

International Organizations, Sustainability and Gender

GGS 487/GGS 570/EVS 570
Spring 2021

Syllabus

Class Time: Tuesday 2:20- 3:35pm (online course, recorded)

Prof. Barbara Wejnert

1021 Clemens Hall

CAS, University at Buffalo

bwejnert@buffalo.edu, bwejnert@gmail.com

Office Hours: Tuesday 1:30-2:20 online (zoom)

and by appointment

Course Description

On January 1 of 2016, the United Nations officially released the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which officially launched the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The new goals call for all countries to promote economic growth while tackling climate change and environmental protection (UN, 2016). Other major international organizations and agencies, including women and environment movements, followed this agenda.

This course focuses on intergovernmental organizations, including the United Nations, Green Peace, and Earth Day. It examines historical origins, ostensible functions, the international and domestic political forces that impact their operations, and their effectiveness in appealing to sustainable development and environmental protection. With a focus on cross-sector partnerships in a changing world, the course looks into the inner workings of international organizations and the challenges they face today designing and promoting sustainable development, keeping several questions in mind:

- ❑ Do international organizations represent anything more than the interests of their most powerful members?
- ❑ How are the sustainability and environmental goals of its most potent members pursued – *or not*?

- ❑ What role do domestic politics play when countries interact with international organizations addressing the environment and sustainable development?
- ❑ What ideas and norms in international politics influenced the creation of the various sustainability goals, and what impact have the IOs on the creation and implantation of global goals?
- ❑ Finally, what policies and norms in international politics influenced the creation of the environmental protection goals while considering gender equity?

Weekly discussions will explore the breadth of subject matter and the multidisciplinary nature of the scholarship. This course focuses on interdisciplinary social sciences addressing sustainability, environment, politics, and gender studies drawing from multiple theoretical and conceptual frameworks.

Learning Objectives and Methods of Assessment:

Learning Objectives	Assessment Methods
<p>Recall the historical context for modern-day international organizations</p> <p>Understand the theory and practices of international organizations</p> <p>Identify and categorize the variety of international organizations</p> <p>Discuss the global governance of the United Nations and its goal of sustainable development</p> <p>Understand the future prospects for UN multilateralism in a changing world</p>	<p>In-class assignments; a practice quiz and short quiz, class discussion</p>
<p>Apply conceptual frameworks of leadership and strategy to the UN and other international organizations</p> <p>Examine why and how international organizations engage in cross-sector partnerships addressing sustainability</p>	<p>Midterm exam; short reflection paper</p>
<p>Reflect on a sustainability concept concerning human nature.</p> <p>Examine what is “planned obsolescence” to achieve eco-effectiveness.</p> <p>Identify acceptable practices and policies in sustainability as an operational goal for society</p>	<p>In-class assignments, class discussion, short reflection paper</p>

Develop writing, analytic, and communication skills on steps that can be taken to make us live a more sustainable life.	Prepared debate and in-class presentations. Final research paper
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Required Texts and Readings:

Robert Taylor. Ed. 2014 Taking Sides: Clashing Views in Sustainability 2nd. New York, N.Y.: McGraw-Hill, (abbreviated as RT). *Taking Sides: Clashing Views in Sustainability* provides a broad-ranging but concise introduction to the concept and issues in sustainability, covering all major aspects of sustainable development. This second edition has several new essays to reflect the current concerns of the global system. Global environmental degradation, governing natural resources, monetarizing ecosystems, and urban sustainability are critical topics covered.

Sach, Jeffrey. 2016. The Age of Sustainable Development. Columbia University Press. (this book will be used later in the semester and was ordered to UB library) (abbreviated as SJ). The book argues that when looking at ways to harmonize economic growth with environmental sustainability, we must consider the effects of human actions on planetary boundaries. These planetary boundaries include biodiversity loss, change in land use, climate change, ocean acidification, stratospheric ozone depletion, Nitrogen cycle, Phosphorous cycle, global freshwater use, atmospheric aerosol loading, and chemical pollution. At the top of the list of planetary boundaries described by Sachs is biodiversity loss.

B. Wejnert. Ed. 2012. Linking Environment, Democracy and Gender. UK: Emerald Group Publishing, Research in Political Sociology, vol. 20. The volume highlights how scholarly analysis has contributed to a rich understanding of the links between spreading democracy, gender equality, and environmental protection. Combining theoretical, empirical, and policy perspectives, the volume includes cutting-edge debates on the meaning of democracy and the processes of its development and the response of democracies to environmental and gender concerns. In particular, the volume answers questions applicable to women's situation in the democratizing world and environmental problems, linking together gender and the environment. It discusses the difference between democratic and non-democratic countries in terms of protection and cares for their citizens; security of women's rights and women's opportunities offered by democratic versus non-democratic states; relations between environmental issues and gender; and women's response to environmental problems (**abbreviated as BW, selected readings on UB learns**)

Recommended reading (several issues of collaborative governance and the United Nations will be discussed during class lectures):

W. Cunningham and M. Cunningham. *Environmental Science: A Global Concern*. Ed. 13th ISBN: 1260153126, ISBN-13: 9781260153125. *Environmental Science: A Global Concern* is a comprehensive environmental science presentation for non-science majors that emphasizes critical thinking, environmental responsibility, and global awareness. This book is intended for use in a one or two-semester course in environmental science, human ecology, or environmental studies at the college or advanced placement high school level. As practicing scientists and educators, the Cunningham author team brings decades of experience in the classroom, in the practice of science, and in civic engagement. This experience helps give students a clear sense of what environmental science is and why it matters in this exciting, new 13th edition.

Course Requirements

The course format: The course is organized as a two-part seminar: the first hour is a lecture on fundamental theoretical and empirical work in the field. In contrast, the second hour is devoted to a discussion about assigned reading material. Class participation and preparation play an essential part in determining course grades.

Thus, there will be three graded assignments for this course that could be enhanced by in-class discussion.

- 1) The midterm exam (up to 30% of the final grade) is composed of one broader essay question for an undergraduate class and two broad questions for graduate students, plus several multiple questions. All questions cover material from lectures and class readings.
- 2) One short in-class quiz will cover material from class lectures (15 points, or 15% of final grade).
- 3) **One in-class discussion for undergraduate students** about weekly readings led by a small group a student, the student will critically discuss one paper out of all papers assigned to read in a selected week and submits 1 page critical analysis of the discussion. For graduate students, there **will be two in- class discussion** required integrating a theoretical material presented in the readings. The discussion and critical analysis count as 15% of the final grade.
- 4) The final project will contain one **in-class final debate and a final paper (15 points debate and 25points paper)**, accounting for 40 points (40%) of the final grade. The debate should focus on an important issue related to international organizations and sustainability or gender equality. Students will receive a list of questions to choose from as a preparation for the final debate. For example: Do international organizations benefit all members equally? (One group will present pro- and one con- arguments based on class lectures and reading). What are the costs and benefits of global sustainable governance of natural resources? (One group will present pro- and one con-arguments based on class lectures and reading). Where initiatives of the United Nations regarding gender equality successful or not? (One group will present pro- and one con-arguments based on class lectures and reading). For the final debate, students can select one of the International Organizations from the list to discuss its pros and cons accomplishments regarding sustainable development. The list includes:
UN Environmental Program (UNEP) Greenpeace
Earth Day ASSOCIATION FOR WOMENS'S RIGHTS IN DEVELOPMENT
GLOBAL WOMEN UN WOMEN , and other organizations
Answers to these questions need to be rooted in and supported by the course material. Each group will need to choose their position on one issue on the list. Students will need to be prepared to defend his/her position on that issue when debating it in class and eventually write a final paper on that issue in place of the final exam (final papers are prepared individually by each student).

Everyone has to be prepared to discuss all reading material each week. Discussion about reading and class participation plays an essential part in determining your grade for the course, mostly if your points are closed to a particular letter grade.

Class attendance: each student is permitted to miss up to 3 classes per semester. Prolonged illness requires a note from a medical office.

Evaluation and Grading

On the scale of 0-100 points, a midterm exam counts as up to 30 points (30% of a final grade), each quiz 10 points (10% of a final grade), in-class discussion 20 points (20%), and final debate-presentation (10 points) and the final paper up to 20 points (total 30 % of a final grade) (each member of a group is graded individually).

Grade	Percentage	Grade Points
A	94 - 100%	4.0
A-	90 - 93	3.67
B+	87 - 89	3.33
B	84 - 86	3.0
B-	80 - 83	2.67
C+	77 - 79	2.33
C	74 - 76	2.0
C-	70 - 73	1.67
D+	67 - 69	1.33
D	60 - 66	1.0
F	0 - 59	0.0

Class assignments are due at the beginning of class; late assignments will be docked **3 points per calendar day** after the due date.

Academic Integrity

From <http://academicintegrity.buffalo.edu/policies/index.php>: "The University at Buffalo takes very seriously its commitment to principles of academic integrity. Our academic community expects the highest ethical behavior on the part of our students in the completion and submission of academic work. Students should assume that no assistance or aid is allowable on exams or homework unless explicitly outlined by the instructor. Even when the instructor allows consultation or collaboration, the student is expected to explicitly footnote the source, extent, and nature of the contribution. Written works must be the complete and original effort of the student, with all ideas and words of others duly attributed according to the appropriate style manual. Furthermore, students should not recycle work in subsequent courses, nor should they facilitate any act of academic dishonesty by another person. If in doubt, the student should err on the side of caution and consult the instructor for additional guidance.

In cases of academic integrity violations, the University will pursue appropriate sanctions subject to the official policy, as outlined in the Undergraduate Catalog:

- [Current UB Academic Integrity Policy](#)

- [Undergraduate Academic Integrity Policy Appendices](#)
- [Undergraduate Catalog](#)”

Accessibility Services

“If you have a disability and may require some type of instructional and/or examination accommodation, please inform me early in the semester so that we can coordinate the accommodations you may need. If you have not already done so, please contact the Accessibility Resources office. The office is located at 25 Capen Hall and the telephone number is (716) 645-2608.” For more information, see: <http://www.buffalo.edu/accessibility/>

UB Incomplete grading policy

“A grade of incomplete (“I”) indicates that additional course work is required to fulfill the requirements of a given course. Students may only be given an “I” grade if they have a passing average in coursework that has been completed and have well-defined parameters to complete the course requirements that could result in a grade better than the default grade. An “I” grade may not be assigned to a student who did not attend the course. Prior to the end of the semester, students must initiate the request for an “I” grade and receive the instructor’s approval. Assignment of an “I” grade is at the discretion of the instructor.” For more information, see <http://undergrad-catalog.buffalo.edu/policies/grading/explanation.shtml>
 This is an introductory course for potential change-makers in international organizations, NGOs and social ventures.

Course Outline

Week 1: February 2. Welcome to the Course - Introduction
<p>Part 1: Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion: What brings you to this course? • Download the course syllabus • Test your knowledge before your start (pre-quiz – not graded, on the United Nations, as the largest international organization)
<p>Part 1: Introduction and early examples of international organizations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction • Early examples of international organizations <p>Par 2: Historical context of international organizations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taxonomy - Different ways to classify organizations (read History of the League of Nations 1919---1946 ; read Ans Kolk.2013.Partnerships as a panacea; on UB Learns)
Week 2: February 9. United Nations, Global Partnership

Part 1: The UN mandate and governance

- The UN Charter and basic principles
- The UN governance system
- Creating Space for leadership in the UN
- Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)
(read: Bruce-Jenks-_2015_-From-MDGs-to-SDG_GPG--Why-the-UN-should-embrace-Global-Public-Goods—on UB Learns) Covid 19.OXFAM (on UB learns)

The UN structure and main bodies

- The UN Security Council
- ECOSOC and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- UN Secretariat and Secretary General
- The UN's role in norms and global public goods

(UN organizational Chart on UB learns;

Week 3: February 16. Definitions of International Organizations: Multilateralism

Part 1: A case for the future of the UN multilateralism

- Why and how do international organizations collaborate?
- Public-private partnership
- What do we mean by Public Private Partnerships?
- Why do international organizations engage in PPPs?

Read Bruce Jenks-2017-Global-Norms--Building-an-Inclusive-Multilateralism on UB learns)

Read: Jenks--Kharas-2016-Toward-a-new-multilateralism (pp.1-9, 13-22, 29-32); Post-2015Development Agenda and business ; ~~Practical examples of PPPs in action~~ on **UB Learns**)

Week 4. February 23. From Millennium Development Goals to Sustainable Development Goals

Part 1: From MDG to SDG

- MDG Goals and SDG
- The history and concept of sustainability
(Read: L. Hosey. A brief History of Sustainability; Bruce Jenkins. From MDGS to GDGs Why the Un..-Paper-no-15
J. Elks. Circling up for Sustainability; [Communicating_on_sustainability](#)
R.Taylor book: is sustainability realistic object.unit1,issue1 on UB Learns;)

Week 5.March 2. The Shifting Context for International Organizations: Is sustainability a realistic objective for society

Part 1: Is sustainability a concept that is contrary to human nature?

- Heirloom design of effect of economic growth on development?
- Why do international organizations engage in PPPs?

Is Public policies conducive to sustainability

- Existing policies that move society towards sustainability
- How to prepare society to not be apathetic to sustainable development and environmental sustainability
- Preparation for midterm

(read : Suzuki, D. Environmental Sustainability possible within a generation(pp.3-6); *The Ecologists*, "Privileged" opp holding back wind farm development—On UB learns; book J. Sach,introduction pp.1-18, ON UB Learns)
Read RT, p. 62-96, Unit 1, issue 4)

Week 6. March 9 **MIDTERM**

Week 7. March 16. International Organizations and Climate change:

Climate Change

- Global efforts to address climate change
- Practical example - Combating deforestation
(read Climate Change and its Impact on Business- UB Learns)
(read Unit 2,book: RT)

Earth Day Organization

- Environmental security of nation states
- Environmental Governance
- Goals and debates on global environmental protection
(read Earth Day goals-UB Learns)
(Climate actions, 7 students protests that made history
<https://www.earthday.org/7-student-protests-that-made-history/>,
Climate Action: US proposes to Gut Nation's Oldest Environmental Law
<https://www.earthday.org/us-proposes-to-gut-nations-oldest-environmental-law/>)

Week 8: March 23. Sustainability & Natural Resources

Sustainable Marine resources, sustainability and Western Values

- Sustainable management of marine resources;
- Can our marine resources be sustainably managed?
- Western values, ethics, and dominant paradigms and natural resources
- Does sustainability mean a lower standard of living?
- Can species preservation be successfully managed? Can sustainable agriculture feed the world?
(read Unit 4, book RT, issues 15-16; read: Communicating on Sustainability –on UB Learns)
https://c402277.ssl.cf1.rackcdn.com/publications/1187/files/original/LPR2018_Full_Report_Spreads.pdf
https://c402277.ssl.cf1.rackcdn.com/publications/1187/files/original/LPR2018_Full_Report_Spreads.pdf

Week 9: March 30. Sustainability -- Global Degradation and Consumption

Part 1: Global Environmental Degradation and Global Consumption

- Can India and China reduce their dependence on coal? Is poverty responsible for global environmental degradation?
- Read: Poverty and environmental degradation. A Ch.1 from Taking sides ... 1st edition, on UB Learns)
- Is limiting consumption rather than limiting population the key to sustainability? ; Can technology deliver global sustainability? (read Unit 2, book RT, issue 7, 8))

Week 10: April 6, International Organizations, Urban Sustainability

Urban Sustainable Development (UNIT 3, issue 11, "DOES SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT REQUIRE MORE POLICY INNOVATIONS AND PLANNING?" and Mike Bloomberg...to be discussed on **April 14-Tuesday**)

- **Does sustainable urban development require more policy innovation and planning?** Should water be privatized? (read Unit 3, issues 11 , book RT)
- Can cities be made sustainable? Mike Bloomberg plan (below)
- (P.Polman, Is sustainability good business practice...; S.Cohen- the Growing reality of Green Economy --on UB

Learns, Mike Bloomberg: climate Change, fighting for a bright sustainable future
https://www.mikebloomberg.com/2020/policies/climate-change?gclid=Cj0KCQjAvJXxBRCeARIsAMSkAppK1-WtnYBz3Nvp0YQHGS5LCyiT5cT1HeXBW4vmbWjNBGPWmFL_I-l8aAk6pEALw_wcB

SHORT QUIZ ON SUSTAINABILITY AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Week 11: April 13. International Organizations and Gender

Is the UN fit to lead in gender focus in a changing world?

- From SDG to MDG with focus on Women's Empowerment
- Four scenarios on the future of multilateralism
- The UN's role in norms and global public goods
- Gendered Goals of International Organizations
(read ch. 7, ch. 9, book BW; Post-2015 Development Agenda and its impact on business on UB Learns)

United Nations Development Program. 2005. Millennium Project: A Practical Plan to Achieve the Millennium
UN Secretary-General and UN Development Program. New York: 47 (on UB learns)

Week 12: April 20. International Organizations and Gender

International Organizations, Women's leadership and Women's movements

Fallon, Kathleen M. 2010. Democracy and the Rise of Women's Movement in Sub-Saharan Africa. John Hopkins
Fallon Kathleen, Liam Swiss, and Jocelyn Viterna. 2012. "Resolving the Democracy Paradox:
Democratization and Women's Legislative Representation in Developing Nations, 1975 to 2009." *American
Review*, 77, 3, 380-408.

Paxton, Pamela, Melanie M. Hughes and Jennifer Green. 2006. "The International Women's Movement and Women's
Representation, 1893-2003." *American Sociological Review* 71: 898-920. (on UB learns)

Week 13: April 27. International Organizations and Gender

GLOBAL WOMEN : select issue to read and analyze from online <https://globalwomengo.org/>
Global Funds for Women or **UN WOMEN** projects: <https://www.unwomen.org/en>

Week 14. May 4. Class Debate on International Organizations and Gender

ASSOCIATION FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN DEVELOPMENT <https://www.awid.org/>
SELECT ONE TOPIC FOR DISCUSSION

Week 15. May 11. Class Debate on International Organizations, Sustainability and Gender

Part 1: Positive interaction between international organizations and gender (GROUP A)

Part 2: negative interaction between international organizations and gender (GROUP B)

Debate Forums

Debates forums will take place on WEEKS 13 AND 14 where each student will discuss individually selected international organizations focusing on either Sustainability (discussed before gender issues) or Gender. The discussion will follow by individual papers that each student will need to submit on the topic of the discussed organization.

Accommodations for tests and other assignments

If you are entitled to accommodations for tests and other assignments, please contact the professor **within the first two weeks of class**. We will make arrangement to accommodate

you. The first prelim is before or soon after the Spring Break. Making proper accommodations requires two weeks of lead time.

Readings

A list of additional readings has been provided for each week. You can reference this list to go deeper into any topics of interest, however, only lectures and required readings will be tested.

Policy on Complaints:

If you feel you have a legitimate complaint(s) about this course then you are welcome to talk to the instructor. If, thereafter, you are still dissatisfied, then you can ask to speak to the Chair of the Department of Global Gender Studies by visiting the departmental office at 1032 Clemens Hall, North Campus.

Policy on Academic Freedom:

This course subscribes to the University's policy regarding academic freedom, which reads in part:

The University supports the principle of academic freedom as a concept intrinsic to the achievement of its institutional goals. This principle implies a trust in the integrity and responsibility of the members of the academic community. Samuel P. Capen, former Chancellor of the University of Buffalo, who is remembered for the tradition of academic freedom he implemented during his leadership of the University, said in 1935:

“Acceptance by an institution of the principles of academic freedom implies that teachers in that institution are free to investigate any subject, no matter how much it may be hedged about by taboos; that they are free to make known the results of their investigation and their reflection by word of mouth or in writing, before their classes or elsewhere; that they are free as citizens to take part in any public controversy outside the institution; that no repressive measures, direct or indirect, will be applied to them no matter how unpopular they may become through opposing powerful interests or jostling established prejudices, and no matter how mistaken they may appear to be in the eyes of members and friends of the institution; that their continuance in office will be in all instances governed by the prevailing rules of tenure and that their academic advancement will be dependent on their scientific competence and will be in no way affected by the popularity or unpopularity of their opinions or utterances....”

(The full policy is available here: <http://www.student-affairs.buffalo.edu/judicial/12rulesp.pdf>)