
Public Policy of Conservation and Sustainable Development

Biology 6250 / Political Science 6452 Section G01

(Reference Biol #14701, PolSci #14604)

Thursday, 6:55PM - 9:25PM, SSB344A

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1. **Description.** How do our societies govern the environment? Can they do better? In Public Policy of Conservation and Sustainable Development, we focus on the challenges, the uncertainties and the different standpoints that drive our response to environmental problems. This course aims to help students (1) master key facts, concepts, and relationships in the field of sustainable development; (2) develop tools and skills for analyzing sustainable development policy and (3) apply the knowledge, tools and skills to sustainable development policy building. In the first part of the course, we analyze the cultural, historical, and institutional roots of environmental policy. In the second part, we examine the concepts and approaches to environmental policy-building. In the third part, students will apply the background knowledge and approaches to current sustainable development issues of their choice. This course should be of interest to students in conservation biology, domestic and international public policy, political science, cultural anthropology and other social sciences, education, and public policy. The course will be team taught by a political scientist and a biologist. A prior course in ecology can be helpful but is not required.

Catalogue course description: *BIO 6450 & POL SCI 6452 Public Policy Of Conservation And Sustainable Development: 3 semester hours.* Prerequisites: Graduate standing in Political Science or Biology and consent of instructor. Prior course in ecology is recommended. This course will introduce the student to concepts and techniques for formulating, implementing, and analyzing public policy with an emphasis on environmental concerns, conservation, and sustainable development. The course will be team taught by a political scientist and a biologist. Course materials will include case studies that demonstrate the special problems of environmental policymaking in developing and developed economies.

2. **Objectives.** This course aims to help

- Identify, illustrate, and state the importance of key concepts and relationships in public policy, conservation, and sustainable development
- Explain the cultural, historical, and institutional roots of sustainable development and environmental policy.
- Compare and contrast distinct standpoints of individuals and institutions on environmental priorities and policy. Explain why there are different standpoints on specific policy issues.
- Explain and hypothesize about the factors that shape policymaking and policy results
- Apply facts and concepts of public policy and sustainable development to writing a white paper on a specific environmental policy problem of the student's choice

3. Grading

The grade for the course is allocated in the following way:

| | |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| Participation: | 30% of the final grade |
| Midterm Essays: | 20% of the final grade |
| White Paper: | 50% of the final grade |

The value for each final letter grade is as follows:

| | | | | |
|--------------|-------------|--------------------------------|--------------|----------------|
| | B+ = 87-89% | C+ = 77-79% | D+ = 67-69% | |
| A = 93% | B = 83-86% | C = 73-76% | D = 63-66% | F = 59% / less |
| A- = 90-92 % | B- = 80-82% | C- = 70-72% | D- = 60-Less | |
| DL = Delayed | EX = Excuse | FN = Failure/Non Participation | | |

4. Books

The following books are required reading in this course. They are available at the UM-St. Louis bookstore. Be sure to purchase the most recent edition of the books:

- Susan G. Clark (originally published under the name Timothy Clark). *The Policy Process: A Practical Guide for Natural Resource Professionals*. New Haven: Yale University Press. 2002. Paperback. ISBN978-0-300-09012-3
- J.R. McNeill. *Something New Under the Sun: An Environmental History of the Twentieth-Century World*. New York: WW Norton. 2001. Paperback. ISBN 978-0-393-32183-8

5. Participation. You must participate in this course actively in order for it to work well. You must prepare for and **attend** class, you must develop and use active listening skills, and you must contribute thoughtfully to discussion. To ensure fairness in allocating this portion of the grade, sign-up sheets will be circulated during some of the classes. If we invite a guest speaker, you can be certain that your absence will reduce your grade.

Your reading assignments are listed on the attached class schedule. You are expected to read the material before coming to class, and you are expected to be prepared to discuss the reading material in class. You may be asked to discuss a question regarding the reading during the class for which the reading is assigned.

We *very strongly* encourage you to ask questions.

6. Essays on Course Readings and Seminar Sessions. You will write a midterm essay in response to two questions we will hand out in class. These essays aim to measure your command of the readings in the course. These essays combined will be a total of no more than 8 pages. These are due by email on or by Monday April 1.

7. White Papers. Half of your grade depends on the white papers you will complete by the end of the course. You will identify an agency and write a white paper for it. More details on this assignment will be provided in readings and in class. Table 7.1 in Susan Clark's *The Policy process* (page 141) provides an outline of a white paper. We copied the outline on the following page:

Table 7.1. Suggested Outline for a Thorough Paper on a Particular Policy Process

TITLE (less than ten words)

Your name, affiliation, address

ABSTRACT (less than 200 words)

INTRODUCTION

- A. Be problem oriented, give goals, problems, alternatives (e.g., "The policy problem is . . .")
- B. List the purposes of the paper
- C. Clarify your standpoint in reference to the problem
- D. Describe methods you used

PROBLEM (description of the policy problem)

- A. Specify contextually (e.g., social process) and in some detail the problem that is the subject of your study
- B. Specify problem in terms of decision process
- C. Clarify goals in reference to the problem of concern

ANALYSIS OF THE POLICY PROBLEM (trends, conditions, projections)

- A. Describe trends in the decision-making process that have had an impact on the problem of concern; identify particular impacts and their relation to the achievement of goals
- B. Identify and examine the factors that have shaped those trends and impacts
- C. Project future trends in decision making and accompanying impacts; emphasize the relationship between projected impacts and the achievement of goals

RECOMMENDATIONS (alternatives and justification)

- A. Present alternatives for resolving the problem, given the projections and conditions described above
- B. Evaluate the alternative strategies you proposed for their potential contribution toward reaching the goals
- C. Select and justify particular strategies to resolve the problem

CONCLUSION

- A. Very briefly state the goals and problems
- B. Recommend your solution and justify it

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

LITERATURE CITED

You will submit drafts of sections of the white paper on these dates

February 7 - *Draft of Introduction of the White Paper due*

February 21 - *Draft of Problem analysis & Preliminary Bibliography of White Paper due*

March 21 - *Draft of Analysis of the Policy Problem & 2nd Draft of Bibliography due*

April 11 - *Draft of Recommendations, Part A of the White Paper due*

Apr 18-May 2 - *Each student presents their project to the class*

May 9 - *FINAL COMPLETE WHITE PAPER DUE*

There are three sample White Papers linked in the online home page for this course.

8. Plagiarism. Plagiarism means taking the written ideas of someone else and presenting them in your writing as if they were your ideas, without giving the author credit. Plagiarism (a word which comes from the Latin word for kidnapping) is deceitful and dishonest. Violations that have occurred frequently in the past include not using quotation marks for direct quotes and not giving citations when using someone else's ideas; using long strings of quotations, even when properly attributed, does not constitute a paper of your own. Plagiarism in written work for this class is unacceptable. The University's Student Conduct Code classifies plagiarism as a form of academic dishonesty. Depending on the severity of the plagiarism, punishment can include receiving no credit for the assignment, failing the course and referral for university disciplinary action.

COURSE SCHEDULE * indicates reading or video on Canvas. Linked to dates below

January 24 Thursday

Introductions

Discussion: Taking Different Standpoints Seriously

Discussion 1: The Stockmann Brothers

Discussion 2: Why Farmers Object to the “Waters of the United States” rule

The Dominant Social Paradigm: Using Nature for Short-Term Economic Benefit

Example: Wilderness

January 31 Thursday

A. Comments and Discussion: Introduction to Sustainable Development

Read: * UN General Assembly, “A Life With Dignity for All”

* Hempel, Concepts of Sustainability

B. Comments & Discussion:

Environmental Thought: Preservation, Conservation, Environmentalism, Environmental Justice

Read: * Latour, “War and Peace in Age of Ecological Conflicts”

C. Discussion: The Big Picture

Read: McNeill, *Something New Under the Sun*, pp. 3-17

February 7 Thursday

- Draft of Introduction of the White Paper due

Comments and Discussion: Introduction to the Policy Process

Read: * Scott, selection from “Seeing Like a State”

Clark, *The Policy Process*, pp. ix-16, 140-145.

* “Policy Creates Politics”

Discussion: Biodiversity

Read: McNeill, *Something New Under the Sun*, pp. 192-268

Comments and Discussion: Land & Cities

Read: McNeill, *Something New Under the Sun*, 21-49, 269-295

February 14 Thursday

Comments and discussion: Risk

Read: *Beck, "Living in the World Risk Society"

Comments and discussion: Air & Water

Read: McNeill, *Something New Under the Sun*, pp. 50-191

Comments and discussion: Energy and Technology

Read: McNeill, *Something New Under the Sun*, pp. 298-324

February 21 Thursday***- Draft of Problem analysis & Preliminary Bibliography of the White Paper due***Comments and Discussion: Culture & Social Process

Read: Clark, *The Policy Process*, pp. 17-55

Comments and Discussion: Big Ideas

Read: McNeill, *Something New Under the Sun*, pp. 325-362

Comments and Discussion: Public Opinion and Motivated Reasoning

Watch: * Motivated Reasoning video

Read: * Downs, "The Issue-Attention Cycle"

February 28 ThursdayComments on Politics and Government

Read: * Mazmanian & Nijaki, Sustainable Development & Governance

Comments and Discussion: Institutional Standpoints, Bureaucracy, NGOsDiscussion: Case Studies

Read: * NOx Case Study

* Bighorn Sheep & Mountain Lion case study

* The Prestige oil spill: A scientific response

* Caballero & Soto-Oñate, "Environmental crime and judicial rectification of the Prestige oil spill"

March 7 ThursdayThe Decision Process and Problem Orientation

Read: Clark, *The Policy Process*, pp. 55-110

March 21 Thursday

- Draft of Analysis of the Policy Problem & 2nd Draft of Bibliography of White Paper due

Discussion on the Policy Process

Read: Clark, *The Policy Process*, pp. 111-172

Exercise on Clark, *The Policy Process*, pp. 32-110

March 28 Spring Break; class does not meet

April 1 Monday

- Essays on Course Readings and Seminar Sessions due.

April 4 Thursday

Individual meetings with students on white paper

April 11 Thursday Summary

- Draft of Recommendations, Part A of the White Paper due

April 18 Thursday

Project Presentations

April 25 Thursday

Project Presentations

May 2 Thursday

Project Presentations

May 9 Thursday

- FINAL FINISHED COMPLETE WHITE PAPER DUE

Comments and Discussion: The Global Policy Context and Process

Read: *O'Neill, "Global Environmental Policy Making"

Course Summary

Read: *UN General Assembly, "A Life With Dignity for All"