

Course Outline

EST 612

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY AND GOVERNANCE

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Department of Environmental Studies

SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry
Spring 2010, Th 9:30 am – 12:20 pm, Bray 324

DESCRIPTION

Overview

This graduate-level course examines environmental politics and policymaking at various geopolitical scales. It considers the roles of governmental, private sector, non-governmental, community, consumer, and other actors in environmental governance. The course begins with a survey of the interrelated fields of environmental philosophy, politics and policy, respectively; and continues with case studies of environmental policymaking in domestic (community-based and multi-level), international, and global arenas, respectively. Each week, students write short, critical commentaries on required readings; these essays will serve as the starting point for class discussion. In addition, students engage in a semester-long research project, applying course concepts to a related topic of their choosing. At the end of the semester, students give an oral presentation and submit a medium-length paper communicating their research findings and analysis.

Objectives

By the completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Distinguish the importance of geopolitical, economic, cultural, and ecological factors on various geopolitical levels of environmental policymaking and governance;
- Demonstrate familiarity with the philosophies, roles, and contributions of political parties, governmental, private sector, non-governmental, community, consumer, and other actors in environmental policymaking and governance;
- Distinguish between regulatory, voluntary, market-based, and participatory approaches to environmental policymaking and governance;
- Comfortably, clearly, and persuasively master the art of the short, critical essay;
- Demonstrate proficiency in applying basic course concepts, analytical frameworks, and/or theoretical perspectives to a research topic of their choosing.

Procedures

The course meets each Thursday morning during the semester; it is designed in the first instance as a reading and writing seminar, with required weekly readings, and short, formal essays on that week's assigned reading. Commentaries are due by e-mail to the instructor and all course participants by no later than **8:00 am, Wednesday**, the day prior to class. (Guidelines for these commentaries will be handed out separately.) Students are expected to read all commentaries, as well as the required texts, prior to class. Each Thursday morning, we will begin our discussion of the assigned text(s) with the commentaries.

In the second aspect of the course, students explore the relevance and application of course concepts to a related research topic/ area of their own selection. Weekly commentaries may explore applications of or interrelations between course materials and the research topic. By the end of the course, students will have completed a seminar paper utilizing concepts and approaches examined in the course. These student research projects are shared with course participants in the form of a short talk, multi-media or poster presentation.

Requirements

- Attend all class sessions;
- Read all required texts;
- Submit weekly commentaries (@ 2 pp. max.) on the required readings;
- Prepare, present, and submit a medium length (~15 pp.) seminar paper applying course concepts to a relevant research topic.

Grading

Weekly commentaries, 40%

Semester-long research project, 40%, of which:

-- Written paper, 80%

-- Oral presentation, 20%

Attendance and participation, 20%

Communication

Office: 106 Marshall

Hrs.: M 3-5 pm; W 2-3:30 pm & by appointment

Tel. 315.470.4931/ 6636, fax 315.470.6915

E-mail: <dsonn@esf.edu>, and <DASonnenfeld@gmail.com>

URL: <http://www.esf.edu/es/sonnenfeld>

TEXTS

Required

Carter, Neil. 2007. *The Politics of the Environment: Ideas, Activism, Policy*. 2nd ed. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Carter, Neil, & Arthur P.J. Mol, eds. 2007. *Environmental Governance in China*. London and New York: Routledge. Available also as a special issue of the journal, *Environmental Politics* 15 (2), 2006.

one of the following two books:

Roberts, J. Timmons, & Bradley C. Parks. 2007. *A Climate of Injustice: Global Inequality, North-South Politics, and Climate Policy*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Roberts, J. Timmons, & Melissa Toffolon-Weiss. 2001. *Chronicles from the Environmental Justice Frontline*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Smith, Ted, et al., eds. 2006. *Challenging the Chip: Labor Rights and Environmental Justice in the Global Electronics Industry*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Recommended

Economy, Elizabeth. 2004. *The River Runs Black: The Environmental Challenge to China's Future*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Bookstore

Follett's Orange Bookstore, Marshall Square Mall, 720 University Ave., tel. 478.6821

SEMINAR PAPER

Topic. By **Week 3**, submit a written proposal outlining an environmental issue or topic you would like to develop into a seminar paper for this course, and from what perspective you propose to examine that topic. You may expand on a topic addressed in one of the course texts, or develop another topic of your choice. Proposal should be 1-2 pp., typed, double-spaced. (Feb. 4)

Abstract, Outline, and Bibliography. By **Week 7**, submit a working abstract, outline and bibliography for your seminar paper (two cc; Mar. 4)

Buddy Comments. In **Week 8**, submit comments on your seminar partner's working abstract, outline and bibliography (two cc; Mar. 11)

Oral Presentation. Brief presentation of your research project in class, ~10 min., including questions and discussion. **Weeks 13-14**. (Apr. 15 & 22, 20% of Seminar Paper grade)

Seminar Paper. ~15 pp. typed, double-spaced, plus cover page & references. Due at the beginning of the regularly scheduled **Final Exam** period for this course. (80% of Seminar Paper grade)

SCHEDULE

I. *Politics of the Environment: A Theoretical and Analytical Framework*

Week 1 – Course Introduction

Course Introduction

Theory: Thinking about the Environment

REQUIRED:

Carter, *Politics of the Environment*, Intro, Part I, ch's 1-3, pp. 1-82

Week 2 – Parties and Movements

Green Political Parties

The 'Greening' of Established Parties

Environmental Groups

REQUIRED:

Carter, *Politics of the Environment*, Part II, ch's 4-6, pp. 83-170

*** Commentary #1 due ***

Week 3 – Environmental Policy

The Environment as a Policy Problem

Greening Government

Policy Instruments and Implementation

REQUIRED:

Carter, *Politics of the Environment*, Part III, ch's 7, 11, 12, pp. 171-206, 291-352

*** Paper Topic Due ***

*** Commentary #2 due ***

Week 4 – Globalization and the Environment

Sustainable Development and Ecological Modernization

Global Environmental Politics

Globalization, Trade, and the Environment

REQUIRED:

Carter, *Politics of the Environment*, ch's 8-10, Conclusion, pp. 207-290, 353-362

*** Commentary #3 due ***

II. Case Studies I: Environmental Governance in China

Week 5 – China in Transition

REQUIRED:

Mol, A.P.J., and N.T. Carter, "China's Environmental Governance in Transition". Pp. 1-22 in *Environmental Governance in China*

Economy, E., "Environmental Governance: the Emerging Economic Dimension". Pp. 23-41 in *Environmental Governance in China*

Lo, C.W-H., and S-Y. Tang, "Institutional Reform, Economic Changes, and Local Environmental Management in China". Pp. 42-62 in *Environmental Governance in China*

RECOMMENDED:

Economy, *The River Runs Black*

*** Commentary #4 due ***

Week 6 – Energy, Consumption, Water, Biotechnology

REQUIRED:

Aden, N.T., and J.E. Sinton, "Environmental Implications of Energy Policy in China". Pp. 42-62 in *Environmental Governance in China*

Martens, S., "Public Participation with Chinese Characteristics: Citizen Consumers in China's Environmental Management". Pp. 63-82 in *Environmental Governance in China*

Nickum, J.E., and Y-S. F. Lee, "Same Longitude, Different Latitudes: Institutional Change in Urban Water in China, North and South". Pp. 23-41 in *Environmental Governance in China*

Keeley, J., "Balancing Technological Innovation and Environmental Regulation: an Analysis of Chinese Agricultural Biotechnology Governance". Pp. 145-161 in *Environmental Governance in China*

RECOMMENDED:

D'Sa, A., and K.V.N. Murthy. 2006. "Environmental Reform in the Electricity Sector: China and India," *Journal of Environment and Development* 15(2)

*** Commentary #5 due ***

Week 7 – Mid-Semester Check-in: Seminar Papers

Abstract, Outlines, Preliminary Bibliography

Two copies – one for your seminar paper 'buddy'

*** Abstract, Outline and Bibliography due (2cc) ***

Week 8 – China's Future

REQUIRED:

Shi, H., and L. Zhang, "China's Environmental Governance of Rapid Industrialisation". Pp. 123-144 in *Environmental Governance in China*

Jahiel, A.R., "China, the WTO, and Implications for the Environment". Pp. 162-181 in *Environmental Governance in China*

Carter, N.T., and A.P.J. Mol, "China and the Environment: Domestic and Transnational Dynamics of a Future Hegemon". Pp. 182-196 in *Environmental Governance in China*

RECOMMENDED:

Zhang, L., A.P.J. Mol, and D.A. Sonnenfeld. 2007. "The Interpretation of Ecological Modernisation in China," *Environmental Politics* 16(4):659-668.

*** Commentary #6 due ***

*** Buddy Comments due (2 cc) ***

SPRING BREAK

III. Case Studies II: Environmental Justice Perspectives

Week 9 – Race, Class & Environmental Conflict in Louisiana

Environmental Justice Struggles in Perspective

Environmental Injustice in Louisiana

Case Studies

REQUIRED (GROUP A):

Roberts and Toffolon-Weiss, *Chronicles from the Environmental Justice Frontline* (all)

*** Commentary #7 due (Group A only)***

Week 10 – Global Climate Change and Social Inequality

REQUIRED (GROUP B):

Roberts and Parks, *A Climate of Injustice...* (all)

*** Commentary #8 due (Group B only)***

IV. Case Studies III: Governing Global Environmental Flows

Week 11 – Labor Rights and Environmental Justice

The Quest for Sustainability and Justice

The Silicon Valley Toxics Coalition

Worker Health in Scotland

Community-Based Organizing on the U.S.-Mexico Border

Taiwan's Hsinchu Science Park

New Perspectives for Organized Labor

REQUIRED:

Smith, et al., *Challenging the Chip*, Foreword, Introduction, Part I Section Introduction, pp. ix-16; Part II, ch's 9-17, pp. 107-200

*** Commentary #9 due ***

Week 12 – Electronic Waste and Extended Producer Responsibility

Environmental Politics and Lifecycle Analysis

High-tech Pollution in Japan

High-tech's Dirty Little Secret

International Environmental Agreements and the IT Sector

Private Sector Politics: The Dell Corporate Campaign

REQUIRED:

Smith, et al., *Challenging the Chip*, Part III, ch's 18-25, Appendices, pp. 201-310

*** Commentary #10 due ***

V. Applying the Framework in Your Own Research

Weeks 13-14 – Oral Presentations

Final Exam Period – Seminar Paper Due