# STV4341 – Comparative Environmental and Climate Politics

**Course content**

Environmental problems and climate change are becoming so severe that they are affecting human wellbeing and threatening the very human survival. In order to fix these problems, individual action is insufficient and we need political interventions. Understanding how various political institutions and actors can facilitate or hamper environmental and climate action can help us design policy interventions necessary to tackle environmental problems. In this course, we will discuss why countries respond to environmental problems and climate change differently. First, we will talk about the nature of environmental problems and challenges associated with commitments to solve environmental problems and climate change. Second, we will discuss collective action theory and how to use it to analyze current small- and large-scale environmental problems. We will delve into the role of the state in tackling collective action problems and cover the basics of environmental and climate policy-making. Third, we will talk about the role of different political institutions in shaping countries responses to environmental problems and climate change. Among these institutions, we will discuss the role of regime type, comparing democratic and authoritarian responses to environmental problems and climate change, bureaucratic quality, corruption, rule of law, and institutions shaping state-society relations. Fourth, we will analyze the role of public support in environmental and climate policy-making and drivers of public support, including individual and external factors.

**Learning outcome**

**Knowledge:**

After the successful completion of the course students will:

* Have an in-depth knowledge about and understanding of various sources of environmental problems
* Have an in-depth understanding of and be able to explain collective action theory and social dilemmas and their implications for solving environmental problems
* Have a solid understanding of  the role of the state in environmental and climate governance and the environmental and climate policy-making process
* Have a solid understanding of the challenges that environmental problems and climate change pose for democratic governments
* Have an in-depth understanding of how political institutions shape countries’ responses to environmental problems and climate change, including regime type, quality of government, state-society relations, people’s values, and public support for environmental and climate policies
* Know of main data sources on environmental and climate policies, environmental and climate outcomes, and environmental values for an independent empirical analysis

**Skills:**

The students will be able to:

* Critically assess the role of political institutions in causing and creating potential solutions to environmental problems and climate change
* Apply collective action theory to analyze various small-scale and large-scale environmental problems
* Use institutional theories to compare and analyze real-world examples of different national responses to environmental problems
* Conduct an independent empirical study using comparative research methods
* Communicate academic knowledge in writing and orally

**Competences:**

The students will be able to:

* Apply comparative politics theories to a specific policy problem
* Apply scientific theories to an empirical analysis of real-world cases
* Apply comparative methods to conduct empirical research
* Engage in a debate and be able to articulate an informed opinion on a heated topic
* Provide constructive feedback to the work of peers
* Engage in dissemination of empirical research

**Admission**

Students who are admitted to study programmes at UiO must each semester [register which courses and exams they wish to sign up for](http://www.uio.no/english/studies/registrations/course-registration/) in Studentweb.

Students enrolled in other Master's Degree Programmes can, on application, be admitted to the course if this is cleared by their own study programme.

If you are not already enrolled as a student at UiO, please see our information about [admission requirements and procedures](http://www.uio.no/english/studies/admission/).

[Apply for guest student status](http://www.sv.uio.no/english/studies/admin/guest-student/isv.html)if you are admitted to another Master's programme.

**Prerequisites**

**Recommended previous knowledge**

Bachelor degree in political science or equivalent.

**Teaching**

Lectures and compulsory activities

**Compulsory activities**

* One-page memo (preparation for the discussion seminar)
* Discussion seminar
* Online discussion on “skisse”

The course is taught in English, and the papers handed in must be written in English.

See [guidelines for compulsory acitivities](https://www.uio.no/english/studies/examinations/compulsory-activities/index.html).

**Absence from compulsory activities**

If you are ill or have another valid reason for being absent from compulsory activities, your absence need to be approved and you will need to submit a complementary assignment.

* [Report absence from or the need for a postponed deadline on a compulsory activity](https://www.uio.no/english/studies/admin/compulsory-activities/sv-absence-from-compulsory-tuition-activities.html)

**Examination**

Term paper and an oral presentation.

The term paper:

* must be of 3500-5000 words
* meet the [formal requirements for submission of written assignments.](http://www.sv.uio.no/english/studies/resources/submission-written-assignments/isv.html)

The oral presentation will be held in a seminar after the submission of the term paper.

You must pass the compulsory activities in order to be eligible to take the exam.

**Examination in Inspera**

Due to the situation with the coronavirus, the written school exam is changed to a home examination in Inspera.

You will need to familiarize yourself with the digital examination arrangements in Inspera.

[Read more about examinations in Inspera.](https://www.uio.no/english/studies/examinations/submissions/)

**Language of examination**

The examination text is given in English, and you submit your response in English.

**Grading scale**

Grades are awarded on a scale from A to F, where A is the best grade and F is a fail. Read more about [the grading system](http://www.uio.no/english/studies/examinations/grading-system/).

**Explanations and appeals**

* [Explanation of grades and appeals](http://www.uio.no/english/studies/examinations/explanation-appeal/)

**Resit an examination**

If you are sick or have another valid reason for not attending the regular exam, we offer a [postponed exam](http://www.uio.no/english/studies/examinations/illness-postponed/) later in the same semester.

See also our information about [resitting an exam](http://www.uio.no/english/studies/examinations/new-exam/).

**Special examination arrangements**

Application form, deadline and requirements for [special examination arrangements](http://www.uio.no/english/studies/examinations/special-arrangements/).

**Evaluation**

The course is subject to continuous evaluation. At regular intervals we also ask students to participate in a more comprehensive evaluation.