



## COURSE SYLLABUS

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Course: **Global Ecology and Sustainability Challenges**

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### COURSE DATA

Degree	Diploma in Humanities and Global Challenges
Academic Year	2024-25
Credits	6
Course type	Elective
Department	International Relations
Language of instruction	English

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### SHORT DESCRIPTION

The earth is facing unprecedented human-induced pressures that threatens the functioning of our ecosystems. We will introduce students to a number of basic multidisciplinary concepts, which are fundamental to understand these interrelationships. In recent years global environmental problems are increasingly dealt with and regulated by international organizations such as the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU) as well as intergovernmental environmental organizations like the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The course will deal also with the relationship between states, international organizations, the scientific community, and nongovernmental environmental organizations, as well as the role of these different actors in intergovernmental climate change negotiations. To finish we will analyze the impact of successful projects and programs in fighting climate change.

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## CONTENTS AND STRUCTURE

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TOPIC 1: MAIN CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

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TOPIC 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

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TOPIC 3: GREEN GOVERNANCE

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TOPIC 4: ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS

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TOPIC 5: SUSTAINABLE PROJECTS

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**TOPIC 6: CASE STUDIES AND PRESENTATIONS**

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## METHODOLOGY

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The course will consist of *lectures*, *debates* and the design of an **e-portfolio**. A group e-portfolio is a systematic collection of student work that represents student activities over a course. Electronic portfolios offer rich possibilities for learning and assessment, with the added dimension of technology as students will work with different graphic design software. Lectures will introduce the key topics and concepts of each theme. Videos and reading list will be available in advance so that students can prepare for the debates. Students are expected to participate actively in the discussions and express their views. The lectures will be complemented by debates discussing relevant topics and by the creation of an e-portfolio, which consists of 4 activities. Students will be divided into groups and will do the portfolio together. A part of the e-portfolio, will be done in class and later improved and polished at home. The results of the case study analysis, which is the 4<sup>th</sup> activity of the e-portfolio, will be presented by all members of the group in the last 3 weeks of the semester. The final written exam will take place in the last session.

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## ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

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Assessment type	Assessment criteria	Percentage
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FINAL EXAM	At the end of the semester, students will be assessed through a written theoretical exam. Students will answer a series of short questions and will write a reflexive essay or will interpret a cartoon.	<b>50%</b>
E-PORTFOLIO	<p><i>In groups, students will work on an e-portfolio. This portfolio will have 4 activities. All the instructions will be available in Moodle and will be explained in the first sessions.</i></p> <p>1. CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS: MIND MAP  2. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW: TIMELINE  3. MAIN HAZARDS: CARTOON INTERPRETATION  4. CASE STUDY ANALYSIS: WRITTEN PROJECT AND ORAL GROUP PRESENTATION: INFOGRAPHY</p>	<b>40%</b>
PARTICIPATION	Active participation is essential to create a dynamic and entertaining atmosphere. Regular attendance and participation in all classes is necessary to achieve full points.	<b>10%</b>

- Committing any serious academic misconduct, such as **plagiarism** of previously published material, the use of ChatGPT, or **copying** in the exam or any other graded activity, **will imply not being able to pass the course in the ordinary assessment period.**
- At the beginning of the term, the professor will announce the office hours for the course. Tutorials are an essential part of the development of the course, and students may attend tutorials during the course within those office times, but it is recommended that they are arranged in advance with the professor.
- Any non-face-to-face learning activity that requires the submission of an assignment/document, etc., will be submitted by the student through Moodle, always in PDF format.
- To be able to take the final exam, students **must not have missed more than one third of the classes without justification.** If this requirement is not met, the student may

lose the right to be assessed both in the ordinary and extraordinary assessment period (art. 93-1 of the General Regulations). Failure to attend to the first hour of a two-hour lecture, means having missed the whole session in terms of attendance, regardless of whether or not the student the second hour.

- Students who fail the final exam (less than 5.0) will have to resit the exam in the “Convocatoria extraordinaria”, **even if the average with the portfolio grade is a pass, the exam has to be repeated if failed.**

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### **STUDENT WORKLOAD** (in hours)

CONTACT HOURS	OUTSIDE CLASSROOM	OVERALL
60	90	150

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### **READING LIST / RELEVANT REFERENCES**

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Biermann, F., & Kim, R. E. (2020). *Architectures of Earth System Governance: Institutional Complexity and Structural Transformation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (pdf file in Moodle)

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Chasek, Pamela S., Downie, David L., & Brown, Janet Welsh. (2017). *Global Environmental Politics* (7th edition ed.). London: Routledge. (Library)

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Falkner, R., Ed. (2016). *The Handbook of Global Climate and Environment Policy*. Cheltenham, John Wiley & Sons. (Library)

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Mohamed Behnassi (Editor), Himangana Gupta (Editor), Olaf Pollmann (Editor) (2019). *Human and Environmental Security in the Era of Global Risks: Perspectives from Africa, Asia and the Pacific Islands*. Springer. (Library)

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Vandana Shiva (2016). *The Violence of the Green Revolution: Third World Agriculture, Ecology, and Politics (Culture of the Land)*. The University Press of Kentucky. (Library)

UNDP (2022). Human Development Report, <https://hdr.undp.org/content/humandevlopment-report-2021-22>

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Thomas Hale (2022). Transnational Actors and Transnational Governance in Global Environmental Politics, *Annual Review of Political Science*. (23)203–20

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(Moodle-pdf file)

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GRUNSTEIN, J. (2022) "The Climate Crisis Is Becoming Another North-South Fault Line", *World Politics Review*, <https://mailchi.mp/worldpoliticsreview/weekly-wrap-upclimate-change?e=7356c2804a>

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RITCHIE, H., (2019). "Who has contributed most to global CO2 emissions? There's not only significant variability in how much CO2 countries emit across the world today. There are also large differences in how much each has emitted in the past. Who has contributed most to global CO2 since 1750?", *Our World in Data*, <https://ourworldindata.org/contributed-most-global-co2>

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**ADDITIONAL READINGS:**

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Courtney Lindwall (2022). What Are the Effects of Climate Change?

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<https://www.nrdc.org/stories/what-are-effects-climate-change#environment> WHO (2023). Climate change and health, <https://www.who.int/news-room/factsheets/detail/climate-change-and-health>

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Serge Latouche (2004). Why less should be more: Degrowth economics, *Le Monde diplomatique*, <http://www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/25/126.html>

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