ENR 4000 - 0010
Environmental and Natural Resources Policy

Spring 2017

Day and time of meetings: Tu-Th from 8:00 AM to 9:20 AM
Location: Kottman 103

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 12:15-1:45 pm, Thursday 9:30 – 11:00 am.

Teaching Associate: Hugh Walpole (students with family names M through Z).
Office: Kottman 305.
Email: Walpole.23
Office Hours: Wednesday 12:15-1:45 pm, Thursday 9:30 – 11:00 am.

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 7:00 a.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 four written assignments. Assignments will pertain to an issue of the students choosing, but there are two topics that the assignments CANNOT BE ABOUT: climate change and algal blooms in Lake Erie. The policy brief will be about algal blooms in Lake Erie. 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, January 27th at 12:00 pm (drop a copy in the corresponding dropbox in Carmen).
2. Assignment #2 due Friday, February 24th at 12:00 pm (drop a copy in the corresponding dropbox in Carmen).
3. Assignment #3 due Friday, March 10th at 12:00 pm (drop a copy in the corresponding dropbox in Carmen).
4. Assignment #4 due Friday, March 31st at 12:00 pm (drop a copy in the corresponding dropbox in Carmen).

Students will write a policy brief on the topic of algal blooms in the western portion of Lake Erie. 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 April 26th at 9:45 am (a copy of the brief will be uploaded into a 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 (25 points for each assignment), 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

January 10
Introduction

No required reading this week!

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

January 12
Environmental Problems Now and Then

Required reading:


January 17
The Value of Institutions

Required reading:


January 19
The U.S. Constitution

Required reading:

January 24
The Dominant Social Paradigm and Some Environmental History

Required reading:


January 26
Basics of the Policy Making Process in the U.S.

Required reading:


Suggested reading:


Assignment #1 due Friday, January 27th at 12:00 pm – drop a copy in the corresponding dropbox in Carmen.

January 31
Congress

Required reading:

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


Suggested reading:

February 2
Courts

Required reading:


February 7
Agencies

Required reading:


February 9
Review Exam #1

February 14
Exam #1
Unit 2: Regulating the Environment and Natural Resources in the U.S.

February 16
Theories of the Policy Process (I)

Required reading:


Cairney, Paul. Rational Choice and the IAD. Available here.

February 21
Theories of the Policy Process (II)

Required reading:


February 23
NEPA

Required reading:


Assignment #2 due Friday, February 24th at 12:00 pm –drop a copy in the corresponding dropbox in Carmen.

February 28
Endangered Species Policy

Required reading:

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. 40 Years of Conserving Endangered Species. Available [here](#).


**March 2**  
Endangered Species Policy–Class Exercise

**Material to be used in class:**


**March 7**  
Climate Change and Global Governance

**Required reading:**


**March 9**  
Climate Change and Obstacles to Political Action

**Required reading:**


**Assignment #3 due Friday, March 10th at 12:00 pm –drop a copy in the corresponding dropbox in Carmen.**
March 13-17
Spring Break (no classes).

March 21
Review Exam 2

March 23
Exam 2
Unit 3: Environmental Policy in Complex Social-Ecological Systems

March 28
Introduction to Harmful Algal Blooms in Lake Erie

Required reading:


March 30
How do Harmful Algal Blooms Happen?

Required 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

Assignment #4 due Friday, March 31st at 12:00 pm –drop a copy in the corresponding dropbox in Carmen.

April 4
Farming and adoption of best management practices

Required reading:


Class activities:
1. The students watch the video “Identifying practices to best manage phosphorus”, available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pVfN28w6vvg.
2. Students work in groups to discuss these questions:
   2.1. What individual variables make farmers more likely to adopt farming best management practices?
   2.2. What types of social ties affect the adoption of best management practices?
3. Students will use the final 15 minutes of class to refine the mental model produced during the first class period. They will do so using the “mental modeler” software.

April 6
Stakeholders and Algal Blooms in the Western Lake Erie Basin

Required reading:


Class activities:
1. Working in groups, students identify the relevant stakeholders for the case and place them in a Rainbow Diagram.
2. Teams are paired, with each team asked to review the other team’s stakeholder analysis. This exercise will be followed by a discussion of the value of rainbow diagrams for the analysis of this particular case.

April 11
Policy Instruments and Tools

Required reading:
Kerr, John M., Joseph V. DePinto, Dennis McGrath, Scott P. Sowa, and Scott M. Swinton.
“Sustainable management of Great Lakes watersheds dominated by agricultural land use.”


**April 13**

**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.

**April 18**

**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.

**April 20**

**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.
April 26
Drop a copy of your Policy Brief no later than 9:45 AM in the course’s Carmen dropbox