

**Political Science 3201: The Environment and Public Policy**  
**Fall 2007**  
**Tuesday/Thursday, 9:30-10:45 am**  
**HALE 230**

**Professor: Nancy Billica, Ph.D.**

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This course examines the definition, formulation and implementation of public policy concerning the environment. Starting with models of the policy process and policy design, we examine competing perspectives on the nature and causes of environmental problems that inform the definition and formulation of environmental policy goals. Both traditional and emerging policy options or solutions are considered. The institutions through which environmental policies are designed, promoted, legitimated, implemented and adjudicated in the United States are also reviewed. By studying specific cases of environmental problems and policies, we will have opportunity to consider both policy successes as well as shortcomings in the political system in terms of achieving public ends.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Tue, 11 Sept	Short paper #1	(5 percent)
Tue, 25 Sept	Short paper #2	(5 percent)
Tue, 9 Oct	Short paper #3	(5 percent)
Thu, 18 Oct	Midterm exam	(20 percent)
Thu, 1 Nov	Short paper #4	(5 percent)
Thu, 29 Nov	Research paper	(30 percent)
Mon, 17 Dec	FINAL, 4:30 – 7:00 pm	(30 percent)

**READING MATERIALS**

Required readings come from several sources. Two books have been ordered and should be available in the campus bookstore:

Judith A. Layzer, *The Environmental Case: Translating Values Into Policy*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.  
(Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2006)

Norman J. Vig and Michael E. Kraft, editors, *Environmental Policy: New Directions for the Twenty-First Century*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2006)

Where indicated on the reading assignment list, several items are available either on the internet or directly from the course website. Students should expect additional readings to be assigned as the semester progresses.

## **EXPECTATIONS**

- Attend class and be prepared. This means reading each assignment prior to that class.
- Contact me early and often. Individual meetings are valuable to both of us. If you cannot meet during my office hours, I am easily reached via e-mail or telephone. You should especially talk with me as soon as possible when particular questions or concerns arise.
- Academic honesty. Any cheating is grounds for an automatic F, expulsion from the class, and referral to the College Committee on Academic Dishonesty. Cheating specifically includes use of unauthorized materials or others' work during exams, plagiarism (which also covers the use of materials made available on the internet), and misrepresentation of someone else's work or work from another course as your own. If you have questions about what is or is not permissible, ask first.

## **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Any student eligible for and needing academic adjustments or accommodations because of a disability should let me know early in the semester so that your learning needs may be appropriately met. You may be required to provide documentation of your special needs to the Disability Services Office. Contact: 303-492-8671, Willard 322, and [www.Colorado.edu/disabilityservices](http://www.Colorado.edu/disabilityservices).

## **RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES**

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to reasonably and fairly deal with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. Let me know as soon as possible any schedule conflicts due to religious observances. See full details at [http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac\\_relig.html](http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html).

## **BEHAVIORAL STANDARDS**

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Students who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Faculty members have the professional responsibility to treat all students with understanding, dignity and respect, to guide classroom discussion and to set reasonable limits on the manner in which they and their students express opinions. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. See policies at <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html> and at [http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student\\_code](http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code).

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council ([honor@colorado.edu](mailto:honor@colorado.edu); 303-725-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Other information on the Honor Code can be found at <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html> and at <http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/>.

## **DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT**

The University of Colorado at Boulder policies on Discrimination and Harassment, Sexual Harassment, and Amorous Relationships (found at <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/discrimination.html>) apply to all students, staff and faculty. Any student, staff or faculty member who believes s/he has been the subject of discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at <http://www.colorado.edu/odh>.

**PSCI 3201, The Environment and Public Policy**  
**CLASS SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS**

- Aug 28** Course overview
- Aug 30** Introducing the environmental policy process
- Layzer, Chapter 1
- Sept 4** The environmental policy process, cont'd
- Vig & Kraft, Chapter 1
- Sept 6** Agenda setting and the environment
- John Kingdon, excerpt from *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1984), 205-217. Available on the class website.
  - Vig & Kraft, Chapter 4
- Sept 11** Policy formulation and design
- Anne Schneider and Helen Ingram, "Systematically Pinching Ideas: A Comparative Approach to Policy Design," *Journal of Public Policy* 8 (Spring 1988): 61-80. Available on the class website
- Short paper #1 due, beginning of class**
- Sept 13** Policy design and the Clean Air Act of 1970
- Layzer, Chapter 2
  - Vig & Kraft: Use index listing for "Clean Air Act 1970" for references to important terms and policy elements
  - Review the EPA's documents on the Clean Air Act, available at: [http://www.epa.gov/air/oaq\\_caa.html](http://www.epa.gov/air/oaq_caa.html)
- Sept 18** Clean Air Act (CAA) of 1970, cont'd
- Sept 20** Competing perspectives on the environment: the lens of environmental ethics
- J. Baird Callicott, "Environmental Ethics: An Overview," Forum on Religion and Ecology, Harvard University Center for the Environment (2000), available at <http://www.environment.harvard.edu/religion/disciplines/ethics/index.html>.
  - Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, "Environmental Ethics," first published Mon 3 Jun, 2002, available at <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ethics-environmental/>
- Sept 25** Environmental ethics, cont'd
- Short paper #2 due, beginning of class**
- Sept 27** Ethics and the environment: the case of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR)
- Layzer, Chapter 6
- Oct 2** Ethics and the environment: water resources in the west. We will be watching a video entitled "Cadillac Desert: An American Nile," produced as one in a series of PBS films based on the book *Cadillac Desert: Water and the Transformation of Nature*, by Marc Reisner.
- Oct 4** The tragedy of the commons and sustainability
- Garrett Hardin, "Tragedy of the Commons," *Science*, Vol. 162 (December 13, 1968), available at <http://www.dieoff.org/page95.htm>.
- Oct 9** The commons and the case of fisheries
- Layzer, Chapter 10
- Short paper #3 due, beginning of class**

- Oct 11** Economics and the environment
- Vig & Kraft, Chapter 9
  - Layzer, Chapter 14
- Oct 16** Environmental regulation: command and control vs. marketplace incentives
- Winston Harrington and Richard D. Morgenstern, “Economic Incentives versus Command and Control: What’s the Best Approach for Solving Environmental Problems?” *Resources (Fall/Winter 2004)*, a publication of Resources for the Future, available at [http://www.rff.org/Documents/RFF\\_Resources\\_152\\_economicincentives.pdf](http://www.rff.org/Documents/RFF_Resources_152_economicincentives.pdf).
- Oct 18** **Midterm exam**
- Oct 23** Sustainability, population growth and the environment: Guest speaker Dr. Albert Bartlett, Emeritus Professor of Physics, University of Colorado, Boulder
- Albert Bartlett, “Reflections on Sustainability, Population Growth and the Environment,” originally published in *Population & Environment* 16, No. 1 (September 1994), 5-35; revised January 1998, available at <http://dieoff.org/page146.htm>.
- NOTE: Class attendance will be taken on this day.**
- Oct 25** Science and environmental policy
- Helen Ingram, “Science and Environmental Policy,” an address to a Plenary Session of the Annual Meeting of the Pacific Division of the Association for the Advancement of Science, June 19, 2001, available at <http://www.iec.uci.edu/S&EPpdf.pdf>.
- Oct 30** Hazardous waste policy
- Layzer, Chapter 3
- Nov 1** Hazardous waste policy, cont’d  
**Short paper #4 due, beginning of class**
- Nov 6** National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and environmental risk assessment
- National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, available at <http://ceq.eh.doe.gov/nepa/regs/nepa/nepaeqia.htm>
  - Vig & Kraft, Chapter 10
- Nov 8** Environmental risk assessment versus the precautionary principle
- Nancy J. Myers, “Precautionary Tools for Reshaping Environmental Policy,” Chapter 1 (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005), available at <http://mitpress.mit.edu/books/chapters/026263323Xchap1.pdf>
- Nov 13** Environmental justice: the case of Chester, Pennsylvania
- Vig & Kraft, Chapter 10
- Nov 15** Environmental justice, cont’d
- Layzer, Chapter 5
  - U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, “Environmental Justice: Frequently Asked Questions,” available at <http://www.epa.gov/compliance/resources/faqs/ej/index.html>

## THANKSGIVING BREAK

- Nov 27** Congress and environmental policy
- Vig & Kraft, Chapter 6

- Nov 29** The President and environmental policy
- Vig & Kraft, Chapter 5
- Research paper due, beginning of class**
- Dec 4** Environmental laws and regulations
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, “Introduction to Laws and Regulations,” available at <http://www.epa.gov/epapages/epahome/lawintro.htm>
  - U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, “Laws and Regulations.” Be sure to look at “Current Legislation,” available at <http://www.epa.gov/epapages/epahome/rules.html>
  - Vig & Kraft, Chapter 8
- Dec 6** The courts and environmental law
- Vig & Kraft, Chapter 7
- Dec 11** The challenge of global climate change
- Layzer, Chapter 11
- Dec 13** The challenge of global climate change, cont’d

**FINAL EXAM: Mon, 17 Dec, 4:30 – 7:00 pm**

**PAPER ASSIGNMENTS**  
**PSCI 3201: The Environment and Public Policy**  
**Professor Nancy Billica**  
**FALL 2007**

The paper assignments are intended to deepen student understanding of the substance of environmental policy and the processes by which environmental policy decisions are made.

Some general guidelines:

- To reduce paper waste, all written assignments should be printed single-spaced. If possible, print double-sided, or print on reused paper.<sup>1</sup>
- Include a bibliography with full information on sources at the end of each paper. Remember that a bibliography is always presented in alphabetical order by author's last name. Where there is no individual author, the name of the organization is considered to be the author. Web addresses alone are insufficient bibliographic information. These should be listed like any other source (starting with author, title, date, etc., with the web address listed last as the publisher).
- All papers need to be submitted in hard copy at the beginning of class on the due date.
- Points will be deducted for incomplete assignments, lateness, and editing errors.
- Feel free to ask questions about any of the assignments!

**Paper Assignment Schedule**

Tue, 11 Sept	Short paper #1	(5 percent)
Tue, 25 Sept	Short paper #2	(5 percent)
Tue, 9 Oct	Short paper #3	(5 percent)
Thu, 1 Nov	Short paper #4	(5 percent)
Thu, 29 Nov	Research paper	(30 percent)

**A. SHORT PAPER ASSIGNMENTS**

**SHORT PAPER #1: *Ecological Footprint Quiz and Discussion.***

1. Go to the *Ecological Footprint Quiz*, found at <http://www.earthday.net/footprint/info.asp>. The opening page of this website will show a map of the world. Direct the mouse to North America, click on the U.S. and your chosen language, and then a new screen will open to start the quiz.
2. Complete the quiz with responses that best match your current circumstances.
3. Rerun the quiz twice:
  - a. Change at least one variable to highlight a consumption choice in your current situation (e.g., use of transportation, food selections, etc.).
  - b. Duplicate your original quiz responses, changing only your location – i.e., assume you are living in a different state or country. (NOTE that the units change by country and cannot be directly compared. In the U.S. the unit of area is acres, in most other countries the unit is hectares. An alternative is to compare number of planets.)
4. Record all choices and results; attach data sheet to written assignment.
5. Write a paper (1-2 pages, single-spaced) that discusses the following:
  - Compare the results from part (2) to part (3a). What did you compare and why? What was interesting? Unexpected?
  - Compare the results from part (2) to part (3b). What was most interesting? Unexpected?
  - Discuss how these results might affect your personal choices.
  - What are the limits to individual attempts to protect the environment? How might collective choice (ie, public policy) help us to address some of the concerns raised in this exercise?

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<sup>1</sup> NOTE: The U.S. is, by far, the world's largest producer and consumer of paper. Per capita U.S. consumption of paper is over six times greater than the world average and about 25 percent greater than Japan, the world's second largest per capita paper consumer. The average U.S. office worker uses over 10,000 sheets of printing and copying paper per year; the average U.S. office worker generates about 2 lbs. of paper waste per day; annual per capita consumption of paper in the U.S. is currently over 748 lbs. This is a lot of paper! Let's try to use less.

### **SHORT PAPERS #2, #3 and #4: Policy Design Analysis**

These short papers will use the same policy design framework to analyze three different environmental policy issues discussed in the general media or other sources of information on environmental policy issues. We will discuss the policy design framework in detail in class, and you can gain further insight on the elements of policy design through the assigned reading (especially Anne Schneider and Helen Ingram, “Systematically Pinching Ideas: A Comparative Approach to Policy Design,” *Journal of Public Policy* 8 (Spring 1988): 61-80, available on the class website).

Each paper should be 1-2 pages single-spaced. Specifically:

1. Identify an environmental issue of interest. You should be able to briefly and objectively explain the problem.
2. Describe the elements of the existing policy design applied to this issue: Goals, targets, agents, linkages (tools, rules, assumptions).
3. In many cases it will be difficult to pinpoint all of the policy details from any particular article, and extrapolation may be necessary. (Keep in mind that these are not intended to be major research papers but rather opportunities to apply the policy design framework to issues currently being addressed in the news.) However, be sure you base your analysis on solidly-written material. The *New York Times* (<http://www.nytimes.com/>) provides some of the best science and environmental coverage among U.S. newspapers. The *Washington Post* (<http://www.washingtonpost.com/>) has some of the best coverage of national policy and political issues. Environmental interest groups such as Worldwatch Institute (<http://www.worldwatch.org/>) also provide easily-accessible environmental policy materials.
4. Explain what is being proposed in terms of policy design (for example, no change, new or expanded goals, different targets, alternative agents, new tools, different assumptions, etc.). If there are many proposals under consideration, select one or two for further assessment.
5. Analyze and critique. Does this proposal seem to be an appropriate approach? Why or why not? What would you do differently? What are some alternatives (e.g., other targets, competing assumptions, more modest goals, etc.).
6. One or more of your short papers can be a test run for your longer research paper. However, all short papers must be on different policy issues.
7. Be prepared to discuss your issue and the policy design you examined on the due date or in subsequent classes. Volunteers will be solicited, but you could also be called on to briefly describe your paper in class.

### **RESEARCH PAPER: An Analysis of Environmental Policy Options (5-6 pages, single-spaced)**

This is a three-part research assignment that allows students to examine an environmental issue in its broad policy and political context. Environmental policy issues can be addressed from many different angles, appealing to different arguments, involving many different actors, and using different policy design elements. Your job is to identify a politically feasible policy approach to an issue of interest to you. Part A will focus on the nature of the issue itself – explaining the underlying environmental problem, the current controversy and the competing interests trying to influence the issue. Part B will require an assessment of where this issue fits in the policy process and which political actors might have an impact in terms of promoting policy change. Part C will focus on the policy design elements, current and proposed. What policy design options do you consider most promising, considering the nature of the problem and the likelihood of gaining sufficient support? Papers will be graded on research (demonstrating that all relevant information was located and used); analysis (appropriately interpreting the information and developing an argument using that information); and presentation (paying attention to the details of careful writing, including style and editing for errors).

It is strongly advised that students begin to think through this assignment early in the semester. All of the materials necessary for the analysis will be introduced in the first weeks of the semester, including discussion of the environmental policy process, agenda setting and the environment, policy formulation and design, and competing perspectives on the environment.

**Part A: Identifying the Interests at Stake.** The focus of this first part of the assignment is to examine the competing interests that organize around issues of environmental concern.

To complete this part of the assignment:

1. Choose an environmental issue of current concern. Describe the problem and general controversies.
2. Identify at least three different special interest groups that are taking a position on your chosen issue and briefly explain the position each group is advocating. In order to examine the issue from different points of view, seek out different types of groups. For example, environmental organizations (such as Sierra Club, Greenpeace); industry groups (such as the American Petroleum Institute, American Forest & Paper Association); other affected interests (such as Off-Road.com, American Council of Snowmobile Associations, developers, ranchers, farmers); and broader-spectrum interest organizations (such as the Public Interest Research Group, other consumer groups, health care interests, partisan groups, religious organizations).
3. What are the underlying values in this debate? Are the competing interests/groups arguing from the same or different perspectives? You should discuss the range of perspectives introduced in class (e.g., ethics, commons, economics, science, justice), but you are not limited to these. Which of the perspectives seem to better fit the case and the arguments, and why is this?
4. Are these groups arguing at cross-purposes? Is there common ground? Over what kinds of issues and values might the various interests/groups agree? Keeping in mind that policy change in the U.S. depends on developing majority coalitions, it is usually the case that no one group's position will prevail. Compromise and negotiation are necessary. How could we bring representatives of each of these organizations together for a fruitful discussion? Be creative.

**Part B: *Assessing where the issue stands in the policy process.*** There are many different actors involved in the environmental policy process. Among others, these actors include the president, executive appointees, federal agencies, the Congress, the judiciary, interest groups, experts, the media and the broad public. In addition, environmental issues might be addressed locally, at the state level, regional level, national level or international level. Which actors are most likely to be involved in this issue today, given how the issue has been addressed to date? Remember that many different actors operating at different levels can be simultaneously involved in an issue. Describe how you see each of these actors involved or, if not, why not. Which do you think could be most effective in terms of advancing this policy issue? Explain.

**Part C: *Evaluating the policy design elements.*** You should be well practiced in evaluating the elements of policy design by the time you turn attention to your research paper. Describe the elements of the existing policy design applied to this issue: Goals, targets, agents, linkages (tools, rules, assumptions). Be specific! What particular changes to these elements are being proposed (for example, in legislation, by an interest group "expert," or by an interest group in a court case)? Do the proposed policy design elements seem to offer an appropriate approach? Why or why not? What would you do differently? Keeping in mind political feasibility concerns, what are some alternatives that you would favor (e.g., specifying alternative targets, different assumptions, more modest goals, etc.). To whom would you offer these insights?