

Political Science 403Z

Introduction to Environmental Policy (Spring 2008)

Lecture: Mon. Wed.
1:00 – 2:15

Professor: Dennis Pirages
Office Hours: Mon., Wed. 2:15 – 3:30;
Tues. 2:00 – 3:30; and by appointment

Required Books (paperbacks):

Conca et al., Green Planet Blues
Rosenbaum, Environmental Politics and Policy
Kassiola, Explorations in Environmental Political theory

Course Requirements: Participants are expected to attend lectures regularly, complete assigned readings in a timely manner, and to participate in class discussion. Final grades will be determined as follows:

Mid-term Examination 35%
Final Examination 45%
Attendance and participation 20%

Jan. 23: Course overview - Procedures and expectations – Environmental policy as an interdisciplinary undertaking - Two kinds of evolutionary processes – Natural selection - Sociocultural evolution.

Jan. 28: The context for environmental policy I. – Human beings and the environment - Historical patterns of population growth - Environmental impact of three sociocultural revolutions - Exclusionist and inclusionist perspectives - Technology and environmental quality.

Assignment: Conca, Introduction, Chapters 1, 5.

Jan. 30: The context for environmental policy II. - Basic ecological concepts - Components of the physical environment - Natural resources - The biosphere - The hydrosphere - The atmosphere - Environmental services - Qualitative and quantitative pollution - Interdependence in the global ecosystem.

Assignment: Rosenbaum, Chapter 1.

Feb. 4: The context for environmental policy III. - Environmental politics and policy - The origins of political systems - Politics as an authoritative allocation of values - Politics and markets - Policy-making and enforcement in the United States - The policy cycle - Agenda setting.

Assignment: Rosenbaum, Chapter 2.

Feb. 6: The origins of U.S. environmental policy - Early attempts at government regulation - The environmental revolution - The politics of environmental policy - Impact of federalism - Separation and division of powers - The institutional setting - Administrative law - EPA - Power of the courts – Complexities of environmental policy-making.

Assignment: Rosenbaum, Chapter 3.

Feb. 11: Early environmental legislation - The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) - Environmental impact statements - NEPA litigation - Council on Environmental Quality.

Feb. 13: Air pollution - The physical basis of air pollution – Smog and temperature inversions - Criterion pollutants - Current controversies over air quality – The debate over curbing carbon emissions.

Assignment: Rosenbaum, 174 - 195.

Feb. 20: Air quality legislation - Air quality standards - Issues in pollution abatement - The problem of particulate matter - Non-attainment areas - SUVs, trucks, and air pollution.

Feb. 25: Water pollution - Causes and consequences - Water as a renewable resource - Major pollutants - Point and non-point sources - Problem of scarce and polluted ground water.

Assignment: Rosenbaum, 196- 213.

Feb. 27: Water quality legislation - Rivers and Harbors Act - Clean Water Act of 1972 - BPT and BAT - Permitting discharges - The future agenda.

March 3: Less visible pollution threats - Living better (or not) through chemistry - Chemical pollution threats - Pesticides and herbicides – Risk assessment - TOSCA - Federal regulation of toxic substances - PMNs.

Assignment: Rosenbaum, 217 - 228.

March 5: Handling the nation=s waste - Hazardous and non-hazardous waste - The management and treatment of hazardous waste - The NIMBY syndrome - Post-industrial waste.

Assignment: Rosenbaum, 228 - 249.

March 10: **Mid-term Examination.**

March 12: The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) - Cradle-to-grave controls - The manifest system - Small quantity generators - New kinds of hazardous

waste - CERCLA and the Superfunds – Toxic torts.

March 24: New issues in environmental policy – The precautionary principle - Sick buildings - Radon - Endocrine disruptors - Persistent Organic Pollutants - Perchlorate - EMFs.

March 31: Energy and the environment - Energy sources for the industrial revolution - Fossil fuels - Quantity and quality - The political economy of petroleum reserves- Energy use in the U.S. – New vehicle mileage standards.

April 2: Environmental problems associated with obtaining and using energy - Energy consumption and pollution – Alternative fossil fuels - Soft path and hard path choices – Renewable energy sources.

Assignment: Rosenbaum, Chapter 8.

April 7: Nuclear power - Promise and peril - Nuclear waste storage issues - Power grids and blackouts - The politics of energy non-policy - Comparative energy policies.

April 9: Comparative and global environmental issues - Tragedies of the global commons – Strategies for managing the commons - The consensual nature of international law - Regional and international agreements.

Assignment: Conca, Chapters. 3, 4, 12.

April 14: The atmospheric commons – Trace gases - The disappearing ozone layer - Causes and consequences of ozone depletion - The Montreal Protocol - Ozone diplomacy.

Assignment: Rosenbaum, 341 - 349.

April 16: Causes and consequences of global warming – Carbon dioxide, methane and the greenhouse effect - Rising sea levels - Sources of future emissions - warming and disease - warming and agriculture.

Assignment: Rosenbaum, Chapter 10.

April 21: The international politics of global warming - Winners and losers- North-South politics – The Kyoto Protocol - More Kyotos needed? - Other international environmental agreements.

April 23: Comparative environmental policy- Japan and Germany - Global development and the environment - Progress and sustainability - The Chindia problem – Environmental constraints on industrial growth – A new planetary bargain.

Assignment: Conca, Chapters 2, 8; Kassiola, Chapter 1.

April 28: Issues of sustainable development – Ecological footprints - Ecodevelopment and authentic development - Dilemmas of development – Changing social paradigms – Leapfrogging development.

Assignment: Conca, Chapters 22-24.

April 30: Globalization, trade, and the environment – Establishing minimum standards - Free trade or environmental protection? - The Ashadow@ ecologies - Harmonizing environmental policies - Who protects the global ecosystem?

Assignment: Conca, Chapters 17, 18, 19, 20, 21.

May 5: New ways of measuring social progress - What should be sustained? - Quantity versus quality - The vagaries of G.D.P. - Toward indicators of genuine progress – Measuring ecological footprints.

Assignment: Kassiola, Chapter 8.

May 7: Deeper ecological issues – sustainability as process - Changing the dominant social paradigm - Different agendas for different societies - Confronting consumption - New kinds of efficiency – Ecological politics.

Assignment: Conca, Chapters 25, 26; Kassiola, Chapters 2, 3, 6, 7, 9.