

Political Science 403Z

Introduction to Environmental Policy (Fall 2009)

Lecture: Mon. Wed.
11:30 –12:45

Professor: Dennis Pirages – WRI B215
Office Hours: Mon., Wed. 1:00 – 3:00; and by
appointment.
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Required Books (paperbacks):

Conca et al., Green Planet Blues

Rosenbaum, Environmental Politics and Policy

Kassiola, Explorations in Environmental Political theory

Course Requirements: Participants are expected to attend lectures regularly, complete assigned readings in a timely manner, and to participate in class discussion. Final grades will be determined as follows:

Mid-term Examination	40%
Final Examination	50%
Attendance and Participation	10%

Aug. 24: Course overview - Procedures and expectations – Environmental policy as an interdisciplinary undertaking – Two kinds of evolutionary processes – Natural selection - Sociocultural evolution.

Aug. 26: The context for environmental policy I. – Human beings and the environment - Historical patterns of population growth - Environmental impact of three sociocultural revolutions - Exclusionist and inclusionist perspectives - Technology and environmental quality.

Assignment: Conca, Introduction, Chapters 1, 5.

Aug. 31: The context for environmental policy II. - Basic ecological concepts - Components of the physical environment - Natural resources - The biosphere - The hydrosphere - The atmosphere - Environmental services - Qualitative and quantitative pollution - Interdependence in a global ecosystem.

Assignment: Rosenbaum, Chapter 1.

Sept. 2: The context for environmental policy III. - Environmental politics and policy - The origins of political systems - Politics as an authoritative allocation of values - Politics and markets - Policy-making and enforcement in the United States - The policy cycle - Agenda setting.

Assignment: Rosenbaum, Chapter 2.

Sept. 9: The origins of U.S. environmental policy - Early attempts at government regulation - The environmental revolution - The politics of environmental policy - Impact of federalism - Separation and division of powers - The institutional setting - Administrative law - EPA - Power of the courts - Complexities of environmental policy-making.

Assignment: Rosenbaum, Chapter 3.

Sept. 14: Early environmental legislation - The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) - Environmental impact statements - NEPA litigation - Council on Environmental Quality.

Sept. 16: Air pollution - Causes of air pollution - Smog and temperature inversions - Criterion pollutants - Current controversies over air quality - The debate over curbing greenhouse gas emissions.

Assignment: Rosenbaum, 174 - 195.

Sept. 21: Air quality legislation - Air quality standards - Issues in pollution abatement - The problem of particulate matter - Non-attainment areas - Hummers, trucks, and air pollution.

Sept. 23: Water scarcity and pollution - Causes and consequences - Water as a renewable resource - Major pollutants - Point and non-point sources - Problem of scarce and polluted ground water.

Assignment: Rosenbaum, 196- 213.

Sept. 28: Water quality legislation - Rivers and Harbors Act - Clean Water Act - BPT and BAT - Permitting discharges - The future agenda.

Sept. 30: Less visible pollution threats - Living better (or not) through chemistry - Chemical pollutants - Pesticides and herbicides - Risk assessment - TOSCA - Federal regulation of toxic substances - PMNs.

Assignment: Rosenbaum, 217 - 228.

Oct. 5: Handling the nation's waste - Hazardous and non-hazardous waste - The management and treatment of hazardous waste - The NIMBY syndrome - Post-industrial waste.

Assignment: Rosenbaum, 228 - 249.

Oct. 7: The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) - Cradle-to-grave controls - The manifest system - Small quantity generators - New kinds of hazardous waste - CERCLA and the Superfunds - Toxic torts.

- Oct. 12: **Mid-term Examination.**
- Oct. 14: New issues in environmental policy – The precautionary principle - Sick buildings - Radon - Endocrine disruptors - Persistent Organic Pollutants - Perchlorate – EMFs - Cell phones.
- Oct. 19: Energy and the environment - Energy sources for the industrial revolution - Fossil fuels - Quantity and quality - The political economy of petroleum reserves- Controversy over offshore drilling - Energy use in the U.S. – New vehicle mileage standards.
- Oct. 21: Environmental problems associated with obtaining and using energy - Energy consumption and pollution – Alternative fossil fuels - Soft path and hard path choices – Renewable energy sources.
- Assignment: Rosenbaum, Chapter 8.
- Oct. 26: Nuclear power - Promise and peril - Nuclear waste storage issues - Power grids and blackouts - The politics of energy non-policy - Comparative energy policies.
- Oct. 28: Comparative and global environmental issues - Tragedies of the global commons – Strategies for managing the commons - The consensual nature of international law - Regional and international agreements.
- Assignment: Conca, Chapters. 3, 4, 12.
- Nov. 2: The atmospheric commons – Trace gases - The disappearing ozone layer - Causes and consequences of ozone depletion - The Montreal Protocol - Ozone diplomacy.
- Nov. 4: Causes and consequences of global warming – Carbon dioxide, methane and the greenhouse effect - Rising sea levels – Changing polar regions - warming and disease - warming and agriculture.
- Assignment: Rosenbaum, Chapter 10.
- Nov. 9: The international politics of global warming - Winners and losers- North-South politics – U.S. voluntary approaches -The Kyoto Protocol - More Kyotos needed? - Other international environmental agreements.
- Nov. 11: Comparative environmental policy - Global development and the environment - Progress and sustainability - The Chindia problem – Environmental constraints on industrial growth – A new planetary bargain.
- Assignment: Conca, Chapters 2, 8; Kassiola, Chapter 1.

Nov. 16: Values and environmental policy - Issues of sustainable development – Ecological footprints - Ecodevelopment and authentic development - Dilemmas of development – Search for a new social paradigm – Leapfrogging development.

Assignment: Conca, Chapters 22-24.

Nov. 18: Globalization, trade, and the environment – Establishing minimum standards - Free trade or environmental protection? - The “shadow” ecologies - Harmonizing environmental policies - Who protects the global ecosystem?

Assignment: Conca, Chapters 17, 18, 19, 20, 21.

Nov. 23: New ways of measuring social progress - What should be sustained? - Quantity versus quality - The vagaries of G.D.P.

Assignment: Kassiola, Chapter 8.

Nov. 25: Toward indicators of genuine progress – Measuring ecological footprints.

Nov. 30: Deeper ecological issues – sustainability as process - Changing the dominant social paradigm - Different agendas for different societies - Confronting consumption - New kinds of efficiency – Ecological politics.

Assignment: Conca, Chapters 25, 26; Kassiola, Chapters 2, 3, 6, 7, 9.

Dec. 2. Recap and review for final examination.

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The Disability Resource Center (DRC) coordinates all academic accommodations for students with documented disabilities. The DRC is the official office to review and house disability documentation for students, and to provide them with an official Academic Accommodation Plan to present to the faculty if an accommodation is warranted. Faculty should not provide students accommodations without being in receipt of this plan.

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