

**Seminar on American Environmental Politics  
Political Science 421**

Spring 2022  
MW 2.50p – 4.05p  
Twilight 110

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Office Hours:

M 12.30p-2.30p  
W 11a-12p  
and by appointment

In this seminar we will seek to understand and analyze conservation, environmental, and natural resources politics and policy in the United States. We will achieve this goal by studying how members of society seek to influence the government through public opinion and voting, as well as through interest groups and grassroots activism. We will examine how conservation and environmental policy has changed over the last several decades, specifically focusing on new policy pathways. The final portion of the course will feature presentations of student research projects.

This will be an in-person class unless the college shifts to remote teaching. There will not be a hybrid option. I suggest you create a buddy system with one-or-two classmates who can help bring you up to speed if you need to miss class.

READINGS

Five books are required for the course. **The library has each of these as an e-book.**

- Christopher McGrory Klyza and David Sousa, 2013, *American Environmental Policy: Beyond Gridlock*, updated and expanded edition.
- Stephen Ansolabehere and David M. Konisky, 2014, *Cheap and Clean: How Americans Think about Energy in the Age of Global Warming*.
- Andrew Cheon and Johannes Urpelainen, 2018, *Activism and the Fossil Fuel Industry*.
- James Morton Turner, 2012, *The Promise of Wilderness: American Environmental Politics since 1964*.
- David M. Konisky, ed., 2015, *Failed Promises: Evaluating the Federal Government's Response to Environmental Justice*.

Readings marked by an \* in the reading list are available through Canvas. **You are not expected to print out these readings to bring to class.**

You are also **required** to subscribe to and read/scan *Greenwire*. This is an electronic environmental newsletter that summarizes and gives links to the top environmental stories of the day. It is free and will be delivered by email Monday through Friday around 1.30p. I will email you instructions on how to register for daily email alerts.

## COLLOQUIUM

Students are strongly encouraged to attend the ES Colloquium. Given the unsettled nature of the semester, rather than a weekly colloquium there will be four guests and presentations by two sections of ENVS 401 this spring on Thursdays from 12.15p-1.20p. The colloquium includes a 30-40 minute talk and a question and answer session. The colloquium meets in Hillcrest 103. It is a real cool time. For the schedule see:

<http://www.middlebury.edu/academics/es/news/woodincolloquiumseries>

## GRADES AND ASSIGNMENTS

(1) You are expected to be a regular contributor to the class discussions of the readings. This will require your reading the assignments, understanding the author's points, formulating and expressing your own opinions, and questioning the opinions of others. Class attendance is crucial, and absences will be penalized in your participation grade. **Class participation:** 30% of grade.

(2) You are required to write one short analytical paper (4-5 pages) on a topic that flows from the seminar readings for a particular class. No outside reading will be required, although your interests may lead you in that direction. At the beginning of the semester, you will select the class when you would like to write. Please give this matter some serious thought, considering carefully both your interests and your other obligations, for once the final schedule is assembled, there will be no changes. **Papers need to be emailed to me by 4.00p the day before class.**  
**Short Paper:** 15%.

(3) You will write one 3-page policy memo to a United States senator of your choice on how he or she should vote on a current policy issue (e.g., a climate change bill). Your political analysis should draw on themes and materials that we have discussed in class, as well as specific characteristics of your senator's state. Due: March 14<sup>th</sup>. **Short Paper:** 15%.

(4) A 25-page research paper (or an equivalent major project grounded in the policy literature) that analyzes and explains some aspect of United States environmental politics or policy is the main assignment for the class. A 1-page prospectus of the paper is due on March 2<sup>nd</sup>; a 3-page research design is due on March 30<sup>th</sup>; the first draft of the paper (or project) is due on April 20<sup>th</sup>; presentations of your paper on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup>; and the final draft is due on May 11<sup>th</sup>.  
**Research Paper:** 40 %.

NOTE: All assignments must be completed in order to pass the course. Late papers will be penalized one-half letter grade per day.

# COURSE SCHEDULE

February

14 **REMOTE Introduction**

## EXPLANATION

16 **REMOTE Theory I: Explaining Policy Change**

**READ:**

1. \*Robert Repetto, 2006, "Introduction," in *Punctuated Equilibrium and the Dynamics of U.S. Environmental Policy*, edited by Robert Repetto, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, pp. 1-23.
2. \*Frank R. Baumgartner, 2006, "Punctuated Equilibrium Theory and Environmental Policy," in *Punctuated Equilibrium and the Dynamics of U.S. Environmental Policy*, edited by Robert Repetto, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, pp. 24-46.

21 continued

**READ:**

1. \*Helen Ingram and Leah Fraser, 2006, "Path Dependency and Adroit Innovation: The Case of California Water," in *Punctuated Equilibrium and the Dynamics of U.S. Environmental Policy*, edited by Robert Repetto, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, pp. 78-109.
2. Matt Jenkins, 2010, "California's Tangled Water Politics," *High Country News*, December 20. Available at: <http://www.hcn.org/issues/42.22/californias-tangled-water-politics>.
3. \*Charles Davis, 2006, "The Politics of Grazing on Federal Lands: A Policy Change Perspective," in *Punctuated Equilibrium and the Dynamics of U.S. Environmental Policy*, edited by Robert Repetto, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, pp. 232-252.

23 **Theory II: The Green State, Gridlock, and Policy Pathways**

**READ:**

1. \*Karen Orren and Stephen Skowronek, 2004, *The Search for American Political Development*, New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 1-32.
2. Klyza and Sousa, *American Environmental Policy*, pp. 1-42.

## HOW SOCIETY INFLUENCES ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS

28 **Public Opinion**

**READ:**

1. Ansolabehere and Konisky, *Cheap and Clean*, pp. 1-124.

March

2 continued

**READ:**

1. Ansolabehere and Konisky, *Cheap and Clean*, (skim pp. 125-152) pp. 153-211.
2. Yale Program on Climate Change Communication, 2020, "Explore Climate Opinion across Political Lines with Our Partisan Maps," available at: <https://climatecommunication.yale.edu/publications/explore-climate-opinion-across-political-lines-with-our-partisan-maps/>.

**1p RESEARCH PAPER PROSPECTUS DUE**

7 **Interest Groups and Social Movements**

**READ:**

1. Cheon and Urpelainen, *Activism and the Fossil Fuel Industry*, pp. 1-125.

9 continued

**READ:**

1. Cheon and Urpelainen, *Activism and the Fossil Fuel Industry*, pp. 126-214.

14 **Partisanship**

**READ:**

1. \*Judith A. Layzer, 2012, *Open for Business: Conservatives' Opposition to Environmental Regulation*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, pp. 333-369.

2. \*James M. Turner and Andrew C. Isenberg, 2018, *The Republican Reversal: Conservatives and the Environment from Nixon to Trump*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, pp. 196-216.

**POLICY MEMO DUE**

CASE STUDY 1: WILDERNESS POLITICS

16 **Wilderness Politics**

**READ:**

1. Turner, *The Promise of Wilderness*, pp. 1-136.

21 NO CLASS—SPRING BREAK

23 NO CLASS—SPRING BREAK

28 continued

**READ:**

1. Turner, *The Promise of Wilderness*, pp. 137-266.

30 continued

**READ:**

1. Turner, *The Promise of Wilderness*, pp. 267-406.

**3p RESEARCH DESIGN DUE**

CASE STUDY 2: SEEKING ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

*April*

4 **Seeking Environmental Justice**

**READ:**

1. Konisky, *Failed Promises*, pp. 1-56, chapter 3 or 4.

6 NO CLASS—KLYZA AT MIDWEST POLITICAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING, CHICAGO.

11 continued

1. Konisky, *Failed Promises*, pp. 117-171, chapter 7 or 8, pp. 233-257.

2. \*Tony G. Reames, Michael A. Reiner, and M. Ben Stacey, 2018, "An Incandescent Truth: Disparities in Energy-Efficient Lighting Availability and Prices in an Urban U.S. County," *Applied Energy* 218: 95-103.

### CASE STUDY 3: CLIMATE CHANGE POLITICS

13 **Climate Change Politics**

**READ:**

1. Barry Rabe, 2018, *Can We Price Carbon?*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, pp. 37-81, 125-161, 163-184. [library e-book]

18 continued

**READ:**

2. Leah C. Stokes, 2020, *Short Circuiting Policy: Interest Groups and the Battle over Clean Energy and Climate Change in the States*, New York: Oxford University Press, pp. xx, xx, xx [library e-book]

### MAKING ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

20 **New Policy Pathways: Appropriations and Executive Politics**

**READ:**

1. Klyza and Sousa, *American Environmental Policy*, pp. 43-140.

**RESEARCH PAPER FIRST DRAFT DUE**

25 **New Policy Pathways: The Courts and Collaboration**

**READ:**

1. Klyza and Sousa, *American Environmental Policy*, pp. 141-226.

27 **New Policy Pathways: The States and the Future**

**READ:**

1. Klyza and Sousa, *American Environmental Policy*, pp. 227-317.
2. \*Christopher McGrory Klyza and David Sousa, 2010, "Beyond Gridlock: Green Drift in American Environmental Policymaking," *Political Science Quarterly*, 125 (Fall): 443-463.
3. \*David Sousa and Christopher McGrory Klyza, 2017, "... Whither We Are Tending": Interrogating the Retrenchment Narrative in U.S. Environmental Policy," *Political Science Quarterly*, 132 (Fall): 467-494.

### STUDENT RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS

May

2 **Student Research Presentations**

4 continued

**EVENING: Pizza dinner at Klyza's house in Middlebury.**

9 continued

11 **Summary and Conclusion**

**READ:**

1. \*Paul Kingsnorth, 2013, "Dark Ecology," *Orion*, January/February.

**RESEARCH PAPER FINAL DRAFT DUE**