

United Nations University Institute for Environment and Human Security
and
University of Bonn Institute of Public International Law

PILOT COURSE
ON
CLIMATE CHANGE AND INTERNATIONAL LAW

1. Overview of the Course

Proposed title for the course:

“CLIMATE CHANGE AND INTERNATIONAL LAW”

General description:

The stark reality of global climate change today, coupled with the unprecedented rapid pace at which it is occurring, has brought with it several adverse consequences for human security. Unsurprisingly, there is also an increasing realization among scholars and policy makers that climate change is not just an environmental issue, but is predominantly a human security issue. In this interface between climate change and human security, the role of international law has increasingly come under scrutiny, not only in terms of the ability of existing laws in protecting from adverse effects, but also in terms of the possible role of international law in establishing, regulating and successfully implementing appropriate frameworks for global environmental governance. This twelve weeks course introduces participants to the current and emerging debates in the linkages between climate change and international law from a trans-disciplinary perspective. Various dimensions of these linkages including water security, food security, climate induced migration, human rights approaches, etc. will be explored. Finally, participants will be invited to discuss and debate the future directions of these linkages. This course is jointly organized by UNU-EHS and University of Bonn Institute of International Law, and draws on research expertise from both organizations on this topic.

2. Course Start

Sommersemester 2015 (8 April)

3. Class format

This course will take a seminar format with an interdisciplinary approach, so students can understand the inter-linkages between climate change and international law, and reflect on the impact of climate change on human security.

4. Assessment

Students will write an academic essay (5000 words approximately), double-spaced, on a topic related to the themes covered in the course.

UNU-EHS is currently pursuing some financial paths in order to secure some funding for awarding the best academic essays the students are writing. The method is intended to stimulate the students' participation and contribution to the course, as well as encourage students to improve their English language writing skills and develop qualitative academic contributions.

5. Assessment criteria

- Complexity
- Creativity
- Thoroughness
- Demonstrates an understanding of relevant course learning
- Applies relevant course learning appropriately
- Responds appropriately to the assigned task
- Clarity and logic of presentation
- Follows guidelines for formatting and presentation

6. Intended learning outcomes

The course intends for learners to achieve the following objectives:

- Understand the legal dimensions of climate change
- Understand the specific role of international law in the interface between climate change and human security
- Gain knowledge of the impacts of climate change on water and food security
- Gain knowledge of the human rights approaches to climate change
- Understand the linkages between climate induced migration and international law
- Analyze the political, economic, social and cultural dimensions to the search for appropriate future directions

7. Proposed topics of the course

1. INTRODUCTION
2. INTERLINKAGES BETWEEN CLIMATE CHANGE AND INTERNATIONAL LAW
3. INTERNATIONAL LAW PRINCIPLES RELATED TO CLIMATE CHANGE
4. WATER AND FOOD SECURITY
5. CLIMATE CHANGE AND MIGRATION
6. CLIMATE MIGRANT vs CLIMATE REFUGEE DEBATE
7. PROTECTION OF CLIMATE-INDUCED MIGRANTS
8. STATELESSNESS
9. CLIMATE CHANGE AND HUMAN RIGHTS
10. HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACHES
11. STATE RESPONSIBILITY
12. LOOKING OVER 2015 (FUTURE ACTION)

8. Teachers

Dr. Cosmin Corendea (United Nations University) and Prof. Stefan Talmon (University of Bonn).