INTRODUCTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS
Course website: through https://blackboard.uoregon.edu/

Professor: Dr. Craig Kauffman
Email: ckauffma@uoregon.edu
Office: 911 PLC, tel. 6-4974
Office Hours: Thursdays
2:00 – 5:00 p.m.

GTF: Meian Chen Office: 828 PLC E-mail: meian@uoregon.edu

Class Time: Monday & Wednesday,
2:00 p.m. - 3:20 p.m.

Class Location: 276 ED (Lokey Ed Bldg)

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

In recent years, environmental issues have risen to the top of policymakers’ agendas. Solving environmental problems such as climate change, pollution, deforestation, and food and water insecurity requires the cooperation of diverse sets of actors, including national and local governments, private companies, non-governmental organizations, communities, and others. However, there remain fundamental disagreements not only about the nature and importance of environmental problems, but also over preferred policies for addressing them. Using a comparative approach, this class examines the origins and nature of various ecological problems as well as strategies for solving them.

The course begins by introducing different types of environmental problems and examining how each creates unique sets of incentives and challenges. The second section compares four perspectives on the fundamental causes of environmental problems. Each suggests different solutions, with implications for current policy debates, including whether there are inherent limits to growth and how to achieve sustainable development (and if it is even possible). The third section examines the rise of environmentalism as a political issue and compares the perspectives, agendas, and strategies advocated by different strains within the U.S. environmental movement (e.g., mainstream and radical environmentalism and environmental justice). The fourth section examines the politics surrounding different policy solutions to environmental problems in the U.S. We look at how the government has addressed environmental issues over the past 50 years, focusing particularly on the green state legislation of the 1960s and 1970s. We then look at critiques of these policy approaches and proposed alternatives, including market-based solutions and collaborative governance. The final section looks at the case of climate change to study the particular challenges involved with addressing international environmental problems.

Throughout the course, we explore these issues using case studies from both the U.S. and other countries that illustrate contemporary environmental challenges, including population pressures, deforestation, air and water pollution, sustainable development, climate change, energy, and environmental security. Questions addressed include: What are the causes of environmental
problems? How does the type of environmental problem determine what solutions are possible? What policies are best suited to resolving different types of environmental problems? What kinds of people and organizations are involved in environmental politics, and what roles do they play? How are environmental policies made? What are the obstacles to creating effective systems for managing the environment, and how can these be overcome?

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES:

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify and evaluate competing values regarding the proper relationship between humans and nature, and explain how this influences environmental policy;
- Identify and evaluate competing claims as to what are the main drivers of environmental problems and the best solutions;
- Identify the unique characteristics of different environmental problems and explain how these shape the way environmental politics works;
- Explain how the environment became a leading policy issue, both in the U.S. and internationally;
- Describe the evolution of environmentalism in the U.S. and the distinct values, strategies, and policy proposals of different environmental movements;
- Explain the process and actors involved in making environmental policy, both in the U.S. and internationally;
- Identify and evaluate competing policy proposals for addressing environmental problems, including command and control regulation, market mechanisms, collaborative approaches, and private governance arrangements.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Read and Think!
This course is reading intensive. Be prepared. Complete the assigned readings before class. Read carefully and with a critical eye. Mark passages, ideas, and concepts that you find confusing and bring them up in lecture or discussion section. Ask questions! – this is the best way to learn. Class time will consist of not just me talking, but us discussing together. Please bring the readings to class, either hard copies or on your laptop or tablet, so that we can refer to them during class.

Readings: All required readings are on the course Blackboard website, under “Course Documents/Course Readings.” Please contact Prof. Kauffman immediately if you have any trouble downloading them. You will also find other useful information on Blackboard, such as a copy of the syllabus, information about assignments and exams, and your grades.

Participate:
Talk in both lecture and discussion section, ask questions, or make both your GTF and me aware that you’re engaged in other ways. Please note you will not be graded on the quantity of your comments but rather your ability to demonstrate that you are thinking through the issues.
discussed in class. I know some people don’t like to talk in class; another way you can participate is by writing on the course discussion board (see below).

Assignments (shown in percentages of total grade):

20%  **Pop Quizzes on the reading.** There will be five pop quizzes administered in lecture throughout the term. They are worth 5 points each. I will drop each student’s lowest-scoring quiz, so that students’ four highest scoring quizzes will count toward their final grade. I will post reading questions on blackboard for each day’s readings, and the quiz questions will be chosen from these reading questions. If you don’t have time to read through each reading carefully, at least skim them before class. The purpose of this assignment is to encourage you to come to class prepared so that we can have an informed and productive discussion of the readings in class.

25%  **Discussion paper.** 7-10 page paper (double spaced) analyzing a specific environmental problem. Paper instructions will be handed out at the end of week 2.

20%  **Midterm Exam**

25%  **Final Exam**

10%  **Discussion section attendance and participation.** You are permitted one unexcused discussion section absence. If you miss more than one section (without valid documentation about why you were absent), your discussion section grade will drop one half letter grade (e.g., from an A to an A-) per absence. In addition to attendance, part of your grade will reflect your preparation, in terms of having done the reading, and participating in discussion.

**Extra Credit Opportunity (maximum 5 points):**
You may earn extra credit by bringing to discussion section a newspaper or magazine article that relates to one of that week’s topics and describing its relevance in section. You will earn 1 extra credit point each time you do this. You may do this up to five times for a total of 5 extra credit points. Students may not use articles/stories that I previously used in lecture or ones that other students previously used in discussion section. If multiple students identify the same story the same week, all will get credit so long as each discusses a unique aspect of the article’s relevance to that week’s readings.

**No Make-up Exams:**
Out of fairness to the other students, there will be no opportunities to re-take missed quizzes or exams.

**Turn in your assignments on time:**
Late assignments will be accepted for up to one week (7 days) after the deadline. Late assignments lose a half letter grade (5 points) each day. Assignments are due at the beginning of class, and a late penalty of one day (half grade) applies for assignments handed in later on the due date. NOTE: passing the class requires that you turn in ALL assignments. I rarely fail anyone who turns in all assignments. The rare times that I do fail people, however, is when they
fail to turn in all assignments (since each is such a large portion of the final grade). So, please, turn in even late assignments. Help me help you pass the course.

Academic Honesty:
Don’t cheat. Don’t waste my time and yours. Today’s software makes it very easy to catch cheaters. Everything in your assignments must be your own work. Neither ignorance of these policies nor the lack of an intention to cheat or plagiarize will be considered a legitimate defense. Raise questions you have with me before problems arise. If you are caught cheating or plagiarizing, you will receive a zero on your assignment, you will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct, and you may fail the class. For more information on the Student Conduct Code and on plagiarism, see these websites:
http://uodos.uoregon.edu/StudentConductandCommunityStandards/StudentConductCode/tabid/69/Default.aspx
http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/
http://tep.uoregon.edu/workshops/teachertraining/learnercentered/syllabus/academicdishonesty.html

Grading:
If you have questions or concerns about the grading of the assignment stop and think before reacting, then discuss the assignment with the GTF who graded it. If you still have concerns feel free to come to the professor with the assignment in question. All requests for a re-grade must be made in writing and provide a compelling reason. If the professor re-grades the assignment, whatever grade the instructor assigns stands, which can be lower or higher than your initial grade. Requests for re-grades must be made within two weeks of the return of the assignment to the class.

Class Communications: Please check your email and the announcements section on the course Blackboard site every day. I may send you information on scheduling, corrections to lectures or readings, and other messages that you need to see. It is your responsibility to check your email and the course blackboard site. Once I have sent you a message, I assume that you have that information.

TECHNOLOGY POLICY

Silence your cell phones before coming to class. Students who answer phone calls or engage in excessive text messaging will be asked to leave. Please feel free to bring your laptops to class to take notes and refer to the readings. Avoid using your laptop to play games or distract your fellow students during class. During exams, students may not use any electronic devices, including cell phones, PDAs, I-pods, dictionaries or any other electronic equipment. Students who are found to be using any electronic device will automatically fail the exam.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES OR REQUIRING SPECIAL ACCOMMODATION

Both I, as a professor, and the University of Oregon are committed to creating inclusive learning environments. Please notify me if any aspects of my instruction methods or course design result in barriers to your participation. If you have a disability or require special accommodation, I encourage you to contact the Accessible Education Center in 164 Oregon Hall at 346-1155 or
CLASS AND READING SCHEDULE

Section 1: Introduction to Environmental Politics
Questions: What is environmental politics and environmental governance? What are the various kinds of environmental problems and how do they structure environmental politics? How do they shape the incentives of different people involved and possible solutions available?

1. January 5: Introduction to Class and Syllabus

2. January 7: The Politics of Open Access Problems (16 pgs) – If you have a laptop, PLEASE bring it to class for use in the simulation!
   • Oran Young, “Natural Resources,” in On Environmental Governance, pp. 23-39.
   • Prepare for simulation (see below)

   We will simulate the Tragedy of the Commons online during class. Prepare your strategy BEFORE class. Start by playing the “Optimizing a Private Farm” game on the website (Information will be provided on Blackboard). During the in-class game, you will decide how many cows you want to put on a commons to which all other students have access. Your goal is to maximize the milk your cows produce (so you can share that milk with homeless people). What strategy will you use to ensure that you and the rest of the class do not overgraze the commons? How will you convince others to adopt your strategy? What should you do in the meantime to make sure you still can give milk to homeless people this year?

3. January 12: Can Institutions Overcome the Tragedy of the Commons? (34 pgs)

   • Oran Young, “Environmental Protection,” in On Environmental Governance, pp. 40-56.
   • Michelle Nijhuis, “When the Snows Fail,” National Geographic, October 2014.

5. January 19: NO CLASS – MLK DAY!
Section 2: Four Perspectives on the Drivers of Environmental Problems

Questions: What are the main drivers/causes of environmental problems? Is economic growth the main problem, or the solution? Is sustainable development possible, and if so, what would it look like? Can technology and/or institutional rules ultimately solve our problems? How do power relations and value differences influence the ability to solve environmental problems?

   • Jennifer Clapp & Peter Dauvergne, Paths to a Green World, pp. 1-17.
   • Donella Meadows et. al, “The Limits to Growth” (excerpt).
   • Joao Augusto de Araujo Castro, “Environment and Development: The Case of Developing Countries” (excerpt).

7. January 26: The Sustainability Debate: Is Sustainable Development Possible? If so, what would it look like, and how can we achieve it? (42 pgs)
   • World Commission on Environment and Development, Towards Sustainable Development (excerpt)
   • Larry Lohmann, Whose Common Future? (excerpt)
   • Tom Knudson, Shifting the Pain: World’s Resources Feed California’s Growing Appetite (excerpt)

Section 3: Perspectives and Strategies of Environmental Movements

Questions: Why and how has the environment become a leading political issue? What kinds of interactions between humans and the environment should we pay attention to? What are the varieties of environmentalism? What actions and changes in behavior do these environmental political positions urge?

   • Leslie Thiele, Environmentalism For A New Millennium (pp. 3-8)
   • John Muir, A Voice for Wilderness (excerpt)
   • Gifford Pinchot, The Birth of Conservation (excerpt)
   • Aldo Leopold, A Land Ethic (excerpt)

9. February 2: Contemporary Environmental Movement(s) (39 pgs)
   • Leslie Thiele, Environmentalism For A New Millennium, pgs. 9-29.
   • Kirkpatrick Sale, Schism in Environmentalism (excerpt).
   • Edward Abbey & Dave Foreman, Monkeywrenching (excerpt).

10. February 4: Environmental Justice (20 pgs)
    • Robert Bullard, Environmental Justice in the 21st Century
    • Principles of Environmental Justice
11. February 9: MIDTERM EXAM

Section 4: Environmental Policy & Structures for Solutions
Questions: How does the government address environmental problems? How and why have these approaches changed over time? Which approaches allow the government to make policy more effectively and democratically?

   • Norman Vig & Michael Kraft, Environmental Policy Over Four Decades, pp. 11-16.

13. February 16: The Anti-Environmental Backlash (30 pgs)
   • Jaime Fuller, “Everything you need to know about the long fight between Cliven Bundy and the federal government,” Washington Post, April 15, 2013.

14. February 18: Movie: Who Killed the Electric Car?

15. February 23: The Turn to Markets (35 pgs)
   • Robert Stavins and Bradley Whitehead, “Market-based Environmental Policies.”

16. February 25: Critiques of Markets and Privatization (31 pgs)
   • Michael Sandel, It’s Immoral to Buy the Right to Pollute (with replies)
   • Ronnie Lipschutz, Global Environmental Politics, pp. 185-207, 228-233.

17. March 2: The Turn to Collaboration (37 pgs)
   • Edward Weber, Bringing Society In, ch 1 (excerpts).
   • Christopher Klyza and David Sousa, American Environmental Policy 1990-2006, selection from ch 6 (excerpts).
   • Carlotta Collette, Oregon’s Plan for Salmon and Watersheds: The Basics of Building a Recovery Plan

**** DISCUSSION PAPERS DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS *****

Section 5: International Environmental Politics in an Age of Climate Change
Questions: Why is international environmental policymaking more challenging than local or national-level policymaking? What kinds of governance arrangements have emerged in response to global environmental problems like climate change? How do linkages with other issues like energy and security affect politics surrounding climate change?
18. March 4: International Environmental Policymaking (30 pgs)
   • Pamela Chasek, “Development of Environmental Regimes,” (excerpt on Ozone and Climate Change regimes).

   • Paul Wapner, “Politics Beyond the State: Environmental Activism and World Civic Politics.”

   • Michael Maniates, “Plant a Tree, Buy a Bike, Save the World?”
   • Paul Wapner and John Willoughby, “The Poverty of Lifestyle Change.”
   • Simon Nicholson, “Geoengineering: Reformatting the Planet for Climate Protection?”
   • Michael Pollan, “Why Bother?”

*** THURSDAY, MARCH 19, 2015 at 2:45pm – FINAL EXAM ***