

UP 246 - International Environmental Planning and Governance

Professor Sean Kennedy, Department of Urban & Regional Planning

MWF 12:00-12:50 PM

Online office hours: By appointment



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Course overview

Cities and regions have long depended on the environment for their health and wellbeing. In recent decades, globalized networks of social and economic activity have extended cities' environmental impacts well beyond their political boundaries. Simultaneously, the climate emergency has exposed urban infrastructure, housing, human livelihoods, and health to environmental changes that originate in distant locations. In many regions, long-standing inequalities in resource access have intensified the vulnerability of low-income people as they struggle to adapt to environmental change.

This course examines the social dimensions of environmental change, with an emphasis on cities and regions in the global South. The course is designed for sophomore and junior undergraduate students with interests in areas such as environmental planning, sustainable development, environmental justice, and environmental policy and management.

Learning outcomes:

1. *Understand* the historical and contemporary drivers of environmental change, including colonization, urbanization, and globalization
2. *Compare* processes and outcomes of environmental change in Southeast Asia, Latin America, Africa, and Europe
3. *Identify and describe* the roles and relationships between different actors in governing environmental change across multiple scales
4. *Demonstrate* how environmental change affects different social groups in and around our cities and regions
5. *Critically analyze* potential social and environmental implications of new planning and policy approaches to current and future environmental challenges.

Course Format

The course will be conducted in an online format. The weekly modules will include video lectures, online discussions, and small group exercises. All readings and links to video and audio files are posted on the course Compass site. All assignments should be submitted through Compass unless otherwise noted.

Schedule of topics

Note: Adjustments may be made to the schedule and content if advantageous for learning

Week	Date	Topic/s
1	8/24	Introduction
2	8/31	Environmental planning in the global South / environmental governance
3	9/7	Historical roots of environmental change: colonialism and development
4	9/14	Contemporary trends: globalization and urbanization
5	9/21	Social impacts of environmental change: Risk, vulnerability, and resilience
6	9/28	Environmental planning and policy tools / environmental valuation
7	10/5	Mid-term review and examination
8	10/12	Introducing Indonesia
9	10/19	Climate change: causes, impacts, and planning responses
10	10/26	Forests
11	11/2	Energy
12	11/9	Food
13	11/16	Water
	11/23	FALL BREAK
14	11/30	Course review and future directions
15	12/7	Group presentations

Course Evaluation

The final grade is comprised of the following components. All items are due at 11:59 pm unless otherwise noted.

Item	Due date	Points	% of grade
Media Posts	Every Sunday	100	10
Discussion Forum	Every Wednesday and Friday	100	10
Weekly Assignments	Every Friday	200	20
ICSD Reflection	September 27	50	5
Midterm Exam	October 7	150	15
Indonesia Group Project	Fridays – Weeks 8-12	200	20
<i>Final project</i>			
- Proposal	September 23	50	5
- Draft	November 11	50	5
- Report	December 13	100	10
Total Points		1000	100

Media responses (100 points; 10 total)

Over the semester, students will upload to the Compass discussion forum a total of **ten** media responses. These responses will allow you to share environmental news stories with the class and also serve as the basis for weekly discussion. Responses are due Sunday at 11:59 pm of the week *before* the readings are assigned (i.e., responses for Week 2 are due September 2). Late submissions will be subject to a 50% penalty. Responses should be at least 300 words and must include the following elements to receive the full 10 points:

- The article title, source and publication date
- A summary of the key facts (who, what, where, when, why)
- A brief discussion of the *specific* ways in which the article relates to the assigned reading(s), including references to the specific page numbers in the text where applicable.
- Five points will be deducted for each missing element.

Some useful resources for media coverage of environmental issues include:

- Environmental News Network - <https://www.enn.com/>
- The Guardian's Environment page - <http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment>
- NYTimes Climate and Environment page - <https://www.nytimes.com/section/climate>
- Climate Desk - <https://www.climatedesk.org/>
- Global Justice Ecology Project blog - <http://climate-connections.org/>
- Monga Bay - <https://news.mongabay.com>

Discussion forum (100 points)

Each week, students are required to comment on at least two media responses on the discussion forum. Your comments should be clear, accurate, and complete sentences. Initial comments are due on Wednesdays at 11:59 pm. Follow-up comments due each Friday at 11:59 pm.

In your comments, please:

- Expand on or clarify an important point.
- Offer an additional argument to support a position taken in an answer, being sure to use evidence to support your argument. Evidence is supporting information from course readings, an outside resource, research (book, website), or specific real-life application from your work experience or prior coursework.
- Suggest ways in which an idea could be more clearly expressed.
- Identify passages where you think the writer misunderstood a concept or applied it incorrectly.

If you disagree with the views of another student, please:

- Be constructive and respectful.
- Politely critique a position on an issue, but not the person.
- Avoid sarcasm, swearing, or language that would be considered rude or argumentative.
- Offer reasons why you think their view is incorrect and support your position by citing the text or other sources.

International Conference on Sustainable Development (ICSD) Reflection (100 points)

Students are required to attend at least one session of the International Conference on Sustainable Development, which will be held online from September 20-21. Students will submit a 3-page reflection paper detailing the ways that the session has informed or changed the way you think about social equity and environmental justice. Registration is free and can be completed at <https://ic-sd.org/>. Students who are unable to attend at least one session should contact the professor immediately.

	Excellent (25 pts)	Good (20 pts)	Fair (10 pts)	Poor (0 pts)
Summary	The reflection contains a concise summary of the conference session, including the topic and participants.	The reflection contains a summary of the conference session.	The reflection only briefly mentions the topic of the session or participants.	The reflection does not contain a summary of the conference session.
Analysis	The reflection is an in-depth analysis of the conference session, including an evaluation of the arguments and evidence presented by the speakers.	The reflection is an analysis of the conference session, including a discussion of the arguments and evidence presented by the speakers.	The reflection attempts to analyze the conference session, but the analysis is vague or unclear.	The reflection does not move beyond a description of the conference session.
Making Connections	The reflection demonstrates multiple connections between the conference session and the content covered in class and assigned readings.	The reflection demonstrates general connections between the conference session and assigned materials.	The connection between the conference session and assigned materials is vague or unclear.	The reflection does not demonstrate any connection to course content.
Reflective Thinking	The reflection explains the student's thinking and learning processes, as well as implications for future learning.	The reflection explains the student's thinking about his/her learning processes.	The reflection attempts to demonstrate thinking about learning but is vague or unclear about the personal learning process.	The reflection does not address the student's thinking or learning.

Weekly assignments (200 points; 10 total)

There will be 11 weekly assignments throughout the semester, with the best ten worth 100 total points. These will reinforce the concepts presented in the lectures and readings and allow you to explore them in greater depth by applying them to real-world environmental issues.

Midterm exam (150 points)

The Midterm Exam, which counts for 150 points of your final grade, will include all material discussed in the course, up through the last class meeting before the midterm exam. The Midterm exam will consist of multiple-choice, short answer, and essay questions. There is no Final Exam in this course.

Indonesia collaboration (200 points)

During Weeks 8-14, students will participate in a collaborative learning experience with students at the Institute of Technology in Bandung, Indonesia. Students will work in pairs or small groups (depending on enrollment) to develop comparative case studies exploring environmental planning challenges and opportunities in particular cities or regions in their respective countries. The interaction between students will include an initial meet and greet via pre-recorded video using software such as Kaltura. Throughout the module, students will interact through a combination of email/Whatsapp, discussion boards, and blog posts. In Week 12, students will present their work in the form of pre-recorded videos and reflect on the experience.

Final project (Proposal 50 points; Draft 50 points; Final paper 100 points total)

The major assessment for the course is a team-based project in which students design planning interventions to address a specific environmental issue in an international city or region of their choice. You are encouraged to build on your work for the Indonesian collaboration, but you may select a different study site with approval from the instructor. The proposed intervention should include identification of relevant and specific planning tools, as well as strategies such as posters, videos, or social media campaigns that may foster community engagement. A project proposal – including a summary of the environmental issue and the chosen city – will be due in Week 9. A complete draft of the individual paper will be due in Week 12, which will be distributed for peer review. The final project is due Sunday of Week 15 at 11:59 pm.

Additional information on the Final Project will be provided in class. Final Projects will be penalized by one letter grade during the first week past the due date. For instance, an “A” paper would become a “B” paper. After that, the paper grade will revert to a zero. A grading rubric for the final project will be provided at a later date.

Conversions from Numeric to Letter Grades

Numerical Grade	Letter Grade		Numerical Grade	Letter Grade
≥ 97.5	A+		> 72.5	C
> 92.5	A		> 70.0	C-
> 90.0	A-		> 67.5	D+
> 87.5	B+		> 62.5	D
> 82.5	B		> 60.0	D-
> 80.0	B-		< 60.0	F
> 77.5	C+			

Student expectations

Active and constructive student participation in online discussions and activities is an essential component of this course. You are encouraged to ask questions and offer your opinions and insights whenever appropriate.

Respect in the virtual classroom and other learning environments: All online conversations and discussions should demonstrate respect for all the members of the class and be conducted in a manner consistent with the code of conduct for students in your University Student Code. Consult Student Code Article 1—Student Rights and Responsibilities, Part 1. Student Rights: §1-102: http://www.admin.uiuc.edu/policy/code/article_1/a1_1-102.html.

Academic Integrity: Learning involves an effort to do assignments by yourself, even if the result is not perfect. Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of another as if they were your own. Whether intentional or unintentional, plagiarism carries severe consequences, including failing the course and having a permanent record of plagiarism in your university file. Any cheating and plagiarism of any kind will be investigated and penalized. To avoid this risk, please ensure you are familiar with Part 4 of the Student Rights and Responsibilities (<https://studentcode.illinois.edu/docs/19.001.FullCodeInside.vf.pdf>).

Support resources and supporting fellow students in distress: As members of the Illinois community, we each have a responsibility to express care and concern for one another. We know that students sometimes face challenges that can impact academic performance (examples include mental health concerns, food insecurity, homelessness, personal emergencies). Should you find that you or a fellow student are managing such a challenge and that it is interfering with your coursework, you are encouraged to contact the professor or the [Student Assistance Center \(SAC\)](#) in the Office of the Dean of Students for support and referrals to campus or community resources. The SAC has a Dean on Duty available to see students who walk in, call, or email the office during business hours. For mental health emergencies, you can call 911 or walk-in to the Counseling Center. No appointment is needed.

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities: To obtain disability-related academic adjustments or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the course professor and the Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES) as soon as possible. To contact DRES, you may visit 1207 S. Oak St., Champaign, call 333-4603, email disability@illinois.edu or go to the [DRES website](#).

Additional resources

You may feel overwhelmed with the amount of reading and writing required to prepare before class sessions. To improve your reading skills so that you can get the most from the limited time you have, please review the handout on Compass titled *Ten Steps to Critical Reading*. To improve your academic writing skills, consult another handout posted on Compass titled: *Guide to Writing Effective Essays*.

You are strongly encouraged to take the benefit of consultations with the Writers Workshop (<http://www.cws.illinois.edu/workshop/>). You can make an appointment through their website. You can also consult the Purdue University's Online Writing Lab (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu>), which is one of the most comprehensive collections of writing information available online. If English is not your first language, the OWL also provides useful resources for English as a second language (ESL) writers at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/esl/>.