The International Politics of Climate Change
Friday, 11:45–13:15
Room C 421

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Office: D227
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Course description

Content: The course explores the politics of climate change cooperation. It provides background to the concepts and perspectives employed within the international political debates on climate change. In addition, it introduces the basic research tools that will help students understand and describe such a complex political phenomenon as climate change decision-making. The first part of the course focuses on the nature, history and structure of the international policy-making that addresses the problem of greenhouse gas emission. The second part narrows down and analyzes the framework for negotiation under the United Nations Convention for Climate Change, where the interests and positions invoked by climate change are most evident.

Goals: The goals of the course are three: (1) to familiarize students with the most current academic knowledge on climate change governance; (2) to systematically examine international climate policy and politics with the lenses of relevant international relations theory and explanatory models; and (3) to critically identify the role of the actors involved in climate change policy-making, in particular at the UN climate negotiations. More generally, the students will learn how to orientate themselves through topical peer-reviewed literature, how to structure oral presentations, and how to compose position and research papers. Participants are required to read ahead of the lecture and participate in the in-class discussion, as informed active thinking will highly boost their outcome in the class.
Course Requirements

Participation - A number of texts is assigned to each lecture; covering the required readings is mandatory and should be done before each session. The course will also involve in-class exercises that will be integrated in the final evaluations. The instructor will take note of frequent participation, discussions and preparation to in-class activity.

In-class Presentation - Each student is required to prepare a ten- to fifteen-minute presentation of a pre-assigned mandatory reading listed in this syllabus. You are strongly encouraged to see the instructor to discuss your presentation at least a week before it is due.

Response Essay - The mid-term will consist of a written assignment where students will be asked to respond to one of two questions formulated around the themes of the course so far. Each student will be asked to (a) describe the background of the topic raised by the question, (b) point to the relevance of the question (i.e. its theoretical and empirical implications), and (c) provide an informed and critical answer that gives voice to different opinions on the topic. This will be a 6-page (1500 words ca., double-spaced, + references) paper that requires no extra research, but that will rather evaluate the student’s understanding of what was covered in the lectures and readings. More information will be provided in class on Session 8.

Position Research Paper - Each student is required to prepare a 10-page (2500 words ca., double-spaced, + references) analytical study of the climate change policy positions and political interests of a country she/he will be assigned by the instructor. The students will need to provide links between the readings covered in the course and the contingent features (vulnerability, adaptability, and of course the climate change political scenario) of such country. In addition, the student will need to tie this study to the UN climate change negotiations analyzed in class. The essay will require individual research and relies on the careful investigation of secondary academic literature. More information will be provided in the last session, when the respective countries will be assigned.

FINAL GRADE: Participation + Presentation (20%) + Response Essay (35%) + Position Research Paper (45%)
## Timetable

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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| 1.  | 10/26/2012 | Introduction
Causes, impacts and current debates                                |
| 2.  | 11/02/2012 | IR and Climate Change I
Realism and hegemony                                                          |
| 3.  | 11/09/2012 | IR and Climate Change II
Liberalism and liberal institutionalism                                      |
| 4.  | 11/16/2012 | IR and Climate Change III
Complexes and regime theory                                                   |
| 5.  | 11/23/2012 | Political Ideology and Climate Change
Risk, perceptions and cost-benefit analysis                                  |
| 6.  | 11/30/2012 | Political Interests and Climate Change
Materialism, Malthusianism, and the Epistemic Community                       |
| 7.  | 12/07/2012 | Climate Change Policy-making Issues I
Carbon regulation and market instruments                                       |
| 8.  | 12/14/2012 | Climate Change Policy-making Issues II
The changing climate policy agenda                                              |
| 9.  | 01/11/2013 | International Climate Negotiations: the ‘why’
International organizations                                                   |
| 10. | 01/18/2013 | International Climate Negotiations: the ‘who’
States, domestic preferences and international positions                      |
| 11. | 01/25/2013 | International Climate Negotiations: the strategies
Agenda-setting and climate diplomacy                                           |
| 12. | 02/01/2013 | International Climate Negotiations: the outcomes
The implications of decision-making                                            |
| 13. | 02/08/2013 | Further investigation
On data, methods and analysis                                                 |
| 14. | 02/15/2013 | Conclusion and Wrap up
Future debates and outlook                                                   |
## Readings

(* = mandatory readings)

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<td>Realism and hegemony</td>
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* Vezirgiannidou, S-E. 2009 The Climate Change Regime Post-Kyoto: Why Compliance is Important and How to Achieve it. *Global Environmental Politics*, 9(4):41-63


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9. 01/11/2013  *International Climate Negotiations: the ‘why’*

- International organizations

10. 01/18/2013  *International Climate Negotiations: the ‘who’*

- States, domestic preferences and international positions

> *In-class exercise 1*: please go to the page [http://unfccc.int/documentation/submissions_from_parties/items/5901.php](http://unfccc.int/documentation/submissions_from_parties/items/5901.php), type-search “Implications of the inclusion of reforestation of lands with forest in exhaustion”, and download the 2011 national position submissions of Brazil, China and Ethiopia.
**International Climate Negotiations: the strategies**  
Agenda-setting and climate diplomacy

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**International Climate Negotiations: the outcomes**  
The implications of decision-making

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13. 02/08/2013  Further investigation
On data, methods and analysis


14. 02/15/2013  Conclusion and Wrap up
Future debates and outlook