

**ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS AND POLICY**  
ENVIRON 312/PUBPOL 312/POLITICAL SCIENCE 380  
FALL TERM 2015

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Office Hours: Monday 3:30-5:00, Wednesday 1-2:30, and by appointment

**INTRODUCTION AND COURSE OBJECTIVES**

This course introduces students to the formation and implementation of environmental policy, with primary emphasis on the United States. It draws from the discipline of political science in examining environmental politics and how this body of theory translates into public policy. Unlike many policy courses that focus exclusively on either national or international institutions, this course will concentrate on federal, state, and local governance and relations across these levels. In turn, we will frequently compare the respective abilities of state and federal governments to both enact and implement environmental policy, drawing on past experience to consider what the “next generation” of American environmental policy might entail. Further, we will discuss the varying coalitions behind different policy options, and how that impacts policy adoption.

The course will define “environment” quite broadly, covering a range of issue areas, as reflected in readings and class deliberations. This will include examination of more conventional issues such as air and water pollution as well as hazardous and nuclear waste, looking at the history of policy decisions in these arenas, and the consequences of past policy-making on the current state of affairs. We will also give attention to a number of rapidly-evolving issues, such as policies related to climate change and to extraction of natural gas and oil from shale deposits via so-called hydraulic fracturing (or “fracking”) processes. We will discuss the implications for varying models for addressing these current issues, and students will be asked to use past experience and theory to suggest workable policy solutions.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

All students will be expected to complete three major written assignments during the term and also contribute to class discussion. Take-home essay questions will be assigned for each of the three major sections of the course. Each will involve completion of an essay of approximately six-to-eight (double-spaced) pages, often in response to a memo that outlines a particular policy situation and asks each student to assume a particular role (such as advisor to the Governor of Michigan or the Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency). The first and second essays will each be worth 25% of the final grade; the third essay is worth 30%. Essays that are not turned in at the required date will be reduced 10% for each day of delay in submission. Dates for receipt and submission of assignments are in the syllabus.

All evaluation and grading will be completed by the instructor; there will not be a graduate student instructor, teaching assistant, or grader employed in this course. The three primary grading criteria that each essay will be measured against include: 1) Presence of a structured argument that responds to the assignment; 2) Ability to include and apply relevant course concepts to the issues at hand; and 3) Ability

to advance a compelling case for a particular policy proposal or political analysis. Ninety percent of the total grade will be based on substantive content and the remaining ten percent on stylistic clarity and quality. Students are advised to make the case for their own understanding of the best approach to a particular issue, rather than attempt to assimilate any presumed position of the instructor.

Participation in this class is also a requirement and expectation. 10% of the final grade will be based on contribution to classroom discourse. This includes regular participation in lecture, class debate days, and in Q&A during three class periods led by scholars outside of U-M (on September 28, November 2, and November 23). Prior to these lectures, students will submit 1-2 tentative questions via Canvas, which will be collectively worth 5% of the final grade; late submittals will not be accepted. In addition, students will give a short (3-5 minute) presentation of their third essay (December 14<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup>), worth 5% of the final grade. Evaluation of class participation will be based on quality of discourse and not sheer frequency of engagement. Students who have concerns about participation should feel free to discuss these with the instructor at any point; students who do not anticipate attending on a regular basis or coming prepared for active engagement should withdraw from the class.

### **REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS**

We will read most or all of the following texts:

Rosenbaum, W. A. (2014). *Environmental Politics and Policy*. (9<sup>th</sup> edition: ISBN: 1452239965)

**\*\*Be sure to get the correct edition\*\***

Ansolabehere, S. , and Konisky, D. M. (2014). *Cheap and Clean: How Americans Think about Energy in the Age of Global Warming*. MIT Press. ISBN: 0262027623

All of the additional readings noted in the syllabus will be posted on Canvas.

### **EXPECTATIONS**

I believe the best learning environment is a result of the efforts of both students and instructors.

The responsibilities of the student include:

1. coming to class on time and prepared to participate
2. respecting the views and learning needs of other students
3. consulting with the Instructor about any problems in the course

The responsibilities of the Instructor include:

1. coming to class prepared to facilitate discussion and learning
2. giving students guidance about how to improve their performance
3. respecting the views and learning needs of all students
4. working with students to resolve any problems in the course
5. responding to most email within 24 hours; email sent after 4pm on Friday will be returned by Monday at noon

*If you believe you need an accommodation for a disability, please let me know at your earliest convenience. Some aspects of this course may be modified to facilitate your participation and progress. As soon as you make me aware of your needs, we can work with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities to help us determine appropriate accommodations. I will treat any information you provide as private and confidential.*

## **Section One: POLICY FROM THE TOP-DOWN: THE FEDERAL ROLE**

### **September 9: Introduction to Environmental Politics and Policy**

*What are the major successes in American environmental policy over the past generation and what are the greatest challenges for coming decades? How do we begin to think about the role of the political process and governing institutions in influencing environmental quality? And if these are national (if not global) problems, shouldn't the federal government be acting?*

### **September 14: The Role of Congress and the President in Environmental Policy**

*Congress was incredibly active on environmental issues in the 1970s and early 1980s but has had enormous difficulty reaching consensus on these matters in more recent times. Are there special aspects of environmental policy that compound the challenge of effective Congressional engagement? How influential are Presidents in this area—and how much power should they have? Further, what are the legal and Constitutional limits to federal (or local) action?*

Chapters 2 & 3 in Rosenbaum

Schapiro, R. (2011). The Varieties of Federalisms. In *Navigating Climate Change Policy: The Opportunities of Federalism*. Edited by Schlager, Engel, Rider. Pg 35-47

### **September 16 & 21: The case of clean water**

*The EPA, Clean Air Act, and Clean Water Act all have their origins in an era of federal leadership on environmental issues. What precipitated federal action? This legislation certainly led to notable improvements, but was it enough? In policy arenas where the federal government takes the lead, is there any role for state or local action?*

Chapter 6 in Rosenbaum

Ernst, H.R. (2003). The Political Fight for Nutrient Management Policy: The Case of Agricultural Regulation. In *Chesapeake Bay Blues*. Pg 69-86

Howe, R. S. (1985). The politics of nonpoint pollution control: A local perspective. *Journal of Soil and Water Conservation*. 40(1): 107.

Layzer, J. (2012). The Nation Tackles Pollution. In *The Environmental Case*. Pg 28-55

Roelofs, T. (2015, August 4). Algae bloom, the sequel, spells big trouble for Lake Erie. *Bridge*.

Vanderwarker, A. (2012). Water and Environmental Justice. In *A Twenty-First Century U.S. Water Policy*. Edited by J. Christian-Smith & P. H. Gleick. Pg 52-89

von Kaenel, C. (2015, August 4). Leaky septic tanks are polluting Michigan groundwater and rivers. *E&E News*.

### **September 23: Environmental Policy Formation**

*Numerous factors can deter the enactment of environmental policy, at any level of government. We will review competing theories of policy formation and agenda setting to consider what forces tend to converge when a new policy is enacted. Is some kind of environmental disaster essential to drive the development of a new policy, such as the 2010 oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico? How influential is public belief and concern in driving policy formation? What role do policy ideas play and how can various policy options be framed to build political support?*

Karch, A. (2011). Policy Diffusion and Climate-Change Policy. In *Navigating Climate Change Policy: The Opportunities of Federalism*. Edited by Schlager, Engel, Rider. Pg 103-119

Kingdon, J. W. (2010). Wrapping things up. In *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Pg 196-208.

### **PAPER 1 ASSIGNED – DUE 10/7**

**1-2 questions for speaker Ian Rowlands due on Canvas by 10am on 9/28**

### **September 28: SPECIAL SESSION**

**“Promoting Renewable Electricity in Ontario, Canada: Policies and Politics” by Professor Ian Rowlands**  
*Ian Rowlands is one of Canada’s leading experts on climate change and energy policy. In his presentation, he will use the multiple streams approach (from the 9/23 lecture) to help explain Ontario’s shifting energy policy, providing an update on the assigned paper. He will also talk about the expected impact of Canada’s national election on climate policy in Ontario and the rest of Canada.*

Rowlands, I.H. (2007). The Development of Renewable Energy Policy in the Province of Ontario: The Influence of Ideas and Timing. *Review of Policy Research*, 24(3): 185-207

An additional reading will be assigned by Sept 23<sup>rd</sup>

### **September 30 & October 1: Environmental Politics**

*With a wide majority of Americans professing high concern for the environment, why are we unable to find environmental policy solutions? Is it just a matter of partisanship? What happens when there are competing environmental interests? Can should we put a price tag on the environment, and who should pay for environmental regulation? Finally, do the motivations of policymakers (or their constituents) matter so long the problems are being solved?*

Chapter 5 in Rosenbaum

Baxter, W. (1999). The Case for Optimal Pollution. In *Environmental Ethics: Concepts, Policy, Theory*. Edited by Joseph DesJardins.

Layzer, J. (2012). A Policymaking Framework. In *The Environmental Case*. Pg. 1-18

Layzer, J. (2012). The Consequences of a Conservative Era. In *Open for Business*. Pg 333-350

Long, N., Bull, P., & Zigelbaum, N. (2011). Efficiency First: Designing Markets to Save Energy, and the Planet. In *Energy, Sustainability and the Environment*. Edited by F. P. Sioshansi. Pg 195-227

### **October 7: Class Debate on Paper 1**

**PAPER 1 DUE ON CANVAS AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS**

## **Section Two: STATE AND LOCAL REGULATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT**

### **October 12 & 14: The Evolving State Government Role in Environmental Policy**

*State governments have been unexpectedly active players in climate change policy, developing a wide range of policies either unilaterally or in collaboration with neighbors. What motivates some states—but not others—to take unilateral action? How do state-level politics impact the policies themselves? Do you mandate or incentivize? Tax or cap-and-trade? Go it alone or collaborate with neighbors?*

Rabe, B.G. (2004). The Politics of Climate Change, State Style. In *Statehouse and Greenhouse*. Pgs 21-37

Rabe, B. G. (2016). Racing to the Top, the Bottom, or the Middle of the Pack? The Evolving State Government Role in Environmental Protection. In *Environmental Policy* 9<sup>th</sup> edition. Edited by N.J. Vig & M.E. Kraft. Pg 33-57

Schlager, E. (2011). Acting in Concert. In *Navigating Climate Change Policy: The Opportunities of Federalism*. Edited by Schlager, Engel, Rider. Pg 144-162 [Role of regional agreements]

### **October 19: Fall Break. Enjoy!**

### **October 21: When state policy precedes federal policy**

*How does a mixture of state policy responses influence federal ability to engage the issue? What are the ramifications of the Clean Power Plan on those states that have already made significant gains in reducing greenhouse gas emissions?*

Engel, KH. (2015). EPA's clean power plan: An emerging new cooperative federalism? *Publius*. <http://publius.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2015/05/29/publius.pjv025.full>

Wallach, P.A. (2015, April 28). Legal and political updates from the front lines of the Clean Power Plan battles. Brookings PlanetPolicy Blog

### **Paper 2 Assigned (due 11/16)**

### **October 26 & 28: When state and local policy collide**

*The rapid expansion of hydraulic fracturing techniques to secure natural gas and oil from shale deposits has begun to raise a wide range of energy and environmental policy issues. Most of these are concentrated at the state and local government levels. How do states maximize the economic benefits from shale sources while minimizing environmental risks? Are states relying on existing energy policies or starting from scratch? What does the public think about this issue? What does the public have a right-to-know about the chemicals used in hydraulic fracturing and what should remain a trade secret?*

Chapter 4 in Rosenbaum

Brantley, S. L., & Meyendorff, A. (2013, March 13). The Facts on Fracking. *The New York Times*. New York

Goho, S. A. (2012). Municipalities and Hydraulic Fracturing: Trends in State Preemption. *Planning & Environmental Law*, 64(7), 3–9

Smith, M. F., & Ferguson, D. P. (2013). "Fracking democracy": Issue management and locus of policy decision-making in the Marcellus Shale gas drilling debate. *Public Relations Review*, 39(4), 377–386.

Weale, A. (2007). Precautionary principle in environmental policies. In Sage handbook of Environment and Society.

Weinstein, A. and Mark Partridge. (2014). Economic Implications of Unconventional Fossil Fuel Production. In *Our Energy Future*. Edited by Albrecht. Chapter 2

## 1-2 questions for speaker Chris Borick due on Canvas by 10am on 11/2

### November 2: SPECIAL SESSION

#### **“Fracking Policy in Marcellus Shale states: Comparing state approaches” by Professor Chris Borick**

*Chris Borick is a nationally recognized public opinion researcher and political scientist who has conducted over 250 large-scale public opinion surveys on climate change, energy policy, and Pennsylvania politics. At the intersection of these interests is state policy on hydraulic fracturing, and particularly how it differs dramatically in the nine states that lie within the Marcellus Shale. Professor Borick will discuss the differences in policy and public opinion of fracking in the Marcellus Shale, and what this diversity of regulatory regimes can teach us about environmental federalism.*

Kromer, M. (2015). *Public Perceptions of Hydraulic Fracturing in Three Marcellus Shale States*. Ann Arbor, MI: The Center for Local, State, and Urban Policy at the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy, University of Michigan

### November 4: Siting Environmental Facilities

*One of the most challenging environmental issues is where to locate facilities that may serve a general public good but literally must be located in someone’s backyard. When waste dumps and old industrial facilities are cleaned up, where should the waste go? How does one weigh economic efficiencies versus equity considerations? Looking ahead, how do we best approach such siting issues? And is it possible to site new nuclear facilities in the aftermath of the Fukushima disaster?*

Chapter 8 in Rosenbaum (Pages 294 -305 only)

Spies, S., Murdock, S. H., White, S., Krannich, R., Wuljhorst, J. D., Wrigley, K., ... Thompson, J. (1998). Support for Waste Facility Siting: Differences between Community Leaders and Residents. *Rural Sociology*, 63(1), 65–93.

### November 9 & 11: The Curious Case of Wind Turbines

*Siting is an issue not just for waste management but also extends to other areas, including the siting of renewable electricity equipment such as wind turbines, solar farms, hydro dams, and transmission lines. The vast majority of the renewable energy being added to the grid today comes from large-scale wind turbines. Why is there such opposition to wind development in some communities, while others welcome wind development? How does federalism—which level of government controls siting regulations—impact community acceptance, economic feasibility, and a state’s ability to meet renewable energy targets? Why might local authority actually lead to more wind energy?*

Balaskovitz, A. (2015, February 10). Has Michigan’s “wind capital” reached its saturation point? *Midwest Energy News*.

Bell, D., Gray, T., & Haggett, C. (2005). The “Social Gap” in Wind Farm Siting Decisions: Explanations and Policy Responses. *Environmental Politics*, 14(4), 460–477.

Cusick, D. (2015, August 4). Can wind energy in the Midwest blow through a tangle of state and county laws? *E&E News*.

Kahn, M. E. (2013). Local non-market quality of life dynamics in new wind farms communities. *Energy Policy*, 59, 800–807.

McElfish, J. M. J., & Gersen, S. (2011). *State Enabling Legislation for Commercial-Scale Wind Power Siting and the Local Government Role*. Washington, DC: Environmental Law Institute. (Read pages 1-13 ONLY)

**November 16: Class Debate on Paper 2**

**PAPER 2 DUE ON CANVAS AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS**

**Section Three: POLICY FROM THE BOTTOM-UP: The role of science, direct democracy, and non-profits on policy**

**November 18, 23, & 30: Survey research & public policy**

*People often hear about opinion polls being used to predict the outcome of elections or to gauge the job performance of elected officials. But survey research can also be used to inform the policy-making process. What does survey research tell us about American attitudes towards renewable energy? How do they differ than attitudes about climate change? What role does partisanship actually play in environmental policy preferences? How can survey research help determine how to frame an issue to gain wider traction, or help policy makers select from competing policy solutions?*

Chapters 1-3, 5, 7-9 in Ansolabehere & Konisky

**1-2 questions for speaker David Konisky due on Canvas by 10am on 11/23**

**November 23: SPECIAL SESSION**

**“Public Opinion and Environmental Policy Making” by Dr. David Konisky**

*David Konisky is a nationally recognized scholar on American politics and public policy, specializing in environmental issues. He is the co-author of Cheap and Clean—one of the required texts for the course—and has just this year published another book on the environmental justice within federal policy. In his lecture, Dr. Konisky will extend the analysis in Cheap and Clean to think about what this means for states as they develop responses to the Clean Power Plan.*

**Paper 3 Assigned (due 12/14)**

Students are encouraged to meet with me before December 4<sup>th</sup> for help identifying data sources for use in this paper. Please come during office hours or email me to set up another time to discuss.

**November 25: Thanksgiving. Enjoy!**

**November 30: Continuation of Survey research & public policy (see November 18 for readings)**

**December 2: When the science is up for debate**

*Science can help us not only understand public sentiment about solutions to environmental problems, it can help us understand the environmental problem itself. Increasingly, though, science is called into question, whether it's doubt in the honesty of climate scientists or debate about the safety of genetically modified foods. How widespread is this doubt in science? What contributes to this doubt? What sort of ethical responsibility do scientists have in the conduct of research?*

Achenbach, J. (2015). The Age of Disbelief. *National Geographic* 227(3): 30-47

Hastie, J. (2007). The Role of Science and Scientists in Environmental Policy. In Sage handbook of Environment and Society.

### **December 7: Direct Democracy**

*From renewable energy mandates to farmland preservation policy, state and local governments have increasingly turned to ballot propositions and other methods of public participation to give the citizenry direct input into the formation of environmental policy. How do these processes work and do they offer viable ways to incorporate public preferences into environmental policy? Can they address concerns about environmental justice?*

Forster, D. & Smith, D.A. (2015). Environmental Policies on the Ballot. In *Changing Climate Politics: U.S. Policies and Civic Action*. Edited by Y. Wolinsky-Nahmias. Pgs 171-196

Boulanger, D. J. (2008). The battle over property rights in Oregon: Measures 37 and 49 and the need for sustainable land use planning. *Willamette Law Review* 45: 313-316 ONLY

Muzumdar, T. (2011, November 16). The Ann Arbor Greenbelt, Then and Now. *Concentrate*. Retrieved from <http://www.concentratemedia.com/features/annarborgreenbelt0173.aspx>

### **December 9 & 14: The Role of Non-profits in Environmental Policy**

*In some policy areas, non-profits are taking over functions that the government used to perform. In other areas, non-profits are advocating for governmental action for entirely new functions. What are the benefits and drawbacks to public versus private implementation of environmental policy? What are the implications of policies driven by non-profit "interest groups" compared to political parties?*

Chapter 9 in Rosenbaum

Endicott, E. (1993). *Land Conservation Through Public/Private Partnerships*. Pgs. xiii-xvi & 3-11

Local Food Association. *Public Policy Development & Advocacy*. Retrieved from <http://www.localfoodassociation.org/?page=PolicyAdvocacy>

Pirog, R., Miller, C., Way, L., Hazekamp, C., & Kim, E. (2014). *The local food movement: Setting the stage for good food*. MSU Center for Regional Food Systems.

**December 14: 15 students present Paper 3 in pecha kuccha 3-5 minute presentation  
PAPER 3 DUE ON CANVAS AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS FOR ALL STUDENTS**

**December 18 (1:30-3:30): 15 students present Paper 3 in pecha kuccha 3-5 minute presentation**