Environmental Policymaking and Policy Analysis
420.614 Spring 18

Course Syllabus

Johns Hopkins University
Advanced Academic Programs
Zanvyl Krieger School of Arts and Sciences

Instructor  Daniel Stone
202-907-8510
destone@gmail.com

Office Hours: 30 minutes prior to each class session or by appointment

Course Description

This course provides a broad introduction to and general discussion of U.S. environmental policymaking and analysis. We will begin with a historical overview of laws and statutes in the United States, including the National Environmental Policy Act, the Clean Air Act, and the Endangered Species Act. We will review the role of state, national, and international governments in managing natural resources, and the costs and benefits associated with new policies. The course will also cover environmental media, public opinion, and the ways scientists influence environmental behavior.

Learning Objectives

At the end of the course, students should be able to:

● Describe the various ways policies are made, particularly regarding natural resources.
● Analyze current policy to recommend changes or justify the status quo
● Discuss the various bodies that influence policy and how they operate together
● Conduct a policy cost analysis

Materials

(Note: If you’re unable to find an affordable version, the 8th edition is also fine.)


http://www.jstor.org/stable/43266712
Course Structure

Unit 1: Environmental history. This unit will chronicle the country’s history—from its founding up to the Trump Administration—in regard to the ways it has regulated air, water, agriculture, renewable energy, and the use of other natural resources.

Unit 2: The players. At the state and federal level, the legislative, administrative, and judicial pillars of government all play important and different roles in the creation and implementation of policy. We will examine the powers of these three institutions, and the ways they can work either cooperatively or adversarially.

Unit 3: How policy gets made. What are the typical ways that policy is made? We will study in detail two environmental laws, one statutory (the National Environmental Policy Act) and one specific (the Endangered Species Act), and note how their applications differ. We’ll dive into current in-process rulemaking and prepare draft (or real) comments.

Unit 4: Environmental journalism and environmental scientists. We rely on the government to make policy. But what happens when it doesn’t? We will explore the roles of journalists and issue experts in how they shape public opinion and influence behavior. We will also examine the role of scientists in informing public understanding.

Unit 5: Environmental economics. All policy is developed with people in mind. How are the costs assessed, and who is responsible for monitoring all impacts? This unit will be central to the midterm assignment, which will ask students to study the costs and benefits of a proposed policy to address climate change.

Unit 6: International policy. Air and water don’t respect state and national borders. How do different governments cooperate, and what happens when they don’t? We’ll study several international case studies, as well as the effectiveness of international climate change conferences that produce broad agreements.

Unit 7: Environmental policy of the future. This unit will look ahead to how several major environmental issues will change over the next decade. Students will be asked to bring in questions (and answers) that they expect to face in their careers. They will make brief presentations and will field questions from other students.
Assignments and Grade Breakdown

Participation — 50 percent
Much of our course time will be devoted to discussions about environmental and policy issues and how they relate to students’ intended careers. Discussions will require familiarity with course readings as well as additional materials distributed prior to class meetings.

Halfway through the course, the instructor will inform each student individually of his/her participation grade up to that point, as well as, when necessary, suggestions for improvement.

Midterm — 20 percent
The midterm will be an essay in regard to costs of climate change policy. It will be completed outside of class.

Final — 30 percent
The final exam will consist of a series of essay questions related to major course themes. It will be completed outside of class and will be due on the final day of the semester, as indicated by the instructor.

University Policies

Ethics and Plagiarism
The strength of the university depends on academic and personal integrity. In this course, you must be honest and truthful. Ethical violations include cheating on exams, plagiarism, reuse of assignments, improper use of the Internet and electronic devices, unauthorized collaboration, alteration of graded assignments, forgery and falsification, lying, facilitating academic dishonesty, and unfair competition. Report any violations you witness to the instructor.

Students with Disabilities
Johns Hopkins University is committed to providing reasonable and appropriate accommodations to students with disabilities. Students with documented disabilities should contact the coordinator listed on the Disability Accommodations page. Further information and a link to the Student Request for Accommodation form can also be found on the Disability Accommodations page.

Dropping the Course
You are responsible for understanding the university’s policies and procedures regarding withdrawing from courses found in the current catalog. You should be aware of the current deadlines according to the Academic Calendar.