

# Environmental Public Policy

Special Topics in Political Science: PS 2294

Transylvania University

May 1999

MTWRF 12:30-2:30

Haupt Humanities # 107

**Instructor:** Mr. Mike Gunter  
**Office:** Room #4 Hazelrigg Hall  
**Office Hours:** Mondays and Wednesdays 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.  
 and by appointment  
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## REQUIRED TEXTS

The following required texts are available at the University Bookstore:

- Gelbspan, Ross. *The Heat is On: The Climate Crisis, The Cover-Up, The Prescription*. Reading, Mass.: Perseus Books, 1998.
- Gibbs, Lois Marie. *Love Canal: The Story Continues*. Stony Creek, Conn.: New Society Publishers, 1998.
- Mann, Charles C. and Mark L. Plummer. *Noah's Choice: The Future of Endangered Species*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995.
- Ray, Dixy Lee with Lou Guzzo. *Environmental Overkill: Whatever Happened to Common Sense?* New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1994.

## ADDITIONAL REQUIRED READING

In addition to the above texts, numerous chapters and articles as noted in the course schedule will form the basis of various class discussions throughout the term. In an effort to conserve your textbook costs I am not requiring that you purchase these items. However you are still responsible for each of these readings. Copies of each item are on reserve at the campus library.

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

Environmental issues encompass perhaps the most challenging set of policy problems for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Our environment involves complex, often scientifically ambiguous relationships, specifically in terms of the cause-effect connections that are the underlying target of all policymaking attempts. These are highly contentious issues, with powerfully embedded personal values at stake. At times, environmental concerns clash directly with economic considerations, creating deep divisions in our body politic. Yet, at the same

time our environment is by definition a unifying force as well, displaying a remarkable tendency to bring divergent regions and political agendas together as one. This course explores the tensions between environmental conservation and economic development by looking at several key policy issues the United States now faces. We will uncover the fundamental obstacles to effective environmental policymaking regarding these issues – and outline policymaking strategies which may overcome these key obstacles.

As a general aside, let me also note that this course is essentially a contract between teacher and student. My job is to do my best to help you learn. Please let me know if anything in class hampers this. Students are encouraged to come to my office hours to ask questions or make suggestions. Your side of the agreement is to do your best to learn. Coming to class prepared -- doing the reading *before* class and taking notes on that reading. Attendance and participation in class are expected. Material discussed in class (and not necessarily in the readings) will appear on exams and other assignments. Participation will play a key role in determining final grades, especially border-line cases.

### **CURRENT EVENTS JOURNAL and REFLECTIVE JOURNAL:**

There is both an oral and written component to the current events journal. Twice during the term I will collect your journals for evaluation. Five article entries are due on each of these days with at least one page of analysis per entry. Thus, over the course of the semester we will each read AND analyze ten separate articles. Of course, grammar and writing style are also important. Also, note that once during the semester you will be expected to give a short (5 minutes) oral presentation on one of your journal entries. Please see the attached handout for additional information.

Reflective Journals are a weekly assignment (Mondays) of approximately 1-2 pages. See the attached handout for more detailed information.

### **GRADING POLICY:**

Grading is based upon the standard +/- system below:

A = 93 % and above	C = 73-76%
A- = 90-92%	C- = 70-72%
B+ = 87-89%	D+ = 67-69%
B = 83-86%	D = 63-66%
B- = 80-82%	D- = 60-62%
C+ = 77-79%	F = 59% and below

You are responsible for turning in assignments on time. Late assignments are docked one letter grade for each day after the due date. In other words an A quality journal which is one day late receives a B. Make-up tests are not given, except under approved, extenuating circumstances, i.e. illness, death in the family, religious holiday. In these cases the instructor must be informed *prior* to the exam.

### **GRADING DISTRIBUTION:**

Participation	20%
Reflective Journal	20%
Current Events Journal	15%
Policy Paper	20%

Final Exam

25%

**TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE****Dates****Topics and Reading Assignments****April 28<sup>th</sup>****Introduction****April 29<sup>th</sup>****The Nature of Environmental Issues**Carson, Rachel. *Silent Spring*

Introduction by Al Gore

Chpt.1: A Fable for Tomorrow

Chpt.2: The Obligation to Endure

Chpt.3: Elixirs of Death

O'Rourke, P.J. *All the Trouble in the World: The Lighter Side of Overpopulation, Famine, Ecological Disaster, Ethnic Hatred, Plague and Poverty*

Chpt.6 Saving the Earth: We're All Going to Die Anyway

**April 30<sup>th</sup>****Historical Framework: Origins and Values**Leopold, Aldo. *A Sand County Almanac: And Sketches Here and There*

Forward

The Land Ethic

Wilson, E.O. *Naturalist*.

Chpt.18: Biodiversity, Biophilia

Lovelock, J.E. *GAIA: A New Look at Life on Earth*

Introductory

Gaia and Man: The Problem of Pollution

Film: The Life of Rachel Carson

**May 3<sup>rd</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>****The Political Process: the Executive, Congress,  
Judiciary, Regulation and the EPA**Cohen, Richard E. *Washington at Work: Back Rooms and Clean Air*

Chpt.1: Its Tough to Get Things Done

Ray, *Environmental Overkill*

Part 4: Rules and More Rules

Part 5: Communication, Education and Politics

Gibbs, *Love Canal*

Prologue

Introduction

Chpt.1: The Problem at Love Canal

Cohen, Richard E. *Washington at Work: Back Rooms and Clean Air*

Chpt.7: Special Interests and Influence

Chpt.12: Epilogue: The Conflicts Resume

Gibbs, *Love Canal*

Chpt.2: The Swale Theory

Case Study: Woburn, Mass. Civil Action

Mann and Plummer, *Noah's Choice*

Chpt.1: Seventeen Beetles

Film: Meltdown at Three Mile Island

**Reflective Journal Due May 3<sup>rd</sup>**

**Current Events Journals Due May 7<sup>th</sup>**

**May 10<sup>th</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup>**

**Other Participants: Science and Business, Cost-Benefit Analysis, Environmental Interest Groups and Environmental Justice**

Gelbspan, *The Heat is On*

Introduction: Climate Change Is Here Now

Chpt.1: Of Termites and Computer Models

Chpt.2: The Battle for Control of Reality

Chpt.3: At Congressional Book Burning

Chpt.4: The Changing Climate of Business: Boon or Bankruptcy

Gibbs, *The Love Canal*

Chpt.3: The Killing Ground

Chpt.4: The Motel People

Chpt.5: Still Studying the Problem

Exercise/Guest Speaker: The Kentucky Bottle Bill

Werbach, Adam. *Act Now, Apologize Later*

Introduction

Section 3: The Many Faces of Environmentalists

Section 5: Who Put the Twinkies in My Canyon?

Bullard, Robert. *Dumping in Dixie* (excerpts)

Exercise: Environmental Justice

**Reflective Journal Due May 10<sup>th</sup>**

**Current Events Journals Due May 14<sup>th</sup>**

**Policy Paper Proposal Due May 14<sup>th</sup>**

**May 17<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>                      Questions of Stewardship: Private Property  
and/or Public Lands**

Hawken, Paul. *The Ecology of Commerce: A Declaration of Sustainability*

Chpt.1: A Teasing Irony

Chpt.7: Private Lives and Corporate Rights

Gore, Al. *Earth in the Balance: Ecology and the Human Spirit*

Introduction

Chpt.1 Ships in the Desert

Chpt.10 Eco-nomics: Truth or Consequences

Ray, *Environmental Overkill*

Part 3: This Land is Our Land

Class Exercise: Development or Suburban Sprawl?

Hardin, Garrett. "The Tragedy of the Commons," *Science*, Dec. 13, 1968.

Gelbspan, *The Heat is On*

Chpt.5 After Rio: The Swamp of Diplomacy

Chpt.6: Headlines from the Planet

Chpt.7: The Coming Permanent State of Emergency

Chpt.8: One Pathway to the Future

Mann and Plummer, *Noah's Choice*

Chpt.4: Uncooking the Frog

Chpt.6: The Awful Beast is Back

Chpt.8: Noah's Choice

Film: The Web of Life: Exploring Biodiversity

**Reflective Journal Due May 17<sup>th</sup>**

**Policy Papers Due May 21<sup>st</sup>**

**May 24<sup>th</sup>                      Conclusions and Final Review**

Carson, Rachel. *Silent Spring*.

Chpt 17: The Other Road

Gibbs, *Love Canal*

Afterward

Ray, *Environmental Overkill*

Part 6: Conclusion

**Reflective Journal Due May 24<sup>th</sup>**

**May 25<sup>th</sup>                      Final Exam**

\* Please note changes in this schedule are inevitable as we progress through the course. Any such changes will be announced in class.