COURSE DETAIL

GOVERNING THE GLOBAL COMMONS
Country France
Host Institution Institut d'Etudes Politiques (Sciences Po)
Program(s) Sciences Po Paris
UCEAP Course Level Upper Division
UCEAP Subject Area(s) Legal Studies
UCEAP Course Number 113
UCEAP Course Suffix
UCEAP Official Title GOVERNING THE GLOBAL COMMONS
UCEAP Transcript Title GOV GLOBAL COMMONS
UCEAP Quarter Units 4.50
UCEAP Semester Units 3.00

Course Description

Why is it so difficult for the international community to agree on the governance of shared global domains? Why do efforts to address climate change constantly fall short? And why do Global Commons provide States with an opportunity to exploit finite resources, but impose few obligations to clean up the mess? The answers to some of those questions lie in the international frameworks established since WWII to govern "Global Commons" including Antarctica, Outer Space, the Deep Sea Bed, the High Seas, and the atmosphere, which provide freedom of access and use to all States, but few mechanisms for precaution and sustainability. These global commons are protected from claims of national sovereignty, and generally prohibit use of nuclear weapons in these spaces, serving a critical role in disarmament. This course examines contemporary issues in these five Global Commons at the intersection of international law, science, mining, telecommunications, security, and defense. Students learn how to navigate and apply the treaties governing each of the domains to contemporary issues while considering economic and political theory, such as Hardin's "Tragedy of the Commons," intergenerational equity and sustainability. By studying the governance of all five domains in the one semester, students gain high-level insight into what governance models work best and where regulatory gaps remain. Solutions are to be found in some domains that might be applied to others. Students have the opportunity to research one specific domain of their choosing for their written paper, and propose new regulation and policy in order to address international challenges. This equips students with the ability to advocate for change and support the global community in realizing the benefits of shared international spaces. Students develop an understanding of: the geopolitical history of the Antarctic Treaty (1959), the Outer Space Treaty (1967), the Sea Bed Treaty (1971) aka the Sea Bed Arms Control Treaty, the High Seas Treaty (2023) aka The Agreement on Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ), and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC); the international framework governing activities in each of these five Global Commons; the application of ethics and theory to the governance of Global Commons; the application of principles in the relevant treaties to real-life case studies; the

political forces shaping EU and international policy in these domains; the risk to global peace and security from arms races and over exploitation in these domains.

Language(s) of Instruction
English

Host Institution Course Number
DDRO 25A92

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Host Institution Course Details
https://syllabus.sciencespo.fr/fr/?202420/269302

Host Institution Campus

Host Institution Faculty

Host Institution Degree
Seminar

Host Institution Department
Law

Course Last Reviewed
2024-2025

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