Course Title

Environmental Social Movements

Course Number
ENVST-UA 9481001 /SOC-UA 9209001

SAMPLE SYLLABUS

Lecturer Contact Information
Dr. Andrzej Ancygier
aa157@nyu.edu

Course Details
Wednesdays, 10:00am to 12:45pm
Location of class: NYUB, Room “Spandau” (tbc)

Prerequisites
None

Units earned
4

Course Description
This course will look into the factors leading to the creation of social movements in reaction to environmental concerns. It will investigate which of them make these movements effective in leading to a change, and which lead to a failure. Also, the roles of counter-movements fighting for keeping the status quo will be investigated.

The course will consist of three parts. The first part will look into the origins and developments of environmental social movements and their intersections with the notion of social justice. In this part, the differences between the preservationists and conservationists will be investigated, as well as the history of the major environmental organizations.

Keeping in mind the recent developments in the area of climate policy, the second part of the course will particularly focus on current and future developments of social movements dealing with climate change. What should their role be after the adoption of the Paris Agreement in December 2015? How can they contribute to dealing with the major environmental issues of this century? Also, the arguments of climate skeptics will be closely looked into.

Finally, the third part will look into the future role of social environmental movements. The rapidly changing world brings up new challenges but also new opportunities. In the last three sessions we will discuss how these can be used by different actors in the area of environmental policy.

Course Objectives
The course will have three main goals. The first goal of the course is to familiarize students with the historical emergence and contemporary activities of groups and movements engaged in protecting nature, natural resources and the environment. We will address their strategies and goals. The second goal of the course is to introduce students to the strategies employed by the social environmental movements in an attempt to instigate a change. Finally, the third goal is to engage students in a critical discussion on the role of environmental movements in a rapidly globalizing world, on issues of social and environmental justice, and on the contradictions emerging between them.

Assessment Components

a. In-class participation (15%). This covers having read all of the assigned reading requirements and participating in the discussions.

b. Three reading responses (15% total, 5% each) on the reading material for a chosen session (400-700 words each). Alternatively, students may also write their reactions to the discussion which took place in class. The first reading response is to be submitted by 30 September, the second, by 31 October and the last by 30 November.

c. “Dream Speech” (10%), based on MLK's speech, that will present the environmental action from a different perspective than the one traditionally taken by the mainstream environmental movement. Alternatively, the students may also provide a selection of “News from the Future”. Examples of both a “Dream Speech” and “News from the Future” will be provided.

d. One in-class presentation (15%). Students will be asked to give a 10- to 15-minute-long talk during which they present an idea for an environmental movement they would like to initiate. The presentation should include a description of the problem that the movement should mitigate, the strategy and the potential competitors struggling to keep the status quo. Students have until 30 September to inform the instructor about the topic of their presentations.

e. Midterm essay (25%). Students will have to write a take-home essay (2000 words +/-10%, excluding references) in which they present a social environmental movement of their interest. The paper should describe the problem the movement is dealing with, its strategy and goals. It should also look at the competing movements. The conclusions should include at least three “lessons learned” that the student will use for the development of his or her own movement (see point “c”). The midterm essays are due before 15 November 2017.

f. Final exam (20%). The final exam will consist of two parts. The first part will require answering two out of three long open questions at home. The answers need to be submitted 24 hours before the last session. The second part will be held during the session on 13 December 2017 and last around 30 minutes. It will consist of multiple choice and short open questions.

Failure to submit or fulfill any required component may result in failure of the class, regardless of grades achieved in other assignments.

Assessment Expectations

Grade A: The student makes excellent use of empirical and theoretical material and offers well-structured arguments in their work. The student writes comprehensive essays / answers to exam questions and their work shows strong evidence of critical thought and extensive reading.
Grade B: The candidate shows a good understanding of the problem and has demonstrated the ability to formulate and execute a coherent research strategy.

Grade C: The work is acceptable and shows a basic grasp of the research problem. However, the work fails to organize findings coherently and is in need of improvement.

Grade D: The work passes because some relevant points are made. However, there may be a problem of poor definition, lack of critical awareness, poor research.

Grade F: The work shows that the research problem is not understood; there is little or no critical awareness and the research is clearly negligible.

Grade Conversion
Your lecturer may use one of the following scales of numerical equivalents to letter grades:

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<tr>
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<td>A-</td>
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<td>B-</td>
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Alternatively:

<table>
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Attendance Policy
Participation in all classes is essential for your academic success, especially in courses that meet only once per week. Your attendance in both content and language courses is required and will be checked at each class meeting. As soon as it becomes clear that you cannot attend a class, you must inform your professor by e-mail immediately (i.e. before the start of your class). Absences are only excused if they are due to illness, religious observance or emergencies. Your professor or NYU Berlin's administration may ask you to present a doctor's note or an exceptional permission from NYU Berlin's Director or Wellness Counselor as proof. Emergencies or other exceptional circumstances must be presented to the Director. Doctor's notes need to be submitted to the Academics Office, who will inform your professors. Doctor's notes need to be from a local doctor and carry a signature and a stamp. If you want the reasons for your absence to be treated confidentially, please approach NYU Berlin's Director or Wellness Counselor.

Unexcused absences affect students' grades: In content courses each unexcused absence (equaling one week's worth of classes) leads to a deduction of 2% of the overall grade and may negatively affect your class participation grade. In German Language classes two or three (consecutive or non-consecutive) unexcused absences (equaling one week's worth of classes) lead to a 2% deduction of the overall grade. Three unexcused absences in one content course and five unexcused absences in your German language course may lead to a Fail in that course. Furthermore, your professor is entitled to deduct points for frequent late arrival or late arrival back from in-class breaks. Being more than 15 minutes late counts as an unexcused absence. Please note that for classes involving a field trip, transportation difficulties are never grounds for an excused absence. It is the student's responsibility to arrive in time at the announced meeting point.
Exams, tests and quizzes, deadlines, and oral presentations that are missed due to illness always require a doctor's note as documentation. It is the student's responsibility to produce this doctor's note and submit it to the Academics Office; until this doctor's note is produced the missed assessment is graded with an F and no make-up assessment is scheduled. In content classes, an F in one assignment may lead to failure of the entire class.

**Attendance Rules on Religious Holidays**
Members of any religious group may, without penalty, excuse themselves from classes when required in compliance with their religious obligations. Students who anticipate being absent due to religious observance should notify their lecturer AND NYU Berlin's Academics Office in writing via e-mail one week in advance. If examinations or assignment deadlines are scheduled on the day the student will be absent, the Academics Office will schedule a make-up examination or extend the deadline for assignments. Please note that an absence is only excused for the holiday but not for any days of travel that may come before and/or after the holiday. See also [http://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/university-calendar-policy-on-religious-holidays.html](http://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/university-calendar-policy-on-religious-holidays.html)

**Late Submission of Work**
(1) Written work due in class must be submitted during the class time to the professor.

(2) Late work should be submitted in person to the lecturer or to the Academics Office, who will write on the essay or other work the date and time of submission, in the presence of the student. Another member of the administrative staff may also personally accept the work, and will write the date and time of submission on the work, as above.

(3) Work submitted late receives a penalty of 2 points on the 100 point scale for each day it is late (excluding weekends and public or religious holidays), unless an extension has been approved (with a doctor's note or by approval of NYU Berlin's administration), in which case the 2 points per day deductions start counting from the day the extended deadline has passed.

(4) Without an approved extension, written work submitted more than 5 days (excluding weekends and public or religious holidays) following the submission date receives an F.

(5) End of semester essays must be submitted on time.

(6) Students who are late for a written exam have no automatic right to take extra time or to write the exam on another day.

(7) Please remember that university computers do not keep your essays - you must save them elsewhere. Having lost parts of your essay on the university computer is no excuse for a late submission.

**Provisions for Students with Disabilities**
Academic accommodations are available for students with documented disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at 212-998-4980 or see their website ([https://www.nyu.edu/students/communities-and-groups/students-with-disabilities.html](https://www.nyu.edu/students/communities-and-groups/students-with-disabilities.html)) for further information.
Plagiarism Policy
The presentation of another person’s words, ideas, judgment, images or data as though they were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes an act of plagiarism. Proper referencing of your sources avoids plagiarism (see as one possible help the NYU library guide to referencing styles: http://nyu.libguides.com/citations).

NYU Berlin takes plagiarism very seriously; penalties follow and may exceed those set out by your home school. Your lecturer may ask you to sign a declaration of authorship form.

It is also an offense to submit work for assignments from two different courses that is substantially the same (be it oral presentations or written work). If there is an overlap of the subject of your assignment with one that you produced for another course (either in the current or any previous semester), you MUST inform your professor.

For a summary of NYU Global's academic policies please see: www.nyu.edu/global/academic-policies

Required Text(s)
The texts required for the class will be available online on NYU Classes.

In addition, students are asked to purchase Naomi Klein’s book “This Changes Everything. Capitalism vs the Climate”.

One copy of each book is kept in the Reading Room of NYU Berlin's Academic Center, for you to read in the center but not to take out.

NYU Berlin Library Catalogue: http://guides.nyu.edu/global/berlin or follow the link on NYU Berlin’s website (Academics/Facilities & Services).

Supplemental Text(s) (not required to purchase)

Michael Nordhaus, Ted Schellenberger (2009). Break Through: Why We Can't Leave Saving the Planet to Environmentalists.

Both publications are available in the NYUB library.

Additional Required Equipment
None

Session 1, Wednesday, 30 August 2017
What is a Social Movement? Theories and Concepts
The first session will introduce students to the concept of social movements. We will discuss definitions, central elements of social movement theories, and the issues they raise about collective action, organization, cooperation, their role in politics and democracy, as well as their effectiveness.

Readings:
Kenneth Newton, “Pressure Groups and Social Movements,” in Cambridge Textbooks in Comparative Politics: Foundations of Comparative Politics, (Cambridge University Press, 2009), 198-221 [01].


Movies:
“Social Movement” available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y7YPTD7QwR4 Duration: 7’34.

Session 2, Wednesday, 6 September 2017

Introduction to Social Environmental Movements
What is particular to social environmental movements? Which factors lead to their creation? What is the difference between preservationists and conservationsists and how has this influenced the development of social environmental movements? In addition to answering these questions, during this session we will also look at the role of social movements in a rapidly changing world.

Readings:


Movies:
“Activism 2.0 – Rebirth of the Environmental Movement: Emily Hunter at TEDxUTSC” available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KsB2qtDaiRw Duration: 16’37.

Session 3, Wednesday, 13 September 2017

Early Conservation Ideas and Actors in the US
Session three looks at the roots of nature conservation. It juxtaposes two great men that are usually considered to be pioneers of nature conservation, but who differed considerably in their approaches to nature. The self-styled “founder” of US forestry Gifford Pinchot was committed to what he called the “wise use” or “conservation” of resources. By contrast, John Muir is the most prominent early “preservationist”. The goal of this session is to distinguish between their conceptions of nature. At the same time, it is important to acknowledge that both traditions characterize the conservation movement and continue to have an impact on environmentalism today.

Readings:


Movies:

Visit to the Ecologic Institute (TBC)

**Session 4, Wednesday, 20 September 2017**

From “Silent Spring” to “Limits to Growth”
The fourth session covers the rise of modern environmentalism, a shift towards a more comprehensive view of humanity’s impact on the planet. This transition is considered to have taken place in the decade between Rachel Carson’s admonitions against the dangers of DDT published in 1962 and the warnings of the Club of Rome in 1972 about the “Limits to Growth”. While the United States played a prominent role in these developments, the rise of environmentalism or “the environmental revolution”, as it has been dubbed, is a worldwide phenomenon.

Readings:


Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., *There are No Limits to Growth* (New Benjamin Franklin House, 1983), 1-12, [10].

Movies:


**Session 5, Wednesday, 27 September 2017**

Earth Day: How a 1970 Teach-in Made the First Green Generation
The fifth session will study the importance of events in the history of the environmental movement. By looking at organizers, speakers, local events, and the new infrastructures that followed from Earth Day, we will critically analyze Adam Rome’s thesis that Earth Day mobilized for and shaped environmentalism in the 1970s. We will try to answer the question of whether the success of the 1970 Earth Day can be repeated.

Readings:


Movies:
“Earth Day 1970 Parts 1 to 13” available at:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WbwC281uzUs&list=PL3480E41AA956A42B&index=1
Combined Duration: 55’46

Session 6, Wednesday, 4 October 2017

Greenpeace – From Counterculture to Global Organization
Greenpeace is probably the most well-known environmental organization. We will examine in detail how the brand new study by Frank Zelko explains the rise of Greenpeace, its intellectual origins and organizational transformations, as well as its activities and ideas about “mind-bombing” the public. As in the previous session, the discussion will be based on students’ essays on selected chapters of this book.

Reading:

Movies:
"Greenpeace: From Hippies to Lobbyists” available at:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T7UdiiKseQY Duration: 57’53

Session 7, Wednesday, 11 October 2017

Urban Environmental Justice
This session introduces the notion of environmental justice and its critique. We will investigate if “environmental racism” is an issue, and if yes, how big it is. We will also discuss how helpful the environmental justice movement is in improving the state of the environment and contributing to a more equal spread of burdens resulting from environmental degradation.

Readings:


Movies:
"Majora Carter: Greening the Ghetto". Available at:
https://www.ted.com/talks/majora_carter_s_tale_of_urban_renewal Duration: 18’26

18 October 2017 – Fall Break – No Class
Session 8, Wednesday, 25 October 2017

Nature Conservation in Europe
In session eight, we will move to Europe and compare the development of the environmental social movements there to the developments in the United States. For this purpose, we will look at the peculiarities of the German environmental movements and the differences between Eastern and Western Europe.

Readings:


Nick Manning, “Patterns of Environmental Movements in Eastern Europe,” in Environmental Politics, 7:2, (1998), 100-133. [18]

Movies:
"Chernobyl After the Nuclear Explosion – Full Documentary”. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E_uwOjCX6is Duration: 44’13

Guest Lecture by Jan-Henrik Meyer (tbc)

Session 9, Wednesday, 1 November 2017

The Pillars of the Global Climate Change Governance
The adoption of the Paris Agreement during the climate summit in Paris in December 2015 was a milestone on a very long path of dealing with climate change. However, it was only possible due to a number of successes and failures, like the climate negotiations in Copenhagen in 2009. Also, without a significant increase in the scientific knowledge about climate change, there would be no consensus that urgent action is necessary. This session will introduce students to the two main pillars of the global climate change governance: the IPCC and the UNFCCC.

Readings:

UNFCCC (2015), points 12-17, 53-55, 59 of the “Paris Decision” and articles 2, 3 and 4 of the “Paris Agreement”. [20]


Movies:
“How Paris is different from past climate change negotiations” available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aj3Kr8odxns Duration: 8’33, and
The Inside Story of the Paris Climate Agreement” available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MIA_1xQc7x8&t=2s Duration: 14’50

Session 10, Wednesday, 8 November 2017

The Climate Change Movement
The adoption of the Paris Agreement and the variety of climate action wouldn’t have been possible without the climate change movement, including non-state actors, scientists, politicians and even religious leaders. During this session, we will take a look at the main strategies of different actors and the way forward in combating climate change. We will also discuss the role of religion in the area of environmental protection.

Readings:
Naomi Klein, This Changes Everything. Capitalism vs. The Climate, (Simon & Schuster, 2014), Introduction, 31 pages, [22 - Book].


Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter Laudato Si’ of the Holy Father Francis on the Care for our Common Home, (Vatican, 2015), 52 pages, [24].


Movies:
"Climate Change Movement has Failed | Assaad Razzouk" available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QkIV8PcAyr0&t=68s Duration: 14’26

Talk by Melanie Mattauch from 350.org (tbc)

Session 11, Wednesday, 15 November 2017

Climate Change Skeptics
As in the case of all environmental movements, as well as in the case of combating global warming, there is an opposition to changes of the existing status quo by those benefitting from it. In the case of climate change mitigation, the opposition results not only from the transition towards a low-carbon economy which causes enormous losses to fossil fuel companies, but also from a disbelief in the anthropogenic causes of the problem. During this session, we will look into the main arguments of the climate change skeptics.

Readings:


Movies:
"Climate Change: Prof Brian Cox (scientist) takes on Senator Malcolm Roberts (politician)" available at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qVB-rpC2x3w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qVB-rpC2x3w) Duration: 29'05.

**Session 12, Wednesday, 22 November 2017**

**Climate Change Versus Capitalism**
Can we save the planet while working within the capitalist system, which has proven so effective in increasing consumption? Or should we look for alternatives? These questions will be discussed on the basis of readings presenting opposite views on this matter.

**Readings:**


Ted Nordhaus and Michael Shellenberger, *Break Through. Why We Can't Leave Saving the Planet to the Environmentalists*, (Mariner Books 2009), i-18, 216-240. [33]

**Movies:**
"UpFront - Is Capitalism Driving Climate Change?" Available at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bCi3Xt0udzw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bCi3Xt0udzw) Duration: 25'05

**Session 13, Wednesday, 29 November 2017**

**The Role of Media**
Access to media is decisive for the success or failure of a social movement. At the same time, the media landscape is changing due to the massive spread of social media in recent years. How do the strategies of social environmental movements have to change in response to the decreasing role of mass media and the increasing individualization of the means of public communication?

**Readings:**
Catherine Happer and Greg Philo, "The Role of the Media in the Construction of Public Belief and Social Change," in *Journal of Social and Political Psychology*, Vol 1, No. 1 (2013), 16 pages. [34]


Andrew Hoffmann, *How Culture Shapes the Climate Change Debate*, (Stanford University Press, 2015), 34-47. [37]

Movies:
"Let's Design Social Media that Drives Real Change | Wael Ghonim" Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HiwJ0hNI1Fw Duration: 13'33

Session 14, Wednesday, 6 December 2017

Social Environmental Movements in a Rapidly Changing World
In 1980, Alvin Toffler had already written about the Third Wave of civilization’s development, characterized by individualism and the dominance of knowledge. Due to the demassification of media and decreasing role of nation states, the political system will evolve towards a "mosaic democracy". Was Toffler correct in his predictions? What impact will radical changes have on the role of social environmental movements? How will they have to change their strategies to deal with the new challenges?

Readings:


“The Earth Charter” (2000), 4 pages, [41].


Movies:
“Big Thinkers - Alvin Toffler [Futurist]” Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QCXCDYj6U4E Duration: 22'25

Session 15, Wednesday, 13 December 2017

Wrap-up session. In-class exam: Around 30 minutes and discussion of answers to the long open questions.

Classroom Etiquette
No use of laptops during class is allowed.

Suggested Co-Curricular Activities
To be discussed during the class

Your Lecturer
Dr. Andrzej Ancygier has been teaching various courses dealing with environmental protection, European integration and global challenges from political and sociological perspectives. His main focus is the impact of the energy sector on climate change and
analysis of the factors leading to the global transformation towards renewable sources of energy.

Dr. Ancygier has been teaching at the NYU since 2011. In addition, he is also teaching a course dealing with the European environmental policy and politics at the Freie Universität in Berlin. Since 2015, Ancygier has been working as an energy expert and the Deputy Head of the Climate Policy Team at Climate Analytics, a think tank analyzing the impact of climate change on the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS).