

Political Science 224-A
Environmental Policy and Law
Elon University
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Monday, Wednesdays, & Fridays 10:50 – 12:00 p.m.
McMichael 322
Office Hours: Tuesdays/Thursdays 12:00 to 2:00 p.m.
and by appointment

Course Description

In the American political landscape, few areas of public policy are as complex as environmental policy. The condition of our natural environment profoundly impacts all facets of our lives. However, it was only in the latter half of the twentieth century that the federal government in the United States has taken significant steps to ensure the health of the environment. While this area of policy is comparatively new in the U.S., its size and scope is massive. This course will introduce you to environmental policy and law in the United States. The course will cover topics including: the condition of the environment today, environmental values, the crafting of environmental policy, the role of different political institutions, pollution and its control, natural resource issues, environment and economics, environmental justice, environmental law, and the future of environmental protection in the U.S. A myriad of topics will be introduced in an effort to provide a broad grounding of environmental policy and law for students.

This course is intended for students in political science and public administration who wish to delve into a particular policy area, for students in environmental studies to provide them a better understanding of the role of government in environmental issues, and finally for students who have a general interest in environmental issues.

Understanding environmental policy is becomingly increasingly important as environmental awareness continues to grow, not only in the United States, but around the world. The natural environment is necessary for life and the condition of the environment dramatically impacts all facets of life. Therefore, it is imperative that all people better understand the environment that they depend on for their very survival.

Course Goals

- Provide background information on the origins and development of environmental policy in the United States
- Articulate major federal environmental protection policies
- Explain why environmental policy is like no other policy area and why it is so complex
- Improve critical thinking skills and analytical writing capabilities
- Engage in policy research and craft a clear and concise policy option to a particular problem
- Hypothesize about the future of environmental policy in the United States

Course Expectations

While it goes without saying that students get out of a course what they put into it, it is important to emphasize several key expectations.

Class Participation and Discussion – The goal of this course is to learn about environmental policy and law and that can only be accomplished by engaging the material. This means that class participation is a must. Everyone, students and the instructor, can and should learn from one another. Learning is a process and is enhanced by dialogue. Additionally, engaging the material requires that students come to class having read the assignments so that they are prepared to thoughtfully and productively contribute to the class discussion. Success in this course requires engagement of the material both inside and outside of class.

Because class participation and discussion are vital to this class, it is imperative that class discussions be conducted in an appropriate manner that befits the larger institutional environment. Therefore, debate is encouraged as long as it is conducted with respect and civility. Courtesy in class discussion extends to making sure cell phones and pagers are off or in silent modes.

Attendance & Tardiness – Attendance is crucial; students who are not in class do not have the opportunity to learn from the rest of the class and the class does not have the opportunity to benefit from an absent student. It is understandable that circumstances, however, will warrant an occasional absence; if such is the case, please make every effort to inform the instructor in advance of an absence. Students are allotted three absences for the semester. Those students who surpass this number must meet with the instructor to devise assignments to make-up for missed classes. It is the responsibility of students to monitor their absences and failure to complete make-up assignments will significantly and adversely impact a student's final grade for the course.

Being late to a class is problematic for the student who is tardy, fellow students, and the instructor. A student who arrives to class late is disruptive to everyone. Students are expected to get to class on time and stay for the duration of the class. Excessive tardiness will negatively impact a student's grade.

Current Events – Studying environmental policy cannot and should not be done without an awareness of current events because these issues are constantly changing. Accordingly, students will be expected to stay informed of current events through reading newspapers, magazines, and online news services. Frequently, current events will be part of class discussion. Since many environmental policy matters escape mention in the national news media, it will be necessary to seek environmental news and information from a variety of other sources. Students should strongly consider subscribing to either daily or weekly email listservs provided by a number of different environmental groups, including Grist: Environmental News and Commentary (www.grist.org) and Environmental News Network (www.enn.com). To keep track of environmental news on Capital Hill, students may want to subscribe to the League of Conservation Voters listserv (www.lcv.org).

Course Textbooks

The following texts are required for this course:

- Kraft, Michael E. 2007. *Environmental policy and politics*, 4th ed. New York: Pearson Longman.
- Kubasek, Nancy K. and Gary S. Silverman. 2005. *Environmental law*, 5th ed. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall.
- Rosenbaum, Walter A. 2007. *Environmental politics and policy*, 7th ed. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.
- Vig, Norman J. and Michael E. Kraft, eds. 2006. *Environmental policy: New directions for the 21st century*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

Additional supplemental readings will be assigned periodically and posted on Blackboard.

Course Requirements

The requirements of this course fall into the following categories: quizzes, exams, a policy options paper/white paper, policy options memo and an oral presentation.

Reflection Paper – One reflection paper is assigned at the beginning of the course. Students should write about their initial thoughts regarding the condition of the environment and the nature of environmental policy. This assignment serves two purposes. First, it requires students to critically think about their natural environment and the policies governing it. Second, it affords the students an opportunity to submit a writing assignment to the instructor early in the semester to ascertain course expectations. Papers should be a minimum of two, double-spaced, typed pages.

Quizzes – Quizzes will be administered at the discretion of the instructor as a way to ascertain whether students are reading the assigned material and to what degree the material is being comprehended; thus, quizzes will be unannounced.

Exams - There will be three exams throughout the semester. The exams will consist of a combination of short answer and essay questions. Exams should not be missed; however, in the unlikely event that one is missed, arrangements must be made with the instructor prior to the exam date to make up the exam.

Policy Options Paper/White Paper – The bulk of the course will be devoted to introducing various topics within environmental policy and law; as a result, there will not be adequate time devoted to an in-depth exploration of various topics. Therefore, the policy options paper and memo will provide a counterbalance by allowing for students to comprehensively explore a particular environmental issue. Students will be required to select a *specific* environmental issue (e.g. global climate change is too broad for this project; fertilizer run-off into the Chesapeake Bay would be a narrower and more appropriate topic) to research. Undoubtedly, selecting a topic will prove challenging so students are urged to subscribe to various environmental listservs to help broaden their knowledge base of specific environmental problems.

After a topic is selected, students are to research the topic extensively and provide sufficient background on the origins of the problem, efforts (if any) to deal with the problem, and then propose a variety of different options for dealing with the problem. The paper should conclude

with a clear advocacy for one particular option. The paper should be thought of as a comprehensive policy paper that is suitable for submission to a member of Congress, for instance. The paper must be between 15 and 20 pages in length. The paper must have appropriate documentation and cite scholarly sources.

Policy Options Memo – After completion of the policy options paper/white paper, students will then craft a memo to accompany their white papers for submission to government officials. The memos must clearly and concisely outline the environmental issue, the policy options, and then advocate a particular policy option – and all of this must be done in no more than two pages. Government officials’ time is often at a premium and the goal of a policy options memo is to incite enough curiosity in a government official to read your white paper (or at least have a staff member read it!).

These memos should be written in a memo format from the student who is writing on behalf of an environmental interest group (either real or fictional) to a member of Congress.

Presentation – A professional oral presentation is expected for this course. Students will present the environmental issue that they have researched for their white paper and the different options that may be put in place to address the issue. Students should take on the role of an environmental or other interest group and attempt to persuade the class about one particular option that the student recommends. Fellow students will evaluate the persuasiveness of the presentation.

The timetable for this project is as follows:

Initial topics/environmental issues are due Monday, September 10

In-Class Visit to the Library Friday, September 14

Revised topics/environmental issues are due Monday, September 24

Mandatory Rough Draft due Friday, October 26

Policy Options/White Paper due Friday, November 16

Policy Options Memo due Friday, November 30

Presentations, Wednesday, November 28 – Wednesday, December 5

Grading

Grades will be computed in the following manner:

Class Participation/Attendance/Quizzes/Reflection Paper	15%
Presentations	10%
Exams (3)	30%
Policy Options Paper/White Paper	30%
Policy Options Memo	15%

Grading Scale

A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	59 and below

Honor Code

Students are expected to abide by the Elon University Honor Code.

Cheating and Plagiarism – Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. Any student suspected of either cheating or plagiarism will be referred to appropriate administrative proceedings at Elon University. Additionally, the student will receive a zero for the assignment.

Guidelines for Assignments

All written assignments should meet the following criteria:

1. All work must be typed, double-spaced, 12 point font, and one inch margins.
2. Citations should follow one of the following guidelines: Turabian/Chicago Manual of Style, MLA, or APA.
3. Assignments are due at the beginning of the class period on their appointed due date according to the syllabus (or any change made during the course). Late assignments will not be accepted. If a student is absent on the day an assignment is due, he/she should make arrangements to turn in the assignment ahead of time.
4. All assignments must be turned in to the instructor in hard copy, unless other arrangements are made.
5. Written work will be evaluated both in terms of content and writing/grammar.

Course Schedule

The chapters indicate the material that should be read prior to coming to class (please note the schedule is tentative and may be amended).

Class 1 – Wednesday, August 29
Course Introduction & Overview

Environmental Problems and Policy

Class 2 – Friday, August 31
Environmental Values and Defining Environmental Policy
Kraft, Chapter 1

- Class 3 – Monday, September 3
The Condition of the Environment Today
Kraft, Chapter 2
Rosenbaum, Chapter 1
Reflection Paper due
- Class 4 – Wednesday, September 5
Environmental Policy Historically
Vig and Kraft, Chapter 1
Kraft, Chapter 4
- Class 5 – Friday, September 7
Making Environmental Policy
Kraft, Chapter 3
Rosenbaum, Chapter 2
- Class 6 – Monday, September 10
Context of Environmental Policy
Rosenbaum, Chapter 3
Initial Paper Topics Due
- Class 7 – Wednesday, September 12
Environmental Policy and Congress
Vig and Kraft, Chapter 6
- Class 8 – Friday, September 14
Library Session
- Class 9 – Monday, September 17
Environmental Policy and the Presidency
Vig and Kraft, Chapter 5
- Class 10 – Wednesday, September 19
Environmental Policy and the Bureaucracy
Vig and Kraft, Chapter 8
Environmental Policy and Federalism
Vig and Kraft, Chapter 2
- Class 11 – Friday, September 21
Environmental Policy and the Courts
Vig and Kraft, Chapter 7
Revised Topics Due
- Class 12 – Monday, September 24
Environmental Policy and Interest Groups
Sussman, Daynes, and West, Chapter 4 (available on Blackboard)

Class 13 – Wednesday, September 26
Class Cancelled – Instructor presenting a paper at the Southeastern Conference on
Public Administration in Nashville, TN

Class 14 – Friday, September 28
Class Cancelled – Instructor presenting a paper at the Southeastern Conference on
Public Administration in Nashville, TN

Class 15 – Monday, October 1
Exam #1

Environmental Policy Dilemmas

Class 16 – Wednesday, October 3
Command and Control Regulations: Air and Water Pollution
Kraft, Chapter 5
Rosenbaum, Chapter 6

Class 17 – Friday, October 5
Toxic and Hazardous Substances
Rosenbaum, Chapter 7

Class 18 – Monday, October 8
Case Study: Love Canal
Layzer, Chapter 3 (available on Blackboard)

Class 19 – Wednesday, October 10
Energy Policy
Kraft, Chapter 6
Rosenbaum, Chapter 8

Class 20 – Friday, October 12
Public Lands
Rosenbaum, Chapter 9

Fall “Break,” October 13 - 16

Class 21 – Wednesday, October 17
Environmental Policy and Economics
Rosenbaum, Chapter 5
Vig and Kraft, Chapter 9

Class 22 – Friday, October 19
Case Study: The Northern Spotted Owl
Layzer, Chapter 8 (available on Blackboard)

Class 23 – Monday, October 22
Risk Assessment
Rosenbaum, Chapter 4

Class 24 – Wednesday, October 24
Environmental Justice
Vig and Kraft, Chapter 11

Class 25 – Friday, October 26
Public Opinion, the Media, and Environmental Issues
Sussman, Daynes, and West, Chapter 3 (available on Blackboard)
Rough Draft of Policy Options Paper/White Paper Due

Class 26 – Monday, October 29
Exam #2

Environmental Law and Policy Assessment

Class 27 – Wednesday, October 31
American Legal System
Kubasek and Silverman, Chapter 1

Class 28 – Friday, November 2
Litigation Process
Kubasek and Silverman, Chapter 2

Class 29 – Monday, November 5
Administrative Law and the Environment
Kubasek and Silverman, Chapter 3

Class 30 – Wednesday, November 7
Environmental Law
Kubasek and Silverman, Chapter 4

Class 31 – Friday, November 9
Air Pollution Control Laws
Kubasek and Silverman, Chapter 5

Class 32 – Monday, November 12
Environmental Policy Evaluation
Kraft, Chapter 7

Class 33 – Wednesday, November 14
Greening of Industry
Vig and Kraft, Chapter 12

Class 34 – Friday, November 16
Future of Environmental Policy
Vig and Kraft, Chapter 17
Kraft, Chapter 8
Policy Options Paper/White Paper Due

Class 35 – Monday, November 19
Exam #3

Thanksgiving “Break,” November 21 - 25

Class 36 – Monday, November 26
Course Wrap-Up and Reflections

Class 37 – Wednesday, November 28
Presentations

Class 38 – Friday, November 30
Presentations
Policy Options Memo Due

Class 39 – Monday, December 3
Presentations

Class 40 – Wednesday, December 5
Presentations

Some concluding thoughts...

“Nature provides a free lunch, but only if we control our appetites.”

- William Ruckelshaus, EPA Administrator

“We do not inherit the Earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children.”

- Native American Proverb

“We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect.”

- Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*

“When one tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds it attached to the rest of the world.”

- John Muir