

Name:	Dr. Andrzej Ancygier
Email address:	a.ancygier@gmail.com
Course title:	Global Challenges – Sustainable Futures
Track:	A-Track
Language of instruction:	English
Contact hours:	48 (6 per day)
ECTS-Credits:	4

Course description

The course introduces students to the politics, ethics, and governance of sustainability. The key challenges of our time are global by nature. However, the current system of global governance based on sovereign states (often in competition with each other) is ill-equipped to meet challenges such as poverty, climate change, environmental degradation and availability of resources. As states cannot provide on their own for a sustainable future of their citizens, they are increasingly forced into a logic of sustainability for all people and responsibility for the global commons. This new logic is grounded on the scientific truth of planetary boundaries, but equally on ethical requirements (e.g. caring for the Earth).

The course examines major current global challenges divided into economic, political and environmental issues. In the second part of the course the main existing and potential solutions to these problems will be discussed. During the discussions in class and field trips we will try to find out why these solutions have not been implemented so far and what is needed to make our global society more sustainable, especially in economic and environmental terms. Thus, we will also analyze the current system of international treaties with their normative principles (sovereignty, equality, human rights) and institutions (governments, international organizations, and civil society). Special focus will be put on the role of the United Nations as an organization whose goal has been to prevent and solve major global issues. We will try to find out to what degree the UN was effective and successful in fulfilling this mission. We will also take a look at the Earth Charter and analyze to what degree it shows the direction in which our global community should develop.

Student profile

The course is designed for students with different academic backgrounds and a general interest in sustainability and sustainable development. There are no special prerequisites for the course.

Prerequisites

None

Course Requirements

- 1.) Attendance and class participation
- 2.) Test
- 3.) Presentation

Grading

Attendance and class participation: 40%

Test: 30%

Presentation: 30%

Reading

A course reader will be provided.

Course schedule

Date	Program*
Monday, July 24, 2017	Global economic issues: Analysis of the reasons for global poverty and increasing income disparity globally and within particular countries. We will try to find out how to deal with the exhaustion of resources such as oil, natural gas and rare earths.
Thursday, July 27, 2017	Global environmental issues: Air pollution, soil pollution, desertification, climate change – How important are these issues and how can we solve them? Visit to an ENGO dealing with environmental problems*
Monday, July 31, 2017	Global political issues: How big is the threat of a conventional or nuclear war? What are the dangers resulting from failed states and dictatorships? Is terrorism back on the agenda?
Thursday, August 3, 2017	The UN system: The genesis, functioning and role of the United Nations in solving global problems.
Monday, August 7, 2017	Earth Charter, EU, Germany: What is the Earth Charter all about? How “humanitarian” is the European and German humanitarian policy? Visit to an ENGO helping refugees in Germany*
Thursday, August 10, 2017	Solutions to climate change: Global negotiations, the role of ENGOs, the role of new technologies and behavioral changes. Students' Presentations
Monday, August 14, 2017	Governance and Law for Sustainability: Democracy and sustainability, new institutions and role of civil society Students' Presentations
Thursday, August 17, 2017	Final test and Remaining Students' Presentations

*Field trips may be subject to change depending on the availability of appointments and speakers. On field trip days adaptation of class times is possible.