POL 4390.002: Environmental Politics and Policy

Dr. Joshua Ozymy
Spring 2012
Class Time: T 4:20-6:50 CI-102
Office Hours: T 3-4:00 and MW 1-2:00; 4:30-5:30 in BH 304
Contact Information: Joshua.ozymy@tamucc.edu or 361-825-2215

Brief course description:
This course serves as an overview and introduction to the environmental policy process (and politics behind that process) in the United States and abroad. The first section of the course primarily focuses on the policy process, including a discussion of the agencies, rules, laws, and regulations that govern environmental policymaking in the United States. The second section considers the politics behind the construction and enforcement of those regulations, while paying considerable attention to citizen opposition and involvement in policymaking. Included in this section are issues such as environmental justice, problems of environmental enforcement, citizen participation, and possibilities for citizen inclusion in crafting environmental policy.

Format:
Participation is encouraged and expected. The class will be structured around instructor-led lectures and substantive student participation.

Attendance policy:
You should attend every class. Poor attendance will hurt your participation grade considerably.

Learning outcomes
Students should be able to accomplish the following by the end of the course:
   A. Recall important laws and environmental institutions that have affected environmental policy in the United States
   B. Understand a history of environmental policy in the United States and the environmental movement as a whole
   C. Recognize the politics behind the creation and enforcement of environmental policies and the problems inherent in the process
   D. Comprehend the role that citizens play and might play in crafting environmental policy
   E. Assess the differential impact of environmental costs on various sections of society, including problems of race and class in the distribution of environmental pollution

Method of evaluating outcomes:
The instructor will gauge student learning primarily through formal testing via essay exams and a major writing assignment. Formal testing will be supported through a series of less-formal means including: thoughtful reading of the material by students demonstrated by class participation, instructor-student interaction in class, group assignments, and formal presentations, which will also contribute substantially to each student’s final grade.

Course assignments and grading structure:
15% of course grade: Participation- demonstrated by thoughtful class participation
15% of course grade: **Group assignment** students will be assigned to work in groups of three. They will be required to present a comparative analysis of their chosen environmental problem to the class, lasting approximately 15 minutes. In this presentation the group will create a PowerPoint presentation comparing and contrasting each of their chosen problem's domestic and international environmental impact.

35% of course grade: **Environmental Case Study (major writing assignment)**- each student will write a paper representing an in-depth analysis of a domestic or international environmental problem. This assignment constitutes a serious research paper. It should not be the Wikipedia version. I will grade the paper on the following 100 point scale:

- **50 points for content:** The paper should be clearly written, thorough, analytical and representative of a university paper in an upper-division class. It must demonstrate both a historical understanding of the problem, institutional assessment of why the problem persists, a focus on the environmental and public health impacts, and discuss policy solutions. The paper must be a minimum of 12 pages (minus back matter).

- **40 points for research and scholarly sourcing:** The paper must include a minimum of 12 scholarly sources (i.e. from peer reviewed journals found in the online databases through the TAMUCC library) and use these sources in appropriate ways, such as adding nuance and detail to the paper and backing for claims made throughout- paraphrase Wikipedia material if you must, but do not cite it.

- **10 points for grammar and style:** The paper must use APSA style appropriate for a research paper in political science and be written in a clear and interesting manner (other sources available online as well): [http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/DocAPSA.html](http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/DocAPSA.html) *Penalty for lateness is 10 points per day.*

35% of course grade: **Comprehensive Exam**- Will include all material covered in the course. The exam will be distributed a week before and due on the final class session. Penalty for lateness is 10 points per day.

Letter grades for the course will be assigned as follows:

- A= 89.50 or above
- B= 79.50 to 89.49
- C= 69.50 to 79.49
- D= 59.5 to 69.49
- F= Below 59.5

**Required Readings:**
Professional journals and online readings as assigned on first day of class

**Helpful Websites on Environmental Issues:**

[http://www.progressivereform.org/aboutCPR.cfm](http://www.progressivereform.org/aboutCPR.cfm) Center for Progressive Reform- good overview, commentaries, and empirical analysis of environmental issues by well-intentioned law professors and academics
http://chej.org/ Louis Gibbs of Love Canal fame-great info on community organizing and collective action

http://www.ejrc.cau.edu/ Robert Bullard-first scholar to bring serious academic attention to environmental justice issues

http://iaspub.epa.gov/triexplorer/tri_release.chemical EPA's Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) Explorer- find out who is dumping (what and how much-well most of it) in your neighborhood

http://scorecard.goodguide.com/ Scorecard- the easy route to understanding pollution in your community and across the country

http://www.environmentalintegrity.org/ Environmental Integrity Project (EIP)- all of the technical details about pollution and the failures of federal and state environmental regulation you did not want to know

http://texas.sierraclub.org/ your state chapter of the Sierra Club (still relevant after all of these years)

Course Schedule (subject to change with proper notice):

Section I: Environmental Policy

Week 1 (January 12): Introduction
Thursday: Introduction to class, explain assignments, use of library, groups
*Read Chapter 1 in Smith

Week 2: History of the Environmental Movement
Tuesday: History of the movement
Thursday: Change, reformation, and the institutionalization of the environmental movement
*Read Chapter 2 in Smith

Week 3: The Institutional Environment of Policymaking
Tuesday: The political and institutional setting
Thursday: The regulatory environment
*Read Chapters 3 and 4 in Smith
Review 98: 243-60.
*Steinzor, Rena I. 1999. "Reinventing Environmental Regulation through the Government Performance and Results Act: Are the States Ready for the Devolution?" Environmental Law Reporter (URL is too long to paste-please Google title to find article online)

Week 4: Clean Air Policy
Tuesday: Regulating Air Emissions
Thursday: Problems with Regulating and Enforcing rules on air emissions
*Read Chapter 5 in Smith


Week 5: Clean Water Policy
Tuesday: Regulating Water Quality
Thursday: Problems with Regulating Water Quality
*Read Chapter 6 in Smith

Week 6: Energy Policy
Tuesday: The Petroleum Paradox and Renewables
Thursday: Documentary, Crude
*Read Chapter 7 in Smith

Week 7: Managing Toxic Waste
Tuesday: Solid Waste Disposal Issues
Thursday: What is to be done with Hazardous Waste?
*Read Chapter 8 in Smith

Week 8: Managing International Environmental Issues
Tuesday: Identifying Transnational Environmental Issues
Thursday: Managing Transnational Environmental Issues
*Read Chapters 10 & 11 in Smith
Section II: Environmental Politics

Week 9: Citizens and Experts in the Risk Society
Tuesday: Democratic Prospects in the Age of Expertise
Thursday: Professional Knowledge, Technocratic Challenge, Experts, and Citizens
*Read Chapters 1-4 in Fischer
*Possible guest speaker on Thursday*

Week 10: Spring Break-No Class!

Week 11: Environmental Politics in the Public Sphere
Tuesday: Science vs. Policymaking in Environmental Regulation
Thursday: Politicizing Expertise
*Read Chapter 5 in Fischer

Week 12: Environmental Politics in the Public Sphere II
Tuesday: NIMBY
Thursday: Citizens Confronting Experts in the Public Sphere: EJ as Cultural Politics
*Read Chapter 6 in Fischer

Week 13: Local Knowledge and Participatory Inquiry
Tuesday: Citizens as Local Experts: The Advent of Popular Epidemiology
Thursday: The Methodological Foundations of Participatory Research
*Read Chapters 8-9 in Fischer

Week 14: Creating Discursive Institutions
Tuesday: Participatory Inquiry as Civic Discovery
Thursday: Deliberative Practices and Policy Epistemics
*Read Chapters 10-12 in Fischer
*Possible guest speaker on Thursday*

Week 15: Group Presentations
Tuesday: Presentations
Thursday: Presentations

Week 16: Wrapping-up and Group Presentations
Thursday: Presentations
*Final paper and exam due in class. Ten-point penalty per day assessed for lateness.

Student Responsibilities: TURN OFF CELL PHONES!!!
Pay attention during class. Private conversations, sleeping, and reading non-class related material will not be tolerated. Learn something! Participate in class discussions.

Students with Disabilities/Religious Needs: If you are a student with a disability or special needs, please let me know during the first week of class.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Driftwood 101. If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

Academic Honesty: University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, forgery, or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) If unsure of what honesty entails or if for more information regarding the penalties for academic dishonesty, please refer to the University Catalog.

Academic Advising: The College of Liberal Arts requires students to meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Academic Advisor will set up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, a faculty mentor, and the department chair. The College's Academic Advising Center is located in Driftwood 203E (825-3466).

Grade Appeal Process: As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. If the problem cannot be resolved at this level, the student may take the steps below.

1. Presentation of grievance to instructor. (This step must be taken within fourteen calendar days after the beginning of the next term.)

2. Appeal to department chair or area coordinator.
3. Written appeal to the University Academic Standards Grievance Committee.

4. Preliminary review and advising by an ombudsman appointed by the Provost.

5. Submission of file by department chair to the chair of the University Academic Standards Grievance Committee.

6. Review of file by committee chair and submission of case to committee.

7. Proceedings of the University Academic Standards Grievance Committee. (Committee holds hearing, reviews data, presents findings to all parties, and makes recommendation to Provost.)

8. Decision by Provost.

9. Final appeal in writing to the Provost if student or instructor thinks appropriate procedures have not been followed. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.htm.