



Political Science (POL 228)
US Environmental Politics and Policy



Davidson College

Spring 2016

Class Times: Tues. and Thur., 1:40 pm – 2:55 pm

Class Location: Chambers 1062

Professor Graham Bullock
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Department of Environmental Studies

Office Hours: Monday, 1:40 – 3:40 and Thursday, 3:05 – 4:50 pm, and by appointment

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This course has no pre-requisites, and may be counted as a course satisfying the Social Scientific Thought Distribution Requirement, the Environmental Social Sciences course required for Environmental Studies majors, and the American Politics course required for Political Science majors

Course Overview

This class takes a problem-based approach to understanding environmental politics and policy in the United States. We will use a series of environmental cases to highlight the political challenges associated with solving environmental problems, and will discuss a range of concepts and strategies that may be helpful in understanding and overcoming those challenges. We will look at the history of environmental politics in America and the range of stakeholders and interest groups that have played important roles in the evolution of US environmental policy. We will cover endangered species, climate change, energy, pollution, urban sprawl and other environmental issues, and each student will write a policy memo that analyzes an issue of particular interest to them. The memo will also discuss potential ways to make progress on the issue in question, given its particular political context.

Course Learning Outcomes

This course is designed to contribute to five overarching learning outcomes, which are described below. Readings, lectures, discussions and assignments are all designed to help students achieve these goals. By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- **Theoretical Knowledge of the Social Sciences:** To describe social science and political science concepts that help explain human cognition and behavior and the structures of human societies and institutions.
- **Empirical Knowledge of US Environmental Politics and Policy:** To summarize the key features of the political actors, institutions and policymaking processes that are relevant to US environmental politics.
- **Application Skills:** To classify and compare specific characteristics of US environmental politics using key social science and political science concepts.
- **Political Analysis Skills:** To analyze and evaluate claims made about US environmental politics using relevant theoretical and empirical knowledge.

- **Policy Analysis Skills:** To generate, analyze, and evaluate policy options designed to solve specific environmental problems in the United States.

By achieving these learning outcomes, students will be empowered to think critically about their own environmental values and positions, make informed political choices about environmental issues, and to positively, strategically, and successfully engage in American democracy – as citizens, advocates, and leaders.

I have designed this syllabus to help us accomplish these goals. I aim for our classes to be engaging and well-organized, our lectures, discussions, and group activities to be focused and productive, and our texts to be informative and thought-provoking. Our assignments will also help us meet these objectives, and assess our progress towards them. I will therefore work to provide constructive feedback and fair grades on them in a timely manner (my goal is to have them back to you within two weeks of submission). I will be available for help outside of class in office hours every week for anyone with questions about the material covered in the course.

Course Structure and Format

The course is structured into six units:

- **Unit I - Introduction:** The course begins with two weeks of readings and discussion related to the scope, history, and landscape of environmental politics. This component of the course will introduce us to the major themes, concepts and actors that we will be investigating in more depth throughout the semester.
- **Unit II - The Politics of Nature:** In this unit, we will look at the political debates around land management, endangered species and property rights. We will also examine the moral positions embedded in these debates, and consider how they are framed using different historical and ethical narratives. Cases will focus on the grazing policy on federal lands, recreation policy in the National Parks, the wise use movement (i.e. the “Sagebrush Rebellion”), the spotted owl issue, and marine fisheries management.
- **Unit III - The Politics of Pollution:** This unit will provide an overview of pollution controversies, with particular attention to toxic waste, risk assessment, environmental justice, and the relationship between business operating procedures and environmental politics. Cases will center on the Clean Air and Water Acts, the Love Canal controversy, acid rain, the Chesapeake Bay, and climate change policy.
- **Unit IV - The Politics of Energy:** In this unit, our focus will be on the politics of energy production, the concept of energy security, and the role of lobbyists, sub-national governments (e.g. US states) and utilities in the development and implementation of energy policy. Cases include the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR), hydraulic fracturing (i.e. “fracking”), renewable energy, and the Deepwater Horizon disaster.
- **Unit V - The Politics of Urban Sustainability:** This unit will investigate the contestation and collaboration found in the quest to achieve sustainable development, both generally and in the specific context of urban areas. We will explore the meaning of “sustainability” and apply it in analyses of three different cities – Boston, Portland, and New Orleans.
- **Unit VI – The Politics of Food:** In this unit, we will investigate the US Farm Bill, which originated during the Great Depression and provides funding for agricultural subsidies, environmental conservation, food safety, food stamps, and more. The 2014 version of the bill includes spending



of \$956 billion over ten years, and was highly controversial. Students will participate in an in-depth simulation and case analysis of this key element in America's agricultural, food, and environmental policy.

- **Unit VII - Summary and Synthesis:** In this final unit, we will summarize and synthesize what we have learned about environmental politics over the course of the semester. We will also go over the Final Exam and fill out evaluations for the course.

Course Requirements (Assignments and Grading)

The assignments for this course are designed to help students accomplish the course's learning objectives. They include the following activities:

- **Participation (15%):** This course is designed for active student involvement and participation. For each day's class, I expect students to complete the assigned reading and to come to class prepared to discuss that reading. Occasionally, students will be assigned specific roles to play in case simulations in class. Participation grades will also be based on your preparation for class, your careful attention to assigned readings, the quality of your contributions, your respect for the ideas and remarks of others in the class, the relevance of your remarks, and your overall level of participation (both active and passive) in the classroom. Students should also keep track of current events related to environmental politics and be prepared to discuss them as they relate to the themes and issues we discuss in class.
- **Response Papers (20%; 6% each paper, 2% personal website):** Students will write three short one-page response papers (single-spaced) on three different topics – one case discussed in the class, one discussion of a relevant current event, and one environmentally-themed movie (a list of approved movies will be circulated). The response papers should apply specific concepts and ideas discussed in the class to the topic rather than only summarize the material. The current events papers are due on Friday, Feb. 5 at 5 pm and the movie papers is due on Friday, April 22 at 5 pm. The case papers are due in class on the day they are discussed (students will select the cases they will write about at the beginning of the semester). Once suggested revisions are made, students will post their papers to their personal websites, which they will create through the Davidson Domains project. Posts will then be syndicated to the class website. Finalized websites with all posts uploaded are due on Tuesday, May 3 at 5 pm.
- **Policy Memo (20%):** Each student will write one 2-page policy memo (single-spaced, one inch margins, 11 point font). The policy memo will address an environmental issue of interest to the student. A short description of the policy memo topic is due January 26 in class. The first draft of the policy memo is due on Friday, March 18 at 5 pm, and a final draft incorporating suggested revisions is due on Monday, April 11 at 5 pm. Revised memos should be posted to the course website by Tuesday, May 3 at 5 pm.
- **Mid-Term Review (20%):** A Mid-Term Review covering Parts I and II of the course will be held on Tuesday, February 16. It will be an in-class review with several short answer questions.
- **Final Exam (25%):** A Final Exam will be held during the Exam period that will be both a review of concepts and information covered over the course of the semester as well as an assessment of students' ability to apply those concepts to new situations.

Course Attendance and Assignment Extensions

We will be covering new topics and issues every day. Attendance is therefore required and will be monitored daily. You are also expected to respect your classmates and your professor by arriving for class on time and remaining until the end. You may have one unexcused absence during the semester; thereafter,

I will deduct two points from your course grade for every unexcused absence. Excused absences are only granted for serious personal illness or injury, family emergency, or authorized college activity, and generally require documentation from college officials. Changes in deadlines will be approved only upon evidence of similarly extenuating circumstances. It is your responsibility to request an excused absence or an extension as soon as you possibly can, and preferably at the beginning of the semester.

Honor Code and Academic Integrity

As a student at Davidson College, you are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity and to follow the Honor Code throughout the course. Any violation of that code will be dealt with as stipulated. If you have any questions about documentation, what constitutes plagiarism, or any other Honor Code-related questions, please seek guidance right away. In general, academic dishonesty is defined as cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, falsifying academic records, and any other act designed to avoid participating honestly in the learning process. Academic dishonesty also includes, but is not limited to, providing false or misleading information to receive an assignment extension or test postponement, or the submission of essentially the same written assignment for two different courses without prior permission of faculty members.

Course Texts

One text is required for the course, and it is available at the campus bookstore:

1. Layzer, Judith. 2016. *The Environmental Case*, 4th Edition, Washington, DC: CQ Press.

Course Website, Materials and Emails

Additional readings that are not from these two books will be posted on the Moodle course website. Please visit the course website regularly for information about the course. The web site can be accessed at moodle.davidson.edu. Emails about course updates and assignments will be sent either through Moodle or the course email list, so it is imperative that you check your Davidson email regularly.

Technology in the Classroom

When in lecture or in section please turn off your cell phones, MP3 players, and other mobile devices. Since it is our mutual responsibility to create a productive learning environment while we are in the classroom, notebook computers may not be used during class. There have been numerous studies showing that computers distract both the students using them and students around them (similar to second-hand smoke). These studies also indicate that they can result in a lack of learning and lower grades for those that they distract.



More importantly, they also create a physical barrier between students, the professor, and the rest of the class. This hinders the productive discussions and engagement that enables deeper learning and skill formation and is the hallmark of a liberal arts education. While I recognize many students may prefer to take notes using their computers because “they type faster than they write,” the object of note-taking is not quantity but quality. Especially in the social sciences where the skills of analysis and interpretation are

essential, the key to constructive note-taking is to process and prioritize the information being received, not just copying it down verbatim.

Therefore students are encouraged to take notes in paper notebooks and to practice critical note-taking skills in the process. Tablets that lie flat on the desk are allowed, but should only be used for note-taking, not surfing the web or checking your email (turn off your wireless connection during class). After class, you are also encouraged to take a few minutes to review, revise, and even re-write your notes, and you can use a computer to do so. Your learning and analytical skills will be greatly improved as a result.

That is not say that technology cannot be effectively used in the classroom to facilitate our learning objectives – it can and we will do so throughout the semester. I will often use Powerpoint slides to summarize important points, and will distribute them via Moodle after class. I will make use of audio and video materials where relevant and appropriate, including some online materials. And we may make occasional use of mobile software to conduct instant polls in class. But it will be intentional and directed use of technology, not ad hoc and distracting.

Current Events

As we will be applying the concepts and ideas from the course to current events in environmental politics, students are expected to read the news daily and stay up on what is going on in the world. The New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Washington Post, and PBS NewsHour are acceptable outlets of both national and international information, and can be accessed easily online. Discount subscriptions for students to the New York Times and the Wall Street Journal are available via their websites. We will have regular discussions of relevant current events, and how they relate to what we are learning in class.



Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Full accommodations are the legal right of students with learning and physical disabilities. If you are a student with a learning disability documented by Davidson College who might need accommodations, please identify yourself to me within the first week or two of class, so that I can learn from you as early as possible how to best work with your learning style. If I do not hear directly from you I will presume you are not seeking any accommodations.

Course Outline, Readings and Deadlines

The number of pages of reading are shown in parentheses for each day and reading. Page totals per day range from 8 to 42 pages, with the average of around 30 pages.

Note: I reserve the right to make modifications to this outline if in my judgment the flow of the course will be best served by such adjustments.

PART I: AN INTRODUCTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS

Tuesday, 1/12: Introduction to the Course

Mini-case handed out in class.

Thursday, 1/14: The History, Landscape, and Governance of Environmental Politics (28)

Layzer, Judith. 2016. "A Policymaking Framework: Defining Problems and Portraying Solutions in US Environmental Politics" in *The Environmental Case*, p. 1-22 (22).

Smith, Zachary. 2009. "Public Opinion and the Environment" in *The Environmental Policy Paradox*, p. 26-31 (6). [Available on Moodle](#)

Tuesday, 1/19: Values and Environmental Politics (42)

Merchant, Carolyn. 1992. "Environmental Ethics and Political Conflict" in *Radical Ecology*, p. 63-87 (25). [Available on Moodle](#)

Clapp, Jennifer and Peter Dauvergne. 2005. "Peril or Prosperity? Mapping Worldviews of Global Environmental Change" in *Paths to a Green World*, p. 1-17 (17). [Available on Moodle](#)

PART II: THE POLITICS OF NATURE

Thursday, 1/21: Natural Resource Politics (35)

Kraft, Michael. 2011. "Natural Resources and Policy Change" in *Environmental Policy and Politics*, p. 178-204 (27). [Available on Moodle](#)

Kiker, Gregory A. et al. 2005. "Application of multicriteria decision analysis in environmental decision making." *Integrated Environmental Assessment and Management* 1(2): 95-102 (8). [Available on Moodle](#)

Tuesday, 1/26: Narratives and the Dust Bowl (29)

William Cronon. 1992. "A Place for Stories: Nature, History, and Narrative," *The Journal of American History* 78(4), p. 1347-1376 (29). [Available on Moodle](#)

→ **Policy Memo Topic Due in Class**



Thursday, 1/28: Environmental Stakeholders: Whose Home on the Range? (34)

CASE: Layzer, Judith. 2016. "Federal Grazing Policy: Some Things Never Change" in *The Environmental Case*, p. 202-232 (30).

Kiker, Gregory A. et al. 2005. "Application of multicriteria decision analysis in environmental decision making." *Integrated Environmental Assessment and Management* 1(2): 103-107 (4). [Available on Moodle](#)

Tuesday, 2/2: Property Rights and the Sagebrush Rebellion (40)

CASE: Layzer, Judith. 2011. "Backlash: Wise Use, Property Rights, and Anti-Environmental Activism in the 1990s" in *The Environmental Case*, p. 383-408 (25). [Available on Moodle](#)

Opie, John. 1987. "Land and Liberty, Individual Rights, and the Constitution" in *The Law of the Land: Two Hundred Years of American Farmland Policy*, pages 18-31 (12). [Available on Moodle](#)

McEvoy, Thom. 2001. "Private Property Rights: A Look at Its History and Future." *Farming, The Journal of Northeast Agriculture*, Volume 4, Number 12 (December), p. 45-47 (3). [Available on Moodle](#)

Thursday, 2/4: Institutions and the Northern Spotted Owl (39)

CASE: Layzer, Judith. 2016. "Jobs versus the Environment: Saving the Northern Spotted Owl" in *The Environmental Case*, p. 239-269 (31).

Kraft, Michael and Scott Furlong. 2010. "Understanding Public Policy" in *Public Policy: Politics, Analysis, and Alternatives*, p. 65-72 (8)

→ **Current Events Response Paper Due on Friday, 2/5 at 5 pm**

Tuesday, 2/9: Science and Fisheries Management (32)

CASE: Layzer, Judith. 2016. "Crisis and Recovery in the New England Fisheries" in *The Environmental Case*, p. 309-335 (27).

Gieryn, Thomas. 1995. "Boundaries of Science" in *Handbook of Science and Technology Studies*, p. 393-398 (5).

Thursday, 2/11: The Politics of Nature and the Policymaking Process (15)

Kraft, Michael and Scott Furlong. 2010. "Understanding Public Policy" in *Public Policy: Politics, Analysis, and Alternatives*, p. 73-87 (15)

→ **Tuesday, 2/16: In-Class Mid-Term Review**

PART III: THE POLITICS OF POLLUTION

Thursday, 2/18: Policymaking and Pollution Regulation (39)

Markham, Adam. 1994. "A Brief History of Pollution" in *A Brief History of Pollution*, p. 1-11 (11). [Available on Moodle](#)

Layzer, Judith. 2016. "The Nation Tackles Pollution: The Environmental Protection Agency and the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts" in *The Environmental Case*, p. 31-58 (28).

Tuesday, 2/23: Policy Innovation and the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments (36)

CASE: Layzer, Judith. 2016. "Market-Based Solutions: Acid Rain and the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990" in *The Environmental Case*, p. 133-162 (30).

Kraft, Michael and Scott Furlong. 2010. "Understanding Public Policy" in *Public Policy: Politics, Analysis, and Alternatives*, p. 87-92 (6).

Thursday, 2/25: Health, Risk, and Love Canal (43)

CASE: Layzer, Judith. 2016. "Love Canal: Hazardous Waste and the Politics of Fear" in *The Environmental Case*, p. 63-87 (25).

Rosenbaum, Walter. 2011. "Common Policy Challenges: Risk Assessment and Environmental Justice" in *Environmental Politics and Policy* (8th Edition), p. 128-146 (18). [Available on Moodle](#)

SPRING BREAK

Tuesday, 3/8: Watershed Management and the Chesapeake Bay (23)

CASE: Layzer, Judith. 2016. "Ecosystem-Based Management in the Chesapeake Bay" in *The Environmental Case*, p. 92-124 (23)



Thursday, 3/10: International Politics and Climate Change (35)

CASE: Layzer, Judith. 2016. "Climate Change: The Challenges of International Environmental Policymaking" in *The Environmental Case*, p. 380-414 (35).

PART IV: THE POLITICS OF ENERGY

Tuesday, 3/15: Energy Politics and Policy (33)

Weeks, Jennifer. 2011. "Energy Policy" in *CQ Researcher*, p. 279-326 (17). [Available on Moodle](#)

Mantel, Barbara. 2015. "Energy" in *CQ Researcher* (2). [Available on Moodle](#)

Miller, Norman. 2009. "The Burgeoning Role of State and Local Governments" in *Environmental Politics: Stakeholders, Interests, and Policymaking*, p. 59-73 (14). [Available on Moodle](#)

Thursday, 3/17: Federalism and Fracking (28)

CASE: Layzer, Judith. 2016. "Fracking Wars: Local and State Responses to Unconventional Shale Gas Development" in *The Environmental Case*, p. 463-490 (28).

Movie Assignments: *Gasland* and *Gasland 2*

→ **Policy Memo Due on Friday, 3/18 at 5 pm**

Tuesday, 3/22: ANWR and Energy Security (37)

CASE: Layzer, Judith. 2016. "Oil versus Wilderness in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge" in *The Environmental Case*, p. 169-197 (29).

Sovacool, B. K. (2012). "Energy security: challenges and needs." *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Energy and Environment*, 1(1), 51-59 (8). [Available on Moodle](#)

Thursday, 3/24: EASTER (NO CLASS)

Tuesday, 3/29: Cape Wind, Renewable Energy and Nimbyism (33)

CASE: Layzer, Judith. 2016. "Cape Wind: If Not Here, Where? If Not Now, When?" in *The Environmental Case*, p. 421-453 (33).



Thursday, 3/31: Deepwater Horizon, Fossil Fuels and Focusing Events (32)

CASE: Layzer, Judith. 2016. "The Deepwater Horizon Disaster: The High Cost of Offshore Oil" in *The Environmental Case*, p. 340-371 (32).

PART V: THE POLITICS OF URBAN SUSTAINABILITY

Tuesday, 4/5: Sustainable Cities (33)

Portney, Kent. 2013. "The Conceptual Foundations of Sustainable Cities: Sustainability, Sustainable Economic Development, and Sustainable Communities" in *Taking Sustainable Cities Seriously*, p. 1-33 (33).

Thursday, 4/7: The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI) and Environmental Justice (23)

CASE: Layzer, Judith. 2011. "Community Activism and Environmental Justice: The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative" in *The Environmental Case*, p. 83-105 (23). [Available on Moodle](#)
→ **Revised Policy Memo Due on Monday, April 11 at 5 pm**

Tuesday, 4/12: The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI) and Environmental Justice (10)

Rosenbaum, Walter. 2011. "Common Policy Challenges: Risk Assessment and Environmental Justice" in *Environmental Politics and Policy* (6th Edition), p. 147-156 (10). [Available on Moodle](#)

Thursday, 4/14: Portland, Urban Sprawl and Democratic Accountability (26)

CASE: Layzer, Judith. 2016. "Making Tradeoffs: Urban Sprawl and the Evolving System of Growth Management in Portland, Oregon" in *The Environmental Case*, p. 499-524 (26).

PART V: THE POLITICS OF FOOD

An extended simulation and case study of the United States Farm Bill. Readings To Be Determined.

Tuesday, 4/19: Readings To Be Determined.

Thursday, 4/21: Readings To Be Determined.

→ **Environmental Film Response Paper Due on Friday, 4/22 at 5 pm**

Tuesday, 4/26: Readings To Be Determined.

PART V: SUMMARY AND SYNTHESIS

Thursday, 4/28: Summary and Synthesis (8)

Layzer, Judith. 2016. "Conclusions: Politics, Values, and Environmental Policy Change" in *The Environmental Case*. p. 556-564 (8).

→ **Website Completed and Posts Uploaded by Tuesday, 5/3 at 5 pm.**

→ **FINAL EXAMINATION DURING EXAM PERIOD**