

Sustainable Energy: Governance & Policy

United Nations University

Autumn 2017

Location: 6F lecture room

Lecturer: Dr. Robert Lindner

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Office Hours: by appointment

Course Description

This course will provide students with a basic understanding of the dynamics of the contemporary global energy system. It examines energy policy and governance with a focus on the question of how public policy could help to steer our contemporary systems of energy consumption and production into more sustainable pathways, taking into account the economic, environmental and social dimensions of sustainable development. The course is highly recommended as a supplement to *Introduction to International Relations and Global Studies* (Dr. Lindner) and to *Environmental Politics and Climate Change* (Dr. Vaughter). It is designed as an interactive lecture series, where students are expected to actively contribute to the class discussions and to complete assignments such as a short media reports, final case study presentations and an analytical essay. The first half of the course provides students with an overview of geopolitical questions related to energy security, energy markets, policies and institutions. They will also learn how to analyze energy as a policy problem, focusing on market and environmental constraints, and to explore alternative policy instruments and governing processes available for promoting renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies. The second half of the course engages the students in discussions on specific policy challenges that are prominent in the contemporary political discourse, such as environmental degradation, energy poverty and the diffusion of renewable energy technologies in developing states. The course will conclude with a series of presentations, in which the students will apply the knowledge they have acquired to individual country case studies and identify the challenges and potential policy options for each case.

Course Objectives and Learning Goals

By the end of the course, students are expected to have a basic understanding of the actors, processes and institutions that shape sustainable energy governance on the global, national and local level. They should be able to:

- Understand the key global energy challenges and the nature and development of global energy and climate policy.
- Develop a critical perspective of energy policies and understand the sociopolitical, economic and environmental implications that the pursuit of different energy policies entails.
- Explain key terms and concepts in the field of energy governance, such as “energy security”, “peak oil” or “energy democracy”.
- Contribute to contemporary policy debates on sustainable energy and identify potential policy responses required to govern energy.

Another objective of the course is to practice the student's writing and presentation skills. Short presentations on selected case studies will be assigned and all students will have to write an analytical essay focusing on a current international issue related to energy governance. The essay will require the students to analyze the problem from a theoretical and practical point of view, to recognize the different perspectives of relevant actors and to identify potential responses to the problem.

Requirements and Grading Policy

The course requirements include active class participation, two small in-class assignments, the writing of an analytical essay and the final case study presentation:

- Attendance and active class participation (20%)
- Brief in-class media report (10%)
- Analytical essay (35%)
- Final presentations of case studies (35%)

Class Participation

The course requires students to attend all classes, to arrive on time, to complete the readings and to participate actively in class discussions. At the discretion of the lecturer, frequent late arrivals or absences may result in a lower grade. Please note that the first session is of particular importance and cannot be missed. Students are also strongly encouraged to regularly follow the news to keep up with international developments, as these events will be reflected in the class discussions.

Media Report & Analytical Essay

In the beginning of each class, a student will give a short input presentation (>5min.) about a recent media event that is in his or her opinion related to the topic of the respective previous class. The particular media event may be chosen freely from any reputable English-speaking news outlet (such as the *Financial Times*, *New York Times*, *The Guardian* or the *Japan Times*). Students should provide a short summary of the media event and explain why they find it particularly relevant for the discussion. The oral media report will also serve as a basis for an extended analytical essay, in which the student will reflect the real-life media event against the backdrop of the theoretical knowledge presented in the course readings. The drafts must be submitted via email in word-format by noon on 3 March 2017. The lecturer will comment on the essays using the track changes function and return them via email. Each student is expected to write a paper of 4-5 pages in length (approximately 1500-2000 words), double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font. The papers must have a title, a proper introduction and conclusion section. All material that is used to support the student's argument must be clearly cited.

Final Presentation

In order to practice students' presentation skills, each student will be assigned a 20-minute oral presentation in one of the last two sessions of the course. Students can freely choose the specific

case study they wish to analyze, but should consult the lecturer at least one time during office hours before the final presentations. Students will be introduced to basic approaches in energy policy analysis in the beginning of the course and will be given the opportunity to apply this knowledge in their presentations by identifying the background and history of their specific energy policy case, exploring alternative technological options and policy responses, and by developing recommendations for policy makers. All students are required to draft a 2-page handout for their classmates, including a comprehensive list of the literature used.

Course Readings

Although there is no required textbook for this course, students are strongly encouraged to study one or more of the suggested readings below (available at the UNU library). Additional literature required for the final essays will be uploaded to moodle by the lecturer.

- Goldthau, A. (Ed.) (2013). *The handbook of global energy policy*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Lesage, D., Van de Graaf, T., & Westphal, K. (2010). *Global energy governance in a multipolar world*. Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate.
- Kalicki, J. H., & Goldwyn, D. L. (Eds.) (2013). *Energy and Security: Strategies for a World in Transition* (2nd ed.). Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Press.
- Van de Graaf, T. (2013). *The politics and institutions of global energy governance*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Course Structure

1. Course introduction: What is 'Sustainable Energy Governance'?
2. World energy outlook
3. Geopolitics and energy security 1: Historical development of global energy markets
4. Geopolitics and energy security 2: A new paradigm of energy security?
5. The institutional landscape of global energy governance
6. Energy economics and public policy
7. Case study 1: Japan after Fukushima
8. Case study 2: Germany's energy transition
9. The hidden fuel: Energy efficiency and conservation
10. Energy democracy and energy justice
11. Energy poverty, technology transfer and sustainable development
12. Environmental impacts of energy technologies
13. The future of energy systems: Technology perspectives
14. Final case study presentations, session 1
15. Final case study presentations, session 2