ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY RESEARCH
PUBPOL 495-003
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INTRODUCTION AND COURSE OBJECTIVES

The course aims to actively engage you in environmental policy research, broadly defined to include not just conventional issues such as air and water pollution, but also—and especially—ever-evolving energy and land use policy. In this hands-on course, you will gain a deeper understanding of contemporary environmental policy research, as well as develop personal expertise with a specific aspect of this policy arena. In addition to developing research skills, in keeping with the goals of all sections of PubPol 495, this course will also help you to develop writing and critical thinking skills in the context of policy analysis by requiring you to: a) build skills, rhetorical strategies, and knowledge of writing genres essential for policy writing; b) produce complex, analytical, evidence-based arguments that are tailored for specific audiences; and c) respond meaningfully to critical feedback from your professor and/or your peers through revision.

The course defines "environment" quite broadly, and readings and class discussion will largely be driven by the specific interests of the students in the class. It is anticipated that we will touch on issues such as climate change, energy, and land use policy. Suitable research projects may address some aspect of the allocation of regulatory authority between national, state, and local government; the inclusion or omission of particular policy levers within the overall regulatory framework; or constituencies of support or opposition for a particular policy option.

This course will provide all students with an introduction to both qualitative and quantitative policy research, though it is anticipated that you will only use one of these methods for your research project based upon your own interest and the suitability of the method for answering your research question. For example, you may choose to canvas the field to assess the prevalence of a particular policy (i.e., create their own database), analyze existing data (e.g., public opinion, economic indicators, political leadership, etc.) to identify possible correlates of policy success/suitability, or develop a case study exploring the origin or outcome of a policy in a specific context. While it is anticipated that most students will focus on policies within the U.S., projects looking at sub-national policies in other countries are also acceptable.

This course is part of the CLOSUP in the Classroom Initiative, an initiative to allow students to actively engage with the Center for Local, State, and Urban Policy (CLOSUP). CLOSUP's Energy and Environmental Policy Initiative conducts a range of research projects including a twice-per-year survey of American public opinion on climate change and energy policy, case study and survey research on hydraulic fracturing, and mixed methods research on the local impacts of wind energy. For students who do not have a particular research interest, the instructor will provide a list of possible research topics to complement ongoing research in CLOSUP. In addition, students with exceptional research

papers in this course may be invited to further develop their research into a publishable paper, supported by a paid research assistantship with CLOSUP.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
In this course, you will learn about environmental policy research by doing—and writing about—environmental policy research, culminating in a polished 25-30 page research paper. This paper will be drafted and refined *throughout* the semester by submitting weekly writing assignments (of roughly 2 pages, on average), most of which are intended to be drafts of different sections of your final paper (e.g., literature review, methods, results, etc.). You will get feedback from the instructor and/or peers on each of these assignments, which you should then incorporate into subsequent drafts.

While the first half of the class will be run a seminar focusing on introducing you to policy research techniques, much of our class time in the second half of the term will be spent reviewing eachothers' work and sharing your preliminary findings. This allows you time to refine your own work and practice critically evaluating research, but also gives you an opportunity to learn from each other and discuss the synergies or conflicts presented across your chosen research projects. As a result, it is critical that you keep on track with your research and submit assignments on time. Late assignments will **not** be accepted except under exceptional circumstances.

Weekly writing assignments, including written peer reviews, will collectively count for 50% of your final grade, and will be graded on a pass/fail basis. I expect that since many of these assignments will be early drafts of sections of your final paper, there will be room for improvement, and so you will not be graded on their current quality. However, it is in your interest to make your best effort so that you can get effective feedback from both the instructor and your peers, and students that turn in incomplete assignments may receive only partial credit of the submission. I will be giving advisory grades on the two weekly assignments (Writing assignments 8 & 11) that include revisions of previous writings, so you can gauge your performance against my expectations for the final paper. The final paper will count for 45% of your grade and will be graded on its merits as a piece of policy research: that it provides some novelty to existing research; that the chosen methods are appropriate for the research question; that the results support the analysis; and that it thoughtfully considers policy implications. Ninety percent of the total grade will be based on substantive content and the remaining ten percent on stylistic clarity and quality.

The remaining 5% of the grade will be based upon your thoughtful participation in the research conference that will be held during the final exam period. During this event, you will make a short presentation of your top-level research findings and then engage in a panel discussion with fellow classmates.

REQUIRED READINGS
There is no textbook for this class. An initial schedule of weekly reading assignments is listed below. However, the readings are subject to change based upon students' chosen research topics. Any alteration will be announced in class and on Canvas, so keep an eye out.

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 being prepared to participate
2. respecting the views and learning needs of other students
3. consulting with the Instructor about any problems in the course
4. adhering to high standards of academic conduct

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 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.

January 3: The role of policy research in environmental policymaking
This (short) week in class I'll introduce the course, and discuss how policy research is used by both practitioners and scholars. Outside of class, you should be thinking about the general policy area that you are interested in. If you've come into class with an idea, put it down on paper. If you are didn't come in with an idea, come and see me to discuss.

Writing Assignment 1, due 1/8: Do a self-assessment to help identify possible research topics. What environmental issue is of concern to you? What do you know about policy solutions related to that issue? What do you want to know more about? Include citations to at least 4 news articles or scholarly blogs about the issue.   [1 page]

January 8 & 10: Designing a Research Project
This week in class we'll talk more about how to come up with ideas for a research project, how to find relevant literature, and how we can use the literature to inform our research. Outside of class, in addition to the course readings, you will need to find and read four journal articles on policy research related to your chosen topic. I will suggest two articles (based on your topic) to get you started.

Readings:
        Alford, Robert R. (1998) *The Craft of Inquiry: Theories, Methods, Evidence*. New York: Oxford.
            Chapter 2: "Designing a Research Project."
        Directed reading 4 articles

Writing Assignment 2, due 1/15: Provide a ½ page summary for 4 research articles that you found relevant for your topic. Your summary should include what question the authors were trying to answer, what methods they used, and what it means for policy. Following these 4 summaries, you should note whether you see any places where there may be a gap in what is known. (2-1/2 pages)

January 17: Different types of questions
This (short) week in class we'll talk more about the different types of research questions that you might want to ask about a policy ("why" vs. "how" vs. "when/whether"), and how each suggests a different type of method for answering that question. Outside of class, in addition to the course readings, you will need to find 4 more journal articles on policy research related to your chosen topic.

Readings:
        Creswell, John W. Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches,
            3rd ed. Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2009. Ch. 7 "Research Questions and
            Hypotheses," . Ch. 8 pp 129-143
        Directed reading 4 articles

Writing Assignment 3, due 1/22: Like last week, provide a ½ page summary for 4 research articles that you found relevant for your topic. Your summary should include what question the authors were trying to answer (use the typology we discuss in class), what methods they used (quantitative, qualitative), and what it means for policy. (2-1/2 pages)

January 22 & 24: Policy research methods
This week in class we'll discuss some of the common methods that policy researchers use, drawing upon the methods that you identified based on reading the background literature. We'll also break into groups by research topic to help brainstorm research topics and questions based on the different literature that each student has read. Outside of class, you should be looking through your last two assignments to develop 2-3 possible research questions and brainstorming appropriate methods for answering them.

Readings: TBD

Writing Assignment 4, due 1/29: Draft of 2-3 research questions with methods for addressing each. (1 page)

January 29 & 31: Choosing cases and finding data
This week in class we will talk about how to decide how to set the boundaries for your research project. If you are doing qualitative research, how do you choose which cases to study? If you are doing quantitative research, what are the limitations of the sample in your dataset? If you are doing content analysis or an inventory, what is your sampling plan? We will also start to discuss some good existing datasets for environmental policy research.   Outside of class, you should be exploring data sources for your project and refining your first three writing assignments into the background and literature review sections of your paper.

Readings based on your anticipated method:
Case Study & Content Analysis: Seawright, Jason and John Gerring. (2008) Case Selection Techniques in Case Study Research. *Political Research Quarterly* 61(2): 294-308.

Statistical Analysis, and Inventory: Singleton & Straits (1999) Chapter 4. Elements of Research Design. In *Approaches to Social Research* 3rd Edition.

Writing Assignment 5, due 2/5: Submit a first draft of your paper's background and literature review sections, using Writing Assignments 1, 2, and 3 as the starting point. (6+ pages)

February 5 & 7: Choosing a research question and method
On Monday, Jeffrey Jacquet from Ohio State [I know, it's an unfortunate employer, but he's a great scholar!] will give a lecture in class about his research on how private landowner decisions to lease property to energy developers for oil & gas drilling or wind turbines intersect with public policy. He has used a range of methods in his research, so I've asked him to talk a bit about matching research questions to appropriate methods. On Wednesday we'll be breaking into groups based on research topic to share ideas for data sources or case studies for answering them. Outside of class, you should meet with the instructor to discuss your research question and your proposed methods.

Readings:
> Jacquet, J.B. 2015. "The Rise of 'Private Participation' in the Planning of Energy Projects in the Rural United States" *Society and Natural Resources*. 28(3):231-245

Writing Assignment 6, due 2/12: Peer-review of a classmate's background and lit review (Assignment 5). Follow the rubric on Canvas to provide written feedback of strengths & weaknesses. Then, in a separate

document, provide a written reflection on how your classmate's research might inform your own. Are there research articles that you think you should add to your literature review? Are there methods that you might consider using? (2 pages)

February 12 & 14: Qualitative Analysis

In class this week we'll be discussing approaches to analyzing qualitative data: legislation language, newspaper article text, interview data, etc. On Monday, we'll discuss how to develop and analyze a case study. On Wednesday we'll talk about conducting an inventory or content analysis. The course readings for this week provide good examples of this analysis. Outside of class, you should be assembling your data for analysis.

> Case Study: Mizuno, R. Veto Override and RPS Expansion in Maryland: Roles of Actors and the Economy
> Case Study: Assink, A. Analyzing the Debate Surrounding Clean Water Act Jurisdiction: A Use of the ACF for Decoding American Environmental Policy Stalemates
> Inventory: Soule, A. Plastic Bag Policy and Enforcement in the United States
> Inventory: Griffin, C. Feeding Urbanized Farmland: Food Policy in the Midwest
> Content Analysis: Swiecicki, B. Carbon Capture and Storage Framing in the Media
> Content Analysis: Celovsky, M. Potential Collaboration between Food Policy Councils and Food Hubs

Writing Assignment 7, due 2/22 [NOTE Thursday due-date!]: After meeting with the instructor, you should submit your final research question and details of your proposed methods, including your case selection rationale or sampling plan (as appropriate), and your anticipated data sources. (~6 pages)

February 19 & 21: Quantitative Analysis
In class this week we'll be going to the computer lab to try out hand at quantitative analysis. We'll be using some of CLOSUP's public opinion survey data about energy policy to demonstrate how to run and interpret simple regressions, and also how to identify the limitations of your dataset. Outside of class you should be starting your data analysis. If you are using an existing dataset, start to play around with the data. If you are creating your own dataset, that process should be well on its way.

Readings:
> Podell, J. Residential Utility Rates' Effect on Americans' Support and Willingness-to-Pay for Carbon Pricing Policies
> (reread) Mills, S. and Gore, C. 2016. Public and Local Government Leader Opinions on Environmental Federalism: Comparing Issues and National Contexts. *State and Local Government Review* 48(3): 165-174.

No Writing Assignment this week – Winter Break

February 27 – WINTER BREAK

March 5 & 7: Common challenges in policy research
Welcome back! This week in class we will shift to really focusing on your individual projects. Rather than lecturing, class time will largely be devoted to helping you troubleshoot and work through your

data analysis. On Monday, we'll break into groups based on the type of analysis, so bring your questions (and expertise!) with you to class. On Wednesday, Sanya Carley from Indiana University will be giving a public lecture in our class on a new project she is working on looking at the impacts of transitioning away from coal-fired electricity. The work that she'll be talking about is a mix of qualitative interviews and using quantitative data to create county-level indicators—a sort of spatial inventory. Recall that she has also done some quantitative analysis on RPS policy. With this expertise conducting policy research using a range of methods, feel free to pick her brain in Q&A about the challenges you are facing in your analysis! Outside of class you should be devoting your time to data analysis.

Readings: TBD

Writing Assignment 8, due 3/12: Taking into account feedback from the instructor and your peers and any shifts that have occurred in your research, you should submit a revised version of your background, lit review, research question, and methods section. Like the other assignments, this will be graded pass/fail, but the instructor will give you an advisory grade. (10-12 pages)

March 12 & 14: Common challenges in policy research
This week in class we will continue to assist eachother in overcoming challenges in our data analysis, particularly focusing on interpreting what our results mean. Outside of class you should have most of your analysis complete so that you can document it in an early version of your results and analysis section.

Writing Assignment 9, due 3/19: Submit a first draft of your results (descriptive) and analysis (more critical) sections of your paper. It is expected that at this point these are still works in progress, but put down what you have so that you can see where the gaps are. If there is a section that you are still stuck on, note it within your paper. (6-10 pages)

March 19 [Class Cancelled March 21]: Displaying results
On Monday we will talk about how to display results—creating tables, graphs, figures, etc. After class you should improve the display of results and submit them on Canvas (by Friday morning) so hardcopies will be available for review in class. This week you will also set up a time to meet outside of class with the instructor for one-on-one discussion of your research, particularly focused on the results and analysis. Class will be cancelled on Wednesday.

Writing Assignment 10, due 3/26: Following the meeting with the instructor, write an action plan for what tasks you still need to accomplish on your research project. This should be treated as your "to-do" list. (1-2 pages)

March 26 & 28: What does this mean for policymaking? Writing a conclusion.
On Monday we'll start by doing an in-class peer review of eachothers' tables/graphs. Following that, we will discuss how to translate your research findings and analysis into useable policy action that you will discuss in your paper's conclusion. In particular we will focus on appropriate tone. During class there will be time to brainstorm the conclusion section of your paper. Outside of class you should be following your revision action plan (Assignment 10) to revise all of the sections of your paper and incorporate your conclusion section.

Writing Assignment 11, due 4/2: Taking into account feedback from the instructor and your peers and any shifts that have occurred in your research, you should complete the first full draft of your paper. In addition, you should identify (on the last page) any particular parts of the paper or issues that you would like feedback on from reviewers. Like the other assignments, this will be graded pass/fail, but the instructor will give you an advisory grade. (25-30 pages)

April 2 & 4: Workshopping "problem areas"

In class for these last two weeks each student will be able to solicit their classmates' feedback and assistance on a particular issue within their paper. You should choose from one of the issues that you identified in Assignment 11. This may be a question about tone, some dissatisfaction with a particular analysis, questions about whether a paragraph makes sense, etc. Students should clearly identify (in 1-2 sentences or questions) what feedback they are asking for and submit (via Canvas) the text that they would like reviewed.

Writing Assignment 12, due 4/9: Peer-review of a classmate's full draft (Assignment 11). Provide written feedback of strengths & weaknesses, and feedback on the specific areas that they identify. Then, in a separate document (seen only by the instructor), provide a written reflection on how your classmate's paper might inform your own. Might you want to modify the way you display your results? Does their analysis suggest something that matches or conflicts with yours? (1 page)

April 9 & 11: Workshopping "problem areas"
This week in class I will discuss how to write an abstract and we'll continue workshoping our papers. Outside of class, you should be working through revisions to your papers.

Writing Assignment 13, due 4/16: Write the abstract for your paper that addresses the policy problem your project addresses, your research method, what you found, and why the findings are important for policymakers. (100-200 words)

April 16: Wrapping it all up
On this final day of class we will talk about preparing for the mini conference held during the final exam period. This will also be the last chance to discuss any outstanding questions (specifics or more generally) about expectations for the final paper.

Final Exam Period: Wednesday, April 25, 4-6pm
The instructor will divide the class into topical panels and each student will quickly (in less than 1 minute—no slides) present their top-level findings and then engage in a debate about the implications for policymaking. You should prepare what you will say in presenting your research (think of this as your elevator pitch), but the rest of the time you will just be expected to use your expertise on your topic to thoughtfully engage in conversation with your peers.

Final papers to be submitted via Canvas prior to the beginning of the session.