Course Title

Environmental Social Movements

Course Number
ENVST-UA.9481001 / SOC-UA.9209001

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

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

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 the factors which make these movements effective in leading to a change. At the same time, the roles of counter-movements fighting for keeping the status quo will be investigated.

The course will consist of two 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 be their role 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 the climate skeptics will be closely looked into.

Course Objective
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 changing goals and perennial organizational problems. 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. 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 (25%). This covers having read all of the assigned reading requirements and participating in the discussions.

b. Two reading responses (10% total, 5% each) on the reading material for a chosen session (400-700 words each). Alternatively, the student may also write his/her reactions to the discussion which took place in class.

c. One in-class presentation (10%). Students will be asked to give a 15-minute-long presentation in 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 29 February 2016 to inform the instructor about the topic of their presentations.

d. Midterm essay (30%). Students will have to write a take-home essay (2000-3000 words with 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 31 March 2016.

e. Closed-book, in-class final exam (25%). The final exam will be held during the session on 18 May 2016 and last around 60 minutes. Students will have to choose and answer two out of three open questions which will necessitate a longer response. In addition, the exam will include a number of open questions that should be answered with one or two sentences, as well as some multiple-choice 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 his/her work. The student writes comprehensive essays / answers to exam questions and his/her 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 instructor may use one of the following scales of numerical equivalents to letter grades:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Numerical Equivalent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>90-93</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84-86</td>
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<td>B-</td>
<td>80-83</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>74-76</td>
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<td>C-</td>
<td>70-73</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>65-66</td>
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<td>D-</td>
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<td>F</td>
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Alternatively:

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Numerical Equivalent</th>
</tr>
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<td>B</td>
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**Attendance Policy**

Participation in all classes is essential for your academic success, especially in NYU Berlin’s content courses that, unlike most courses at NYU NY, meet only once per week in a double-session for three hours. 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. If you want the reasons for your absence to be treated confidentially and not shared with your professor, please approach NYUB's Director or Wellness Counselor. Your professor or NYUB's administration may ask you to present a doctor's note or an exceptional permission from the Director or Wellness Counselor. Doctor's notes need to be submitted to the Assistant Director for Academics or the Arts Coordinator, who will inform your professors.

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. Three unexcused absences in one course may lead to a Fail in that course. 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. Five unexcused absences in your German language course may lead to a Fail in that course. Furthermore, faculty is also entitled to deduct points for frequent late arrival to class or late arrival back from in-class breaks. Being more than 15 minutes late for class counts as an unexcused absence. Please note that for classes involving a field trip or other external visit, transportation difficulties are never grounds for an excused absence. It is the student's responsibility to arrive at the announced meeting point in a punctual and timely fashion.

Exams, tests, 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 Assistant Director for Academics; until this doctor's note is produced the missed assessment is graded with an F. 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 because of any religious observance should notify their instructor AND NYUB's Academic Office in writing via e-mail one week in advance before being absent for this purpose. If
examinations or assignment deadlines are scheduled on the day the student will be absent, the Director or Assistant Director will re-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.

**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 instructor or to the Assistant Director for Academics, 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) Unless an extension has been approved (with a doctor's note or by approval of the Director or Assistant Director), work submitted late receives a penalty of 2 points on the 100 point scale for each day it is late.

(4) Without an approved extension, written work submitted more than 5 weekdays following the session date fails and is given a zero.

(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 (http://www.nyu.edu/life/safety-health-andwellness/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](http://nyu.libguides.com/citations)).

NYUB takes plagiarism very seriously; penalties follow and may exceed those set out by your home school. All your written work must be submitted as a hard copy AND in electronic form to the instructor. Your instructor 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](http://www.nyu.edu/global/academic-policies)

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

**Supplemental Text(s) (not required to purchase)**
Micheal Nordhaus, Td Schellenberger (2009). "Break Through: Why We Can't Leave Saving the Planet to Environmentalists”.
Both publications are available in the NYUB library.

**Internet Research Guidelines**
To be discussed in class

**Additional Required Equipment**
None

**Session 1, Wednesday, 3 Feb 2016**

**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.

Video “Social Movement” available at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y7YPTD7QwR4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y7YPTD7QwR4)

**Session 2, Wednesday, 10 Feb 2016**

**Introduction to Social Environmental Movements**
What is particular about social environmental movements? Which factors led to their creation? What is the difference between preservationists and conservationists and how has this influenced the development of the 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:**
“Environmental Movement,” (2005) in Science in the Contemporary World: An Encyclopaedia. 5 pages [01]


Newton, Kenneth “Pressure Groups and Social Movements,” in Cambridge Textbooks in Comparative Politics: Foundations of Comparative Politics” (Cambridge University Press, 2009), 198-221 [03].

Session 3, Wednesday, 17 Feb 2016

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”. He is known for his appreciation of “wilderness” itself, a value he valiantly defended in the battle surrounding dam building in the Hetch Hetchy Valley in the early years of the 20th century. 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. We will read excerpts from original sources to get a first-hand impression of their reasoning.

Readings:


Session 4, Wednesday, 24 Feb 2016

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” 1-12 [8a]


**Session 5, Wednesday, 2 Mar 2016**

**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. This session, as well as session 6, will be based on the discussion of students’ essays on selected chapters of this book.

Readings:


**Session 6, Wednesday, 9 Mar 2016**

**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:

**Session 7, Wednesday, 16 Mar 2016**

**Urban Environmental Justice**

This session introduces the notion of environmental justice and the movements associated with it. In the second half of the session, we will discuss and examine a number of examples in different urban contexts, namely the building of highways through African-American
neighborhoods, the Chicago Heat Wave and the results of Hurricane Katrina. The goal is to establish common traits, problems and solutions, as well as important differences.

Readings:


**Session 8, Wednesday, 23 Mar 2016**

**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 other regions. Based on the example of social movements in Italy we will try to specify the main characteristics of the European environmental social movements. Furthermore, we will also look more deeply into the differences between the Eastern and Western European countries.

Readings:

Nick Manning, “Patterns of Environmental Movements in Eastern Europe," in *Environmental Politics*, 7:2 (1998), 100-133. [22]


**30 Mar 2016 – Spring Break – No Class**

**Session 9, Wednesday, 6 Apr 2016**

The Rise of the Environmental Movement in Germany in the 1970s
Session nine will focus on an important feature of postwar West German society, namely the role and emergence of environmentalism. During this session we will juxtapose two perspectives on the history of the rise of the environmental movement in Germany: its rootedness in traditional nature protection and the new, transnational anti-nuclear issue. We
will also look at the opposition to nuclear energy as the driving force of environmental movements beyond Germany.

Guest Lecture by Jan-Henrik Meyer

Readings:


**Session 10, Wednesday, 13 Apr 2016**

The Climate Change Movement
Adoption of the Paris Agreement during the climate summit in December 2015 was a milestone on a very long path of dealing with climate change. However, it was only possible due to decades of action on behalf of different actors, 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:


The Earth Charter (2000), 4 pages. [32]

UNFCCC (2015), “The Paris Agreement,” 31 pages [Special Focus on points 12-21, and articles 2, 3 and 4] [33]

**Session 11, Wednesday, 20 Apr 2016**

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 disbeliefs in the anthropogenic causes of the problem. During this session we will look into the main arguments of the climate change skeptics.

Readings:
Peter J. Jacques, Riley E. Dunlap and Mark Freeman, “The Organisation of Denial: Conservative Think Tanks and Environmental Scepticism,” in Environmental Politics 17: 3 (2008): 349-385. [34]


Andrew Hoffmann, How Culture Shapes the Climate Change Debate, (Stanford University Press 2015), pp. vii-ix, 1-33, 48-69. [36]


Session 12, Wednesday, 27 Apr 2016

Post-environmentalists
According to some authors of the readings for this session, environmental protection is too important to be left to environmentalists. They are especially critical of the environmentalists’ perceived opposition to economic development and their desire to turn back the clock and give up technological developments due to their potentially negative impact on the environment. During this session, we will analyze to what degree their arguments reflect the reality and what they have to offer instead.

Readings:
Alvin Toffler, Powershift (A Bantam Book 1991), pp. 369-374. [38]

Ted Nordhaus and Michael Shellenberger, Break Through. Why We Can't Leave Saving the Planet to the Environmentalists (Boston: Mariner Books 2009), i-18, 216-240. [39]

“An Ecomodernist Manifesto” (2015), 32 pages. [40]

Session 13, Wednesday, 4 May 2016

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:


**Session 14, Wednesday, 11 May 2016**

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 de-massification 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:**


**Session 15, Wednesday, 18 May 2016**

Wrap-up session. In-class exam: Around 60 minutes and discussion of results afterwards.

**Classroom Etiquette**

To be discussed in class

**Suggested Co-Curricular Activities**

Students are strongly encouraged to attend the talk by John McNeill (Georgetown, USA) entitled “Global Environmental History of the Industrial Revolution: Work in (Slow) Progress” on Friday, 19 Feb 2016 at 6 p.m. in the building of the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung in Schumannstr. 8, Berlin-Mitte. This event is co-sponsored by NYU Berlin and followed by a reception (free drinks and food).