Human Rights and Environmental Law

Course Outline - Dr. Laura Westra

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International Environmental Law is international law applied to many of the ongoing grave problems that affect the natural environment and the life of human beings through it. IN 1992 the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, Principle 1 stated that human beings are "entitled to a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature". But the conflict between this principle and the undefined concept of "development", for instance, was not clarified.

The grave issues related to the ongoing degradation of the environment are many, and they are discussed almost daily in the media. Most of us are aware of the impact of climate change and the extreme weather events that it fosters, of dwindling resources, of disappearing species, of multiple hazards to our health, of mounting numbers of refugees, escaping from the unlivable conditions in their home countries, especially in the third world.

Some of us are protected by most of these problems, and are insulated from their effects, at least in wealthy countries. But poor people in the so-called developing countries, and the Indigenous peoples who live traditional lives on the land, including Canadian First Nations, are not so lucky, and we will discuss the legal regimes existing for their protection.

This course will provide a brief outline of International Environmental Law. Each three-hour day will address a cluster of issues that present problems, and the legal regimes available to address them.

We will use three textbooks, so that a substantial amount of reading will be required each day (between 20 -30 pp.), and attendance to all classes is expected. At the end of the course, a short (5 pp. double spaced including notes and references) essay will be expected, at a time chosen by Prof. D'Aloia, to be submitted by email to Dr. Westra, in Canada.

English proficiency is expected, but each class will consist of a lecture, follow by discussion and questions may be asked in Italian, if that is easier for the student, but answered in English; after a break, we will show a Power Point presentation related to the topic of that day's class.

These will be available to the students to download, if desired. The course will take place between 8.30 and 12:00 Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and between 15:00-18:00 on Thursday as well.

Lunedì 16 aprile 2018, ore 8.30-11.30 - aula A, Sede centrale

Class 1 - *The Origin and Development of International Environmental Law*
  readings: Ellen Hey, 2016: pp.1-23;
  Power Point presentation: "*Human Rights: The Commons and the Collective*"

Martedì 17 aprile 2018, ore 8.30-11.30 - aula A Plesso S. Francesco

Class 2 - *What is at Stake? Environmental Justice*
  readings: Laura Westra, 2016: pp. 34-70
  Power Point presentation: "*Ecuador v. Colombia*"

Giovedì 19 aprile 2018, ore 9.00-12.00 – aula F, Sede centrale

Class 3 - *Ecological Integrity and the Right to Safe Food*
  readings: Laura Westra, 2016: pp.71-101;
  Power Point presentation: "*On Hunger*"

Giovedì 19 aprile 2018, ore 15.00-18.00 – aula Cavalieri, Sede centrale

Class 4 - *Ecological Integrity as a Basic Human Right and the Principle of Common Heritage of Humanity*
  readings: Laura Westra, 2017: chapter 4
  Power Point presentation: "*Ecological Integrity & Global Governance*"

Venerdì 20 aprile 2018, ore 9.00-12.00 – aula B, Sede centrale

Class 5 - *Crimes Against Humanity: Environmental Disasters and Land Grabs (ICC, Office of the Prosecutor, Sept. 2016, paras. 40-41)*
  readings: Laura Westra, 2018: handout on the topic;
  Power Point presentation: "*Crimes Against Humanity and Land Grabs*";

Possible paper topics will be handed out and discussed at this time.

Textbooks:

Hey, Ellen, 2016, *Advanced Introduction to International Environmental Law*, Edward Elgar, Cheltenham, UK
Westra, Laura, 2016, *Ecological Integrity and Global Governance*, Routledge, London, UK
Westra, Laura, 2017, *On Hunger*, International Publishers, California, US