Environmental Policy
Political Science 307
College of Charleston
Fall 2009

Day/Time: MWF 12-12:50
Location: MYBK 111
Course Website: www.astepback.com/EP

Instructor: P. Brian Fisher
Email Address: fisherb@cofc.edu; pbf@astepback.com
Office: 114 Wentworth, #102
Office Hours: MWF 11-12 (library); H 1-3; M 2-4 or by appt.

Course Background

This course will examine environmental problems from a policy perspective. The course will focus on both domestic and global environmental issues with an emphasis on US and local policy. We examine, analyze, and actively participate in exploring the trajectory of individual environmental values to policy. That is, we will examine how values influence environmental policy, and vice versa, how policy in its myriad forms, regulation, taxing, law, incentives— influence values. The course will focus on what constitutes effective environmental policy, how we achieve it to protect the environment. This examination will be conducted through numerous hands-on exercises with the local environment (in/around Charleston), which will become the platform for policy analysis. Topics for discussion within class will include the policy implications of environmental degradation; specifically on energy, natural resources, food and GMOs, climate, hazardous waste, overconsumption, national park policy, environmental injustice, and economic expansion.

Course Format

The Course will be divided into six parts:

I. Orientation to Environmental Policy and Politics: We will evaluate environmental values, what they are, how others have cultivated them, and where we personally stand in discussing the politics of environmental policy. This orientation will also include a historical overview of both environmental problems (how we got here), and environmental policy.

II. Environmental Change from Human Activity—What We Produce, Consume and Waste: This section of the course will investigate human impact on the environment and the historical reasons for an increased anthropogenic impact. We will review I=PAT, and how humanity can confront consumption and population growth as primary drivers of environmental change and what this means for policy. This section will also include personal evaluation of individual consumptive patterns and food choices in illuminating environmental policy pathways.

III. Policy Actors and Environmental Policy Analysis: This section represents the toolkit for understanding policy of environmental issues, and for developing an analytical framework for
evaluating environmental problems.

IV. Approaches to Environmental Problems: This section of the course will include different platforms or approaches to developing environmental policy. We will examine approaches based on the market, ecosystem, local collaboration, people, justice, and alternatives/tradeoffs of these various approaches.

V. Environmental Issues and Cases: In this section, the class will examine eleven (11) different cases of environmental problems in analyzing the values to policy trajectory. In each case, we will examine the background of the problem, the players, the debate, the outcome and conclusion, followed by questions to consider for future policy.

VI. Environmental Action and Sustainability Policy: The final section of the course will attempt to bring the varying strands of values and policy into focus through action (individual and collective) in building toward sustainability.

Course Goals

In light of the course objective and format, the goals of this course are to:

1. Engage the mind and spirit on environmental issues and problems, particularly within the Charleston community. To critically understand and probe values which underpin “good” environmental policy.
2. To address this engagement critically both through experiential exercises and through classroom work (e.g. policy paper, classroom discussion and final exam).
3. Toward these ends, to enhance analytical capacity and capabilities.
4. To apply fundamental theories and concepts to practical environmental problems, while engaging those issues on a scholarly and practical level.
5. To build knowledge of systems, processes, and institutions involved in environmental policy making.
6. To learn varying methods and research skills through engagement of political issues and problems.
7. To hone professional development skills through public speaking, public service, and engaging the public on environmental issues.

Required Books


Course Assignments

All students are responsible for visiting the "schedule" section of the course website on a regular basis. The attached reading list provides a general guide to the course readings; however, the actual assignment list and regular updates will be posted on the course website.
The class webpage will house all required information for use throughout the course, including required readings (including links to those readings), assignment prompts, course policies, and web links for facilitating in class discussion. Readings can be of three sorts: i. On the web, which there will be a direct link provided; ii. From a required text; or iii. On the library e-reserve, and a link will be provided directly to the e-res page (where you’ll enter the class password) to gain access to the reading. On the syllabus, readings that can be accessed directly from the web will be listed as (w), while those accessed through e-reserve (library) will be listed as (e-res). See the class website to access the links to the readings.

Assessment

The following weight will be given to coursework in the determination of final grades:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coursework</th>
<th>Value</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enviro Source Analysis</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food Source Analysis</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enviro Video/Service Exp</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policy Analysis Paper</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Presentation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Class Participation</strong></td>
<td>10%</td>
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**Grading Scale**: A 94-100; A- 90-93; B+ 87-89; B 83-86; B- 80-82; C+ 77-79; C 73-76; C- 70-72; D 65-69; F >65

** Class participation will be determined by the quality of the contribution and by turning in two (2) article summaries of topics listed in the syllabus. On the latter, you must locate an article (any media) and summarize it relative to that class’ readings (see website for more details).

Expectations

1. attend class
2. respect the honor code
3. respect each other
4. respect the environment
5. respect my patience with excuses and the trivial
6. focus on learning and the process more than grades
7. engage your imagination and creativity more than memorization
8. engage the spirit of each exercise in addition to its analytic value
9. open your mind, think, evaluate and take some form of action
10. experience.
Course Schedule
Part I: Orientation to Environmental Policy and Politics

Class 1 — Class Orientation
Wednesday, August 26

* Review Syllabus and Class Expectations

Class 2 — Developing Environmental Values
Friday, August 28

* Pb Fisher, A Step Back Excerpts: Kathmandu and Blue Mountains, Australia, and Cairns, Australia (w).

Class 3 — Personal Environmental Values
Monday, August 31

Due: Environmental Source Analysis (see webpage for prompt)
* No Reading

Class 4 — Environmental Values
Wednesday, September 2

* Dr. Suess (1971), The Lorax (w).

Class 5 — Debating Environmental Policy as Politics
Friday, September 4


Class 6 — The Environmental Crisis: Crisis of Choice?
Monday, September 7

* Maniates, “Individualization: Plant a Tree, Buy a Bike, Save the World?” pp. 31-50 (w).
Class 7—History of Environmental Problems
Wednesday, September 9


Class 8—History of Environmental Policy
Friday, September 11

* J. R. McNeill (2000), Something New Under the Sun, Chapter 1—Prologue: Peculiarities of a Prodigal Century, pp. 3-17 (e-res).
* NDRC, “The Story of Silent Spring” (w).

Part II: Environmental Change from Human Activity: What We Produce, Consume, and Waste

Class 9—Living Within our Means?
Monday, September 14

* The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, "Living Beyond our Means", pp. 3-23 (w).

Class 10—The Current State of the Environment
Wednesday, September 16

* Kraft, “Judging the State of the Environment,” pp. 25-52 (e-res)

Class 11—Economic Growth, Carrying Capacity & IPAT
Friday, September 18

* “The IPAT Equation,” The Sustainable Scale Project, 1pp (w).
* VIDEO: Bill McKibben (2007). “The Downside to Economic Growth” (6m)
Class 12—Confronting Consumption
Monday, September 21

*DUE: Food Analysis* (see website for prompt).

Class 13—Food
Wednesday, September 23

* Mark Bittman (Jan 27, 2008). “Rethinking the Meat-Guzzler” *NY Times* (w).
* Andrew Hund, “Monsanto: Visionary or Architect of Bioserfdom? A Global Socio-Economic Examination of GMOs” (w).

Class 14—Energy and Natural Resources
Friday, September 25


Class 15—Outputs: Waste and Pollution
Monday, September 28


Class 16—Population and Poverty
Wednesday, September 30

Part III: Policy Actors and Environmental Policy Analysis

Class 17—Policy Actors
Friday, October 2


Class 18—State Role in Environmental Policy
Monday, October 5

* EP, Chapter 2, “Racing to the Top, the Bottom, or the Middle of the Pack? The Evolving State Government Role in Environmental Protection,” pp. 27-47.

Class 19—Executive Power in Protecting the Environment
Wednesday, October 7

* EP, Chapter 4, “Presidential Powers and Environmental Policy,” pp. 75-93.

Class 20—The Power of Congress to Protect the Environment
Friday, October 9


** Monday, October 12 – No Class – Fall Break **

Class 21—Judicial Protection of the Environment
Wednesday, October 14


Class 22—Environmental Policy Framework & Analysis
Friday, October 16


Class 23
Monday, October 19

Part IV: Approaches to Environmental Policy
(Market, Ecosystem, Local Collaborative, Human and Justice)

Class 24—Market Based Approaches
Wednesday, October 21

* Debating the Earth, “Market-Based Environmental Policies,” pp. 229-236 (e-res).

Class 25—Ecosystem Based Approaches
Friday, October 23


Class 26—Local Collaboration toward Environmental Problems
Monday, October 26

* Debating the Earth, “Beyond Backyard Environmentalism: How Communities are Quietly Refashioning Environmental Regulation,” pp. 116-33 (e-res).

Class 27—People-Based Approaches
Wednesday, October 28


Class 28—Justice-Based Approaches
Friday, October 30

Class 29—Alternatives and Tradeoffs  
Monday, November 2

* *Debating the Earth*, “Goal: Replace Risk Assessment with Alternatives Assessment,” pp. 135-143 (e-res).
* *Debating the Earth*, “Selling Environmental Indulgences,” pp. 239-252 (e-res).

Part V: Environmental Policy Cases

Class 30—Hazardous Waste and Environmental Justice  
Wednesday, November 4

* Group Presentation 1: Love Canal: Hazardous Waste  
* Group Presentation 2: Dudley Street: Community Activism

Class 31—Government Policy Issues  
Friday, November 6

* Group Presentation 3: Government Secrets at Rocky Flats  
* Group Presentation 4: Federal Grazing Policy: Some Things Never Change

Class 32—Competing with the Environment  
Monday, November 9

* Group Presentation 5: Jobs vs. Environment: Saving the Northern Spotted Owl  
* Group Presentation 6: Trade vs. Environment: Dolphins, Turtles, and Global Economic Expansion

Class 33—US National Park Policy  
Wednesday, November 11

* Group Presentation 7: Oil vs. Wilderness in ANWR  
* Group Presentation 8: Playground or Paradise: Snowmobiles in Yellowstone

Class 34—Atmospheric Degradation Policy  
Friday, November 13

* Group Presentation 9: Nation Tackles Pollution: The EPA and CAA and CWA  
* Group Presentation 10: Climate Change: The Challenges of International Environmental Policymaking
Class 35—Anti-Environmental Movements  
Monday, November 16

* Group Presentation 11: Backlash: Wise Use, Property Rights and the Anti-Environmental Movement
* Video Presentations Begin

Class 36—Videos  
Wednesday, November 18

* Video Presentations

Class 37—Videos  
Friday, November 20

* Video Presentations

Class 38—Videos  
Monday, November 23

* Video Presentations

** Wednesday, November 25 – No Class – T Break **

** Friday, November 27 – No Class – T Break **

Part VI: Environmental Action and Sustainability Policy

Class 39  
Monday, November 30

**DUE: Policy Paper**  
* No Readings

Class 40—Sustainable Development?  
Wednesday, December 2

* *Debating the Earth*, “Putting the Earth First,” pp. 348-353 (e-res).
Class 41—Concluding Words
Friday, December 4


Class 42—Final Prep
Monday, December 7

* No Readings

FINAL EXAM: Wednesday, December 16, 12-3pm.