

**ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND POLICY  
PUBPOL 313  
Winter Term 2020**

**Professor Barry Rabe**  
**Office: 5234 Weill Hall**  
**Office Phone: 734.615.9596**  
**E-mail: [brabe@umich.edu](mailto:brabe@umich.edu)**  
**Office hours: Wednesdays 10-to-1**

**INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE**

This new and experimental course is designed to introduce undergraduate students to the roles that governmental agencies play in environmental protection at the federal and state levels in the United States. It will review the historic evolution of such units as the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Interior as well as their state-level counterparts in exploring how they operate and perform their duties. This will include consideration of programs focused on a specific environmental medium, such as air, water, and land, and also cross-cutting challenges such as climate change that require a wide range of units to work cooperatively over time.

PUBPOL 313 provides 1.5 credits and builds on recent Ford School experimentation with short course modules in our graduate program, including core courses such as public management. For Program in the Environment students, it has been approved for Environmental Social Science use at the 300 level or as part of a specialization. Meetings will take place once weekly throughout the semester, using a combination of lecture and seminar formats. There is no graduate student instructor or grader for the course, as the instructor will assess all dimensions of student performance and assign grades for written work and class engagement.

The course is divided into two primary sections, each comprising about one half of our meetings and total readings. First, we will examine environmental management and policy through the horrific experience of the 2010 Deepwater Horizon disaster in the Gulf of Mexico. While much of the scholarly and journalistic writing on this case has examined the failure of private energy production firms such as BP, we will focus on the numerous federal and state government agencies that were designated to play some role in either preventing such a disaster, responding after it occurred, or both. This case will provide an empirical foundation for examining ways in which federal government agencies are structured and potential factors contributing to management failure or success. Second, we will examine the ways in which the federal government has subsequently responded to this disaster and attempted to prevent recurrences through a series of administrative reforms undertaken in both the Obama and Trump administrations. This will provide context for our examination of how federal legislation

requires government agencies to report annually on their performance and what we can learn about their ability to meet their many challenges. In particular, we will consider how recent presidencies have tried to shape or influence the priorities and functions of these agencies in the absence of new legislation from Congress. This will include considering more recent developments in federal oversight of offshore drilling but also many other areas of environmental management and policy, including climate change, air quality, and land use.

## **ASSIGNMENTS AND POLICIES**

Students will have a variety of opportunities to analyze and express their views on major issues concerning environmental management and policy. This will include two papers that respond to a specific set of questions provided by the instructor. The first assignment will examine issues of public management failure in the Deepwater Horizon case, drawing on primary readings about the episode as well as readings and lectures on competing theories of public management. Your findings will be discussed in one of two sessions set for mid-February. The second assignment will analyze how federal agencies set priorities and assess their own performance through annual reports mandated by Congress. It will review a range of federal environmental agency reports and external reviews of agency performance, leading to a final paper that will examine very recent performance reports issued by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (pending availability of a promised update). Your findings will be discussed in our concluding session on April 15.

Any late submission of papers will be penalized 10 percent of the total available points per day, unless alternative arrangements are made in advance with the instructor. In turn, students are expected to come to class prepared and to engage meaningfully in all discussions; class participation will be weighed formally in establishing a final grade. The final grade will be determined on the basis of total points acquired through the various opportunities noted below:

Offshore drilling management paper: 100 points  
Federal environmental agency paper: 100 points  
Class engagement: 50 points  
Total: 250 points

This module has been designed through consultation with all applicable Ford School and University of Michigan policies, including those addressing inclusivity, accommodations for students with disabilities, and student mental health and well-being. For a review of some of these policies, please see <http://fordschool.umich.edu/academics/expectations>.

## **REQUIRED READINGS**

Required readings should be completed, preferably in the order listed below, before each designated class session. Readings will be posted on the class Canvas site, with some emerging case materials to be added as the term progresses. There is one required book for purchase: Daniel Jacobs, *BP Blowout: Inside the Gulf Oil Disaster* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2016). Jacobs is a professor of management at Loyola Marmount University and formerly served in the Departments of Justice and State. There is also one required book that will be provided free of charge in manuscript form via Canvas. The manuscript is currently scheduled for June 2020 publication and should not be copied or distributed beyond immediate class use: Frank Thompson, Kenneth Wong, and Barry Rabe, *Trump, the Administrative Presidency and Federalism* (Brookings Press, 2020). (Yes, you are being forced to read a book co-authored by your instructor *but* at no monetary cost!)

## **GLOSSARY OF ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS**

The following federal and state governmental units make at least some appearance in the Jacobs book, illustrating the range of potential institutions with some role in environmental management and policy in just that single case. They are listed alphabetically and not in any order of prominence:

Bureau of Ocean Energy Management  
Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement  
Centers for Disease Control  
Coast Guard  
Council on Environmental Quality  
Environmental Protection Agency  
Federal Bureau of Investigation  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
Fish and Wildlife Service  
Governmental Accountability Office  
Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council  
Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund  
Food and Drug Administration  
Homeland Security Department  
Interior Department  
Internal Revenue Service  
Louisiana Comprehensive Master Plan  
Louisiana National Guard  
Louisiana Attorney General  
Minerals Management Service  
Mississippi Restoration Program  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences

Occupational Safety and Health Administration  
Restoration Trust Fund  
Securities and Exchange Commission  
Treasury Department

## **SCHEDULE OF SESSIONS**

### **SECTION I: WHEN ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT FAILS**

#### **January 8—Welcome and Introduction**

#### **January 15—The Evolution of U.S. Environmental Management**

Watch the film *Deepwater Horizon* prior to class. Come prepared for discussion of the role of *public management* and *federal government agencies* in that case.

Katherine J. Cramer, “The Turn Away from Government and the Need to Revive the Civic Purpose of Higher Education,” *Perspectives on Politics* (June 2016): 442-450.

Daniel Jacobs, *BP Blowout*, Preface, pp. vii-ix.

#### **January 22—When Industry Undermines Environmental Management and Policy (Receive first assignment)**

George J. Stigler, “The Theory of Economic Regulation,” in *The Citizen and the State: Essays on Regulation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), pp. 114-141.

REGBLOG, Penn Program on Regulation, “Rooting Out Regulatory Capture,” (June 13, 2016). Please read entries by Senators Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) and Mike Lee (R-UT).

Jacobs, *BP Blowout*, chapters 1-2.

#### **January 29—When Uncertainty Undermines Environmental Management and Policy**

Herbert A. Simon, “Administrative Behavior and Contemporary Behavioral Science,” in *Administrative Behavior* (New York: Free Press, 1975), 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, pp. xxvi-xl.

Michael Lewis, “People Risk” in *The Fifth Risk* (New York: Norton, 2018), 83-126.

Jacobs, *BP Blowout*, chapters 3-4.

**February 5—When Elected Executives Undermine Environmental Management and Policy**

Thompson, Wong & Rabe, *Trump, the Administrative Presidency, and Federalism*, chapter 1.

Jacobs, *BP Blowout*, chapters 9-12.

**February 12 and 19—The Deepwater Horizon Disaster as a Public Management Failure. Submit first assignment on February 12 and debate findings with colleagues on either February 12 or 19 pending assignment**

**SECTION II: WHEN ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT UNDERGOES MAJOR REFORM**

**February 26 and March 11: After the Disaster: Administrative Reforms in the Obama and Trump Eras**

National Academy of Public Administration, *Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement: Strategic Organizational Assessment* (Washington, D.C.: National Academy of Public Administration, 2017), pp. 13-47.

Thompson, Wong, and Rabe, chapters 2 and 4.

**March 18 and 25: Measuring Performance and Improving Outcomes in Federal Public Management (Receive final assignment on March 18)**

Donald P. Moynihan, “The New Federal Performance System: Implementing the GPRA Modernization Act” (IBM Center for the Business of Government, 2014).

\*\*U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, *Working Together: FY 2018-2022 U.S. EPA Strategic Plan February 2018 (September 2019 Update)*

\*\*U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, *EPA Year in Review 2017-2018*

(\*\*These reports will be replaced if EPA publishes updated versions in advance of these sessions)

U.S. Government Accountability Office, *Performance and Accountability Report: Fiscal Year 2018*, pp. 1-60.

**April 1: Public Management at the State Level**

National Academy of Public Administration, *An Organizational Assessment of the Oklahoma Corporation Commission*, Report by a Panel of the National Academy of Public Administration for the Second Century Corporation Commission Task Force (November 2018), pp. 7-26.

John Dinan, *State Constitutional Politics: Governing by Amendment in the American States* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018), pp. 11-34.

**April 8: Final Case Briefing and Review**

Thompson, Wong & Rabe, *Trump, the Administrative Presidency and Federalism*, chapter 6.

Additional material relevant to the case may be introduced for this session pending availability.

**April 15: Final Management Paper Debates (Final papers due at beginning of April 15 class)**