

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

SYLLABUS

NOTE: *Syllabus is subject to change* throughout the semester, for example to accommodate guest lecturers. All changes will be announced in class.

INSTRUCTOR: Michelle D. Land

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OFFICE: East 440

OFFICE HOURS: Thursdays 3:15pm – 4:35pm

CLASS SCHEDULE: Thursday 4:55pm - 6:35pm

ROOM: Silver 501

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Understanding the complex adaptive systems involving environmental impairment and protection is an interdisciplinary effort that converges in the study of environmental policy. This course examines environmental policy (and politics) and its underlying ethical considerations with an emphasis on the American political arena. Students will receive a broad introduction to key concepts, actors, stakeholders, and issues related to environmental policymaking. Course material focuses on the role of government organizations - at the federal, state, and local level – institutional processes, and nongovernmental entities. Throughout the semester, we will address substantive environmental policy issues, such as water and air pollution, waste, biodiversity, land use, and climate change. At the conclusion of the semester, students should have an understanding of the historical, cultural, institutional, and ideological forces shaping environmental policy and regulations in the United States.

EVALUATION:

1. Examination (30%): The examination will be a take home exam issued at the beginning of the semester and due at the end of the semester. The examination will require you to synthesize the material in a coherent and cogent manner and will require you to call upon your understanding of the issues and substance of environmental policymaking. Answers should be based on the required reading and class lectures and discussions. The answer should be no less than 2500 words and no more than 3000 words (ca. 7-8 pages).

2. Semester Project (50%): This project will be comprised of both written and presentation components. Students will research and write a 12-15 page white paper to support a proposed legislative bill. Based upon the research, each student will draft a legislative bill with an accompanying supporting memorandum. Each student will analyze and mark-up one (1) other student's draft bill. Students will present their final legislative recommendations in the last two class meetings.

3. Participation (20%): Student participation during class time is critical. This portion of your grade is based solely on the *quality* of participation in class discussion, rather than mere presence. One element of participation will require students to lead the class in one (1) discussion about a current environmental policy issue in the recent news (within 2 weeks of discussion date). Students will be assigned class dates to satisfy this requirement.

Assignment	Points	Percent of Total
Examination	150	30%
Semester Project	250	50%
Participation	100	20%
TOTAL	500	100%

Points	Percentage	Grade	Points	Percentage	Grade
465 and above	93	A			
450 - 464	90	A-	365 - 384	73	C
435 - 449	89	B+	350 - 364	70	C-
415 - 434	83	B	335 - 349	69	D+
400 - 415	80	B-	300 - 334	60	D
385 - 399	79	C+	Below 300		F

ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS WEBSITES:<http://dotearth.blogs.nytimes.com/><http://www.nytimes.com/pages/science/earth/index.html><http://www.grist.org/><http://www.enn.com/><http://www.ens-newswire.com/><http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/3032493/><http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1025><http://www.reuters.com/news/archive/environmentNews?view=page&page=1><http://news.bna.com/erln/><http://www.eenews.net/Greenwire.htm>

ELEMENTS OF THE SEMESTER PROJECT:

The purpose of the semester project is to examine a narrow environmental issue or problem in an in-depth manner and address it with a legislative response. It will be executed in three parts: I. Research paper, II. Draft legislative bill/memo, and III. Presentation.

I. Research Paper (100/250 points) – Providing background on the issue (including stakeholder perspectives), discuss and analyze an environmental policy issue of your choice and recommend potential policy responses. You may choose either an emerging environmental policy issue that is currently under debate or an existing policy/program needing to be overhauled or revised. ***The final paper will be no less than 12 pages and no more than 15 pages (not including title page and list of sources cited).***

One effective way to search for federally introduced legislation is on the Library of Congress website (Thomas): <http://thomas.loc.gov/>.

Your paper should include:

- (a) Problem Definition—define the issue at the center of your policy problem; include any relevant sub-issues;
- (b) Legislative History—identify state, federal, local laws that pertain to the issue you have chosen and summarize the current policy (or its disposition in the legislative process);
- (c) Stakeholders—identify all **major** stakeholders involved in the debate (“the regulated” industry, public interest/advocacy groups, regulatory agencies, underrepresented groups etc.) and their positions on the issue;
- (d) Recommendation analysis—based on research, cost/benefit weighing, policy externalities, implementation complexities etc., outline your proposed policy recommendations and their potential consequences;
- (e) Conclusion—an overview of the problem, its challenges, and a succinct restatement of your recommended policy solution.

II. Legislative Bill Draft and Supporting Memorandum (100/250 points) – Based on your research and policy recommendations, you will draft a legislative bill that responds to the environmental “problem.” You will also draft a supporting memorandum for the bill on behalf of the bill sponsor. ***The bill will be no more than five (5) pages in length and the memo is no more than two (2) pages.*** While drafting the bill and memo, you should consider the following:

- (a) Background on the issue, including statistics (prevalence of issues etc.)
- (b) Existing law - if no law, draft from scratch?; if law in existence, does it need updating?
- (c) How will the solutions be articulated?
- (d) Who/which agency will be responsible for implementation?
- (e) Does this need funding? If so, how much and from where?
- (f) What will be the penalties for non-compliance?
- (g) Enforcement – what and by whom?
- (h) Is there a federal preemption on the issue?
- (i) Who will be likely co-sponsors in house/senate?
- (j) Which stakeholders will support your position and why; which will oppose your position and why?
- (k) How will you address the stakeholder criticisms?

III. Presentation (50/250 points) – Students will put design a brief presentation (15 minutes) that synthesizes the problem, stakeholders and their positions, and the policy recommendation(s). The presentation should engage the class in the relevance of the topic to environmental policy. Students will receive the presentation grading criteria as the time draws nearer.

Milestones for Semester Project:

I. Topic Selection (1 paragraph)

Select topic and submit a one-paragraph description by **Thursday, September 10th**. The more narrow the topic, the better. In other words, rather than say you want to research “climate change,” propose to research specific actions, such as “requiring government buildings to be carbon free by 2030.” It can be a local, state, or federal issue. **Submit your paragraph via email**; topics must be approved by instructor.

II. Proposal (6 pages)

- Define the problem, legislative history summary (i.e., what, if anything, has happened in the legislature), identify key stakeholders;
- Discuss preliminary research including properly cited sources;
- Due on **Thursday, October 1st (submit Word document via email)**

III. Rough draft (~12 pages)

- To include a 1-page outline of the sections/sub-sections reflecting flow of your paper;
- Should be complete and professionally presented (i.e., properly cited);
- The more final the draft is, the more useful will be the comments you receive;
- Due on **Thursday, October 29th (submit Word document via email)**

IV. Bill Draft + Supporting Memorandum (4-5 pages + 1-2 pages)

Bill title, and draft (see NYUClasses example of actual NYS bill) and supporting memorandum to be submitted for peer review on **Thursday, November 12th**. Each student’s bill will be reviewed by a fellow student, who will provide constructive feedback. Reviewers must be prepared to discuss bill critique with authors by class time on **Thursday, November 19th**.

V. Presentations

- Presentations will take place on **Thursday, December 3rd and Thursday, December 10th**

VI. Final Paper (12-15 pages, *excluding* title page, references, and appendices with tables and figures)

- 12-point font, 1.5 paragraph line spacing, 1-inch margins;
- Use footnotes for references and to include additional textual material;
- Paper must include proper citations and works cited/bibliography/references list; style (MLA, APA, Chicago Style etc.) is up to you, but must be used consistently;
- Good grammar, punctuations, and spelling (consistent errors in any of these will result in a lower grade);
- Due on **Thursday, December 17th by 11:59pm.**

VII. Final Bill + Memorandum (6-8 pages total)

Follow the bill and memo example structure provided on NYUClasses. Due on **Thursday, December 17th by 11:59pm.**

LECTURE SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS:

Week 1 - What is Environmental Policy?

Thursday, September 3rd

- Introductions; course overview; What is policy?
- Reading for next class meeting:

Mazmanian, Daniel A. and Kraft, Michael E., The Three Epochs of the Environmental Movement (March 24, 2008). University of Southern California School of Policy and Development, Environment & Sustainability, WP-March 2008-1. [on NYUClasses]

Ch. 1, Vig & Kraft, pp. 2 - 32

Week 2 – Policy Cycle; Introduction to Official Actors

Thursday, September 10th

- **Discussion: Azal**
- **ONE PARAGRAPH TOPIC DESCRIPTION DUE**
- (brief) history of America's political structure (preserving "status quo"); policy cycle stages, activities and responsible party.
- Reading for next class meeting:

Ch. 2, Vig & Kraft, pp. 33 – 57 and Ch. 4, Vig & Kraft, pp. 80 - 102

Week 3 – Official Actors: Congress cont'd and The Presidency; Federalism

Thursday, September 17th

- **Discussion: Anna**
- Congressional structure and resources; influence of the president
- Respective roles and limits of federal vs. state governments;
- Reading for next class meeting:

Ch. 5, Vig & Kraft, pp. 103 – 127 and Ch. 7, Vig & Kraft, pp. 151 – 170

Week 4 - Official Actors Continued: Government Agencies in Environmental Policy Making

Thursday, September 24th

- **Discussion: Jenna / Jessica**
- Agency oversight, significance of the Administrative Procedure Act, command-and-control
- Reading for next class meeting:

Government Accountability Office, "Environmental Protection Agency: Major Management Challenges," GAO-11-422T, March 2, 2011 [on NYUClasses]

Week 5 - Special Lecture on USEPA

Thursday, October 1st

- **Discussion: Sara T.**
- **PROPOSAL DUE**
- **Guest Lecture: Marla Wieder, Esq., Asst. Regional Counsel / Regional Criminal Enforcement Counsel - U.S. EPA, Region 2 [invited]**

- Reading for next class meeting:

Citizens of Overton Park v. Volpe, 1971 USSC Case [on NYUClasses]

Ch. 6, Vig & Kraft, pp. 128 - 150

Week 6 - Official Actors Continued: The Role of the Judiciary in Environmental Policymaking

Thursday, October 8th

- **Discussion: Peter / Nelvia**
- Judicial review of agency actions; significance of citizen involvement/suits
- Reading for next class meeting:

Allard, Nicholas W., “Lobbying is an Honorable Profession: The Right to Petition and the Competition to be Right,” *Stanford Law & Policy Review*, vol. 19:1, pp. 23 – 68 (2008) [on NYUClasses]

Ackerman Essay on Climate Change Lobbying [on NYUClasses]

Ch. 3, Vig & Kraft, pp. 58 - 78

Week 7 – Informal Actors: The Role of NGO’s in Environmental Politics

Thursday, October 15th

- **Discussion: Lisa / Avital**
- Citizen and corporate advocacy and lobbying in the policymaking process
- Reading for next class meeting:

Milazzo, Paul Charles, Ch. 8, *Unlikely Environmentalists, Congress and Clean Water, 1945 - 1972*, University Press of Kansas, pp. 191 - 223 (2006) [on NYUClasses]

Week 8 – Roots and Rights: History of Environmentalism and Advocacy

Thursday, October 22nd

- **Guest Lecture: John Cronin, Pace University Senior Fellow for Environmental Affairs [confirmed]**
- Reading for next class meeting:

Boehlert, Sherwood L., “The Role of Scientists in Policymaking,” AAAS-CSPO S&T Policy Review: Highlights of the 2007 Forum on S&T Policy [NYUClasses]

Stine, Deborah D., “Science and Technology Policymaking: A Primer,” Congressional Research Service 7-5700, May 27 (2009) [NYUClasses]

Ch. 8. Vig & Kraft, pp. 173 - 193

Week 9 – Informal Actors Continued: Science, Communication and Policy Makers

Thursday, October 29th

- **Discussion: Jun**
- **ROUGH DRAFTS DUE**
- Uncertainties of science, precautionary principle, comparative analysis between policy and science stakeholders
- Reading for next class meeting: TBA

Week 10 – Risk Assessment

Thursday, November 5th

- **Discussion: Sophia / Anastasia**
- **BILL/MEMOs DUE TO PEER REVIEWER**
- Analyzing risk, risk perception, and managing risk
- Reading for next class meeting:

Contents of Environmental Justice folder on *NYUClasses*

Ch. 12, Vig & Kraft, pp. 265 - 285

Week 11 – What Role Does Ethics Play in Environmental Policy? Environmental Justice: A Case Study

Thursday, November 12th

- **Discussion: Batya / Sarah E.**
- **BILLS RETURNED FROM PEER REVIEWER**
- Facility siting, emissions and associated risks, accessibility to information/resources
- Reading for next class meeting:

Ch. 10, Vig & Kraft, pp. 215 – 238 and Ch. 11, Vig & Kraft, pp. 239 - 264

Week 12 – Policy Design and the future of environmental policymaking

Thursday, November 19th

- **Discussion: Evelyn / Leyla**
- Command-and-Control v. market driven v. collaborative policy

Examination due by 9:00am on Wednesday, November 25th (via email attachment, Word document)

Thursday, November 26th – THANKSGIVING - NO CLASS

Week 13 - Student Research Presentations

Thursday, December 3rd

- **STUDENT PRESENTATIONS**

Week 14 - Student Research Presentations

Thursday, December 10th (last class meeting)

- **STUDENT PRESENTATIONS**

Thursday, December 17th - FINAL SEMESTER PROJECT PAPERS DUE by 11:59pm

NOTE: There will be no exam administered during the “final exam period.”