

DePauw University
Department of Political Science

POLS 265A: Introduction to Environmental Policy

Fall 2017
10:20-11:20 MWF
Asbury 117

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Office Hours: Asbury 107
1:00-2:30 MWF

Course description:

This course will introduce you to the actors, institutions, and policies that aim to protect or regulate the environment. Over the semester, we will examine how environmental policy has evolved over time to deal with changing environmental threats or needs, ranging from domestic pollution issues to the longer-term threat of climate change. We will cover different institutions and regulatory frameworks that govern the environment, the behavior of different actors and interest groups in the policy process, and several recent cases of domestic and global environmental policymaking.

The course will largely focus on environmental policymaking within the US to develop an understanding of key actors, laws, or policy outcomes that have affected environmental outcomes such as climate change, air pollution, and access to clean water. Throughout the class, we will also examine the societal implications of environmental threats and policymaking in order to better understand how environmental outcomes and policies affect issues such as inequality, health, and global conflict.

Course requirements and expectations:

Readings will be assigned for most classes and should be read prior to the class meeting. Our in-class lectures and discussions will build off core concepts or issues in each reading. One textbook is required for this class:

Rosenbaum, W. (2017). *Environmental Policy and Politics*. (10th edition). CQ Press.

Although older editions of this textbook are also available online, these will be considerably less helpful as the current edition contains important chapters on the Obama administration's policies (e.g. the Clean Power Plan) that we will cover in class. These editions also contain the most up to date summaries of the scientific consensus on environmental threats. Other readings will come from academic journals that can be accessed through the DePauw library databases (e.g. JSTOR). I will also post links to these readings online using Moodle.

The class will be primarily lecture oriented in the first few weeks as we establish key concepts and theories. As we progress through the semester, classes will involve much more discussion and debate over issues. I expect of each student that they will regularly

attend class with readings completed, and contribute to class discussions or debates in a manner that is respectful and considerate of others.

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

- Identify major environmental risks and threats, and understand why they may require policies at a local, federal, or international level to address them.
- Understand the process by which these policies are formed, through the actions of specific actors, interest groups, and institutions.
- Know how both the nature of environmental risks and their related policies have evolved over time in order to address new and emerging concerns.
- Be able to evaluate the effectiveness of these policies in terms of how they may improve environmental outcomes or conditions.
- Understand the economic, social, and political motivations behind opposition to environmental policy today, and the challenges that these interests pose for policymaking.
- Understand the implications of environmental risk and policymaking for society as a whole, considering how these risks and policies may impact outcomes such as racial or economic inequality, global conflict, or public health.

Assignments and grading:

Course grades will be determined as follows:

Final exam: 30%

Midterm exam: 20%

Policy brief: 20%

In-class quizzes: 20%

Participation and attendance: 10%

• Exams:

There will be a midterm and final exam. Both exams will consist of multiple choice, short answer, and essay sections. The midterm exam is scheduled for Friday, October 13, and will take the entire class session.

The final exam is scheduled from 8:30 to 11:30 am on Mon, Dec 11, and cannot be changed or rescheduled except due to specific circumstances defined by university policies (e.g. dean's excused absence, or bunched finals). I advise you to not book travel arrangements that have you leaving before the end of finals week. See the DePauw academic handbook at <http://www.depauw.edu/files/resources/academichandbook.pdf> for university policies regarding exams.

• Policy brief:

You will write one policy brief paper on contemporary environmental policy issues that we cover in class. I will post a possible topics, deadlines, guidelines for writing a policy brief, and specific grading rubrics on Moodle. This assignment will require you to both summarize materials from readings and do your own research on the issue outside of

class. Papers should be submitted online through Moodle. Late submissions will face a penalty of 10 percentage points for each day that a paper is late.

- Participation and attendance

While I do not formally take attendance, regular attendance is essential to pass the class as quizzes and exams are based on both in-class lectures and theories from the readings. Your grade will be penalized for more than two unexcused absences from class.

However, attendance alone is not participation: I expect that students who come to class do so having completed the assigned readings, and are willing to participate in a meaningful manner. Your participation grade will be based on the quality as well as the level of participation in class, in terms of adding to discussions or debates with constructive comments and ideas. Simply raising your hand to seek clarification on a topic does not constitute participation; rather, I look for informed comments that actively engage with the lecture topic or readings, or questions that can stimulate or add to ongoing discussions. I also expect that you will also be considerate of others' opinions in the class and respectfully engage with their comments and ideas, whether or not they may share your opinions or political views.

Given that debates over environmental policy, climate change, and other issues that we study in this class are a significant part of political and public discourse at this time, I expect students to also remain fairly well informed on these issues in the news. Current events in environmental news and policy will regularly become part of class discussions, and I suggest subscribing to a major national daily news source (e.g. *New York Times*, *Washington Post*), as well as reading environmental news and issues (e.g. *Science Daily*, *Grist*).

- Quizzes:

There will be five quizzes at various points during the semester. These will typically be comprised of multiple choice and short answer questions, and will cover key concepts from both readings and class discussions. Quizzes will be given in the first 20 minutes of class. I typically announce a quiz a few days in advance. I do not allow for quizzes to be made up if you miss class without a dean's excuse or a documented illness, or are late and arrive after the quiz has been collected.

- Grading scale:

	A: 93.0% or above	A-: 90.0% to 92.9%
B+: 87.0% to 89.9%	B: 83.0% to 86.9%	B-: 80.0% to 82.9%
C+: 77.0% to 79.9%	C: 73.0% to 76.9%	C-: 70.0% to 72.9%
D+: 67.0% to 69.9%	D: 63.0% to 66.9%	D-: 60.0% to 62.9%
F: 59.9% or below		

Policies on electronics, slides, communication, and accessibility:

I do not allow the use of laptops, tablets, cell phones, and other electronic devices in class. Laptop use is often distracting both to the users and those students around them, particularly in a discussion-oriented class such as this. For certain group assignments that require in-class research, I will ask you to bring a laptop or similar device to class, and will notify you of these ahead of time. If you have a documented accommodation that requires you to use a laptop to take notes, please speak to me in office hours about this.

I frequently teach using Powerpoints. I will post these slides on Moodle as study aids. These should help you focus on key points for quizzes/tests when reviewing, but will not serve as a substitute for your own attendance or note-taking.

Notices about assignment guidelines, quiz dates, possible reading changes, and the like will be announced by email via Moodle. I will usually announce these in class as well, but you are responsible for regularly checking both your university email and Moodle on a regular basis. Given that climate change and environmental policy are highly contentious topics in politics today, new policy debates or events may emerge at any point that may require us to deviate from the scheduled topics and readings on the syllabus. As such, I reserve the right to amend the syllabus to add/change assigned readings, or discussion topics in order to best meet the objectives of the course.

The most effective way to reach me is by email: I generally respond to emails within 24 hours.

I normally keep office hours Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays; however, I suggest emailing me to schedule a meeting time. I am happy to meet with any student when available (during scheduled office hours or otherwise), but I will always prioritize a scheduled appointment over a walk-in.

What this class does not cover:

Environmental policy is an extremely broad field, and it is not possible to cover each important policy issue in appropriate depth over a semester. As a result, I have omitted aspects of policy such as global governance, land management, and conservation to allow us to explore other issues in sufficient depth. Other political science and environmental classes at DePauw cover some of these issues in substantially more depth. If these (or other policy issues not covered in the class) are of interest to you, feel free to discuss these with me outside of class. You may also use your response papers to cover these matters in a way that links them to the class material.

Course schedule and readings:

Module 1: Understanding what environmental policy is, and why we need it

Wed, Aug 23: Introductions, expectations, and a primer on environmental policy

Fri, Aug 25: Why is environmental policy so relevant now?

Chapter 1 from *Environmental Policy and Politics*.

Mon, Aug 28 – Fri, Sep 1: Why do we need environmental policy? The tragedy of the commons

Hardin, G. (1968). The Tragedy of the Commons. *Science*, 162(3859), 1243-1248.

Dietz, T., Ostrom, E., & Stern, P. C. (2003). The Struggle to Govern the Commons. *Science*, 302(5652), 1907-1912.

Madani, K. (2010). Game theory and water resources. *Journal of Hydrology*, 381(3), 225-238.

Mon, Sep 4: The scientific consensus on climate change

Oreskes, N. (2004). The scientific consensus on climate change. *Science*, 306(5702), 1686-1686. (This is a very short reading but extremely important.)

Van der Linden, S. L., Leiserowitz, A. A., Feinberg, G. D., & Maibach, E. W. (2015). The scientific consensus on climate change as a gateway belief: Experimental evidence. *PloS one*, 10(2), e0118489.

Module 2: Policymaking: Process, actors, and institutions

Wed, Sep 6: Overview of the policy process model

Chapter 2 from *Environmental Policy and Politics*. Read until “Constitutional Constraints” (p. 41)

Fri, Sep 8: Actors and stakeholders

Chapter 2 from *Environmental Policy and Politics*. Read through end of “Environmentalism and its critics” (p. 61).

Mon, Sep 11: Policy and issue framing

Lakoff, G. (2010). Why it matters how we frame the environment. *Environmental Communication*, 4(1), 70-81.

Wed, Sep 13: Federalism

Konisky, D. M., & Woods, N. D. (2016). Environmental policy, federalism, and the Obama presidency. *Publius: The Journal of Federalism*, 46(3), 366-391.

Fri, Sep 15: Public opinion in the policy process

Finish Chapter 2.

Egan, P. J., & Mullin, M. (2017). Climate Change: US Public Opinion. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 20, 209-227.

Mon, Sep 18: Executive power in policymaking

Chapter 3 from *Environmental Policy and Politics*. Read until “Congress: Too Much Check, Too Little Balance” (p. 91).

Wed, Sep 20: Congress and political polarization

Chapter 3 from *Environmental Policy and Politics*. Read until “The Bureaucracy: Power Through Implementation” (p. 99).

Shipan, C. R., & Lowry, W. R. (2001). Environmental policy and party divergence in Congress. *Political Research Quarterly*, 54(2), 245-263.

Fri, Sep 22 and Mon, Sep 25: Bureaucratic institutions and the role of the EPA

Finish Chapter 3

Article from *The Atlantic*: “How the US Protects the Environment, from Nixon to Trump”: <https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2017/03/how-the-epa-and-us-environmental-law-works-a-civics-guide-pruitt-trump/521001/>

(Note that Wed, Sep 27 is the DePauw Day of Dialogue: class will not meet then.)

Fri, Sep 29: Interest groups and organized opposition to policy

McCright, A. M., & Dunlap, R. E. (2003). Defeating Kyoto: The conservative movement's impact on US climate change policy. *Social Problems*, 50(3), 348-373.

Mon, Oct 2: The Precautionary Principle

Chapter 4 from *Environmental Policy and Politics*. Read through “The Precautionary Principle” (p. 154)

Wed, Oct 4: Environmental injustice and discrimination

Finish Chapter 4.

Bullard, R.D. (1999) Dismantling Environmental Racism in the USA. *Local Environment*, 4(1), 5-19.

Fri, Oct 6 to Wed, Oct 11: Evaluating benefits, costs, and tail risks

Taleb, N. N., & Blyth, M. (2011). The black swan of Cairo: How suppressing volatility makes the world less predictable and more dangerous. *Foreign Affairs*, 33-39.

Chapter 5 from *Environmental Policy and Politics*.

Weitzman, M. L. (2011). Fat-tailed uncertainty in the economics of catastrophic climate change. *Review of Environmental Economics and Policy*, 5(2), 275-292.

Fri, Oct 13: Midterm exam

Oct 14-22 – Fall break (No class)

Module 3: Cases and challenges in policymaking: Air, water, and energy policy

Mon, Oct 23 and Wed, Oct 25: The Clean Air Act and Clean Power Plan

Chapter 6 from *Environmental Policy and Politics*. Read until “Regulating Water Quality” (p. 215)

Fri, Oct 27: Free riding and the limitations of federalism

Monogan, J. E., Konisky, D. M., & Woods, N. D. (2017). Gone with the Wind: Federalism and the Strategic Location of Air Polluters. *American Journal of Political Science*, 61(2), 257-270.

Mon, Oct 30 and Wed, Nov 1: Water pollution and the Clean Water Act

Finish Chapter 6.

Fri, Nov 3: The Flint, MI water crisis

NYTimes: Flint Water Crisis Inquiry Finds State Ignored Warning Signs
<<http://mobile.nytimes.com/2016/03/24/us/flint-water-crisis.html>>

Michigan Environmental Justice Coalition statement on Flint water crisis:
<<https://www.dwej.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/MEJC-Statement-On-Flint-Water-Crisis.pdf>>

Mon, Nov 6 and Wed, Nov 8: Energy policy and fossil fuel reliance

Chapter 8 from *Environmental Policy and Politics*. Read through end of “Coal” (p.289).

Fri, Nov 10: Hydraulic fracturing and fossil fuel extraction

Rabe, B. G., & Borick, C. (2013). Conventional politics for unconventional drilling? Lessons from Pennsylvania's early move into fracking policy development. *Review of Policy Research*, 30(3), 321-340.

Article from *The Atlantic*: "How Fracking is Bad for Our Bodies."
<<http://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2013/10/how-fracking-is-bad-for-our-bodies/280384/>>

Module 4: Future directions and challenges for environmental policy

Mon, Nov 13 to Fri, Nov 17: Organized misinformation

Watch and discuss *Merchants of Doubt*

Boussalis, C., & Coan, T. G. (2016). Text-mining the signals of climate change doubt. *Global Environmental Change*, 36, 89-100.

Mon, Nov 20: Political networks

Skocpol, T., & Hertel-Fernandez, A. (2016). The Koch network and Republican Party extremism. *Perspectives on Politics*, 14(3), 681-699.

Thanksgiving break - no class

Mon, Nov 27: Growing polarization, and the role of public opinion

Dunlap, R. E., McCright, A. M., & Yarosh, J. H. (2016). The political divide on climate change: Partisan polarization widens in the US. *Environment: Science and Policy for Sustainable Development*, 58(5), 4-23.

Wed, Nov 29: Cultural cognition in environmental attitudes

Kahan, D. M., Jenkins - Smith, H., & Braman, D. (2011). Cultural cognition of scientific consensus. *Journal of Risk Research*, 14(2), 147-174.

Fri, Dec 1 and Mon, Dec 4: The current state and future of US environmental policy

Readings TBD.

Wed, Dec 6: Environmentalism: a local, federal, or international matter?

Maniates, M. F. (2001). Individualization: Plant a Tree, Buy a Bike, Save the World?
Global Environmental Politics 1(3):31-52.

Watch Jared Diamond's TED Talk: Why Societies Collapse
<https://www.ted.com/talks/jared_diamond_on_why_societies_collapse>

Fri, Dec 8: Moving environmental policy forward & review session

Mon, Dec 11: Final exam 8:30-11:30

Other policies:

- Student disability accommodations

It is the policy and practice of DePauw University to provide reasonable accommodations for students with properly documented disabilities. Written notification from Student Disability Services is required. If you are eligible to receive an accommodation and would like to request it for this course, please contact Student Disability Services. Allow one week advance notice to ensure enough time for reasonable accommodations to be made. Otherwise, it is not guaranteed that the accommodation can be provided on a timely basis. Accommodations are not retroactive. Students who have questions about Student Disability Services or who have, or think they may have, a disability (psychiatric, attentional, learning, vision, hearing, physical, medical, etc.) are invited to contact Student Disability Services for a confidential discussion in Union Building Suite 200 or by phone at 658-6267.

- Academic honesty

All students taking this class must adhere to the standards of academic integrity outlined in the DePauw student code: see the DePauw academic handbook (URL provided on page 2) for the full academic integrity policy. In cases of plagiarism or cheating on quizzes or exams that violate the academic integrity code, students will automatically get a grade of 0 for the assignment or exam with no opportunity to retake it, and may face further sanctioning in accordance with university policy.