Introduction to Environmental Policy and Politics
POL 223
Fall 2012
MWF 3:30 – 4:20

Instructor: Laura D. Young
Email: ldyoung@purdue.edu

Course overview:

In this course we will study the politics and decision making of modern societies as they attempt to cope with environmental and natural resources problems. Whether global warming, Not in My Back Yard (NIMBY) politics, or the tragedy of the commons, citizens around the world are now encountering the consequences of rapid economic growth and development. This course focuses both on domestic and international environmental policy with special attention given to theories of interests, ideas, and institutions. Requirements include active class participation, quizzes, midterm and final examinations. There are no prerequisites.

Grades and Policies


Class attendance and Participation 15%
Issue Poster Presentation 10%
Reading Quizzes 25%
Midterm 25%
Final Exam 25%

Grades: It is a violation of FIRPA to discuss grades via email. As a result, UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCE WILL I DISCUSS GRADES OTHER THAN BY APPOINTMENT. All emails asking about grades will be referred to this syllabus.

Moreover, your grades are your responsibility, not mine. If you are doing poorly I am always available to help you outside of class. It is your responsibility, however, to seek help as soon as you know your grades are not as good as you would like. DO NOT wait until the end of the semester to ask how you can improve your grade. By that point there will be little you or I can do to help improve the situation.

Extra credit: I periodically offer extra credit, though this is NOT guaranteed. If you are concerned about your grade you should take these opportunities if offered. Under no circumstance will I offer extra credit at the end of the semester just for you because you are unhappy with your grade. All requests for extra credit will be referred to this syllabus.

Make-up Policy: I do not give make-up exams, quizzes, or assignments unless you have a verified absence by the Dean of Students. In such cases it is your responsibility to contact me to arrange a time to make-up the missed assignment. At my discretion make-up assignments, quizzes, and/or exams may be different than that given in class, but will be of equal difficulty level.

Special Needs: If you are an individual with a disability and require accommodations for this class, please notify the instructor immediately.
STRUCTURE OF COURSE

Course Material/Readings: All readings will be available on the Blackboard system or through Purdue Library Electronic Resources.

Student requirements:

1. A midterm and a final examination.
2. Preparation for and participation in class discussions along with periodic reading quizzes. You are expected to follow the Purdue University Class Attendance and Absence Reporting Policy, meaning that you are required to attend all lectures and events. Absences will be excused only for documented physical or mental illness, accident, or emergency as determined by the Dean of Students. (See above regarding make-up policy for excused absences.)

For all work, the Purdue University Student Code of Conduct is in effect. Every assignment, quiz, and exam must be your own work. Students who cheat or copy will fail the course and be turned into the Dean of Students.

Class Format: I will post PowerPoint slides for each lecture the day before each class. The slides will outline the important points of that day’s reading. Though these slides will be utilized in class during lectures on occasion, they are also posted to help guide you through each reading. It is to your benefit to look over the slides before and during reading the assigned material. These slides are in no way meant to replace the reading, but to help you understand it.

Most classes are discussion based with little to no lecture except to explain difficult to understand concepts. Discussion is much more interesting and allows the students to shape the class around those areas that most interest them about the reading or how it applies to real world examples. This only works when students participate in discussion and have come prepared to class by reading the material. If students are consistently not prepared I will return to a lecture only format. But, trust me, you will enjoy discussions much more. So make sure to come prepared!

Student Contributions: Students are encouraged to send me links to articles, videos, etc. they find related to an environmental issue or something that brings up an issue we discussed in class. I will incorporate it when appropriate to further keep the class engaged in material which is relevant and of interest.

****Each class meeting listed on the following Course Schedule is broken into sections separated by a solid black line. The reading listed in that section is the reading we will discuss that day. For example, on August 22 we will discuss Chapter 5 from Lindblom and Woodhouse’s book The Policy-Making Process. Therefore, you should complete this reading before coming to class on that day.

Note: This syllabus is a living, organic creation, and it may change over the course of the semester in response to changing classroom and campus conditions. More specifically, in the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances. Use the Blackboard Vista web page to keep track of the most recent version of the syllabus along with my email address lyoungx@gmail.com to get information.
THE POLICY PROCESS

20 Aug

Introduction

Goals: To understand the structure of the course, readings, and class requirements.

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22 Aug

Who Makes Policy?

Goals: To understand who makes policies and the nature of the policymaking process.

Questions: Who makes policy? Why is policymaking delegated to elected functionaries, their appointees, or civil servants instead of left in the hands of citizens? How do elected elites pose a threat to the prospects for intelligent, democratic policy making? What is one reason political elites fail to define, debate, and solve issues effectively? What does the author mean by “the gains from democracy are bought at a cost”? Why does the author argue many aspects of legislative and executive organization tend to obstruct popular control? Why, if the organizations obstruct popular control, are they designed that way?


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24 Aug

United States Politics and the Environment

Goals: To understand the role played by the US president in environmental politics.

Questions: What kinds of presidential powers exist? What indicators can we use to evaluate presidential environmental policy? In what ways did George Bush (I) surprise observers with his environmental policy? What caused a loss of confidence in Clinton’s environmental actions? Where do you believe the next US president will take environmental politics, and why?


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27 Aug

The US Government in Perspective

Goals: To understand the history of the American bureaucracy in theory and in action.

Questions: How can power be “gathered undesirably” by an agency? Why did the status of the US Post Office as a monopoly inhibit its efficiency? Why has the military budget increased even as its numbers decrease? In what ways was the US system a “client oriented bureaucracy”? How do separated powers keep US institutions from changing? How do majoritarian politics help presidents intent on creating new programs? Why do agencies resist deregulation? What can you predict about environmentally-focused agencies?

Actors and Interests

**Goals:** To understand the role of interest groups and business in the policy making process.

**Questions:** Why is there a negative view of interest groups by Americans? Give three examples of an interest group. Name three functions of interest groups. What is the effect of interest groups on elections? Name two sources of interest group influence. How can a government official be confident that managers will discharge the functions that keep an economy affluent? Give three examples of inducements. What are the two categories of benefits to business? What are the three advantages businesses have in electoral politics?

**Readings:** Lindblom and Woodhouse *The Policy-Making Process* Chapter 7 & 8

Ideas, Institutions, and Interests

**Goals:** To be able to recognize and define interest, institution, and idea-based approaches to problems. Additionally, to be able to predict how scholars of each stripe would see a new event, such as attempts to pass stricter gas mileage requirements for cars.

**Questions:** Which approach focuses on the material interests of principal actors? Are political economists still primarily concerned with class-based cleavages? What are some principal actors in the institutional approach? Which approach captures human interactions more effectively? In what way is politics a “struggle for the interpretation of interests”?

**Readings:** Peter A. Hall, “The Role of Interests, Institutions, and Ideas in the Comparative Political Economy of Nations,” in Mark Lichbach and Alan Zuckerman, eds. 1997. *Comparative Politics: Rationality, Culture, and Structure*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. **This reading is very dense and difficult, but it sets the foundation for the theories we will discuss the rest of the semester so at least skim it!!!!**

3 Sept No class – Labor Day

THEORIES

Tragedy of the Commons: Theory

**Goals:** To understand what a “tragedy of the commons” problem is, and to be able to recognize this phenomena in environmental politics in areas of conservation, pollution, and national parks.

**Questions:** Why does Hardin believe that the population problem has “no technical solution”? What does he mean when he says that “the most rapidly growing populations on earth are…the most miserable”? In what ways is an open pasture a tragedy of the commons? If overgrazing is a problem, why don’t the herdsmen stop adding animals? What are potential solutions to this problem? Should temperance be our goal? Is coercion effective? Is abandoning the “freedom
to breed” good advice? Is China’s one-child policy a good or bad example of Hardin’s approach applied to real life?


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<th>7 Sept</th>
<th>Tragedy of the Commons: Markets</th>
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<td><strong>Goals</strong>: To be able to offer a critique of Hardin’s well-known essay.</td>
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<td><strong>Questions</strong>: What are some of the assumptions of the Gordon-Scott model? According to standard tragedy of the commons approaches, what is it “rational” for individuals to do? What is wrong with assumptions that all fishers, for example, are similar? Why doesn’t the “prisoner’s dilemma” game describe reality well? How was the California state government responsible for the collapse of its fisheries?</td>
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<th>10 Sept</th>
<th>Tragedy of the Commons: Population</th>
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<td><strong>Goals</strong>: To understand a sociological perspective on overpopulation and resource depletion.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Questions</strong>: Malthus was wrong; should we not worry, then? What is the override view in terms of compulsory birth control? How is it different from the collaborative approach? According to Sen, is development the most reliable contraceptive? How have data on food production altered the argument? In what ways is Kerala a success? According to Sen, is development the most reliable contraceptive? How have data on food production altered the argument? In what ways is Kerala a success? According to Sen, is development the most reliable contraceptive? How have data on food production altered the argument? In what ways is Kerala a success? According to Sen, is development the most reliable contraceptive? How have data on food production altered the argument? In what ways is Kerala a success? According to Sen, is development the most reliable contraceptive? How have data on food production altered the argument? In what ways is Kerala a success? According to Sen, is development the most reliable contraceptive? How have data on food production altered the argument? In what ways is Kerala a success? According to Sen, is development the most reliable contraceptive? How have data on food production altered the argument? In what ways is Kerala a success? According to Sen, is development the most reliable contraceptive? How have data on food production altered the argument? In what ways is Kerala a success? According to Sen, is development the most reliable contraceptive? How have data on food production altered the argument? In what ways is Kerala a success? According to Sen, is development the most reliable contraceptive? How have data on food production altered the argument? In what ways is Kerala a success? According to Sen, is development the most reliable contraceptive? How have data on food production altered the argument? In what ways is Kerala a success? According to Sen, is development the most reliable contraceptive? How have data on food production altered the argument? In what ways is Kerala a success? According to Sen, is development the most reliable contraceptive? How have data on food production altered the argument? In what ways is Kerala a success? According to Sen, is development the most reliable contraceptive? How have data on food production altered the argument? In what ways is Kerala a success? According to Sen, is development the most reliable contraceptive? How have data on food production altered the argument? In what ways is Kerala a success? According to Sen, is development the most reliable contraceptive? How have data on food production altered the argument? In what ways is Kerala a success? According to Sen, is development the most reliable contraceptive? How have data on food production altered the argument? In what ways is Kerala a success? According to Sen, is development the most reliable contraceptive? How have data on food production altered the argument? In what ways is Kerala a success? According to Sen, is development the most reliable contraceptive? How have data on food production altered the argument? In what ways is Kerala a success? According to Sen, is development the most reliable contraceptive? How have data on food production altered the argument? In what ways is Kerala a success? According to Sen, is development the most reliable contraceptive? How have data on food production altered the argument? In what ways is Kerala a success? According to Sen, is development the most reliable contraceptive? How have data on food production altered the argument? In what ways is Kerala a success? According to Sen, is development the most reliable contraceptive? How have data on food production</td>
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<th>12 Sept</th>
<th>Ecology and Ideas</th>
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<td><strong>Goals</strong>: To understand one critical perspective on the failure of the world to act decisively on environmental problems.</td>
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<td><strong>Questions</strong>: Why does Speth believe that the alarm that was sounded 20 years ago has “not been heeded”? In what ways was the “Global 2000” report accurate? Why does he believe that “poverty destroys the environment”? How will changes in consumption and technology change things?</td>
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14 Sept  Ecology: Interests and Markets

Goals: To understand the typical “individualizing” ways of responding to environmental problems.

Questions: What do the Truffula Trees represent “in the real world”? Who/what does the “Onceler” represent? What are “Thneeds”? Where is the “Gluppity-Glupp” going and why is the Lorax unhappy about it? What is the moral of the story? Who is responsible, according to the Onceler, for replanting all the Truffula Trees and getting the Lorax and his friends to come back? How does this relate to the US’ approach to “saving the environment”?

Readings: The Lorax – Dr. Suess

17 Sept  Ecology: Interests and Markets

Goals: To challenge typical “individualizing” ways of responding to environmental problems.

Questions: In what way does the ending of The Lorax exemplify the American response to the environmental crisis? What is the problem with this approach – that is, why aren’t simple living and militant recycling sufficient? What does IPAT stand for, and how does IWAC differ from it? What is the consumption problem he refers to?

Readings: Michael F. Maniates. 2001. “Individualization: Plant a Tree, Buy a Bike, Save the World?” Global Environmental Politics 1:3 (Aug. 2001), p. 31 -

DOMESTIC POLITICS

19 Sept  Air Pollution: Interests and Markets

Goals: To understand one case study of the complex political intricacies and compromises of passing pollution control legislation in the United States.

Questions: What role do policy entrepreneurs and international pressure play on legislatures like Congress? What process altered lakes’ pH levels beneath 4.5? How did contesting the science of acid rain benefit the Reagan administration? Which groups opposed acid rain controls, and why? What is “allowance trading”? Who lost the most due to the acid rain provisions passed by both Houses? Why did utilities cut their emissions? How did lawsuits play a role in cutting sulfur and nitrous oxide?


21 Sept  Interests: The Role of Markets in Environmentalism

Goals: To recognize and understand arguments for free market environmentalism.

Questions: How do the authors explain the failure of earlier pessimistic forecasts? What sits at the heart of “free market environmentalism” and how does it view human nature? According to this approach, can a central planner know the best solutions? What is wrong with models like
FORPLAN? Why does efficiency matter more in the private sector? What role do property rights play in this approach?


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<td>24 Sept</td>
<td>Nuclear Power and Ideas</td>
<td><em>(Goals)</em>: To view the French anti-nuclear movement from a sociological perspective. <em>(Questions)</em>: Why did the anti-nuclear movement taken on the form of a social movement? What are the origins of the anti-nuclear movement in France? What were the concerns with the programs for developing the electro-nuclear industry to replace oil that led to massive protest between 1972-1975? What is the argument of political ecologists against nuclear power? What was the fate of the anti-nuclear movement in France? Read Chp 2 ONLY</td>
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<td>28 Sept</td>
<td>No Class</td>
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<td>1 Oct</td>
<td>Nuclear Power and Institutions</td>
<td><em>(Goals)</em>: To see patterns in the way that states handle conflict with civil society over unwanted projects. <em>(Questions)</em>: What are “public bads” and why have problems involving them become more severe over time? What is civil society and how does it relate to the policy tools used by the government? What are six potential explanations for how authorities choose where to put divisive facilities? Which explanation does the author favor, and why? What is “clustering” and why might it occur? Readings: Daniel P. Aldrich. 2008. <em>Site Fights: Divisive Facilities and Civil Society in Japan and the West</em>. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, Introduction and Chap 1. (pp. 1-49).</td>
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3 Oct Nuclear Power and Institutions

Goals: To connect the policy instruments used by governments to the strength of civil society in France and Japan in the field of nuclear power.

Questions: How can states be “foxes” or “lions”? What are typical theories of policy instrument use? What are some examples of coercion and hard social control tools? When are “softer” tools employed by state decision makers? Has the Japanese government relied on hard or soft tools in its nuclear power program? What subgroups have been targeted by state agencies? What are some examples of policy tools used in siting nuclear power plants? What differentiates centralized from decentralized nations, and what are examples of each? What about levels of state-society differentiation; how do France and the United States compare?

Readings: Daniel P. Aldrich. 2008. Site Fights: Divisive Facilities and Civil Society in Japan and the West. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, Chapter 2 (pp. 50-69), Chapter 5 (pp. 119-151) and Chapter 6 (pp. 152-184).

5 Oct Risk Perception: Ideas and Institutions

Goals: To view the US legislative process on pollution from a scientific perspective.

Questions: What is “agency rule-making” and what role does it play in the regulatory process? What are the three phases of regulation, and from what periods did they develop? What are some examples of “enlightenment” in pesticides and toxics? Why was the Clean Air Act of 1967 of interest? Are there any solutions to the problems of science-based regulation? Why is the EPA in an “uncomfortable middle ground”? What are hazard and risk assessment, and how do they fit into the overall process of risk assessment at the agency? Why is it so hard to figure out how dangerous chemicals might be to humans? What was EDB, and what did the EPA do about it? Why didn’t the EPA decide to provide a deeper earth cover for uranium mill tailings?


8 Oct No class  - Fall Break

10 Oct Mid-term Review

12 Oct Midterm Examination

Goals: To be able to answer questions about the material covered so far.

Readings: Review the reading questions along with the readings themselves and class notes.
15 Oct  Risk Perception and Ideas

Goals: To appreciate one understanding of public risk perception.

Questions: How does Pillar link optimism to NIMBY fights? In what ways are NIMBY activists the new Luddites? What connections are there between anti-project groups and religious or ethical movements? Are there dark sides to new technologies? Whom does Piller blame for heightened fears and concerns? Do you agree with his conclusions?


17 Oct  Risk Perception: Ideas and Interests

Goals: To be able to analyze the outcome of a failed siting outcome based on risk perception.

Questions: What does Gusterson mean by the “fluidity of risk perceptions?” Did the anti-incinerator group have sole access to arguments about environmentalism? What strategies did the CARE activists use? Did the outcome of this case come about because of broader anti-nuclear or anti-facility sentiment? If not, what contributed to the outcome?


19 Oct  Risk Perception and Ideas

Goals: To understand differences in risk perception among groups.

Questions: How did scientists, businesspeople, and environmentalists differ in their responses to the survey of Jenkins-Smith and Bassett? Do the results indicate that people will, to put it simply, stick with their beliefs regardless of the facts? If so, what are the implications for policies that provide information and public relations attempts?


22 Oct  Ideas, Issue Salience, and Pollution

Goals: To understand how the issue-attention cycle works in the US media.

Questions: Why can’t public attention remain on a single issue, such as pollution, for very long? What are the five stages of the issue-attention cycle? Why did attention paid to NASA plummet? How have changing aspirations altered our perception of the environment? Has “improving the environment” lost public attention, as Downs predicted?

24 Oct

Pollution, Risk Perception, and Ideas

**Goals:** To comprehend risk perception from the perspective of the general public.

**Questions:** We have seen Jenkins-Smith and Bassett lay out a case for differences in risk perception; what differences does Layzer highlight between the experts and the general public? How does publicity alter things? Why didn’t homeowners near Love Canal know that their homes were over toxic waste? What was Lois Gibbs’ role in the process? What compelled politicians to finally relocate all of the Love Canal residents? What connection did this have with the Superfund act?


26 Oct

Facility Siting and Interests

**Goals:** To gain working knowledge of one city’s struggle to balance economic growth and jobs with the resulting environmental consequences.

**Questions:** How did race impact hiring decisions within U.S. Steel? How did racial segregation impact purchasing patterns, and why would this interest us? Why didn’t local officials move to enforce existing environmental regulations, or enact stricter ones? Did U.S. Steel locate its plant and further expansions with the concentration of race or minority groups in mind?


29 Oct

Facility Siting and Interests

**Goals:** To understand the arguments behind a classic text on environmental racism.

**Questions:** According to Bullard, have developers and governments deliberately targeted minority communities? What evidence does Bullard bring to support his argument? How have minority groups responded? Can you think of another explanation for these data? According to Friedman, where did the impetus for the “environmental racism” argument come from? What evidence does he have that the initial studies made “critical errors”? What arguments are there for allowing such facilities in the backyards of minority groups?


31 Oct

Pollution: Institutions and Ideas

**Goals:** To better understand the institutional and ideational sources of pollution in modern China.
Questions: Is China’s “story” a classic tale of economic development run amok? Are the nation’s environmental practices solely the result of policy choices? Did Chinese leaders understand that they traded environmental health for economic growth? What role have nonstate actors played? According to Economy, does Chinese culture accord value to the elements of effective environmental governance? How did population relate to state strength? How did Mao envision nature? Is this a story of ideas or institutions?


2 Nov      No Class

5 Nov      The Environment: Airports in Japan and France

Goals: To understand how strong civil society moves states toward certain policy instruments.

Questions: In which country – Japan or France – did protestors more regularly show strength against plans for airports? Why do airports generate only mild NIMBY responses? Was the resistance at Narita airport normal? What caused it? How have French authorities responded to resistance? Has the Japanese state moved away from land expropriation because of Narita?

Readings: Daniel P. Aldrich. Site Fights. Chapter 3 (pp. 70 – 94)

INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

7 Nov      International Regimes and Environmental Policy

Goals: To see how norms, rules, procedures, and institutions created by nations influence international environmental policy.

Questions: How do we define norms, principles, rules, and procedures? What are some regimes in hazardous waste and climate change? What are some obstacles (systemic, procedural, etc.) to effective global environmental policy? In terms of environmental policy, which do you believe is more important: individuals or institutions?


9 Nov      International Institutions and Environmental Policy

Goals: To understand how international organizations have shifted over time.

Questions: How should we characterize the pre-Stockholm era? How did developing nations see demands for environmental protection? When were poverty and underdevelopment recognized as causes of environmental degradation? What are three critical international institutions focused on the environment?

12 Nov
The Gap between the United States and Europe on the Environment: Interests

Goals: To be able to identify the sources for the distance between US and European environmental positions.

Questions: Why did Bush pull out from the Kyoto protocol treaty? How did the Bush decision help the Europeans overcome internal disagreements? What is the “precautionary principle” embraced by Europe? What is the “no regrets” policy of the US? Why couldn’t the Clinton-Gore presidency close the gap with Europe? Why was the EU skeptical of emissions trading? How does Schreurs explain the failure of environmental groups in the US?


16 Nov
United States Politics and the Environment

Goals: To view the dynamic role played by individual state governments in the US.

Questions: Why is the federal government’s role in climate change unclear, and how have states responded to the ambiguity? In what way is Texas “bigger” than Britain? Are states simply reacting to federal inaction? What is decentralization in the context of environmental policy? Are interest groups involved in state environmental policies, and why or why not? What are policy entrepreneurs, and what are they doing? What are prime-time and stealth states?


19 Nov
No class - Thanksgiving

21 Nov
No class - Thanksgiving

23 Nov
No class - Thanksgiving

26 Nov
The Future of The Environmental Movement

Goals: To understand the future of the environmental movement

Questions: What does Steffen blame for the failure of the environmental movement? What does Steffen say Americans think about when they think of the environmental movement?
What does Steffen mean when he states, “Politics is a war of persuasion?” What strategies does Steffen suggest to strengthen the movement?


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<td>Review for Final Exam</td>
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<tr>
<td>30 Nov</td>
<td>Final Exam</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Dec</td>
<td>Issue Poster Presentations</td>
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<td>5 Dec</td>
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