

Course Outline

EST 612

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY AND GOVERNANCE

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SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry

Spring 2016, 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 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 most Thursday mornings during the semester; it is organized, in the first instance, as a reading and writing seminar, with weekly readings and related short, formal essays. Commentaries are due to the instructor and all course participants *via* the course Blackboard site, no later than **8:00 am, Wednesday**, the day before the class. (Guidelines for these commentaries will be handed out separately.) Students are expected to read all required texts and commentaries prior to each class. Thursday morning, we will begin our discussion of the assigned text(s) with the commentaries.

Even while we are reading, writing and discussing key readings, students will apply course concepts to a related research topic/ area of their choice. The weekly commentaries may explore interrelationships 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. In the final session(s), the research projects are shared with course participants in the form of a short presentation.

Requirements

- Attend all class sessions;
- Read all required texts and everyone's weekly commentaries;
- 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 (10), 40%

Semester-long research project, 50%, of which:

- Seminar paper, 80%
- Oral presentation, 20%

Attendance and participation, 10%

Communication

Office: 211B Marshall

Hrs.: M 2:00-3:30pm, Tu 4:00-5:30pm & by appointment

Tel. 315.470.4931/ 6636, fax 315.470.6915

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

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TEXTS

Required

Carter, Neil. 2007. *The Politics of the Environment: Ideas, Activism, Policy*. 2nd ed. New York: Cambridge University Press. ISBN 0-521-68745-4

Shapiro, Judith. 2016. *China's Environmental Challenges*, 2nd ed. Malden, MA: Polity. ISBN 9-780745-698649

Roberts, J. Timmons, & Melissa Toffolon-Weiss. 2001. *Chronicles from the Environmental Justice Frontline*. New York: Cambridge University Press. ISBN 0-521-66900-6

Smith, Ted, et al., eds. 2006. *Challenging the Chip: Labor Rights and Environmental Justice in the Global Electronics Industry*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. ISBN 0-521-66900-6

Recommended

Axelrod, Regina S., et al. 2014. *The Global Environment: Institutions, Law, and Policy*, 4th ed. Washington D.C.: CQ Press. ISBN 978-1-4522-4145-6

Booth, Wayne C., et al. 2008. *The Craft of Research*. 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. ISBN 978-0-226-06566-3

Mol, Arthur P. J., et al., eds. 2009. *The Ecological Modernisation Reader: Environmental Reform in Theory and Practice*. London and New York: Routledge. ISBN 978-0-415-45371-4

Young, Oran R. 2013. *On Environmental Governance: Sustainability, Efficiency, and Equity*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers. ISBN 978-1-61205-133-8

Bookstore

ESF Virtual Bookstore, available via myESF. For further information see:

<http://www.esf.edu/students/books.htm>

LIBRARY GUIDE

<http://libguides.esf.edu/est612>

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. 3)

Buddy Comments. In **Week 8**, submit comments on your seminar partner's working abstract, outline and bibliography (two cc; Mar. 10)

Oral Presentation. Brief presentation of your research project in class, ~15 min., including questions and discussion. **Week 14**. (Apr. 28, 20% of Seminar Paper grade)

Seminar Paper. ~15 pp. typed, double-spaced, *plus* cover page & references. Printed copy due by 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 and Governance

The Environment as a Policy Problem

Greening Government

Policy Instruments and Implementation

Environmental Governance

REQUIRED:

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

RECOMMENDED:

Young, On Environmental Governance

ADDITIONAL:

Steinberg & VanDeveer, eds. 2012. *Comparative Environmental Politics: Theory, Practice, and Prospects*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

*** 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

RECOMMENDED:

Axelrod, et al., *The Global Environment: Institutions, Law, and Policy*

Mol, et al., *The Ecological Modernisation Reader*

ADDITIONAL:

Speth, James G., and Peter M. Haas. 2006. *Global Environmental Governance*. Washington, DC: Island Press.

*** Commentary #3 due ***

II. Case Studies I: Environmental Governance in China

Week 5 – China's Environmental Challenges

REQUIRED:

Shapiro, *China's Environmental Challenges*, ch's 1-2

*** Commentary #4 due ***

Week 6 – Environmental Policy and Governance in China

REQUIRED:

Shapiro, *China's Environmental Challenges*, ch's 3-5

RECOMMENDED:

Carter & Mol, *Environmental Governance in China*

Sonnenfeld, David A. 2012. "Rule of Law". In *China, India, and East and Southeast Asia: Assessing Sustainability*, eds. Sam Geall, Jingjing Liu, and Sony Pellissery. *The Encyclopedia of Sustainability*, Vol. 7. Great Barrington, MA: Berkshire Publishing.

*** 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:

Shapiro, *China's Environmental Challenges*, ch's 6-7

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 in the United States

Week 9 – Environmental Justice in Louisiana

Environmental Justice Struggles in Perspective

Roots of Environmental Injustice in Louisiana

Role of the Judiciary

REQUIRED:

Roberts and Toffolon-Weiss, *Chronicles*, Preface, ch's 1-3, pp. vii-100

*** Commentary #7 due ***

Week 10 – The Experience of Local Struggles

Shintech PVC Plant

Grand Bois Oilfield Waste Dump

Municipal Landfill

REQUIRED:

Roberts and Toffolon-Weiss, *Chronicles*, ch's 4-7, pp. 101-222

*** Commentary #8 due ***

Week 11 – TBA

IV. Case Studies III: Governing Global Environmental Flows

Week 12 – 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 13 – 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 Course Concepts to Your Research

Week 14 – Oral Presentations

Final Exam Period – Seminar Paper Due