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| Political Science 107 | Winter 2015 |
| Environmental Politics and  Policy  MW 4:10-5:30  106 Olson | Stuart Hill  Office: 570 Kerr (752-0966)  Office Hours: M 2-3:20, T 10:30-11:50  & by appointment |

**SYLLABUS**

The United States has enacted far-reaching laws that seek to clean up the nation's air and water and to identify new environmental threats as they emerge. Large tracts of public lands have been protected from economic development so that future generations of U.S. citizens can see diverse examples of the natural world in their near pristine forms. As the numbers of particular plant and animal species have declined from pollution and the loss of their native habitat, the U.S. government has attempted to identify the species that face the greatest threats and limit development that might lead to their eradication. These environmental policies have not been universally supported. Opponents have lobbied to diminish the scope of past initiatives and to deter the adoption of new governmental mandates. Despite the success of some efforts to roll back environmental protections, the broad reach of environmental policy has continued to grow.

This course will seek to explain the politics of environmental protection in the United States. The expanding scope of environmental policy has been driven by several factors. Americans historically have valued protecting the "natural" environment and the environment on which their immediate health and well-being depend. They have supported, often at the urging of key political leaders, scientific research to investigate current and emerging environmental threats. Elected officials in turn find it in their political interest to monitor and draw attention to the most egregious environmental problems in light of their ideological commitments, particularly those problems that attract the attention of the mass media. We will see that this system of generating and diffusing knowledge of environmental risk helps to explain the expanding scope of environmental policy. But we will also learn that the U.S. government does not necessarily identify and address the most significant environmental problems.

Readings:

Walter A. Rosenbaum. 2014. Environmental Politics and Policy. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press

Judith Layzer. 2012. The Environmental Case. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press

Selected readings are available in a reader at Davis Copy Shop on the corner of 3rd  St and University Ave (one block from campus)

Course Requirements:

A. Analytic Paper: Students will prepare a paper that explains why advocates of expanding environmental protection have been successful in generating support for a major, new piece of legislation (or at least new at the time it was proposed). Students will apply concepts from the readings and lecture to explain the adoption of the policy initiative they choose. Papers should run 10 typed pages in length. A detailed description of the paper will be handed out in the second week of class. The paper is due on Monday, March 16. A late paper is docked five percentage points (one half letter grade) for each day it is overdue. To prepare for writing this paper, students will hand in a prospectus on Wednesday, February 4 that identifies an appropriate topic and at least five specific, relevant sources of information.

B. Examinations: There is a midterm and final exam. Both exams will include short answer and essay questions. The University tells me that the final is scheduled for Thursday, March 20 from 6-8 pm and I have set the midterm forWednesday, February 11. Make-up exams will be offered only for those students who cannot take the exams at the scheduled times for documented reasons of health and personal emergency. All make-up exams will be more difficult than regularly scheduled examinations. Failure to take an exam or a make-up will constitute grounds for a failing grade for this course.

Grading: The breakdown of the grade is: Midterm 30%

Analytic paper 35%

Final 35%

100%

**Course Outline and Readings**

1. Introduction

a. Overview of environmental politics and policy. (January 5)

b. Origins of American environmentalism (January 7)

**Read:** Walter Rosenbaum, Environmental Politics and Policy, chp. 1.; Gifford Pinchot (1910), "Principles of Conservation"; John Muir (1916), Hetch Hetchy Valley"; Aldo Leopold, The Sand County Almanac, “Conservation Esthetic, Wilderness, Land Ethic”; Gregg Easterbrook (1995), "The Ecorealist Manifesto," A Moment on Earth, pp. 647-5

c. Conflicting claims about the severity of environmental problems (January 12,-14)

**Read:**  Donella Meadows et al., "The Nature of Exponential Growth,"; Garret Hardin (1968), "The Tragedy of the Commons," Science Vol.162 (December 13, 1968), pp. 1243-1248; Julian Simon and Herman Kahn, The Resourceful Earth, pp. 1-27

2. Institutions and politics of environmental policy

a. Presidential leadership and Congressional disposition (January 21)

**Read:** Rosenbaum, chps. 2-3

b. Executive agencies and policy implementation (January 26)

**Read:** Walter Rosenbaum, "Science, Politics, and Policy at the EPA, in Vig and Kraft, eds., Environmental Policy

2. Institutions and politics of environmental policy cont’d

c. Public and elite opinion (January 26)

**Read:** John Zaller, Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion, chps 2 (pp 6-28), 3 & 6; Frank Baumgartner and Bryan Jones, Agendas and Instability in American Politics, chp 1-2; James True, Bryan Jones, and Frank Baumgartner, “Punctuated Equilibrium Theory,” in Paul Sabatier, ed., Theories of Policy Process.

3. Clean Air and Water

a. Clean Air Act of 1970 (January 28)

**Read:** Layzer, chp. 2; Jurgen Schmandt (1984), "Regulation and Science," Science, Technology, and Human Values Vol. 9 (Winter), pp. 23-39; Rosenbaum, chp.6.

b. Clean Water Act of 1972 (February 2)

**Read:** Michael Greve, "Private Enforcement, Private Rewards: How Environmental Citizen Suits Became an Entitlement Program," in Greve and Smith, eds., Environmental Politics: Public Costs, Private Rewards, pp. 105-127

**Paper prospectus: Wednesday, February 4**

4. Toxic wastes, hazardous substances, and endangered species (February 4, 9)

**Read:** Rosenbaum, chp. 7; Jacqueline Switzer and Gary Bryner, Environmental Politics,

chp. 10; Charles Mann and Mark Plummer, Noah's Choice, pp 147-175; Layzer*,*

chps.3 & 7

**Midterm:** **Wednesday, February 11**

5. Economics and evaluating environmental choices

a. Ronald Reagan's challenge to environmental regulation (February 18)

**Read:** J. Clarence Davies (1984), "Environmental Institutions and the Reagan Adm” in Vig and Kraft, eds., Environmental Policies in the 1980s, pp 143-160.

b. Regulatory reform: cost-benefit and risk-benefit analysis (February 23-25)

**Read:** Rosenbaum chps. 4-5; Scott Farrow and Michael Toman, “Using Benefit-Cost Analysis to Improve Environmental Regulation,” Environment (March 1999), pp 12-15, 33-38.

c. Market-place solutions (March 2)

**Read:** Layzer, chp. 14; Robert Goodin, "Selling Environmental Indulgences," Kyklos

(February 5, 2007), pp. 237-254

6. Public Lands, Land Use, and Dust Bowl (March 4)

**Read:** Rosenbaum, chp 9; Layzer, chps. 6 & 13

7. Strategic policy making: energy policy (March 9)

**Read:** Rosenbaum, chp 8; Layzer, chp. 11; R.A.N Smith, “What Are the Trends in Public Opinion? In Energy, the Environment and Public Opinion

8. Strategic policy making: climate change (March 11-16)

**Read:** Rosenbaum, chp. 10; Layzer, chp. 10; David Victor, Global Warming Gridlock, chp 2

**Paper Due:** **Monday, March 16**

**Final Exam:** **Friday, March 20 from 6:00-8:00 pm**