

COURSE DETAIL

POLITICS OF THE EARTH

Country

Netherlands

Host Institution

Utrecht University

Program(s)

Utrecht University

UCEAP Course Level

Upper Division

UCEAP Subject Area(s)

Political Science Environmental Studies

UCEAP Course Number

133

UCEAP Course Suffix**UCEAP Official Title**

POLITICS OF THE EARTH

UCEAP Transcript Title

POLITICS OF EARTH

UCEAP Quarter Units

6.00

UCEAP Semester Units

4.00

Course Description

This course considers environmental issues as a crisis of governance. Students are introduced to political aspects of anthropogenic environmental change at and across various levels of social organization. The course offers a survey of the complex institutional terrain in which environmental change is problematized and tackled, as well as the political and governance processes related to sustainability issues. At the core of the course are ten storytelling lectures that draw on a diverse range of real-world examples, aided by various audio-visual materials. The introductory lecture explores what the politics of the Earth is about. The three lectures that follow expose students to different ways in which environmental affairs are apprehended (where boundaries are drawn and how problems are framed), how society is organized in pursuit of sustainability, and some of the key analytical problems of Earth system governance. These lectures on key tools, ideas, and concepts are followed by a series of problem-oriented lectures that focus on different issue areas such as climate, ocean, water, and biodiversity. Governance challenges of each of these environmental problems are studied at a particular scale or level at which the problem is conceptualized and solutions implemented (i.e., global, regional, national, and local). Then these levels and issues are brought together in a separate lecture where the complex dynamics of multi-level, multi-sector governance for sustainability are examined. The concluding lecture discusses some of the key challenges of and opportunities for transformative environmental governance of a “new” Earth in the Anthropocene. The ten lectures are supported by seven interactive tutorials in five smaller groups. The tutorials are designed to aid understanding of the politics of the Earth with various interactive activities, games, and analyses, as well as practical exercises for the purpose of assessment. The course is designed not only to introduce Earth's politics as a subject of scholarly enquiry, but also to equip students with necessary skills and knowledge to be a change agent for a sustainable future. In the end, students have a better understanding of how the system of Earth system governance works at and across different levels of social organization, and how its effectiveness could be improved for humanity to navigate through complex, interrelated environmental problems in the decades to come.

Language(s) of Instruction

English

Host Institution Course Number

GEO1-2414

Host Institution Course Title

POLITICS OF THE EARTH

Host Institution Campus

Utrecht University

Host Institution Faculty

Geosciences

Host Institution Degree**Host Institution Department**

Innovation and Environmental Sciences

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