

Environmental Studies 2330/ Government 2910: Environmental Policy and Politics

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Department of Government and Environmental Studies Program
Bowdoin College
Fall Semester 2017

Meeting times and location: *Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:00 pm – 2:25 pm, Adams 406*

Office Hours: 102 Adams Hall, Wednesday 2:00 – 4:00 PM, by appointment. Sign up at <https://calendly.com/shanastarobin/>

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Course web site: Blackboard (access for enrolled students only)

1. Course Description

This course explores the ongoing socio-political challenges of addressing environmental problems and cultivates students' understanding of key conceptual issues in environmental policymaking in the U.S. context. Drawing primarily on research in political science, political ecology, and public policy we will analyze the diverse types of social dilemmas that produce environmental problems. First, we examine the nature of environmental policy problems through different theoretical frameworks, including collective action, limits to growth, and ideational explanations. We then explore the politics of the policymaking process, focusing on how policy change occurs. The third section of the course centers on core debates in environmental politics, interrogating the role of science, ethics, and economics in shaping environmental policy solutions. In the fourth part of the course, we evaluate different policy approaches to solving environmental problems. Finally, we examine pressing environmental challenges at the global level, including climate change. Throughout the course, we will pay particular attention to the value conflicts that shape environmental policy and how politicians and other actors respond.

Lectures, in-class discussion and activities will provide opportunities for students to contemplate different approaches to explaining environmental challenges. This course is neither an environmental law class nor a complete survey of U.S. environmental policy. Rather, we engage the broader case of environmental policy-making in the United States to assist students in understanding and applying key concepts such that they may have the skills to independently comprehend and evaluate a range of other environmental problems and solutions within and beyond U.S. borders.

2. Learning Objectives

The overarching objective of this course is to cultivate critical thinking and analytical skills with respect to environmental policy issues. By the end of this course students will be able to:

- (1) **Prepare and participate effectively in class**, including raising thoughtful questions that arise from the readings and lectures, fully engaging in assigned readings and work, and offering challenging and substantive replies to others' arguments, comments, and questions (including

your Professor and peers), while remaining sensitive to the original speaker/writer and the classroom audience.

- (2) Demonstrate familiarity with several different approaches to solving public policy problems, including their strengths and weaknesses.
- (3) Demonstrate an understanding of how values shape core U.S. and international environmental politics and policies.
- (4) Interpret and analyze different perspectives on crucial questions and debates in environmental policy today, including:
 - o Are there “limits to growth”?
 - o What are the causes and solutions of the “Tragedy of the Commons”?
 - o What is the proper role of markets vs. regulation in solving environmental problems?
 - o What is the proper role of the public and scientists in policy making?
 - o How should policy-makers deal with scientific uncertainty or complexity in addressing important environmental challenges?
- (5) Effectively communicate ideas, opinions, and arguments on different policy topics--verbally and in writing.
- (6) Work collaboratively as a member of a group to analyze and devise solutions to an environmental policy problem.

3. Course Format and Requirements

Even though this is a fairly large class, the material we cover demands active participation and interaction to fully grasp the concepts, complexities, and challenges of environmental policy. Thus, our regular class meetings will include interactive class activities, discussion, and lectures. **Please come to each class prepared by completing the required readings and assignments for that day.** There will be many different ways to actively participate in our class and I encourage you to engage using a variety of different approaches.

Communication—both written and verbal—is critical for understanding and affecting policy change. ****Assignments include in-class activities, one midterm, one final, and a policy memo project.**** Specific guidelines for each assignment will be made available well in advance of the due date. **All students are responsible for visiting the course website regularly to check for the most current schedule, readings, assignment prompts, course policies, and web links for facilitating class discussion.**

Due Date	Assignment	Points (%)
Ongoing	Class Participation	100 (20%)
Oct 31	Midterm	125 (25%)
Sep 28	<i>Policy Memo and Presentation</i>	150 (30%)
November 7	(1) Problem Analysis	25
Nov 21	(2) Values Conflict	25
Nov 30/Dec 5	(3) Institutional Analysis	25
Dec 7	(4) Final Group Project & Presentation	50
	(5) Peer Assessment	25
Dec 18	Final Exam (2:00PM, Searles 213)	125 (25%)
	TOTAL:	500 (100%)

4. Course Materials

The following materials are required for this course. With the exception of the main casebook, reading material will be available for students to access and download through Blackboard or links to resources via the library or internet. Be in touch with me if you are concerned about affording course materials, and we will work together to find a solution.

- (1) Judith Layzer. (2016). *The Environmental Case: Translating Values Into Policy*, 4th edition. CQ Press: Washington, DC. ISBN-13: 978-1-4522-3989-7.
 - (a) The readings from this book are noted as **Layzer** in the reading assignments.
 - (b) *Older editions are available, but may not have all of the same chapters. Please compare the table of contents to make sure you have access to the readings.*
- (2) Additional materials available through Blackboard.

5. Policies

Technology:

While technology in the classroom has its advantages, it is often distracting to your fellow classmates. Unless otherwise noted, During class meetings, all laptops, tablets, phones, and recording devices must be turned off and put away. Please talk with me if you have questions or concerns about this policy or require accommodations. No recording of any kind (audio, video) is permitted without my permission.

Email Communication:

Like many instructors, I often use email to communicate with students individually or as a group. I will do my best to reply to your emails within a reasonable amount of time, typically no later than 48 hours. However, I do not check email continuously nor am I available at all hours of the day, so please do not expect an immediate response.

Grading and Late Assignments:

Numerical grades will be converted to letter grades according to the following system: A (94-100); A- (90-93); B+ (87-89); B (83-86); B- (80-82); C+ (77-79); C (73-76); C- (70-72); D (60-69); F (<60).

Assignments turned in late without a valid extension will lose one partial letter grade for each day (e.g. an A- paper turned in one day late will become a B+). **Extensions must be requested before the due date.** No extensions will be granted the day an assignment is due except for documented medical or personal emergencies. In calculating course grades, **any missing assignments will be counted as a zero.**

Citation and Plagiarism:

Please refer to Bowdoin's resources on academic honesty for guidance on how to properly use and credit research in your work: <https://www.bowdoin.edu/studentaffairs/academic-honesty/when-to-cite.shtml>

Attendance:

One unexcused absence is allowed for any reason; each unexcused absence thereafter will affect your class participation and potentially lower your **final course grade**. Excused absences require proper

documentation, such as a health center or doctor's note, to be submitted within one week of the absence. In all cases, you are fully responsible for all course material, announcements, and notes missed due to absences. If you are late to class, please enter quietly; I'd prefer a minor disruption to you missing an entire class.

Accommodation:

Any student requesting accommodations related to a disability or other condition must register with the Director of Accommodations for Students with Disabilities (Lesley Levy, 24 College Street, 207-798-4187) and request the ODSA to provide professors with a letter listing the accommodation(s), preferably within the first 2-3 weeks of the semester. All information will remain confidential. Students are expected to reach out to instructors to discuss and arrange for accommodations--well in advance of the assignment or exam for which it is requested.

Writing Project Workshops:

Beginning on September 13, Writing Assistants are available in the Writing Workshop (Center for Learning and Teaching, 102 Kanbar Hall) to assist you at any phase of your writing process. A Writing Assistant can help you focus your ideas and map out a draft, read and respond to a completed draft, or edit and polish a nearly final draft. Be sure to allow adequate time after a conference to revise your work. You can reserve a 45-minute writing conference by going to the Writing Project website <http://www.bowdoin.edu/writing-project> and following the navigation links to the reservation calendar. To work on a paper longer than seven pages, it is wise to reserve two consecutive conference slots with the same Writing Assistant.

NOTE: Syllabus is a work in progress and subject to change. This syllabus is designed to guide our learning. Over the course of the semester, I may adjust the schedule, readings and assignments as appropriate and/or necessary. Updates will be posted on our course Blackboard site.

COURSE OVERVIEW

Date	Topic	Reading	Assignments
Week 1			
8/31 (Th)	Introduction	Syllabus	Student Survey (Due by 9:00 am, 9/1)
Week 2			
9/5 (T)	Environmental Problems	Maniates (2001) Lazyer Ch. 1	Current Problems (Due by 9:00 am, 9/5)
9/7 (Th)	Politics of Problem Definition	Ostrom (2000), <i>pages</i> <i>33, 37-42 ONLY</i> Layzer Ch. 6	
Week 3			
9/12 (T)	Collective Action Problems	Hardin (1968) Ostrom (2008)	
9/14 (Th)	Collective Action case	Layzer Ch. 10	
Week 4			
9/19 (T)	Distributive Conflict Problems	Meadows (2015) Tierney (1990)	

9/21 (Th)	Small group team meetings		Research policy problems in preparation for team meeting
Week 5			
9/26 (T)	Ideational Conflict Problems	Clapp and Dauvergne (2005) La Duke (1998)	Group contract (Due 9 a.m., 9/26)
9/28 (Th)	Whose values?	Muller (2014) Layzer Ch. 9	Problem Analysis (Due 9 a.m., 9/28)
Week 6			
10/3 (T)	Policy Memo Workshop I		
10/5 (Th)	Science	Forsyth (2003) Suhay and Druckman (2015)	
	FALL BREAK		
Week 7			
10/12 (Th)	Precautionary Principle, Risk, Uncertainty	Layzer Ch. 12	
Week 8			
10/17 (T)	Ethics	Layzer Ch. 16	
10/19 (Th)	Environmental Justice	Taylor (2014)	
Week 9			
10/24 (T)	“Climate Smart” Policy	Altieri & Nicholls (2013), FAO on Climate Smart agriculture	
10/26 (Th)	Review session for Midterm		
Week 10			
10/31 (T)	MIDTERM		MIDTERM
11/2 (Th)	Policy Memo Workshop II		
Week 11			
11/7 (T)	Markets and Environmental Politics	Katz (2015) Layzer Ch. 5	Values Conflict (Due 9 a.m., 11/7)
11/9 (Th)	Valuation and Cost-Benefit Analysis	Adams (2014) Parks and Gowdy (2013) Layzer Ch. 8	
Week 12			
11/14 (T)	Focusing Events, Issue-Area Attention Cycle	Layzer Ch. 3 Barry-Jester (2016)	
11/16 (Th)	Agenda Setting and Venue Shopping	Layzer Ch. 14	
Week 13			
11/21 (T)	Regulatory Tools	Layzer Ch. 2 Bardach (2012)	Institutional Analysis (Due 9 a.m., 11/21)
	Thanksgiving Break		
Week 14			

11/28 (T)	New Environmental Policy Instruments	Layzer Ch. 4	
11/30 (Th)	Policy Memo Presentations		Policy Memo Presentations
Week 15			
12/5 (T)	Policy Memo Presentations		Policy Memo Presentations
12/7 (Th)	Wrap-Up - Last Class	Layzer Ch. 17	Peer Assessments (12/7, 9:00 am) FINAL MEMO DUE (12/8, 9:00 am)
12/9 - 12/12	READING PERIOD		
12/18 (M)	FINAL EXAM - 2:00PM		Location - Searles 213

PART I: WHAT ARE ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS?

Class #1 (8/31, Th) Introduction and Course Overview

Assignment: Submit Student Survey (Due by 9:00 am, 9/1)

Key Questions: *Why environmental politics and policy? What factors shape decision-making around environmental issues in the US? Who are the core actors involved in environmental policy in the US?*

Readings:

- Syllabus

Class #2 (9/5, T) What are environmental problems and solutions?

Assignment: Pick a current national-level environmental problem related to water, energy, or climate change in the United States. Find two op-eds (opinion pieces or editorials) from a major US newspaper (Wall Street Journal, New York Times, Chicago Tribune, Washington Post, etc.) that represent two different views on the environmental problem. Summarize the problem definitions advanced by each author in no more than three (3) sentences. Submit these online to our Blackboard discussion board **by 9 am** and make sure you have a copy with you in class. Submission details are available on Blackboard. *Note: the Bowdoin Library has access to most national newspapers online.*

Key Questions: *What makes something an environmental problem? What kinds of environmental problems are we currently facing? What is the scope and scale of these environmental problems? In what ways are these political problems? How do identities shape environmental problems?*

Readings:

- Maniates, Michael F. (2001). Individualization: Plant a tree, buy a bike, save the world? *Global environmental politics*, 1(3), 31-52.
- Layzer Chapter 1, "A Policymaking Framework: Defining Problems and Portraying Solutions in US Environmental Politics."

Class #3 (9/7, Th) The Politics of Problem Definition

Key Questions: *What are different ways of explaining environmental degradation? What are its causes? What are the implications of problem definition for solving environmental challenges?*

Readings:

- Ostrom, E. (2000). The danger of self-evident truths. *PS: Political Science and Politics*, 33(1), **pages 33, 37-42 ONLY.**
- Layzer Chapter 6, "Oil Versus Wilderness in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge"

Class #4 (9/12, T) Theories of Environmental Politics: Collective Action Problems

Key Questions: *What is the logic of collective action? What is the tragedy of the commons? How do these theories explain environmental degradation? How can different types of property*

regimes impact the provision of different types of goods (private, club, common, and public goods)?

Readings:

- Hardin, Garrett. (1968). "The tragedy of the commons." *Science* 162 (3859): 1243-8.
- Ostrom, Elinor. (2008). "The challenge of common-pool resources." *Environment: Science and Policy for Sustainable Development* 50.4: 8–21.

Class #5 (9/14, Th) Collective Action Case

Key Questions: *How do the logic of collective action and the tragedy of the commons apply in the case of New England fisheries? How do different property regimes and institutions relate to both collapse and recovery in these fisheries?*

Readings:

- Layzer Chapter 10, "Crisis and Recovery in the New England Fisheries"

Class #6 (9/19, T) Theories of Environmental Politics: Distributive Conflict Problems

Key Questions: *Are there limits to growth? What is the population bomb? How do these theories explain environmental degradation? What are the causes of and solutions to distributive conflicts that lead to environmental degradation?*

Readings:

- Meadows, Donella et al. (2015). "The Limits to Growth." In Conca and Dabelko, eds. *Green Planet Blues*.
- Tierney, John. (1990). "Betting on the Planet." *New York Times Magazine*, December 2, 1990.

9/21: Policy Small Group Meetings

Assignment: Complete Group Contract

Class #7 (9/26, T) Theories of Environmental Politics: Ideational Conflict Problems

Assignment: Problem Analysis (Due 9 a.m., 9/26)

Key Questions: *How do worldviews shape our understanding of environmental problems? What types of explanations for environmental degradation are advanced by different worldviews? What are the implications of different worldviews for advancing environmental policy solutions?*

Readings:

- Clapp, Jennifer and Peter Dauvergne. 2005. "Peril or Prosperity: Mapping Worldviews of Global Environmental Change." *Paths to a Green World: The Political Economy of the Global Environment*. MIT Press. P. 1- 17.
- La Duke, Winona. (1998). Excerpts from *All Our Relations*. Chapter 35 in Dryzek, J. and D. Schlosberg, eds. 2005. *Debating the Earth: The Environmental Politics Reader*, 2nd edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

PART II: DEBATES IN ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS

Class #8 (9/28, Th) Whose values shape environmental politics and policy?

Key Questions: Whose values and voices shape US environmental politics and policy? What are the implications for social and environmental outcomes?

Readings:

- Muller, Clayton Thomas (Mathias Colomb Cree). 2014. "The Rise of the Native Rights-Based Strategic Framework: Our Last Best Hope to Save our Water, Air, and Earth" in *The Winter we Danced: Voices From the Past, the Future, and the Idle No More Movement*, 365-378. The Kino-nda-niimi Collective.
- Layzer Chapter 9, "Playground or Paradise: Snowmobiles in Yellowstone National Park."

Class # 9 (10/3, T) Policy Memo Workshop I

Readings:

- Bardach, Eugene, and Eric M. Patashnik. 2015. *A practical guide for policy analysis: The eightfold path to more effective problem solving*. CQ press. (Excerpts)

Class #10 (10/5, Th) Science and Environmental Politics

Key Questions: What is science? How should science inform environmental policy-making? What is the role of scientists in environmental politics and policy?

Readings:

- Forsyth, T. 2003. *Critical Political Ecology: the Politics of Environmental Science*, Chapter 2: "Environmental Science and Myths"
- Suhay, Elizabeth, and James N. Druckman. "The politics of science: political values and the production, communication, and reception of scientific knowledge." (2015): 6-15.

*** Fall Break ***

Class #11 (10/12, Th): The Precautionary Principle, Risk, and Uncertainty

Key Questions: How do policy-makers deal with risk and uncertainty in environmental decision-making? How should policy-makers make decisions under conditions of uncertainty?

Readings:

- Layzer Chapter 12, “Climate Change: The Challenges of International Environmental Policymaking.”

Class #12 (10/17, T): Ethics and Environmental Politics

Key Questions: *What types of ethical dilemmas do decision-makers face when confronting environmental problems? How should policymakers decide what types of tradeoffs are acceptable when addressing environmental problems?*

Readings:

- Layzer Chapter 16, “Hurricane Katrina Hits New Orleans: Disaster, Restoration, and Resilience.”

Class #13 (10/19, Th): Environmental Justice

Key Questions: *What is environmental justice and how does it (and should it) inform decision-making? Why are some people denied the basic right to a clean and safe environment? Why are some groups disproportionately burdened with pollution? Why are some groups disproportionately burdened with the costs of producing environmental goods? Why are some groups disproportionately denied access to environmental amenities?*

Readings:

- Taylor, Dorceta. (2014). “Internal Colonialism: Native American Communities in the West.” Chapter 3 in *Toxic Communities: Environmental Racism, Industrial Pollution, and Residential Mobility*. New York: NYU Press, 47-68.
- Jedediah Purdy (2015). *The New Yorker*.

Class #14 (10/24, T): “Climate Smart” Policy

Readings:

- Altieri, Miguel A. and Clara I. Nicholls. (2013) The adaptation and mitigation potential of traditional agriculture in a changing climate. *Climate Change*.
- FAO – Overview of Climate-smart agriculture: <http://www.fao.org/climate-smart-agriculture/overview/en/>
- Altieri, Miguel A. and Victor Manuel Toledo. (2011). The agroecological revolution in Latin America: rescuing nature, ensuring food sovereignty and empowering peasants. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 38(3): 587-612 (RECOMMENDED)

Class #15 (10/26, Th): Midterm Review Session

The review session will be guided by your questions, so please bring them to discuss!

Class #16 (10/31, T): **MIDTERM (in-class exam)**

The mid-term is cumulative and will draw from lectures, activities, and course readings.

Class #17 (11/2, Th): Policy Memo Workshop II

PART III: SOLVING ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS THROUGH POLICY

Class #18 (11/7, T): Markets and Environmental Politics

Assignments: Values Conflict (Due 9 a.m., 11/7)

Key Questions: *What role should markets play in environmental politics and policy?*

Readings:

- Katz, Diane. (2015). "An Environmental Policy Primer for the Next President." Heritage Foundation. Available online: <http://www.heritage.org/environment/report/environmental-policy-primer-the-next-president>
- Layzer Chapter 5, "Market-based Solutions: Acid Rain and the Clean Air Act."

Class #19 (11/9, Th): Valuation and Cost-Benefit Analysis

Key Questions: *What is the role of economics in environmental politics and policy? What is the value of nature and different ecosystem services? What are the advantages and disadvantages of different approaches to economic valuation in solving environmental problems? Is there a role for cost-benefit analysis in environmental policy?*

Readings:

- Adams, W. M. (2014). The value of valuing nature. *Science*, 346(6209), 549-551.
- Parks, Sarah, and John Gowdy. "What have economists learned about valuing nature? A review essay." *Ecosystem Services* 3 (2013): e1-e10.
- Layzer Chapter 8, "Jobs Versus the Environment: Saving the Northern Spotted Owl."

Class #20 (11/14, T): Focusing Events, Issue-Area Attention Cycle

Key Questions: *What catalyzes policy action? When do policymakers act on environmental problems?*

Readings:

- Layzer Chapter 3, "Love Canal: Hazardous Waste and the Politics of Fear"
- Barry-Jester, Anna Maria. (2016). "What Went Wrong in Flint." *FiveThirtyEight.com*. 26 January.

Class #21 (11/16, Th): Agenda Setting and Venue Shopping

Key Questions: *What is the policy cycle? How do different policy actors get their issues and priorities addressed by policymakers?*

Readings:

- Layzer Chapter 14, "Fracking Wars: Local and State Responses to Unconventional Shale Gas Development."

Class #22 (11/21, T): Policy Tools: Regulatory

Assignment: Institutional Analysis (Due 9 a.m., 11/21)

Key Questions: *How do governments address environmental problems? What is command and control? What different types of regulatory tools are best suited for what types of problems? How should we evaluate policy tools? What are the advantages and disadvantages of regulation?*

Readings:

- Layzer Chapter 2, "The Nation Tackles Air and Water Pollution: The Environmental Protection Agency and the Clean Air and Water Acts."
- Bardach, Eugene. (2012). "Things Governments Do." Appendix B in *A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis*.

*** Thanksgiving Break ***

Class #23 (11/28, T): Policy Tools: New Environmental Policy Instruments

Key Questions: *What are new environmental policy instruments? What are market-based approaches? What kinds of tradeoffs must be considered when selecting policy instruments? How should policy impacts be measured?*

Readings:

- Layzer Chapter 4, "Ecosystem-based Management in the Chesapeake Bay."

Class #24 (11/30, Th): Policy Memo Presentations

Class #25 (12/5, T): Policy Memo Presentations

Class #26 (12/7, Th): Looking back and forging ahead

Assignment: Peer Assessment (Due by 9:00 am, 12/7)

Key Questions: *What have we done this semester and where do we go from here?*

Readings:

- Layzer Chapter 17, "Conclusion: Politics, Values, and Environmental Policy Change"

12/8: Final Policy Memo due by 9am

12/18: FINAL EXAM, 2pm Searles 213

The final exam is cumulative, with an emphasis on material after the mid-term and will draw from lectures, activities, and course readings.
