History of American Environmental Policy  
ENVST-UA 423.001 / 22418

Thursday, 2:00-4:45 pm  
Dr. Tyson-Lord Gray; tlg8@nyu.edu  
Office hours: 1:00 – 4:00 pm (Weds) by appointment

**DESCRIPTION:**
This survey course will focus on the historical development of U.S. environmental policies regarding public lands and resources, including the germination and expansion of the idea of a coherent public interest with respect to air, water, forests, landscapes, and other environmental issues. The course will address U.S. environmental policy through several lenses, including (1) a set of two introductory sessions in which students are introduced to key terminology, concepts, and orientations toward the domain of environmental policy; (2) a core series of ten sessions through which we survey how both official and informal policy actors have shaped contemporary U.S. environmental policies and programs; and (3) a concluding set of two sessions through which students with present final presentations and research papers on contemporary environmental laws.

**Required Book:**  

**Additional Reading:** (All provided on NYU Classes)

**Students will also be required to have seen A Civil Action by 10/25.**
ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE:

I. Defining Environmental Policymaking (9/6)
   A) Hardin “Tragedy of the Commons”

II. Origins of Environmental Policy (The Basics) (9/13)
   A) Mazmanian “The Three Epochs of the Environmental Movement”
   B) Vig & Kraft - Chapter 1

III. Official Policy Actors - States (9/20)
   A) Vig & Kraft Chapter 2

IV. Official Policy Actors – President/Gov. Agencies (9/27)
   A) Vig & Kraft Chapter 4 & 7

V. Official Policy Actors - Congress (10/4)
   A) Vig & Kraft Chapter 5

VI. Official Policy Actors – The Judiciary (10/11)
   A) Vig & Kraft Chapter 6

VII. Informal Policy Actors – Agriculture (10/18)
   A) Vig & Kraft Chapter 9
   B) Guest Lecturer – Kim Richman – Founding Partner Richman Law Group

VIII. Film Discussion (10/25)
   A) Students will have seen A Civil Action by this class

IX. Informal Policy Actors – Industry (11/1)
   A) Vig & Kraft Chapter 11

X. Informal Policy Actors – NGOs in Environmental Politics (11/8)
   A) Allard, “Lobbying is an Honorable Profession”
   B) Ackerman, “What are Lobbyist saying on Capital Hill?”

XI. Specialized Concerns: Science in Environmental Policymaking (11/15)
   A) Keller, “Science in Environmental Policy”
   B) Ascher, “Knowledge and Environmental Policy”

XII. Environmental Justice Environmental Policymaking (11/29)
   A) Bullard, “Environmental Justice in the Twenty-first Century”
   B) Layzer, “Community Activism and Environmental Justice”

XIV. Student Presentations (12/6)
   A) Presentations should be 10 minutes each

XV. Final Paper, Bill and Memorandum (12/13)
   A) Due by 11:59pm

Evaluation:
Participation (10%) Student participation during class time is critical. Consequently, these points are not based merely on attendance, but on substantive contributions to class discussion. Students are expected to be on time, have a physical copy of the readings for that day, and to be prepared with questions and comments.

Reading Quizzes (20%) There will be three quizzes over the semester. These quizzes will not be announced beforehand and will be given at the beginning of class. Only two of the quiz grades will count therefore, the lowest grade out of the three will be dropped.

Writing Exercises (20%)
A. (10%) Each student will be assigned one week’s readings to closely analyze, and email a one-page outline and three questions to the class (via NYU Classes) two days prior to the class in which the reading is assigned.
B. (10%) Students will be required to write a one-page Critical Analysis Paper on a current environmental topic with policy relevance. Guidance regarding the criteria for these papers will be provided the first two weeks of the semester.

Semester Project (50%) The purpose of the semester project is to examine a single environmental issue or problem in an in-depth manner and address it with a legislative response. It will be executed in three parts: I. Research Paper, II. Draft legislative bill/memo, and III. Presentation

A. (25%) Research Paper: Students will write a 12-15 page paper to support a proposed legislative bill.
B. (15%) Bill and Memo: Based upon the research, each student will draft a legislative bill with an accompanying supporting memorandum.
C. (10%) Presentation: Students will present their final bill in the second to last class meetings.

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Overview of the Semester Project:

I. Research Paper – Provide background and stakeholder perspectives, discuss and analyze an environmental policy issue of your choice and propose potential policy responses. You may choose either an emerging policy issue that is currently under debate or an existing policy/program that has undergone some reassessment and is likely to be overhauled or revised.

If you want to research whether there has been any legislative activity around your issue, one effective way to search for federally introduced legislation is on the Library of Congress website (Thomas): [http://thomas.loc.gov/](http://thomas.loc.gov/).

Your paper should include:
(a) Problem Definition—define the issue at the center of your policy problem; include any relevant sub-issues;
(b) Legislative History—identify state, federal, local laws that pertain to the issue you have chosen and summarize the current policy (or its disposition in the legislative process);
(c) Stakeholders—identify all major stakeholders involved in the debate (regulated entities, public interest groups, political leaders, underrepresented groups, etc.) and their likely positions on the issue;

(d) Recommendation analysis—based on research, cost/benefit, policy externalities, implementation complexities etc., outline your proposed policy recommendations and their potential consequences;

(e) Conclusion—an overview of the problem, its challenges, and a succinct restatement of your recommended policy solution.

II. Legislative Bill Draft and Supporting Memorandum – Based on your research and policy recommendations, you will draft a legislative bill that responds to the environmental “problem”. You will also draft a supporting memorandum for the bill. The bill will be no more than five pages in length and the memo is no more than two pages. While drafting the bill and memo, you should consider the following:

(a) Background on the issue, including statistics (prevalence of issues etc.) – this will come from your research paper.
(b) Existing law – if no law, draft from scratch. If law is already in existence, does it need updating?
(c) How will the solution be articulated?
(d) Who/which agency will be responsible for implementation?
(e) Does this need funding? If so, how much and from where?
(f) What will be the penalties for non-compliance?
(g) Enforcement – what and by whom?
(h) Is there a federal preemption on the issue?
(i) Who will be likely co-sponsors in house/senate?
(j) Which stakeholders will support your position and why; which will oppose your position and why?
(k) How will you address the stakeholder criticisms?

III. Presentation – Each student will present his/her research and bill to the class. Students should put together a brief presentation (10 minutes) that synthesizes the problem, the stakeholders and their positions, and the policy recommendations. The presentation should engage the class in the relevance of the topic to environmental policy. Students will receive the presentation grading criteria.

Deadlines:

I. 9/20 Topic Selection (1 paragraph)
Select topic and submit a one-paragraph. The more narrow, the better. In other words, rather than say you want to research “climate change,” propose to research specific actions, such as “requiring office buildings to turn off lights at 11:00pm.” It can be a local, state, or federal issue.

II. 10/4 Proposal (6 pages)
• Define the problem, legislative history summary (i.e., what, if anything, has happened in the legislature), identify key stakeholders;
• Discuss preliminary research including properly cited references/works cited.

III. 11/1 Rough draft (10-12 pages)
• To include a 1-page outline of the sections/sub-sections reflecting flow of your paper;
• Should be complete and professionally presented (i.e., properly cited);
• The more final the draft is, the more useful will be the comments you receive.

IV. 11/15 Critical Analysis Paper

V. 12/6 Presentations
VI. **12/13 Final Paper (12-15 pages, excluding title page, references, and appendices with tables and figures)**
- 12-point font, 1.5 paragraph line spacing, 1-inch margins;
- Use footnotes for references and to include additional textual material;
- Paper must include proper citations and works cites/bibliography/references list; style (MLA, APA, Chicago Style etc.) is up to you, but must be used consistently;
- Good grammar, punctuations, and spelling (consistent errors in any of these will result in a lower grade);

VII. **12/13 Final Bill + Memorandum (5-7 pages total)**
Follow the bill and memo example structure provided on NYU Classes.

**POLICIES:**

*Plagiarism:*
Plagiarism results in failure in the class. It includes: copying sentences or fragments from any source without quotes or references; not citing every source used in your papers; citing internet information without proper citation; presenting someone else’s work as your own; or inadvertently copying verbatim from any source.

*Extensions/Incompletes:*
In the interest of fairness to other students, extensions and incompletes are only given in exceptional circumstances. Please discuss a request with me well before the due date.

*Disability Disclosure Statement:*
Academic accommodations are available to any student with a chronic, psychological, visual, mobility, learning disability, or who is deaf or hard of hearing. Students should please register with the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at 212-998-4980. NYU's Henry and Lucy Moses Center for Students with Disabilities 726 Broadway, 2nd Floor New York, NY 10003-6675 Telephone: 212-998-4980 Voice/TTY Fax: 212-995-4114 Web site: http://www.nyu.edu/csd.