

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Course name:

Global Environmental Issues

ENHL 243: 3 credits

Academic Semester: Spring AY 2019- 2020

Course Coordinator: Rima Habib, Ph.D

Introduction:

Global environmental problems such as climate change, water shortage, floods, fires, depletion of stratospheric ozone, and the loss of biodiversity have captured news headlines and the attention of the public. These developments are transnational, in that their impact is felt across national boundaries and effective responses require coordinated efforts transcending any individual state. The establishment of conventions and institutions facilitating international cooperation reflect this reality, yet the success of these efforts has been frequently inadequate and criticized as favouring the powerful over the disenfranchised.

This course engages students in a review of global environmental issues affecting the Arab region and beyond. This review will explore research on the history and causes of these environmental problems, giving special attention to their framing in public discourse. The ecological, social, economic, political, cultural, and health aspects of the environmental problems are discussed in a debate format. The local, national, and international efforts to develop strategies to address these problems are also raised.

1. Course Objectives:

This course aims to accomplish the following:

- A. Investigate global environmental topics that have contemporary relevance;
- B. Conduct analytical reflections on environmental topics; and
- C. Prepare students to deliver presentations that critically engage environmental debates.

2. Course Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the course, the student must be able to:

- A. Understand the environmental, social, economic, and political complexities of global environmental issues;
- B. Formulate an argumentative statement that addresses a global environmental issue;

- C. Conduct an in-depth literature review investigating a global environmental problem; and
- D. Communicate effectively an analysis of a literature review regarding a global environmental issue through writing and oral and poster presentations.

3. Time and Place:

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:00PM to 3:15PM
Van Dyck, Room 101.

4. Course Instructors:

- a. Dr. Rima Habib, Ph.D - Course Coordinator
Office 335, Extension: 4630. Email: rima.habib@aub.edu.lb
- b. Dr. May Jurdi, Ph.D
Office 420A, Extension: 4624. Email: mjurdi@aub.edu.lb
- c. Dr. Joumana Nasr, Ph.D
Office 413, Extension: 4631. Email: jn16@aub.edu.lb

5. Course Evaluation:

In class, you will choose a global environmental topic that you wish to explore. Over the course of the semester, you will be asked to complete a number of assignments, which address this issue of your choosing. Each task will have a descriptive sheet explaining what is expected of you to receive credit for your work. The tasks are as follows:

▪ Documentary assignment	5%
▪ Debate presentation/discussion	25%
▪ Written report	30%
▪ Poster Abstract	5%
▪ Poster	15%
▪ Oral poster presentation	15%
▪ Attendance and Participation in other students' debate	5%

6. Debate Presentation:

Each class session, two of you will individually present on a global environmental issue to your peers in class. Topic selection will be done in the first sessions of class, and the process for this selection is outlined in Appendix A. The order of students' presentations will be selected at random during the first sessions. Each student has a total of 35 minutes for their presentation and debate, distributed as explained below.

Each of you will deliver a 10 minute presentation on his/her topic, which should cover the following materials:

- 1) a general background on the topic;
- 2) discussion of the recent public debate on the issue (pros and cons, opponents and proponents);
- 3) description of the major efforts that are being undertaken to address the problem on a global level; and
- 4) your reflections on whether these global interventions are adequate to address the problem or require reformulation.

In addition, your presentation should also include a short documentary (5-7 minutes) – or a segment of a documentary, from one of the following sources:

- youtube: www.youtube.com
- Tedx: <http://www.ted.com/talks/tags/environment>
- earth protect: <http://www.earthprotect.com/index.php/video-gallery-frontpage>
- or other media sources that is relevant to your topic to show with your presentation.

This material should creatively support your presentation and explore public discourse on your topic.

Following your presentation, you are required to facilitate a discussion with your peers for 15 minutes. You should prepare two exploratory questions about your topic to facilitate this discussion.

REMEMBER: Students in class must also participate during the discussion in order to earn 5% of the total grade. The criteria for grading the debate are in Appendix B.

This presentation fulfills course objectives A & B and outcomes A, B, C, & D.

7. Written Report:

This 8-10 page report should be written in 12 point New Times Roman font, double spaced and with one inch margins. It should contain an introduction and background that clearly states the problem and its ecological, health, social, and economic impacts. It should also contain a discussion on the major debates surrounding this issue, a discussion on national and international efforts to address the issue, and a section with an analysis and recommendations about how global actors should move forward to address the issue. See Appendix C for a complete breakdown of the sections and grading of the report.

This assignment fulfills course objectives A & B and outcomes A, B & C.

8. Poster and Presentation:

Your poster should focus on the topic of your written report, yet explore a specific case study. It should include some form of discussion on the topic background, an exploration of the case study with a background and analysis of its success/limitations, and a section on the applications of the case study for the broader environmental issue. Your poster presentation should be 10 minutes long and cover the contents of your poster. Following the presentation, you will answer questions for 5 minutes.

The poster must address the following: specific case study, background and environmental health significance, management of the problem, and recommendations. Adequate referencing is emphasized.

Here are links to websites dedicated to showing you how to make effective poster presentations:

<http://www.ncsu.edu/project/posters/>

<http://colinpurrington.com/tips/academic/posterdesign>

<http://www.cns.cornell.edu/documents/ScientificPosters.pdf>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MqgjgIXadA>

DIMENSIONS: Your poster may be 90 cm wide and 110 cm tall. These are the standard requirements.

REMEMBER: your posters do not need to be expensive, but *creativity* is a must! The criteria for grading the poster and presentation are in Appendix D.

This assignment fulfills course objectives A, B & C and outcomes A, B, C & D.

9. Poster Abstract:

All students in class will participate in a student conference organised by the Nature Conservation Centre at AUB: IBDA 2020. This year's edition will carry the theme of "Women's Connection to Climate Change". Students will present their posters to experts during an open-air conference held on **Earth Day, Wednesday, April 22nd, 2020**. The ENHL 243 posters fall under IBDA's research category. In previous years, this category has featured first, second, and third place prizes of \$2,000, \$1000, and \$500 respectively (I hope you will win!). More details about the conference can be found at:

<http://www.aub.edu.lb/units/natureconservation/programs/ibda/>

The abstract for this course consists of the following sections:

- Introduction / Background (why the case study is important and how it relates to the theme)

- Methods / Approach
- Discussion and Recommendations
- Conclusion

Please note that the text in the abstract should be a maximum of 300 words. See Appendix E for the grading of the poster abstract.

This assignment fulfills course objectives A, B & C and outcomes A, B & C.

NOTE: Please note that the structure of the poster is flexible and relevant to the topic of your case study. It may not necessarily follow the sections of the abstract specified above.

10. Students Code of Conduct:

The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and honesty. You are expected to abide by the following honour code in all work associated with this course. While you are encouraged to discuss the course topics with faculty members and with other students, submitted reports must be unequivocally your own work. Where material is taken from other sources, the work in question must be clearly acknowledged in your report or your presentation. Otherwise, your action constitutes plagiarism. The course instructors take a serious view of both plagiarism and collusion and impose serious penalties for these offences, which can vary from failing the course to disciplinary procedures at University level (Student Handbook).

For examples of what constitutes plagiarism in academic writing, go to the following link and familiarize yourself with the contents: <https://www.indiana.edu/~istd/examples.html>

11. Course Plan and Time-Line:

1. Topic selection	Tues 4 February, 2020
2. Debate Presentations	Tues 18 Feb until Thurs 19 March 2020
3. Poster Abstract Submission	Thurs 26 March, 2020
4. Poster Submission	Tues 7 April, 2020
5. Poster Evaluation and Oral Presentation	Tues 7 April until Thurs 9 April, 2020
6. Submission of Written Report	Tues 21 April, 2020
7. IBDAA conference	Wed 22 April, 20

NOTE:

Students with Special Needs: AUB strives to make learning experiences accessible for all. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers due to a disability (such as ADHD, learning difficulties, mental health conditions, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please do not hesitate to inform the Accessible Education Office. In order to ensure that you receive the support you need and to facilitate a smooth accommodations process, you must register with the Accessible Education Office (AEO) as soon as possible: accessibility@aub.edu.lb; +961-1-350000, x3246; West Hall, 314.