Global Environmental Challenges

Academic Year: (2021 / 2022) **Review date: 30-06-2021**

Department assigned to the subject: Social Sciences Department

Coordinating teacher: GAMERO RUS, JESUS MARCOS

Type: Electives ECTS Credits : 6.0

Year : Semester :

REQUIREMENTS (SUBJECTS THAT ARE ASSUMED TO BE KNOWN)

Non specific one.

OBJECTIVES

BASIC COMPETENCES

CB1 Be able to show that they possess and comprehend facts and contents in an area of study which, based on a previous general secondary school level, have been extended to those included in advanced textbooks and in some aspects proceed from the most advanced studies in this area.

CB2 Be able to show that they have learned how to apply their knowledge professionally to their future jobs or tasks and that they possess the competences needed to develop and defend arguments and solve problems in that area of study.

CB3 Be able to show that they are capable of collecting and interpreting the relevant data (normally within their area of study) needed for formulating judgments which require critical thought on social, scientific and ethical topics of relevance.

CB4 Be able to show that they are able to transmit information, ideas, problems and solutions both to specialized and non-specialized publics.

CB5 Be able to show that they have developed the learning skills required to perform further studies with a high degree of self-dependence.

GENERAL COMPETENCES

CG1 Understand social, political, legal and economic realities from a comparative perspective.

CG2 Be able to approximate and analyze the intrinsic values contained in equal opportunities, multi-cultural society, political ideological and cultural pluralism, human rights, and the international community.

CG3 Know quantitative and qualitative research techniques and possess the ability to choose which is most adequate to apply in the field of Social Sciences.

CG4 Be able to manage information: identify, organize and analyze relevant information critically and systematically within the context of international relations.

CG6 Be able to apply scientific method to the economic, social and political questions of a global society; be able to formulate problems in this context, identify a possible explication or solution, and a method to contrast them by sensibly interpreting the data.

OVERLAPPING COMPETENCES

CT1 Acquire the capacity to communicate knowledge in oral and written form, both to specialized and to non-specialized publics.

CT2 Acquire the capacity to establish good interpersonal communication and to work both in interdisciplinary and international teams.

CT3 Acquire the capacity to organize and plan workloads, taking correct decisions based on the available information, collecting and interpreting relevant data in order to provide assessments in that area of study.

CT4 Develop the motivation and capacity to perform independent continuous learning for life, with an endowment to adapt to change and new situations.

SPECIFIC COMPETENCES

CE1 Be familiar with the principal political and social theories. Be capable of analyzing and comparing contemporary policies.

CE2 Be familiar with and understand the processes of political, social, economic and cultural change in society and contemporary policy.

CE6 Understand the socio-political impact of empires, religions and cultures in historical perspective.

CE7 Understand the main dynamics which generate inequality and its consequences, and comprehend

the principles on which equal opportunity policies are based.
CE9 Be familiar with and comprehend the relevance of technological change for economic and social development.
CE10 Be able to discern the differentiating elements in international problems in accordance to the development stages of a country.
CE11 Be able to critically relate present and past events and processes.
CE12 Be able to formulate and solve basic economic, social, political problems in an international context.
CE16 Be able to carry out case studies and apply comparative method to analyze institutions, processes and policies in different countries.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
By the end of the semester the student is expected to critically analyze the main environmental challenges in relation to political and social actors and processes and engage with the following questions: What are the main causes and political processes involved in
environmental problems? How the main international actors respond to these challenges use and what are some of the ways forward? How are environmental issues related to other problems such as inequality, security, or economic development?

DESCRIPTION OF CONTENTS: PROGRAMME

WEEK 1. Introduction. A historical perspective of environmental challenges. Human activity and the ecosystem. Climate Change and the Anthropocene.
WEEK 2. Industrial exploitation and the global ecological crisis. Loss of biodiversity. Mass extinction of living species at the planetary level. Forestry and the problem of logging and illegal logging.
WEEK 3. Environmental degradation, climate change and global governance: actors, causes and consequences. A brief history of global environmental meetings: from the Rio summit to the Paris agreement. Decision making in climate negotiations.
WEEK 4. Climate justice and human rights. Climate change as a social issue: social inequality, women and indigenous peoples.
WEEK 5. Impacts of climate change on conflicts, migration and health.
WEEK 6. 2030 Agenda and Sustainable development Goals. Is another type of development possible? The welfare state and its role to face climate change.
WEEK 7. Cities, urbanism and climate action. From linear economy to circular economy.
WEEK 8. Technology transfer and climate negotiations. How can technical solutions be extended in developing countries, what needs to be done?. Climate change, agriculture and food security.
WEEK 9. Business and international environmental governance. Greenwashing and global corporate social responsibility.
WEEK 10. The Role of the European Union in global climate action. The European Green Deal.
WEEK 11. Uncertainty in climate science. How can a society collapse? Demographics and climate change.
WEEK 12. New and transformative narratives for climate action. Intergenerational justice: the role of youth and older people on climate action.
WEEK 13. Why we need more social science and international studies research on climate change?
WEEK 14. Conclusions.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES AND METHODOLOGY

The course will provide the theoretical and empirical foundations for understanding the major environmental challenges facing humanity. The lectures and seminars are designed to be very dynamic and the active participation of students is encouraged. The tasks that students will undertake range from short quizzes or questions in class; the presentation and discussion of texts; the identification of problems, causes, effects, consequences and impact of policies; and the proposal and defense of political positions.

Students will be expected to read the assigned readings and prepare for class discussions. Discussion groups will be an important part of the course and their final grade. This is a practical course and attendance at all lectures, seminars and discussions is expected.

There will be office hours every week although it is recommended to confirm them with the professor via email.

ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

The final grade will be determined by two elements. All in-class assignments and the presentation will determine 60% of the final grade. The final exam will determine 40% of the final grade.

To successfully complete the course, students are expected to:

- Reading the required texts.
- Participating actively in the Seminar sessions (15% of the overall grade).
- Presenting and/or leading a discussion on the basis of one or several texts.
This assignment will be 25% of the final grade
- Additionally, students have to submit a paper or essay. Each essay has to be coauthored by two students and represents the 20% of the overall grade.
-There will be a final exam to complete the evaluation of the course. It will amount to 40% of the overall grade.

% end-of-term-examination:	40
% of continuous assessment (assigments, laboratory, practicals…):	60

BASIC BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Jeffrey Sachs The Age of Sustainable Development , Columbia University Press, 2015
- Kate O'Neill the Environment and International Relations. , Cambridge University Press, 2017
- Pamela S. Chasek Global Environmental Politics, Routledge, 2016
- Simon Nicholson and Sikina Jinnah New Earth Politics: Essays from the Anthropocene, MIT Press, 2016

ADDITIONAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Axelrod, Regina S., Leonard Downie, David and J. Vig, Norman The global environment: institutions, law and policy, CQ Press, 2014
- Sosa-Nunez, G. y Atkins, Ed Environment, Climate Change and International Relations, E-International Relations Publishing, 2016

BASIC ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

- European Union . Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development : https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda
- Garrett Hardin . The Tragedy of the Commons: https://science.sciencemag.org/content/sci/162/3859/1243.full.pdf
- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) . AR5 Synthesis Report: Climate Change 2014: https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar5/syr/
- Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights . Understanding Human Rights and Climate Change: https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/ClimateChange/COP21.pdf
- Paul J. Crutzen . Geology of mankind: https://www.nature.com/articles/415023a
- Paul J. Crutzen . Geology of mankind: https://www.nature.com/articles/415023a
- The Lancet . The Lancet Countdown on health and climate change: https://www.thelancet.com/countdown-health-climate
- UK Government Office for Science . Migration and Global Environmental Change: Future Challenges and Opportunities: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/287717/11-1116-migration-and-global-environmental-change.pdf
- UNITED NATIONS . UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE: https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/convkp/conveng.pdf
- United Nations . Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development : https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda
- United Nations Task Team on Social Dimensions of Climate Change . The Social Dimensionsof Climate Change: https://www.who.int/globalchange/mediacentre/events/2011/social-dimensions-of-climate-change.pdf?ua=1
- nited Nations Task Team on Social Dimensions of Climate Change . The Social Dimensionsof Climate Change: https://www.who.int/globalchange/mediacentre/events/2011/social-dimensions-of-climate-change.pdf?ua=1