

PO3A4-15 The Global Energy Challenge: Environment, Development & Security

20/21

Department

Politics & International Studies

Level

Undergraduate Level 3

Module leader

Caroline Kuzemko

Credit value

15

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

Energy remains one of the essential ingredients of modern life but how we produce, transport, market and use energy is politically contested – now more than ever. Indeed, the complex energy systems upon which we rely have already started to transition, partly for environmental and developmental reasons. Many policymakers, politicians and other organisations around the world are faced with the ‘Herculean’ task of engendering sustainable system change whilst, at the same time, ensuring secure and affordable access to energy. Others, in countries highly reliant on energy income, need to address the geo-economic implications of change.

This module explores the complex politics of energy, the relationship between policy and energy systems, and the many different perspectives on energy policy, its aims and instruments. It uses case studies (Russia and the EU) to demonstrate some of these complexities. The overall aim is to equip students with sufficient understanding, analytical tools, to critically evaluate energy policy and politics.

[Module web page](#)

Module aims

This is a timely and highly relevant module that will give students the necessary tools to produce well-informed, evidence-based analyses of energy policies, the political thinking behind them, and evaluations of how policies relate to energy system change. Students will develop abilities to engage with and critically evaluate current political solutions to energy issues, including the need for emissions reduction, and to (re-)imagine alternative approaches to change. This should equip students with, highly necessary, skills to reflect upon how energy policy relates to climate change within a complex and changing world.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

Week 1: Historical Backdrop: Energy Systems, Politics & Society

Week 2: The Energy Trilemma

Week 3: Political Perspectives: HOW to Govern Energy

Week 4: Who Governs Energy?

Week 5: Energy Systems Transitions: Implications for Policy & Politics

Week 6: Reading Week

Week 7: Energy Policy in Action I: Transition Leaders Case Study: the EU

Week 8: Energy Policy in Action: Transition Less in Focus. Case Study: Russia

Week 9: Energy Policy in Action III: Rescaling?

Week 10: Tensions, Challenges & Possible Futures

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Identify and discuss energy's role in modern society, and how this relates to energy policy and politics;
- Identify and analyse the key political perspectives on energy, and associated policy choices;
- Apply political perspectives to analyse the main institutions and actors involved in energy policymaking;
- Evaluate and critically assess energy policies, and how they relate to changes in energy systems.

Indicative reading list

Core:

Kuzemko, C.; Keating, M.; Goldthau, A. (2016) *The Global Energy Challenge: Environment, Development & Security*. London & New York: Palgrave Macmillan (Chapter 2: Evolution and Dynamics of the World Energy System)

Bridge, G.; Barr, S.; Bouzarovski, S.; Bradshaw, M.; Brown, E.; Bulkeley, H.; Walker, G. (2018) *Energy and Society: A critical perspective*. London: Routledge (Chapter 9: Past transitions)

Fouquet, R. (2012) 'Past and prospective energy transitions: Insights from history', *Energy Policy* 50, 1-7.

Further Reading:

Bridge, G. (2009) 'Material worlds: Natural resources, resource geography and the material economy', *Geography Compass* 3:3, 1217-1244.

Crosby, A. W. (2014) *Children of the Sun: A history of humanity's unappeasable appetite for energy*.

Kuzemko, C. (2013) *The energy security-climate nexus: Institutional change in the UK and beyond*. London & New York: Palgrave Macmillan. (Chapter 3: Historical Context, Ideas & Political Practice)

Kuzemko, C.; Keating, M.; Goldthau, A. (2016) *The Global Energy Challenge: Environment, Development & Security*. London & New York: Palgrave Macmillan (Chapter 3: The Political Economy of Energy).

Mitchell, T. (2013) *Carbon Democracy*. London: Verso Books.

Sovacool, B. (2014) 'What are we doing here: Analysing fifteen years of energy scholarship and proposing a social science agenda', *Energy Research & Social Science* 1.

Strange, S. (1998) *States & Markets*. London: Bloomsbury (Chapter 9: Energy)

Yergin, D. (1991) *The Prize: The Epic Quest for Oil, Money and Power*. New York: Free Press.

[View reading list on Talis Aspire](#)

Subject specific skills

Ability to understand and discuss energy's role in modern society, and how this relates to energy policy and politics

Identify and analyse the key political perspectives on energy, and associated policy choices

Apply political perspectives to analyse the main institutions and actors involved in energy policymaking

Evaluate and critically assess energy policies, and how they relate to changes in energy systems

Transferable skills

Critical analytical skills

Ability to write cohesively about complex political subjects

Presentation and communications skills

Specific knowledge about energy, sustainability and policy

Ability to understand and engage with energy policy debates

Informed citizen

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	9 sessions of 1 hour (50%)
Seminars	9 sessions of 1 hour (50%)
Total	18 hours

Private study description

TBC

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A1

	Weighting	Study time
3000 word essay	100%	150 hours

Feedback on assessment

Feedback form via Tabula; optional verbal consultation

Availability

Courses

This module is Optional for:

- UECA-4 Undergraduate Economics 4 Year Variants
 - Year 4 of LM1H Economics, Politics & International Studies with Study Abroad
 - Year 4 of LM1H Economics, Politics & International Studies with Study Abroad
- UECA-LM1D Undergraduate Economics, Politics and International Studies
 - Year 3 of LM1D Economics, Politics and International Studies
 - Year 3 of LM1D Economics, Politics and International Studies
- Year 3 of UPOA-M100 Undergraduate Politics
- Year 4 of UPOA-M101 Undergraduate Politics (with Intercalated Year)
- Year 4 of UPOA-M168 Undergraduate Politics and International Studies with Chinese
- Year 3 of UPOA-M169 Undergraduate Politics and International Studies with Chinese (3

year)

- Year 4 of UPOA-M165 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Italian
- Year 3 of UPOA-M162 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Quantitative Methods
- Year 4 of UPOA-M167 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Quantitative Methods (with Intercalated Year)

This module is Option list A for:

- UPOA-M16A Undergraduate Politics and International Studies
 - Year 3 of M16A Politics and International Studies
 - Year 3 of M16A Politics and International Studies
 - Year 3 of M16A Politics and International Studies
- Year 4 of UPOA-M16B Undergraduate Politics and International Studies (with Intercalated Year)
- Year 3 of UPOA-ML13 Undergraduate Politics and Sociology
- Year 4 of UPOA-ML14 Undergraduate Politics and Sociology (with Intercalated year)
- Year 4 of UPOA-M163 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and French
- Year 4 of UPOA-M164 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and German
- Year 3 of UPOA-M16D Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and German (3 year degree)
- Year 4 of UPOA-M166 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Hispanic Studies
- Year 3 of UPOA-M16H Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Hispanic Studies (3 year degree)

This module is Option list C for:

- UHIA-VM11 Undergraduate History and Politics
 - Year 3 of VM11 History and Politics
 - Year 3 of VM11 History and Politics
 - Year 3 of VM11 History and Politics
- Year 4 of UHIA-VM12 Undergraduate History and Politics (with Year Abroad)