

Cleveland State University
Levin College of Urban Affairs
Environmental Policy and Administration (UST 435)
UR 241 - Tuesdays 6 – 8:50 p.m.

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Office Hours: Tues./Wed. 3-4:30 and by appointment

Course Description

This course examines the factors that shape environmental policy, with a particular focus on urbanized areas. In the United States and throughout the world, increasing shares of human population live in densely populated areas, creating environmental risks but also opportunities for more sustainable patterns of growth and development. As the course title suggests, we will focus on how environmental policies are crafted and put in place, as well as how those policies are administered, or implemented and carried out by various actors. Responsibility for environmental policymaking and administration in the United States is shared among the branches of federal, state, and local governments. We will review major federal environmental legislation and recent policy trends, including increased delegation to state and local governments. We will seek to understand how the varying contexts of decision making at each level of government work to influence policy outcomes. We will also examine basic policy analysis techniques to aid our assessment of the prospects for more sustainable outcomes in the future.

The earlier part of the course will focus on the structural/organizational features of environmental policymaking and implementation. The second half of the class will focus on specific policy dilemmas, potential solutions, and policy assessment/analysis.

Course Goals

Students who successfully complete this course will have a stronger understanding of the factors that shape, constrain, and drive environmental policymaking and implementation, particularly as it relates to urban areas. Students will be able to critically analyze environmental policy problems and potential solutions. They will be able to communicate their analyses in professional, objective tone and present their findings to their peers. This course will focus on not only content but on skill development in the areas of critical thinking, professional-style writing, and verbal communication.

Required Reading

Norman J. Vig and Michael E. Kraft (2016). *Environmental policy: new directions for the 21st century*, 9th Edition. Washington, DC: CQ Press. ISBN: 978-1-4833-5258-9

Other readings are listed below and will be provided to you electronically via Blackboard. Additional required readings will often be assigned as current events occur. These will be announced and made available on Blackboard.

Assignments/Assessments

News Stories: Each meeting, all students are required to bring in one news article regarding environmental policy. We will set aside time each class session to discuss news stories in groups and draw connections between current policy debates in the news and our textbook readings. This requirement will contribute toward your participation grade. Bring a hard copy of the news story to class or a typed sheet to hand in with the following information: Article Title, Date of Publication, Source, web link to the online article, short paragraph summarizing the content. E-mails with this information will not be accepted.

Policy Memos: Students will work on a semester-long research project that culminates in a 5-7 page policy memo. Students select a specific policy proposal aimed at alleviating or solving an environmental problem. This policy may be currently under consideration at the federal, state, or local level, OR it may be a policy that is not yet under consideration. Each student will select a specific *legislator* to whom the memo will be addressed. For example, if you select a Cleveland policy that would provide subsidies to homeowners who install rain barrels, convert pavement to lawn, etc., you would want to choose a Cleveland City Council member. Students will discuss the environmental problem the policy aims to address, analyze the potential impact of the policy, the legislator's strategic position (given their background and constituency), and finally, make a recommendation to the legislator on whether to support the policy. More detailed instructions for the project will be distributed as the course progresses.

Examinations: We will have a midterm and a final, administered via Blackboard. You will take the exams on your own time, and so you will be able to reference notes and texts. However, the exams will be timed, and looking everything up during the exams will make completing them very difficult. I recommend studying as though you will not have access to the texts, and then referencing them only occasionally, as needed.

Grading

Grades for the course will be calculated as follows:

- 20% Participation
- 10% Policy Memo Prep assignments
- 30% Policy Memo/Presentation
- 40% Exams (20% each)

Grading criteria for course are as follows:

A	= 94-100%	C+	= 77-79%
A-	= 90-93	C	= 70-76
B+	= 87-89	D	= 60-69
B	= 83-86	F	= 59 and below
B-	= 80-82		

Course Policies

Attendance: Attendance is mandatory and taken each week. In addition to the news story requirement, we will have regular group assignments during class sessions that will also count toward participation. Given that this class meets only once a week, missing more than one class will significantly impact your overall grade for the course. To avoid negative effect on the participation grade, any unavoidable absences must be approved prior to their occurrence.

Screens in the classroom: There are no cell phones, tablets, or computers allowed during this class. If you want to use a laptop for note-taking purposes only, you may seek permission by speaking with the professor in advance. In general, these devices tend to distract students. Please silence cell phones before class and do not use them, except during breaks.

Academic honesty: Students are expected to submit only their own work with their original ideas and proper citations of outside sources. Students are encouraged to study together and discuss their ideas with one another. However, all work submitted for this course must be completed individually. According to the CSU Writing Center, the [CSU Student Handbook](#) describes plagiarism as stealing and/or using the ideas or writings of another in a paper or report and claiming them as your own. This includes but is not limited to the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment.

Late work: Only under extraordinary circumstances, in which students have made previous arrangements with me, will I accept late work. If previous arrangements are not made, students will receive no credit for late assignments. Similarly, students will not be granted additional time to prepare for exams, except where there is compelling reason for doing so. A request for an extension must be arranged in advance, and must be accompanied by a recommendation from a recognized authority (e.g., physician or an academic dean). Grades of incompletes will only be granted for the most severe and documented circumstances (e.g., death in family, health complications, etc.) that prevent students from completing the course as scheduled.

Contacting the professor: Students are encouraged to use e-mail and Blackboard to contact me regarding any questions or concerns. They also should feel free to drop into office hours. If you have a more complicated question that you feel will take some time to

work out, it is a good idea to make an appointment to see me in the office. I will make every effort to accommodate students' schedules.

University Policies

Students with Special Needs: Educational access includes the provision of classroom accommodations, auxiliary aids and services to ensure equal educational opportunities for all students regardless of their disability. Any student who feels he or she may need an accommodation based upon the impact of a disability should immediately contact the Office of Disability Services at 216-687-2015. The office is located in MC147. Accommodations need to be requested in advance and will not be granted retroactively. Students should notify the instructor as soon as possible if they have been granted an accommodation through the Office of Disability Services.

Writing Assistance: Students with difficulty writing may contact the [Writing Center](#) located in the Main Classroom 321 for assistance. Students should use the [American Psychological Association](#) (APA) format for citations and reference pages, unless agreed upon otherwise in advance with the professor.

Course Schedule

(This is a general schedule and may be modified during the semester.)

Tuesday, 8/29 (Week 1)

Introduction to Course
Personal Introductions
Research Project Brainstorming

Tuesday, 9/5 (Week 2)

- Chap. 1 – U.S. Environmental Policy: Achievements and New Directions
- Birkland Chapter 1 (available on Blackboard)

Tuesday, 9/12 (Week 3)

- Chap. 2 – Racing to the Top, the Bottom, or the Middle of the Pack? The Evolving State Government Role in Environmental Protection
- Birkland Chapter 9 (available on Blackboard)

Tuesday, 9/19 (Week 4)

- Chap. 3 – Environmental Advocacy in the Obama Years
 - “Fighting Obama’s Climate Plan, but Quietly Preparing to Comply,” NYT.com, July 19, 2016
- DUE: Policy Memo prep assignment: Proposal (see Blackboard)**

Tuesday, 9/26 (Week 5)

- Chap. 4 – Presidential Powers and Environmental Policy
- Chap. 5 – Environmental Policy in Congress

Tuesday, 10/3 (Week 6)

- Chap. 6 – Environmental Policy in the Courts
- Midterm Available on Blackboard (deadline 10/10)**

No class on 10/10 - holiday

Tuesday, 10/17 (Week 7)

- Chap. 7 – The EPA
- Environmental agencies in the states – additional readings on Blackboard

Tuesday, 10/24 (Week 8)

- Pretty, Jules. 2003. “Social Capital and the Collective Management of Resources,” *Science*.
 - Berke, Philip, et al. 2013. “Local comprehensive plan quality and regional ecosystem protection: The case of the Jordan Lake watershed,” *Land Use Planning*.
- DUE: Policy Memo prep assignment: Outline (see Blackboard)**

Tuesday, 10/31 (Week 9)

- Chap. 8 – Energy Policy: Fracking, Renewables, and the Keystone XL Pipeline
- States and local governments in fracking decisionmaking – additional readings on BB

Tuesday, 11/7 (Week 10)

- Chap. 9 – Eating and the Environment
- Barthel, Parker, and Ernstson. 2013 “Food and Green Space in Cities: A Resilience Lens on Gardens and Urban Environmental Movements,” *Urban Studies*.

Tuesday, 11/ 14 (Week 11)

- Chap. 10 – Applying Market Principles to Environmental Policy
- DUE: Policy Memo prep assignment: Draft 1 of Policy Memo via BB**
Workshop in class – bring a hard copy of your draft to exchange with classmates

Tuesday, 11/21 (Week 12)

- Chapter 11 – Toward Sustainable Production: Finding Workable Strategies for Government and Industry
- Bowen and Wells. 2002. “The Politics and Reality of Environmental Justice: A History and Considerations for Public Administrators and Policymakers,” *Public Administration Review* 62(6): 688 –698.

Tuesday, 11/28 (Week 13)

- Chapter 12 – Taking Sustainable Cities Seriously
 - Bulkely, Harriet. 2010. “Cities and the Governing of Climate Change.” *Annual Review of Environment and Resources* 35: 229-253.
- DUE: Policy Memo prep assignment: Draft 2 of Policy Memo via BB (only if required by instructor – see comments on Draft 1 assignment)**

Tuesday, 12/5 (Week 14)

- Presentations of Policy Memo Research

Final Exam Available on Blackboard Dec. 6 – DUE by end of day Dec. 9

DUE end of day 12/12: Final Policy Memos (via Blackboard)