

Environmental Problems

Geography 464

Fall 2021

3 credits

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Meets:	Tu/Th (TR) 12:30 pm – 1:45 pm
Location:	Bolton 294
Instructor:	Ryan Holifield
Office Location:	Bolton 434
Phone:	229-4868*
Email:	holifiel@uwm.edu
Office Hours:	Tu/Th 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm <i>or by appointment – also available virtually</i>

**Email is usually a more reliable way to reach me.*

Introduction to the course

Is solving environmental problems just a matter of applying the right scientific knowledge? If so, then doesn't it seem like we would have solved our biggest problems by now? Don't get me wrong: environmental sciences and scientists play extremely important roles in addressing environmental problems. But they are obviously not the only actors, and Geography 464 is not a natural science course.

Environmental problems (the toughest ones, anyway) are widely regarded as *wicked problems*. Addressing them requires attending to the interests, desires, and values of a wide range of constituencies: businesses, environmental advocacy organizations, government agencies, political representatives, and neighborhood residents, to name a few – and let's not forget about nonhuman species unable to speak for themselves. It also requires choosing among multiple competing political, philosophical, and practical perspectives or "frames."

In short, the knowledge generated by the natural sciences cannot by itself solve our most vexing environmental problems. We also have to make decisions and take actions, and this requires us to deal with the complex, messy realities of society, culture, law, economics, and politics – and the growing field of environmental governance. Although your textbook and some of the supplementary readings are written by geographers, our interdisciplinary perspective will draw on a range of social sciences.

Course prerequisites and requirements

The official prerequisites for Geography 464 are junior status (or above) and one introductory course in a life science or environmental science. If you have not taken such a course, I would recommend taking Geography 125 (Introduction to Environmental Geography) or CES 210 concurrently with this one. Geography 464 counts as one of the required courses for the Environmental Track, Urban Track, or Regional and Educational Track in the undergraduate geography major, and it is an approved elective for CES majors. It is also open to graduate students for credit.

Readings

Although we will use a range of required and optional readings (available online on the course's Canvas site), we will also use the following **required** textbook for this class:

**Evans, J.P. *Environmental Governance*, London and New York: Routledge, 2012.
(ISBN# 9780415589826)**

Currently, *the textbook is available as an e-book through the UWM library*, which also has a physical copy of the book. If you prefer to purchase or rent the physical book, it is available at the [UWM Virtual Bookstore](#) and through other online vendors.

Course learning objectives and assignments

By the end of the course, you should be able to do the following:

1. Explain *governance* as a distinctive set of approaches to addressing environmental problems.
2. Define and use key terms pertaining to the governance of environmental problems, including terms associated with Elinor Ostrom's institutional analysis and terms associated with different modes of environmental governance (network, market, transition management, adaptive governance).
3. Discuss the historical evolution of environmental governance, explaining the difference between classic "command-and-control" approaches and contemporary governance approaches.
4. Identify, describe, and evaluate major environmental laws and treaties, along with the range of key actors and contemporary perspectives on environmental governance in the US and worldwide.
5. Identify, describe, and explain the significance of key mechanisms and institutions of global environmental governance, including landmark conferences.
6. Distinguish, describe, and evaluate characteristics, assumptions, approaches, and mechanisms associated with the major *modes* of environmental governance (e.g., network, market) and explain their relationships with *orders* of environmental governance.
7. Explain and evaluate rationales and institutions for public participation in environmental governance.
8. Analyze and evaluate efforts to govern, manage, and solve one or more environmental problems.
 - a. Identify, describe, and analyze key actors, institutions, and modes of governance involved in addressing these problems.
 - b. Identify and describe barriers to solving the problems you have identified.
 - c. Evaluate the merits of current approaches and argue on behalf of a particular solution.
 - d. Compose engaging online learning materials to convey information and analysis to your classmates about the governance of an environmental problem.

The three components of your class grade are linked closely to these learning objectives.

Your final grade will be determined by the following:

1. **Quizzes, midterm essay, and final essay** (54% total)
 - a. Eight multiple choice quizzes (3% per quiz – total 24%)
 - b. Midterm essay (15%)
 - c. Final essay (15%)

2. **Blog project** (37%) – *see note below*
 - a. Topic/interest survey (1%)
 - b. Four individual blog posts (7% per post – total 28%)
 - c. Four sets of comments on classmates' blog posts (2% per assignment – total 8%)

3. **Short weekly in-class or homework assignments** (total 9%)

Quizzes, midterm essay, and final essay (full instructions on the Canvas site):

- The quizzes have strict time limits, but you will be able to take them up to three times, with no penalty. All quizzes must be complete by the deadlines listed in the calendar.

- The midterm essay will be due on **Sunday, October 31**, and the final essay will be due on **Tuesday, December 21** (the day in which your final exam would normally be scheduled), both at 11:59 pm. You may complete the essays ahead of the deadlines, but you should wait until after you have completed all previous readings, lectures, and quizzes.

Blog project (full instructions, questions, and rubrics on the Canvas site):

- The major project for the semester will be a **blog**, in which you will use environmental governance concepts to analyze efforts to govern real-world environmental problems in Wisconsin and the Great Lakes region (undergraduates) or beyond (graduates). You will coordinate topics with a small group of other students, but you will compose your own blog posts and comments individually.

- During the first month of class, you will complete a topic/interest survey to let me know your preferences for a topic. I will assign project groups immediately after the survey deadline.

- In all, you will submit four blog posts, and you will also submit one or more comments on at least four blog posts from other teams.

Short weekly in-class or homework assignments

Instead of grading attendance, I will offer a series of in-class or short homework assignments during the semester, most of which will be graded on a simple "Complete/Incomplete" basis. There will be at least 16 opportunities, and for full credit, you should complete at least 9 of the 16 (1% each).

Grading Policy and Guide to Grades

See the following sites for UWM policies on grades and grading:

<https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S29.htm>

Graduate students: <http://uwm.edu/graduateschool/academic-policies-procedures/>

93-100%	A	73-75%	C
90-92%	A-	70-72%	C-
86-89%	B+	66-69%	D+
83-85%	B	63-65%	D
80-82%	B-	60-62%	D-
76-79%	C+	0-59%	F

If you take the class pass-fail (S/U), you must get the equivalent of at least a “C” to earn an “S” in the course.

Work load

This is a 3-credit course. As a general rule of thumb, I expect you to spend 2-3 hours outside of class for every one hour in class. Since we will spend 2½ hours in class each week, you can expect to spend approximately 5-8 hours each week preparing for class or working on assignments.

Federal law now requires university instructors to state the amount of time an average student can expect to spend on different class components during the entire semester:

Estimated time for course components	Hours
Time in the classroom* (29 sessions)	36
Time spent reading textbook and other materials	48
Time completing midterm and final essays	4
Time completing other assignments	28
Time for preparation and study	28
Total for semester (@3 credits x 48 hrs/credit hour)	144
<i>*Includes class session for writing midterm</i>	

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Can I have an extension? A note on special consideration

Please understand that I can't offer you opportunities to improve your grade unless I offer the same opportunities to the entire class. [Here's UWM's policy on "special consideration,"](#) which I follow closely:

Special Consideration. The principle of equal treatment of all students shall be a fundamental guide in responding to requests for special consideration. No student should be given an opportunity to improve a grade that is not made available to all members of the class. This policy is not intended to exclude reasonable accommodation of verified student disability, or the completion of work missed as the result of religious observance, verified illness, or justified absence due to circumstances beyond the student's control.

Comments: This policy applies to requests for special consideration both before and after a course is completed (See also Grade or Record Changes). It is usually impossible to make opportunities for grade improvement available to all students in a course after the course has ended. Examples of unacceptable opportunities for an individual student include extra work, retaking an examination, taking an extra examination, or an extension of time on an assignment or examination. The policy on incompletes (UWM Select Policies and Procedures, S-31) explains the circumstances in which a student may be given extra time for the completion of a course. This policy should reassure students who are not seeking special consideration and it should also protect instructors from student pressure for special consideration.

Late work policy: penalties and "erasers"

- Penalties for late submissions:
 - o 1 letter-grade equivalent for assignments submitted 12 to 24 hours (1 day) late;
 - o 2 letter-grade equivalents for 24-48 hours (2 days) late;
 - o 3 letter-grade equivalents for 48-72 hours (3 days) late;
 - o Complete and passable assignments submitted more than 72 hours (3 days) late, but submitted before the final due date, will receive a maximum of half credit.
- Please email me immediately—and before the assignment is due—if you have technical difficulties submitting your assignment.

Each student gets two "**late penalty erasers.**" You can use these for any two assignments, for any reason. Just let me know, before the last day of the class, which two late penalties you would like me to remove. You can also use these in advance if you need to request a short extension. Don't be shy about using them, but **I encourage you to use them only when you need them.** In general, the deadlines are there to help you manage your time, and if you miss deadlines, you run the risk of letting work pile up on you and adding to your own stress.

- You do not need to use a late penalty eraser for documented medical or personal emergencies. Please contact me as soon as you can if an emergency arises.
- You also do **not** need to use late penalty erasers for **quizzes.** The quiz deadlines on the Canvas site are there to help you stay on track. However, the quizzes will remain available after the deadlines, and you will have until the last day of class to complete your attempts on each.

Attendance policy

In my experience, regular attendance, participation, and engagement are vital to success in this course. However, I also understand that life can be complicated. Instead of grading attendance and participation, I will offer a combination of short in-class and homework assignments (see above). If you anticipate missing numerous class sessions during the semester, I recommend waiting until a future semester to take the course.

Do not attend your in-person class if you have COVID-19, if you are experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19, if you have been in close contact with others who have symptoms, if you need to care for an individual with COVID-19, or have other health concerns related to COVID-19.

- In case of illness, you should contact me immediately to discuss options for completing course work while ill.
- Notify me in advance of the absence or inability to participate, if possible.
- Reach out to me if illness will require late submission or other modifications to deadlines.
- If remaining in a class and fulfilling the necessary requirements becomes impossible due to illness, contact me to discuss other options.

As your instructor, I will trust your word when you say you are ill, and in turn, I expect that you will report the reason for your absences truthfully.

Classroom conduct

In this class, we must work together to create a positive learning environment, and I expect you to *respect the rights of other students to learn*.

- Please come to class on time and stay until the end. If you must come in late or leave early, please avoid distracting other students or disrupting the lecture or discussion.
- Please respect me and your fellow students when we are speaking by not engaging in side conversations with your classmates.

Cell phones, laptops, etc.

- Please turn your cell phone to “silent” when you come to class.
- You may use laptops, tablets, or other electronic devices in class *only* to record lecture notes, complete class-related activities, or refer to digital copies of course texts or notes—and only with the prior approval of the instructor. **Please do not use such devices for texting, messaging, e-mail, web-surfing, gaming, or similar activities during class.**

I also expect you to *acknowledge and respect the diversity of participants in the class*. At times we will discuss controversial issues in this course, and students in the class will not always be on the same side. Your task is not to “win” debates, and it is certainly not to dismiss some points of view, perspectives, or

experiences as incorrect or irrelevant without considering them carefully and critically. On the contrary, you should seek to develop an understanding of the different positions in debates about environmental problems—including positions that differ from your own—and to challenge your own preconceptions. Even if you disagree with points of view expressed by your instructor or your fellow students, as citizens of this class you are responsible for considering different points of view respectfully.

Technology

Canvas site: You will gain access to readings, quizzes, and other course materials through the course Canvas site: <https://uwm.edu/canvas/home/>. To reach the site, simply log in using your Panther ID and password, and then follow the instructions to find the course site. If you need help getting access to the site or to Canvas, please use the UWM Help Desk, which should be your first point of contact for any technical issues you encounter:

Help Desk web site: <https://uwm.cherwellondemand.com/CherwellPortal/CampusTechnology#0>

Help Desk Telephone: (414) 229-4040 or Toll Free (877) 381-3459 (see current hours at <https://uwm.edu/technology/help/>) – email helpdesk@uwm.edu

Help Desk Locations: Bolton 225A and Library Learning Commons – see <https://uwm.edu/libraries/about/hours/>

Canvas help (CETL): <https://uwm.edu/canvas/students/>

Software: The computer you use must have a basic word processing package such as MS Word for Windows, and you should know how to use it. You will also need to be able to view Adobe PDF files (lectures, reading guides, other readings). You can view these files using free downloads, and you'll find links to these downloads on the Canvas site.

Communicating with your instructor

The best way to reach me is via email (holifiel@uwm.edu). (**Note, though, that my last name is “Holifield,” not “Holifiel”!**) Although you shouldn't expect an immediate response – especially on weekends or outside of normal daytime working hours – I check and respond to email frequently. Except in unusual circumstances (for instance, if I am out of town for an extended time), I will answer you within 24 hours. I will let you know if I will be away from my email account for more than 24 hours.

In order to succeed in this course, you should check your **UWM email account** at least once daily and read all announcements and emails I send. **You should make sure that your Canvas settings enable you to receive notifications when I post course announcements.** (I will do my best not to bombard you with email, and I will never try to sell you any strange products.) You should also put my email address in your address book and on your “safe senders” list.

UWM recommends that you do **not** forward your UWM email to a private email account, because private email providers sometimes block incoming UWM email. If you choose to use a private email account in spite of this recommendation, it will be your responsibility to set up the account to receive email forwarded from your UWM account. If you are having trouble receiving my emails or announcements, please let me know and contact the Help Desk for assistance.

In your emails to me, I'd be grateful if you could follow a few basic guidelines:

- Please put "Geog 464" or "Geography 464" in the subject header line. I prioritize student emails, and subject lines that contain the course number help me respond quickly and stay organized.
- Please address your emails to me **by name** (most students prefer to address me as Professor Holifield or Dr. Holifield, but as long as you use my name, I'm satisfied). Many of you are preparing for professional careers, and I recommend following professional conventions when you compose email messages to your professors. It's much better to use names than simply to say "Hey" or "Hi" or to include no salutation at all.
- Please sign your emails by name too. This helps me know how to address you when I reply, and it helps to remind each other that we are both human!
- Please consider the **tone** of your emails carefully. I'm happy to respond to polite questions or requests for information.
- Here is a web site with excellent suggestions for emailing professors:
<http://www.wikihow.com/Email-a-Professor>.

Other options: If you have questions or concerns about the syllabus or course requirements, please do not hesitate to contact me. I am happy to meet with you in person or via phone or video chat. Please send me an email to set up an appointment.

University policies and other concerns

UWM COVID-19 POLICIES FALL 2021

1. Panther Community Health and Safety Standards

UWM has implemented reasonable health and safety protocols, taking into account recommendations by local, state and national public health authorities, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a member of our campus community you are expected to abide by the Panther [Interim COVID- Related Health & Safety Rules](#). These standards apply to anyone who is physically present on campus, in UWM-controlled facilities, or participating in a UWM-sponsored activity.

2. With respect to indoors spaces on UWM facilities (classrooms, labs, performance spaces, etc.):

- Masks are always required while indoors on UWM campuses and in UWM-controlled facilities, with limited exceptions – environments where hazards exist that create a greater risk by wearing a mask (for example, when operating equipment in a lab with the risk of a mask strap getting caught in machinery, or when flammable materials are being used). Such exceptions must be approved in advance.
- A student who comes to class without wearing a mask will be asked to put on a mask or to leave to get one at a mask handout station. Failure to do so could result in student discipline.

- You should check daily for COVID symptoms by completing the self-check at <https://uwm.edu/coronavirus/symptom-monitor/>. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus and include fever, cough, or shortness of breath or difficulty breathing. See the [CDC's Website](#) for more information about COVID-19 symptoms.
- If you test positive for or are diagnosed with COVID-19 based on symptoms, you should complete this Dean of Students Office form: https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofWisconsinMilwaukee&layout_id=4. By doing so, you will get information on resources, help UWM identify individuals you may have come into contact with on campus so that UWM can work with the local health department, and allow UWM to clean campus areas you visited as appropriate.

For the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee’s official policies on **disabilities, religious observances, active military duty, incompletes, discriminatory conduct, Title IX/sexual violence, academic misconduct, complaint procedures, grade appeal procedures, LGBT+ resources** please see the following web site: <http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/SyllabusLinks.pdf>. Geography 464 adheres to all of these policies.

Academic misconduct: You are responsible for reading and following UWM guidelines on academic misconduct, including cheating and plagiarism: http://uwm.edu/deanofstudents/conduct/conduct_procedures/academic-misconduct/. If instructors suspect academic misconduct, we are required to follow the procedures described here: http://www4.uwm.edu/acad_aff/policy/academicmisconduct.cfm.

Incompletes: “An Incomplete may be given to a student who has carried a subject successfully until near the end of the semester but, **because of illness or other unusual and substantiated cause beyond that student's control**, has been unable to take or complete the final examination or to complete some limited amount of term work. **An Incomplete is not given unless the student proves to the instructor that s/he was prevented from completing course requirements for just cause as indicated above.**” (quoted from UWM policy: <http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S31.pdf>).

In accordance with UWM policies, I am happy to make accommodations for disabilities and religious observances. If either circumstance applies to you, you should notify me **within the first two weeks of class**. (See the “Syllabus Links” above for UWM’s policies.)

Please let me know right away if you have questions about the class!

Calendar

Date	Unit	Session	Topic (subject to change)
2-Sep		1	Intro to class: What are environmental problems?
7-Sep	1	2	Environmental problems as "wicked problems"
9-Sep	1	3	Historical background – changing approaches to governing
14-Sep	2	4	The Limits to Growth and the shift to governance
16-Sep	2	5	Globalization and sustainable development
21-Sep	2	6	Competing framings of environmental problems
23-Sep	3	7	Institutions and rules in environmental governance
28-Sep	3	8	Common pool resource management and scale
30-Oct	3	9	Key actors in environmental governance

5-Oct	4	10	The global governance process
7-Oct	4	11	Global governance – institutions
12-Oct	4	12	Climate change and global governance
14-Oct	n/a	13	Networks and environmental governance
19-Oct	n/a	14	Networks and environmental governance
21-Oct	5	15	Markets and environmental governance
26-Oct	5	16	Markets and environmental governance
28-Oct	6	17	NO CLASS – complete midterm essay
2-Nov	6	18	Transition management and environmental governance
4-Nov	6	19	Transition management and environmental governance
9-Nov	7	20	Resilience and adaptive governance
11-Nov	7	21	Resilience and adaptive governance
16-Nov	8	22	Resilience and adaptive governance/participation
18-Nov	8	23	Public participation in environmental governance
23-Nov	9	24	Public participation in environmental governance
n/a			No class – Thanksgiving
30-Nov	9	26	Public participation in environmental governance
2-Dec	10	27	TBA – possible guest speaker
7-Dec		28	TBA – possible guest speaker
9-Dec		29	Conclusion and reflections
14-Dec		30	Review session for final essay

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