

Undergraduate program  
*ENHL 243 - Syllabus*



**American University of Beirut  
Faculty of Health Sciences**

**ENHL 243  
Global Environmental Issues  
[3 credits]**

**AY 2023-2024**

**Course Syllabus**

**Class Time:**

Date, Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:00 pm to 3:15 pm in room 203

**Course Instructors and Contact Details:**

Name: Dr. Rima Habib (course coordinator)  
Office: 335  
Ext. 4630  
Office Hours: By Appointment  
Email: [rima.habib@aub.edu.lb](mailto:rima.habib@aub.edu.lb)

Dr. May Jurdi (course co-instructor)  
Office: 420A  
Ext. 4624  
Office Hours: By Appointment  
Email: [mjurdi@aub.edu.lb](mailto:mjurdi@aub.edu.lb)

Dr. Joumana Nasr (course co-instructor)  
Office: 413  
Ext. 4631  
Office Hours: By Appointment  
Email: [jn16@aub.edu.lb](mailto:jn16@aub.edu.lb)

**Course Description**

Global environmental problems such as climate change, water shortage, floods, fires, depletion of stratospheric ozone, and the loss of biodiversity have captured news headlines and the attention of the public. These developments are transnational, in that their impact is felt across national boundaries and effective responses require coordinated efforts transcending any individual state. The establishment of conventions and institutions facilitating international cooperation reflect this reality, yet the success of these efforts has been frequently inadequate and criticized as favouring the powerful over the

disenfranchised.

This course engages students in a review of global environmental issues affecting the Arab region and beyond. This review will explore research on the history and causes of these environmental problems, giving special attention to their framing in public discourse. The ecological, social, economic, political, cultural, and health aspects of the environmental problems are discussed in a debate format. The local, national, and international efforts to develop strategies to address these problems are also raised.

### **Course Learning Objectives:**

**By the end of the course, students will be able to:**

- LO1. Understand the environmental, social, economic, and political complexities of global environmental issues and their public health impacts.
- LO2. Formulate an argumentative statement that addresses a current debate on a global environmental issue.
- LO3. Conduct an in-depth literature review investigating a global environmental problem.
- LO4. Communicate effectively an analysis of a literature review regarding a global environmental issue through writing, oral, and poster presentations.

### **Course requirements and Student evaluation:**

Course Evaluation:

You will select a global environmental topic from a list given to you in class. Over the course of the semester, you will be asked to complete a number of assignments, which address this topic; these assignments include: a debate presentation, a poster and its relevant abstract and presentation, and a written report. Each task will have a descriptive sheet explaining what is expected of you to receive credit for your work. The tasks you will complete are all based on an individual effort, and are as follows:

▪ Debate presentation	30%
▪ Poster Abstract	5%
▪ Poster	15%
▪ Oral poster presentation	15%
▪ Written Report	30%
▪ Attendance and Participation in other students' debate	5%

### **Debate Presentation:**

Each class session, students will individually present on a global environmental issue to your peers in class. Each student will select a topic in the first sessions of class (See appendix A for the list of topics) and the process for this selection is outlined in Appendix A. Each student has a total of 35 minutes for the debate presentation, distributed as explained below.

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Each of you will deliver a 10-minute presentation on his/her topic, which should cover the following materials:

- 1) a general background on the topic;
  - 2) discussion of the recent public debate on the issue (pros and cons, opponents and proponents);
  - 3) description of the major efforts that are being undertaken to address the problem on a global level (where applicable); and
  - 4) your reflections on whether the adopted interventions are adequate to address the problem or require reformulation.
- 5) In addition to your 10-minute presentation, you should include a short documentary (5-7 minutes) – or a segment of a documentary, from one of the following sources (you can include 2 short documentaries if necessary):

- YouTube: [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)
- TEDx: <http://www.ted.com/talks/tags/environment>
- earth protect: <http://www.earthprotect.com/index.php/video-gallery-frontpage>
- or other media sources that is relevant to your topic to show with your presentation.

This material should creatively support your presentation and explore public discourse on your topic. The class representative will make sure, by connecting to all students, that there is no duplication in the documentary selection.

The documentary can be placed at any time during your presentation; it is your choice.

Following your presentation, you are required to facilitate a discussion with your peers for 15 minutes. You should prepare two exploratory questions about your topic to facilitate this discussion.

**REMEMBER:** Students in class must also participate during the discussion as part of the audience.

The criteria for grading the debate are in Appendix B.

Poster and Presentation:

Your poster is based on the same topic as that of your debate, however focusing on a specific sub-theme, angle, or case study. It includes a background on the topic and its environmental health significance, a suggestion(s) for an intervention to manage the environmental health problem, and a recommendation for an environmental health policy.

Your poster presentation should be 10-minutes long (an absolute maximum of 10 minutes) and cover the contents of your poster. Following the presentation, you will answer questions for 5 minutes.

**Important:** Adequate referencing is emphasized.

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Here are links to websites dedicated to showing you how to make effective poster presentations:

<http://www.ncsu.edu/project/posters/>

<http://colinpurrington.com/tips/academic/posterdesign>

<http://www.cns.cornell.edu/documents/ScientificPosters.pdf>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MqgjgIXadA>

**DIMENSIONS:** Your poster may be 90 cm wide and 110 cm tall. These are the standard requirements.

**REMEMBER:** *Creativity* is a must in your poster!

The criteria for grading the poster and presentation are in Appendix C.

Poster Abstract:

All students in class will participate in a student conference organised by the Nature Conservation Centre at AUB at the end of the semester. This is a yearly conference on biodiversity and environmental sustainability which engages undergraduate students from several universities in Lebanon. The ENHL 243 posters fall under IBDAAs' research category. In previous years, this category has featured first, second, and third place prizes of \$2,000, \$1000, and \$500 respectively; 2 ENHL 243 students won the first and second prize in AY 2015-2016, earning \$2,000 and \$1000 respectively. In AY 2019-2020, two ENHL 243 teams won the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> prize and earned 300 and 200 USD respectively (I hope you will win!).

More details about the conference can be found at:

<http://www.aub.edu.lb/units/natureconservation/programs/ibdaa/>

The abstract for this poster consists of the following sections:

- Introduction / Background (an overview of the issue/problem and a statement of the issue/problem)
- Methods / Approach (a description of the research methods/strategies that were used to collect information for this poster)
- Results and Discussion (a presentation of the findings of the literature review and a discussion of the findings)
- Conclusion and Recommendations (a concluding statement and policy recommendations surrounding the issue/problem)

Please note that the text in the abstract should be a maximum of 300 words.

See Appendix D for the grading of the poster abstract.

**NOTE:** Please note that, occasionally, the structure of the poster is flexible and relevant to the topic of your case study. It may not necessarily follow the sections of the abstract specified above.

**Written Report:**

This 8-10 page report should be written in 12 point New Times Roman font, double spaced and with one inch margins. It should contain an introduction and background that discusses the history, evolution, and current status of the environmental issue and its ecological, health, social, political, and economic impacts. It should also contain a discussion on the major debates surrounding this issue, a discussion on national and international efforts to address the issue, an analysis of their successes and failures, and recommendations for an environmental health policy that delineates how global actors (where applicable) should move forward to address it. A written report on a controversial global environmental health issue will be provided as a sample on Moodle.

See Appendix E for a breakdown of the sections and grading of the report.

Attendance:

Attendance and class participation will be integrated in the students' evaluation.

Student Evaluation:

Table-1 Summary of students' assessments mapped to course learning objectives

	Learning Objectives			
	LO1	LO2	LO3	LO4
Debate Presentation/Discussion (30%)	X	X	X	X
Poster Abstract (5%)	X		X	X
Poster (15%)	X		X	X
Oral Poster Presentation (15%)	X		X	X
Written Report (30%)	X	X	X	X

Course Plan and Timeline:

1. Topic selection Tue 23 January
2. Debate Presentations Tue 20 February until Thur 29 February
3. Poster Abstract Submission Thur 21 March
4. Poster Submission Tue 16 April
5. Poster Evaluation and Oral Presentation Tue 16 April and Thurs 18 April
6. Submission of Written Report Tue 23 April
7. IBDA conference Thur 25 April

**Policies and other General Notes:**

**Moodle:**

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The course material will be posted in MOODLE, an on-line learning environment supported by AUB. You have to sign into the course on Moodle to access the course material, so please do that as soon as possible. Please also post your picture on your profile so your instructor and students can identify you.

**Other Resources:**

*Assistance on writing:* AUB has a Writing Center in West Hall where you can get individual advice on writing. You are strongly advised to take advantage of their services: [www.aub.edu.lb/writingcenter](http://www.aub.edu.lb/writingcenter)

**Academic integrity:**

Education is demanding and time management is essential. Do not hesitate to use the resources around you but do not cut corners. Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. Please review the Student Code of Conduct in your handbook and familiarize yourself with definitions and penalties. If you are in doubt about what constitutes plagiarism, ask your instructor because it is your responsibility to know. The American University of Beirut has a strict anti-cheating and anti-plagiarism policy. Penalties include failing marks on the assignment in question, suspension or expulsion from University and a permanent mention of the disciplinary action in the student's records.

For examples of what constitutes plagiarism in academic writing, go to the following link and familiarize yourself with the contents: <https://www.indiana.edu/~istd/examples.html>

**Students with Special Needs:**

AUB strives to make learning experiences accessible for all. If you have documented special needs and anticipate difficulties with the content or format of the course due to a physical or learning disability (such as ADHD, learning difficulties, mental health conditions, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please contact me and/or your academic advisor, as well as the Counseling Center in the Office of Student Affairs (+961-1-350000, Ext. 3196, West Hall, 314), as soon as possible to discuss options for accommodations. Those seeking accommodations must submit the Special Needs Support Request Form along with the required documentation.

**Non-Discrimination – Title IX – AUB**

AUB is committed to facilitating a campus free of all forms of discrimination including sex/gender-based harassment prohibited by Title IX. The University's non-discrimination policy applies to, and protects, all students, faculty, and staff. If you think you have experienced discrimination or harassment, including sexual misconduct, we encourage you to tell someone promptly. If you speak to a faculty or staff member about an issue such as harassment, sexual violence, or discrimination, the information will be kept as private as possible, however, faculty and designated staff are required to bring it to the attention of the University's Equity/Title IX Coordinator. Faculty can refer you to fully confidential resources, and you can find information and contacts at [www.aub.edu.lb/titleix](http://www.aub.edu.lb/titleix). To report an incident, contact the University's Equity/Title IX Coordinator Ms. Mitra Tauk at 01-350000 ext. 2514, or [titleix@aub.edu.lb](mailto:titleix@aub.edu.lb). An anonymous report may be submitted online via EthicsPoint at [www.aub.ethicspoint.com](http://www.aub.ethicspoint.com).

**Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) Domains mapped to course learning objectives:**

Table 2: Learning Objectives mapped to domains and subdomains

<b>CEPH Domains</b>	<b>Health Communications: Address the basic concepts of public health-specific communication, including technical and professional writing and the use of mass media and electronic technology</b>	<b>Role and Importance of Data in Public Health: Address the basic concepts, methods, and tools of public health data collection, use, and analysis and why evidence-based approaches are an essential part of public health practice</b>
LO1. Understand the environmental, social, economic, and political complexities of global environmental issues		
LO2. Formulate an argumentative statement that addresses a current debate on a global environmental issue	X	
LO3. Conduct an in-depth literature review investigating a global environmental problem		X
LO4. Communicate effectively an analysis of a literature review regarding a global environmental issue through writing and oral and poster presentations	X	