

**PS184, Politics of the Environment in the U.S.  
Fall 2006**

**Tuesday and Thursday, 1:30 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.**

Professor Kent E. Portney

This course is designed to provide an introduction and focused look at the politics of environmental policy making in America. It assumes that you have no particular knowledge of the political system or of environmental problems.

In its role as an introductory course, one of the main missions of this course will be descriptive. In other words, we will spend much of our time trying to build a fairly detailed picture of how American political institutions have tried to deal with issues of environmental threats. To do this we will focus on a little historical background to policies and programs, and on what I call the "mechanics of public policy making." But, of course, we will from time to time go more deeply into some specific issues of environmental politics. For example, we will take a focused look at the operations of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to see how science and technology interact with politics to influence the decisions that are rendered there. We will also take a critical look at the social and political values that underlie contemporary environmental problems and the policies that purport to deal with them.

In order to investigate these and other issues, we will be reading from a number of sources, including several books that you can and should purchase from the bookstore. These include:

Michael E. Kraft, *Environmental Policy and Politics*, 4th edition. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 2007. (Referred to as Kraft in the reading list)

Sheldon Kamieniecki, *Corporate American and Environmental Policy*, 2006. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press. (Referred to as Kamieniecki in the reading list).

Deborah Guber, *The Grassroots of a Green Revolution*, 2003. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. (Referred to as Guber in the reading list)

Robert Durant, Daniel Fiorino, and Rosemary O'Leary, eds. *Environmental Governance Reconsidered*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004. Referred to as Durant in the reading list).

There will be two additional books to which we will periodically refer, neither of which will be available in the bookstore. They are available in Tisch Library. If you decide you would like to obtain one or both, feel free to place an order with Amazon.com or any other source.

Jeffrey M. Berry, *The New Liberalism: The Rising Power of Citizen Groups*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1999. (Referred to as Berry in the reading list)

Ronald G. Shaiko, *Voices and Echoes for the Environment: Public Interest Representation in the 1990s and Beyond*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999. (Referred to as Shaiko in the reading list)

Additional reading material will be distributed in class from time to time. In addition to the usual in-class discussions, we will also take advantage of some other types of resources. For example, we will see a number of videos, possibly hear from a couple of guest speakers, and collectively take part in at least one in-class simulation exercise. All of this is designed to try to make the experience of learning about environmental politics as fruitful and enjoyable as possible.

We will have a take-home mid-term essay exam which will be given out in class on Tuesday, October 24, and which must be returned in class on Tuesday, October 31.

We will also have a take-home final exam, which will be given out in class on Thursday, December 7, and will be due on Thursday, December 14, the first day of final exams, no later than 12:00 noon in the Political Science Department.

Remember, it is your responsibility to make sure that this exam is received,

and it is always advisable for you to make a photocopy of all of your work before you turn it in.

There will be one additional assignment. Each of you will be asked to prepare a brief (3-5 page) paper and oral report discussing one environmental policy or programmatic change made or proposed by the current Bush Administration. You will be expected to provide a succinct description of the proposed or actual change, what its ultimate or current status is, and how this proposed policy or program differs (differed) from what preceded it. You will have the opportunity to sign up for a date when you will give your oral report, and the written version will be due within one week after your oral presentation.

Class attendance is mandatory.

All written work will be graded on the basis of performance in three areas or categories of equal importance (usually a maximum of 33.3 points each): 1) Writing quality and organization of material; 2) factual accuracy and completeness; and 3) synthesis of ideas and creativity.

The final grade will be an average of the mid-term and final exams (each counting 45% toward the grade), and the short assignment (which will count 10% of the grade), adjusted upward or downward based on class participation and attendance.

In general, extensions on assignments and incompletes at final grading time are not granted.

My office hours are 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays. If these hours are not convenient, just let me know and we can make alternative arrangements. Due to other commitments, I will not generally be available on campus during Fridays. My e-mail address is: [kent.portney@tufts.edu](mailto:kent.portney@tufts.edu).

My office is located in Eaton Hall, Room 307. I can be reached there by telephone at extension 73465 (627-3465 from off-campus).

## CLASS BY CLASS TOPICS AND READINGS

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic and Reading</u>
September 5	Introduction: The Semester's Topics and Activities No Reading to be done for today
<b><u>Foundations of Environmental Politics and Policies: Our Social, Economic, Political, and Ecological Values</u></b>	
September 7	Environmental Policy and Politics: Public Policies and the Clash of Values in Society Read: Kraft, Chapter 1
September 12	The State of the Environment: The Magnitude of the Problem Read: Kraft, Chapter 2
September 14	Concepts of Sustainability: Sustainable Development, Environmental Sustainability, and Global Interdependence Read: Durant, Chapters 1 and 2.  Also read: Charles V. Kidd, "The Evolution of Sustainability," from the <i>Journal of Agriculture and Environmental Ethnics</i> , Vol. 5, No. 1, 1992, pp. 1-26; and Becky J. Brown, Mark E. Hansen, Diana M. Liverman, and Robert W. Meredith, "Global Sustainability: Toward Definition," from <i>Environmental Management</i> , Vol. 11, No. 6, 1987, pp. 713-719. <b>Reading provided in class.</b>

## **Regulatory and Administrative Issues in Environmental Protection**

- September 19      Environmental Policy Making: The Policy Processes  
Read: Kraft, Chapter 3
- September 21      Environmental Policy Making and the Role of Government in  
Protecting the Environment (View "An Act of Congress"  
Video)  
Read: Kraft, Chapters 4 and 5
- September 26      The Environmental Protection Agency, the Regulatory  
Processes, and Their Alternatives  
(View "The Regulators")  
Re-Read: Kraft, Chapter 5  
Read: Durant, Chapter 10

## **Getting Down to Earth: Environmental Policies in the U.S.**

- September 28      The Policy Making Processes and Interests in Air Pollution  
Policies (View "Clean Air Act Highlight Compilation" Video)  
Re-Read: Kraft, Chapter 5
- Also read: Lisa Heinzerling and Frank Ackerman, "Pricing the  
Priceless: Cost-Benefit Analysis of Environmental Protection"  
Available online at  
<http://www.healthytomorrow.org/pdf/priceless.pdf>
- October 3            Climate Change and Clean Air; and Consequences of Bad  
Implementation (View "Sixty Minutes II" Segment Video)
- Read: Paul R. Portney, "Air Pollution Policy," Chapter 4, and

Jason Shogren and Michael Toman, "Climate Change Policy," Chapter 5, in Paul R. Portney and Robert Stavins, eds., *Public Policies for Environmental Protection*. Walter Rosenbaum, *Environmental Politics and Policy*, fifth edition, Chapter 10; Harriet Bulkeley and Michele Betsill, *Cities and Climate Change*, Chapter 3. **Readings provided in class.**

- October 5            Water Pollution Policies  
Re-Read: Kraft, Chapter 5  
Margaret Kriz, "Cleaner than Clean?" in *National Journal*, April 23, 1994, pp. 949-949. **Reading provided in class.**
- October 10            Regulating Toxics and Toxic Wastes  
Read: Kent E. Portney, "Public Policies Toward Contaminating the Soil: Regulating Hazardous Wastes and Toxic Substances," Chapter 5 in Kent E. Portney, *Controversial Issues in Environmental Policy*. **Reading provided in class.**
- October 12            Regulating and Managing Solid Wastes  
Read: New York City Department of Sanitation, Recycling and Waste Prevention Reports. Found online at:  
<http://www.nyc.gov/html/dsny/html/reports/recywprpts.shtml#1>
- October 17            Energy and Natural Resources Policies  
Read: Kraft, Chapter 6
- October 19            How Do We Know If Our Policies Work?  
Approaches to Evaluating Environmental Policies  
Read: Kraft, Chapter 7
- October 24            Future Policies? Proposals and Targets for Reform  
Read: Kraft, Chapter 8  
(MID-TERM WILL BE GIVEN OUT IN CLASS)

## **The Politics of Environmental Protection and Management**

- October 26            The Political Landscape for Environmental Policymaking:  
Interest Groups in the American Political System  
Re-Read: Kraft, Chapter 4  
Read: Either Berry, whole book or Shaiko, whole book
- October 31            The Role of the Private Sector in Environmental Policymaking  
(MID-TERM IS DUE IN CLASS ON THIS DAY)  
Read: Kamieniecki, whole book
- November 2           The Conceptual Challenge I: Tragedy of the Commons  
Read: Durant, Chapter 4
- November 7           No Class (Friday's schedule)
- November 9           The Conceptual Challenge II: Resource and Land Conflicts  
Read: Durant, Chapter 8
- November 14          The Conceptual Challenge III: Scientific Uncertainty  
Read: Durant, Chapter 3
- November 16          The Conceptual Challenge IV: Grassroots Politics of the  
Environment and Liberal Democracy  
Read: Durant, Reconnecting with Stakeholders  
and Chapters 5 and 6; Guber, whole book.
- November 21          Siting Waste Treatment Facilities  
Read: Excerpt from Michael O'Hare, Lawrence Bacow, Debra  
Sanderson. *Facility Siting and Public Opposition*, 1983.  
**Reading provided in class.**

November 28           Siting Waste Treatment Facilities: The NIMBY Syndrome and the Dilemma of Democracy  
Read: Kent E. Portney, "The Politics of Siting: A Dilemma of Democracy in State and Local Efforts," Chapter 3 in Kent E. Portney, *Siting Hazardous Waste Treatment Facilities: The NIMBY Syndrome*, 1991. **Reading provided in class.**

November 30           Environmental Justice and Eco-Racism  
and

December 5           Read: Durant, Chapter 7.

Also read: Robert D. Bullard, "The Politics of Pollution: Implications for the Black Community," in *Phylon*, Vol. 47, March 1986, pp. 71-78. Robert D. Bullard, "Ecological Inequities and the New South: Black Communities Under Siege," in *The Journal of Ethnic Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 4, Winter 1990, pp. 101-115. **Reading provided in class.**

### **Can Our Political Systems Cope with the Environmental Problem?**

December 7           Governance and the Fundamental Problem of Social Values

Re-Read: Kraft, Chapters 1 and 8

Read: Durant, Chapter 12 and Conclusion

Take-home final exam will be given out in class,  
and is DUE ON THURSDAY DECEMBER 14 NO LATER  
THAN 12:00 NOON IN THE POLITICAL SCIENCE  
DEPARTMENT.

December 14           Final exam is due by 12:00 noon.  
(Thursday)           (This is the first day of final exam)