove, OR; does appropriate technology, sustainable forestry, organic agriculture, permaculture: http://www.aprovecho.net/
Grupo Fenix - A nonprofit working with land mine survivors and renewable energy in northern Nicaragua.
http://www.grupofenix.org/
Green for All: national organization dedicated to building an inclusive green economy strong enough to lift people out of poverty: www.greenforall.org
The Guide to Going Local:
http://startsomegood.com/Venture/center_for_a_new_american_dream/Campaigns/Show/the_guide_to_going_local
South Central Farmers (Los Angeles urban farm/env. justice): http://www.southcentralfarmers.org/story.html
Bring Recycling (Eugene, OR): non-profit organizations dedicated to reuse, reduction and recycling:
www.bringrecycling.org
Oregon Toxics Alliance http://www.oregontoxics.org/
Mapuche (Chilean indigenous group) international environmental issues link: http://www.mapuche-nation.org/english/frontpage.htm
Eco-consumer guide: http://www.goodguide.com/
Guide to organic farms around the world (work & get travel lodging) www.woof.org

Technical Resources
EPA Environmental Justice Mapping Tool http://www.epa.gov/enviro/ej/
EnviroAtlas is an online decision support web-based tool that communities can use to help inform their policy and planning decisions.
Decision Analysis for a Sustainable Environment, Economy, and Society (DASEES) is a web-based decision analysis application that helps decision-makers and stakeholders evaluate science and technical information with an economic and societal values context to support sustainable decision making.
National Stormwater Calculator and Climate Adjustment Tool
Watershed Management Optimization Support Tool (WMOST)
Green Infrastructure Wizard (GIWiz)
Managing and Transforming Waste Streams -- A Tool for Communities
Village Green Stations are real-time air monitoring stations designed to increase community awareness of local air quality conditions.