ENR 4000 - 0010
Environmental and Natural Resources Policy

Fall 2017

Day and time of meetings: Tuesday/Thursday from 2:20 to 3:40 PM
Location: Ramseyer Hall 059

Instruction Team

Instructor: Ramiro Berardo, Ph.D.
Office: Kottman 316B.
Email: berardo.3
Office Hours: Wednesday 12:15-1:45 pm, Thursday 9:30 – 11:00 am.

Teaching Associate: Francesca Formica (students with family names A through L).
Office: Kottman 461.
Email: formica.18
Office Hours: Wednesday 1:00-2:30 pm, Tuesday 11:00– 12:30 pm.

Teaching Associate: Henry Peller (students with family names M through Z).
Office: Soil physical laboratory (Kottman 452)
Email: peller.10
Office Hours: Monday 9:00 am – 12:00 pm, or by appointment.

Course Description

Environmental policy is an interesting policy area to study because it deals with “wicked” problems that are hard to solve. Every time there is a policy discussion about how humans (can) affect the environment and/or use natural resources, you are almost guaranteed to see multiple stakeholders involved in a messy negotiation process from which some (but rarely all) benefit. Do we need a new pipeline or not? Is it preferable to have huge agricultural yields or pristine clear waterways? Is logging as an economic activity more important than protecting the endangered species that live in the forests where the logging takes place? How do we use the water in our rivers in a context of extended drought? Do we use it to sustain important fish species, or do we direct it to the fields that produce the foods we eat? These questions are hard to answer because different people have different (a) views of what constitutes a problem, (b) policy priorities, and (c) availability of resources (i.e. time and money) that they can spend in
the policy-making process. In other words, to understand which policies are made (or not), one needs to understand not only the problems at hand, but also the political and social context in which decisions are made.

We will cover a lot of material in our time together. In order for us to get the most out of the course, it is essential for everyone to do the assigned work, which includes reading and thinking about the material before we discuss it in class.

**Course Objectives**

By the end of the semester, students will understand key concepts in environmental and natural resources policy. They will have the skills necessary to understand and analyze how and why certain policy decisions are made to address specific environmental problems. This course will foster a knowledge base and interest level to prepare students well for further study in environmental and natural resources policy, both in and beyond the classroom.

**GE Expected Learning Outcomes**

This course fulfills GE category Social Science, subcategory Organizations and Polities, with the following expected outcomes:

1. Students understand the theories and methods of social scientific inquiry as they are applied to the study of organizations and polities.
2. Students understand the formation and durability of political, economic, and social organizing principles and their differences and similarities across contexts.
3. Students comprehend and assess the nature and values of organizations and polities and their importance in social problem solving and policy making.

**Course Requirements**

*The Student:*

Each student must accept responsibility for preparing for each class session by completing assigned readings and taking the time to reflect upon them. Assigned readings are posted in Carmen or linked to from this syllabus. Every Friday, I will provide **reading questions** for the material to be covered in the following week. These questions will be posted in Carmen. There will be 2 or 3 questions each week that will be graded (each one of these will count for 1 point of your final grade). Your answers to the reading questions will be due on the day the reading is assigned at 1:30 p.m.
Students are encouraged to **participate** in class discussions. Each student’s contribution is helpful to increase our understanding of topics. Only rule: **be courteous and tolerant with ideas that you don’t agree with.**

Students will also complete **three written assignments.** Assignments will pertain to an issue of the students choosing, but there is one topic that the assignments **CANNOT BE ABOUT:** climate change at a global scale. Late assignments will be assessed a 20% grade reduction for the first 24 hours and 10% grade reduction for every 24 hours after that. Deadlines for assignments are as follows:

1. Assignment #1 due Friday, September 8\(^{th}\) at 12:00 pm (drop a copy in the corresponding dropbox in Carmen).
2. Assignment #2 due Friday, October 6\(^{th}\) at 12:00 pm (drop a copy in the corresponding dropbox in Carmen).
3. Assignment #3 due Friday, November 3\(^{rd}\) at 12:00 pm (drop a copy in the corresponding dropbox in Carmen).

Students will write a **policy brief** on a topic of their choosing. Policy briefs that are submitted late will be assessed a 20% grade reduction for the first 24 hours and 10% grade reduction for every 24 hours after that. The deadline for the submission of the policy brief is December 8\(^{th}\) at 5:45 pm (a copy of the brief will be uploaded into a digital dropbox created in the course’s Carmen site).

There will be **two in-class examinations**, but no final exam. The two exams will consist in a mix of multiple choice, true/false and essay questions designed to test understanding of the readings and class discussions. Make-up exams will be scheduled **ONLY FOR MEDICAL REASONS THAT CAN BE PROPERLY DOCUMENTED.**

**Attendance** is not mandatory, but students who attend class will be rewarded, simply because the exams will include questions about content that is shared in the lectures that might not necessarily come from the readings.

**NO EXTRA CREDIT ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE GIVEN DURING THE SEMESTER.**

**The Instruction Team:**

In addition to my role as an instructor in class, which requires that I deliver lectures, guide discussions, answer questions, etc., I will be happy to meet with you for office hours outside the classroom. I will be available via email for answer questions or deal with problems that cannot be addressed by the Teaching Associates.

The Teaching Associates will have primary responsibility for answering student
questions and grading assignments, exams, and the policy brief. The TA is a resource for students and are available if the student is having trouble with class material or assignments. The TA will be a first point of contact for students with questions, issues, or problems (including exam absences due to medical reasons). They will help with the grading, class management, logistical items, and other duties that arise.
Grading Policy

Course grades will be based on a student’s point total, which can reach a maximum of 500 points. Points will be earned as follows:

**Weekly reading questions**: 50 points (1 point for each question graded), or 10% of the final grade.

**Assignments**: 100 points (30 points for assignments 1 and 2, 40 points for assignment 3), or 20% of the final grade.

**Policy Brief**: 125 points maximum, or 25% of the final grade.

**Exams**: 225 points maximum (100 points for exam #1; 125 points for exam #2), or 45% of the final grade.

Grading Scale

A: 93 % or more of maximum points  
A-: 90 to 92.9 % of maximum points  
B+: 87 to 89.9 % of maximum points  
B: 83 to 86.9 % of maximum points  
B-: 80 to 82.9 % of maximum points  
C+: 77 to 79.9 % of maximum points  
C: 73 to 76.9 % of maximum points  
C-: 70 to 72.9 % of maximum points  
D+: 67 to 69.9 % of maximum points  
D: 63 to 66.9 % of maximum points  
D-: 60 to 62.9 % of maximum points  
E: lower than 60 % of maximum points

University Policies

**Availability of Accommodations.** If you have a documented disability, please register with the Office for Disability Services (ODS). After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible so that they can be implemented in a timely fashion. All discussions will remain confidential. If you have any questions about this process please contact ODS at (614) 292-3307.

**Academic misconduct.** Cheating on exams or plagiarism are violations of the academic honor code and carry severe sanctions, including failing a course or even suspension or dismissal from the University. In addition to consulting the procedures created by the
OSU Committee on Academic Misconduct (http://oaa.osu.edu/coam.html), here are some basic guidelines:

1. **Cheating on an exam**: Students who cheat on an exam will be reported to the Committee of Academic Misconduct for investigation and upon review will receive a failing grade for this class.

2. **Plagiarism**: Students who plagiarize (including engaging in self-plagiarism) will be reported to the Committee of Academic Misconduct for investigation and upon review will receive a failing grade. Plagiarism means using someone else’s ideas or words (even in a short phrase) without indicating where you got them. If you use someone else’s idea, in your own words, you must include a citation to indicate where you got the idea. If you use someone else’s words, you must put quotes around them and include a citation to indicate where they came from. Plagiarism includes copying another student’s paper or ideas. Self-plagiarism constitutes the reuse of one’s own work, in its entirety or in part, submitted to satisfy other requirements at OSU or another institution.
Course Schedule

Unit 1: The Political Context of Environmental and Natural Resources Policy

August 22
Introduction

No required reading this week!

We will spend time introducing the instruction team and covering the syllabus and rules for the semester.

August 24
Environmental Problems Now and Then

Required reading:


August 29
The Value of Institutions

Required reading:


August 31
The U.S. Constitution

Required reading:

September 5
The Dominant Social Paradigm and Some Environmental History

Required reading:


September 7
Basics of the Policy Making Process in the U.S.

Required reading:


Suggested reading:


Assignment #1 due Friday, September 8th at 12:00 pm – drop a copy in the corresponding dropbox in Carmen.

September 12
Congress

Required reading:

Klein, Ezra. 2016. The single most important fact about American Politics. Available here.


Suggested reading:

September 14
Courts

Required reading:


September 19
Agencies

Required reading:


September 21
Review Exam #1

September 26
Exam #1

September 28
UCAT evaluation

October 3
NEPA

Required reading:


October 5
Endangered Species Policy

Required reading:


Assignment #2 due Friday, October 6th at 12:00 pm –drop a copy in the corresponding dropbox in Carmen.

October 10
Endangered Species Policy–Class Exercise

Material to be used in class:


October 12
Fall break (no class)

October 17
Climate Change and Global Governance

Required reading:

October 19
Climate Change and Obstacles to Political Action

Required reading:


October 24
Harmful Algal Blooms in Lake Erie I

Required reading:

Recommended Reading:

Harmful Algal Bloom Concept Map:
Students will create concept maps to think about the problem of HABs using Mental Modeler. Download the Mental Modeler software at http://www.mentalmodeler.org/. Make sure to bring your laptop to class. If you cannot download the software, you’ll use the stand alone version available online, so bring the laptop nonetheless

October 26
Harmful Algal Blooms in Lake Erie II

Required reading:

October 31
Fracking

Required reading:


November 2
Fracking and Framing (II)

Required reading:


Assignment #3 due Friday, November 3rd at 12:00 pm – drop a copy in the corresponding dropbox in Carmen.

November 7
Review Exam #2

November 9
Exam #2

November 14
Gran Chaco (documentary)

November 16
Guest Speaker: Paula Juarez.
Researcher with the National University of Quilmes (Argentina) and coordinator for the Zero Thirst Program (Argentina-Bolivia-Paraguay)

Required reading: TBD

November 21-23
Thanksgiving Week (no class)
November 28
Designing a Policy Brief

Class activities:
1. The class will begin with a 30 to 40-minute presentation by the instructor on the main component of policy briefs.
2. Students will then use a “policy brief grading sheet” to grade a sample policy brief provided by the instructor.

November 30
Policy Brief Workshop

Pre-class activities:
1. Each student will be asked to complete a draft of their policy brief before coming to class. The draft should contain the basic layout of the brief.

Class activities:
1. Students will work in groups of 3. Each student will read their teammates’ drafts, and grade them using a “policy brief grading sheet” provided by the instruction team. The students will discuss:
   1.1. their level of agreement on the strengths and weaknesses of each of the drafts, and
   1.2. How to improve the final versions of their policy briefs.
2. The instructor will identify drafts with a high score and lead a discussion on how those individual policy briefs address the issue of HABs in Lake Erie.

December 5
Policy Brief Presentations

Pre-class activities:
1. Students print a color-copy of their policy brief, and bring it to the classroom, where they will be asked to tape it to the wall.

Class activities:
1. Each student will be asked to walk around the classroom reviewing a group of policy briefs.
2. The second half of the class will be used to exchange input about the briefs that should be useful for students as they prepare the final submission of their briefs.

December 8
Drop a copy of your Policy Brief no later than 5:45 PM in the course’s Carmen dropbox