

# Environmental Policy

By Josh Gellers, University of Cali

## Course Description

The vitality of the world's ecosystems rests upon a constellation of inevitable and purposive forces acting in concert. To be sure, how humans decide to formalize interactions with their natural surroundings holds important consequences for both the environment and the people who inhabit it. By studying policy, we can better understand how politics translates competing interests, strategies, and values into environmental outcomes. This course will introduce the concept of environmental policy and provide students with the analytical tools required to evaluate the merit of various approaches to solving environmental problems. The main focus will be U.S. environmental policy, but course materials will also incorporate international environmental policy as well as policy in a comparative perspective where appropriate.

## Course Objectives

1. Understand the various ethical orientations toward the environment
2. Identify the root causes of current environmental issues
3. Develop knowledge about environmental policy making processes and actors
4. Examine different approaches to solving environmental problems
5. Analyze current environmental controversies
6. Apply theory and policy frameworks to devise practical solutions
7. Enhance critical thinking, public speaking, and writing skills

## Course Logistics

Class Format:

Lecture attendance is mandatory and will be recorded. Most class sessions will be devoted to a mixture of lecture and discussion regarding assigned reading materials. There is no make-up for anything covered during these general class sessions. Graded portions of the class include four reaction papers, midterm exam, final paper, final paper presentation, and class attendance/participation. The reaction papers will be two-page, double-spaced analytical summaries of the week's readings. Students must complete four of these throughout the term. The midterm exam will consist of two essay questions. This exam will cover readings from the textbook, films shown during class, and in-class lectures. For the final paper, students will be required to write a 7-10 page analysis of a current domestic or international environmental problem and devise a potential policy solution.

## Expectations

1. Reading assignments should be completed prior to class meetings.
2. Class members are encouraged to take an active, participatory role in class discussions.
3. Students should study in advance for all exams.

## Grading

The following weights will be assigned in the determination of final grades:

|                                      |       |
|--------------------------------------|-------|
| Reaction Papers (4)                  | (20%) |
| Midterm Exam (in class: closed book) | (25%) |
| Final Paper (take-home)              | (30%) |
| Final Paper Presentation             | (15%) |
| Class Attendance, Participation      | (10%) |

## Course Materials

The required textbooks for this course are:

*A Sand County Almanac*, (1966). Aldo Leopold, Ballantine Books.

*Debating the Earth: The Environmental Politics Reader*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (2005). Dryzek & Schlosberg, Oxford University Press.

*Environmental Ethics: Readings in Theory and Application*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (2008). Pojman and Pojman, Thomson Wadsworth.

*Environmental Law and Policy*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (2010). Salzman and Thompson, Jr., Foundation Press.

*Environmental Policy: New Directions for the Twenty-First Century*, 8<sup>th</sup> ed. (2013). Vig and Kraft, CQ Press.

*The Global Environment*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (2010). Axelrod, VanDeveer, and Downie, CQ Press.

These textbooks are available for purchase at the bookstore. Copies of the textbooks will also be available on reserve at the university library at the Circulation/Reserve Desk. All other assigned articles should be accessed using the university's online library resources.

## Course Procedures

**Class Announcements:** Check your campus email account on a regular basis for any announcements from the instructor. If you have trouble accessing your email account, an

archive of class email announcements can be found on the Announcements section of the course's website.

Questions via Email: Please email your instructor with questions you may have regarding the administration of the class. Emails will normally be answered within 48 hours. Please raise all questions regarding the substance of the course material during class or office hours.

Recording Policy: Electronic recording of class sessions and discussion sections is not permitted.

Classroom Electronics: Cell phones must be turned off during class. Computers can distract everyone in the room, and will be permitted during class for note-taking purposes only. If anyone notices a computer used for any other reason during class, you will be instructed to turn it off immediately and work without it in the future.

Attendance: Attendance will be recorded in lecture. You will be responsible for all material provided in lecture and assigned readings. Anyone causing disruption in class or in discussion section will be instructed to leave immediately; no exceptions.

Exams: Bring 1 large (8.5" x 11") unmarked bluebook and several blue or black pens to the midterm exam. All essays must be written in ink. No electronic devices or other personal items may be kept at your seat during the exams (other than a plain watch).

Excused Absences: An absence from a lecture or exam will only be "excusable" (i.e. subject to make-up) with written documentation of an extreme illness or death in the immediate family, presented to the instructor within one week of the absence. Make-up credit for attendance will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Make-up exams may take the form of alternate exams or research papers. [\*A make-up final exam is only offered if you report your documented emergency prior to start of the exam to [jgellers@uci.edu](mailto:jgellers@uci.edu).]

Academic Honesty: Students found to be guilty of plagiarism or cheating as defined by official university policy will automatically receive a grade of "F" in the course. Other actions consistent with university policy may be taken where deemed appropriate. For more information, please consult the university's policy on academic integrity.

## Schedule & Assignments

The following reading list is provided as the authoritative guide to the assigned topics and readings for this course. As the weeks progress, the instructor may alter the reading assignments and/or provide links to recommended (optional) readings of further interest.

### [WEEK 1: Ethical Approaches to Environmental Problems]

- Lynn White, "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis," *Environmental Ethics*, pp. 14-21.
- Lewis W. Moncrief, "The Cultural Basis of Our Environmental Crisis," *Environmental Ethics*, pp. 22-27.
- Patrick Dobel, "The Judeo-Christian Stewardship Attitude to Nature," *Environmental Ethics*, pp. 28-32.
- Karen J. Warren, "The Power and Promise of Ecological Feminism," *Environmental Ethics*, pp. 33-48.
- Leslie Paul Thiele (2000), "Limiting Risks: Environmental Ethics as a Policy Primer," *Policy Studies Journal* 28(3) pp. 540-557.
- Aldo Leopold, "The Land Ethic," *A Sand County Almanac*, pp. 237-264.
- Assignment: Nature Conservancy, "What's My Carbon Footprint?" available at: <http://www.nature.org/greenliving/carboncalculator/index.htm>.

### [WEEK 2: History and Perspectives on Environmental Policy]

- Michael E Kraft and Norman J. Vig, "Environmental Policy over Four Decades," *Environmental Policy*, pp. 1-23.
- Salzman and Thompson, Chapter 2, "Perspectives on Environmental Law and Policy," pp. 13-28.
- Marvin S. Soroos, "Global Institutions and the Environment: An Evolutionary Perspective," *The Global Environment*, pp. 24-47.
- Jacqueline Peel, "Environmental Protection in the Twenty-first Century: The Role of International Law," *The Global Environment*, pp. 48-69.
- David Downie, "Global Environmental Policy: Governance through Regimes," *The Global Environment*, pp. 70-91.
- Submit and discuss "What's My Carbon Footprint?" assignment.

### [WEEK 3: Consumption, Population, and Economic Growth]

- Bill McKibben, "A Special Moment in History: The Challenge of Overpopulation and Overconsumption," *Environmental Ethics*, pp. 378-389.
- Garrett Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons," *Environmental Ethics*, pp. 389-398.
- Jared Diamond (2003), "The Last Americans: Environmental Collapse and the End of Civilization," *Harper's Magazine* 306(1837) pp. 43-51.
- Dryzek and Schlosberg, Chapter 3, "A Planet Under Stress," pp. 37-46.

- Stacy VanDeveer, "Consumption, Commodity Chains, and the Global Environment," *The Global Environment*, pp. 311-332.
- Submit final paper proposal.

[WEEK 4: U.S. Environmentalism and its Limits]

- Natural Resources Defense Council, "The Story of Silent Spring," available at: <http://www.nrdc.org/health/pesticides/hcarson.asp>.
- Riley Dunlap and Angela Mertig (1991), "The Evolution of the U.S. Environmental Movement from 1970-1990: An Overview," *Society & Natural Resources* 4(3) pp. 209-218.
- Deborah Lynn Guber and Christopher J. Bosso, "'High Hopes and Bitter Disappointment': Public Discourse and the Limits of the Environmental Movement in Climate Change Politics," *Environmental Policy*, pp. 54-82.
- Peter J. Jacques, Riley Dunlap, and Mark Freeman (2008), "The Organisation of Denial: Conservative Think Tanks and Environmental Scepticism," *Environmental Politics* 17(3) pp. 349-385.
- Paul Wapner and Charles Willoughby (2005), "The Irony of Environmentalism: The Ecological Futility but Political Necessity of Lifestyle Change," *Ethics & International Affairs* 19(3) pp. 77-89.

[WEEK 5: Framing and Agenda Setting]

- Andrew J. Hoffman and Marc J. Ventresca (1999), "The Institutional Framing of Policy Debates: Economics Versus the Environment," *American Behavioral Scientist* 42(8) pp. 1368-1392.
- Clark A. Miller (2000), "The Dynamics of Framing Environmental Values and Policy: Four Models of Societal Processes," *Environmental Values* 9(2) pp. 211-233.
- Christine R. Ader (1995), "A Longitudinal Study of Agenda Setting for the Issue of Environmental Pollution," *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly* 72(2) 300-311.
- Sarah B. Pralle (2009), "Agenda-setting and Climate Change," *Environmental Politics* 18(5) pp. 781-799.
- Jaclyn Marisa Dispensa and Robert J. Brulle (2003), "Media's Social Construction of Environmental Issues: Focus on Global Warming – A Comparative Study," *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy* 23(10) pp.74-105.
- Submit final paper bibliography.

[WEEK 6: Market-Based Solutions]

- Salzman and Thompson, Chapter 2, "Perspectives on Environmental Law and Policy," pp. 32-38.
- Robert Stavins and Bradley Whitehead, "Market-Based Environmental Policies," *Debating the Earth*, pp. 229-238.
- Sheila M. Olmstead, "Applying Market Principles to Environmental Policy," *Environmental Policy*, pp. 206-229.
- Mark Sagoff (1981), "Economic Theory and Environmental Law," *Michigan Law Review* 79 pp. 1393-1419.

- Kenneth R. Richards (2000), "Framing Environmental Policy Instrument Choice," *Duke Environmental Law & Policy Forum* 10(2) pp. 221-285.

[WEEK 7: Local Community Empowerment]

- Charles Sabel, Archon Fung, and Bradley Karkkainen, "Beyond Backyard Environmentalism: How Communities are Quietly Refashioning Environmental Regulation," *Debating the Earth*, pp. 116-134.
- Jim Dodge, "Living By Life: Some Bioregional Theory and Practice," *Debating the Earth*, pp. 355-363.
- R. Gregory Roberts (1998), "Environmental Justice and Community Empowerment: Learning from the Civil Rights Movement," *American University Law Review* 48(1) pp. 229-267.
- Richard C. Rich et al. (1995), "Citizen Participation and Empowerment: The Case of Local Environmental Hazards," *American Journal of Community Psychology* 23(5) pp. 657-676.
- James Blake (1999), "Overcoming the 'Value-Action Gap' in Environmental Policy: Tensions Between National Policy and Local Experience," *Local Environment* 4(3) pp. 257-278.
- Regina Scheyvens (1999), "Ecotourism and the Empowerment of Local Communities," *Tourism Management* 20 pp. 245-249.

[WEEK 8: Environmental Justice and Human Rights]

- Salzman and Thompson, Chapter 2, "Perspectives on Environmental Law and Policy," pp. 28-32, 38-42.
- Robert D. Bullard and Glenn S. Johnson (2000), "Environmentalism and Public Policy: Environmental Justice: Grassroots Activism and Its Impact on Public Policy Decision Making," *Journal of Social Issues* 56(3) pp. 555-578.
- Dorceta E. Taylor (2000), "The Rise of the Environmental Justice Paradigm: Injustice Framing and the Social Construction of Environmental Discourses," *American Behavioral Scientist* 43(4) pp. 508-580.
- Barry E. Hill, Steve Wolfson, and Nicholas Targ (2004), "Human Rights and the Environment: A Synopsis and Some Predictions," *Georgetown International Environmental Law Review* 16 pp. 359-402.
- Francis O. Adeola (2000), "Cross-National Environmental Injustice and Human Rights Issues: A Review of Evidence in the Developing World," *American Behavioral Scientist* 43(4) pp. 686-706.

[WEEK 9: Rationality and Risk Assessment]

- Robert V. Bartlett, "Rationality and the Logic of the National Environmental Policy Act," *Debating the Earth*, pp. 93-103.
- Jeroen C.J.M. van den Bergh, Ada Ferrer-i-Carbonell, and Giuseppe Munda (2000), "Alternative Models of Individual Behaviour and Implications for Environmental Policy," *Ecological Economics* 32 pp. 43-61.

- Milton Russell and Michael Gruber (1987), "Risk Assessment in Environmental Policy-Making," *Science* 236(4799) pp. 286-290.
- John P. Dwyer (1990), "Limits of Environmental Risk Assessment," *Journal of Energy Engineering* 116(3) pp. 231-246.
- Mary O'Brien, "Goal: Replace Risk Assessment with Alternatives Assessment," *Debating the Earth*, pp. 135-144.

[WEEK 10: Proposing Solutions]

- Deliver Final Paper Presentations.

[FINALS WEEK]

- Submit Final Papers by 5:00pm.
- FINAL EXAM