

GVPT 273: Introduction to Environmental Politics

University of Maryland

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Course Description

Environmental politics is a relatively new area of academic study, having only come into its own during the 1960s. Despite this, the field is both diverse and complex. It borrows from other disciplines, such as political theory and scientific research, yet is distinct in its own right. The goals of this course are to introduce students to major discussions and tensions within the field and equip students with tools to critically assess and critique these topics.

To do this, we cover many diverse subjects throughout the semester. We start with some of the philosophical and theoretical ideas that influence environmental thought. Next, we talk about the environmental attitudes of citizens and examine the ways they collectively organize to advance environmental concerns. We then address environmental policy approaches and consider some challenges to environmental policy-making. We also shift our focus up to the global level and consider Environmental Politics and policy there. The last portion of the course considers International Environmental Law and the relationship between conflict and the environment. Most classes consist of lecture, discussion and/or a group activity.

Required Texts

There is no textbook for this course. All readings are available on ELMS.

Course Expectations

For this to be a great class, all of us need to do our share. I'll do my best to present Environmental Politics in clear and interesting ways. You're expected to put your best effort into this course and to take an active role in the learning process. Always be respectful of one another, even when disagreeing with someone. You are encouraged to disagree and to present counter arguments.

Course Requirements and Assignments

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|------------------------------|--------------------|
| ▪ Participation | 20% of final grade |
| ▪ Discussion Questions | 10% of final grade |
| ▪ Midterm I Exam | 20% of final grade |
| ▪ Midterm II Exam | 20% of final grade |
| ▪ Group Presentation & Paper | 30% of final grade |

Participation: Participation points are accrued during each class. It is worth 20 percent of your overall grade. By registering for this course, you are making a commitment to come prepared to every class. This includes active listening, taking notes, asking questions, and participating in other class activities.

All students are required to complete the assigned readings before each class. Be ready to summarize, analyze, evaluate, and debate the readings each day. The quality of our class depends on this. The format of course discussion will include short, in-class writing assignments, partner discussion, and full class discussion.

Each student is responsible for self-grading his/her participation. This should be completed immediately after each class, and you have until 11:59PM that day to complete it. I reserve the right to adjust your participation grade. A detailed description is below:

0:	absent from class
1:	didn't read the assignment and didn't make in-class contribution
2:	didn't read the assignment but makes in-class contribution OR read the assignments, but didn't contribute to the class discussion
3:	read the assignments and made one in-class contribution
4:	read the assignment and made more than one in-class contribution

We'll watch a couple movies throughout the course and will spend time in class discussing them. Pay close attention to these movies. They are meant to be provocative (at times) and hopefully to introduce us to new ideas. Take detailed notes as we watch the movies and look for ways that they connect to Environmental Politics.

Please note that self-grading criteria will differ when we view a movie, have group presentations, have guest speakers, and attend the library session. I will provide additional details for those situations.

Discussion Questions on ELMS: Discussion questions are due each day that we have assigned readings and account for 10 percent of your overall grade. Students will submit one discussion question per reading on ELMS for each day there are assigned readings. The posts are due before class. The questions should be well thought out in order to encourage discussion and debate in class. In fact, we'll use these questions to steer our discussions.

Midterm I Exam: Midterm I is worth 20 percent of your overall grade. It includes material from lectures, discussions, and the course readings. Exams are multiple choice, fill in the blank, True/False, short answer, and/or essay answers. Class time will be devoted to review and preparation for the exam, and I will also make study guides available.

Midterm II Exam: Midterm II is worth 20 percent of your overall grade. Midterm II also includes material from lectures, discussions, and the course readings. It will also include multiple choice, fill in the blank, True/False, short answer, and/or essay answers. The format of Midterm II may differ from the first exam. Class time will be devoted to review and preparation for the exam, and I will also make study guides available. This exam is NOT cumulative.

Group Presentation and Paper: Group presentations and group paper are worth 30 percent of your overall grade. Over the course of the semester, you'll work in a small groups to collaborate on a project and a paper. I will provide additional details at a later date. A mandatory library session is scheduled for students.

Course Policies

Laptops and tablets are allowed for note-taking only. If they become a distraction, you will forfeit your right to use them in class. Cell phones and headphones are not permitted during class. They detract from your learning and also distract those around you. Students using laptops or tablets for any other purpose forfeit all participation credit for that day.

Exams must be completed during the designated time. Extensions and make-ups will only be granted under extreme circumstances and at the discretion of the instructor. Failure to turn in assignments on time will result in grade reductions of one full letter grade per day.

For an absence to be excused, you must email me prior to missing class. You are also required to provide proper documentation of your medical illness to have that absence excused. If you need to miss any class due to religious observances, it is your responsibility to notify me via email immediately.

A complete overview of University Course-Related Policies can be found [here](#). Student are expected to familiarize themselves with these policies. Any suspected violation will be reported to the University.

Every effort will be made to accommodate students that are registered with [the Disability Support Service \(DSS\) Office](#). In order for accommodations to be made, though, students must submit a current University of Maryland [DSS Accommodation Form](#). Please submit the Accommodation Form to me (via email) by the end of the second week of class.

Course Grades

A+: 98-100	B+: 88 to <90	C+: 78 to <80	D+: 68 to <70
A: 94 to <98	B: 84 to <88	C: 74 to <78	D: 64 to <67
A-: 90 to <94	B-: 80 to <84	C-: 70 to <74	D-: 60 to <64
			F: below 60

Course Overview

Week 1	Course Overview and Introductions Environmental Philosophy
Week 2	Guest Speakers Environmental Theories
Week 3	Environmental Rights as Human Rights Public Opinion
Week 4	Citizen Action and Environmental Pressure Groups Green Political Parties
Week 5	Green Politics and Party Politics Environmental Policy Problems
Week 6	The Fukushima Daiichi Meltdown Environmental Policy Paradigms
Week 7	Midterm I Exam Review Midterm I Exam
Week 8	Environmental Policy Instruments Global Environmental Politics I
Week 9	Global Environmental Politics II Library Session
Week 10	Presentation Preparation Presentation Preparation
Week 11	Movie – Wasteland Movie – Wasteland
Week 12	Group Presentations Group Presentations
Week 13	Globalization and Trade No Class –Thanksgiving Break
Week 14	International Environmental Law Conflict and the Environment
Week 15	Paper Workshop Midterm II Review
Week 16	Midterm II Exam in class Group Paper Due

Course Schedule and Readings

Note: Course Schedule and Readings are subject to change. Students will be notified of changes as soon as they happen.

Week 1

Course Overview and Introductions

Environmental Philosophy

- Peter Singer. 1979. "Equality for Animals?" from *Practical Ethics*
- Arne Naess. 1973. "The Shallow and the Deep, Long-Range Ecology Movement" *Inquiry*

Week 2

Guest Speakers

Environmental Theories

- Bjorn Lomborg. Aug 2, 2001. "The Truth about the Environment" *The Economist*.
- Tom Burke. 2001. "Ten Pinches of Salt: A Reply to Bjorn Lomborg"

Week 3

Environmental Rights as Human Rights

- Ignacio J. Alvarez. 2003. "The Right to Water as a Human Right" *Linking Human Rights and the Environment*
- Alan Boyle. 2012. "Human Rights and the Environment: Where Next?" *The European Journal of International Law* 23(3)

Public Opinion

- David Roberts. Apr 21, 2016. "8 Maps that Reveal Americans' Incoherent Opinions on Climate Change" *Vox*
- Matthew Feinberg and Robb Willer. 2012. "The Moral Roots of Environmental Attitudes" *Psychological Science*. 21(1): 56-62

Week 4

Citizen Action and Environmental Pressure Groups

- Dana R. Fisher. 2015. "Studying Large-Scale Protest: Understanding Mobilization and Participation at the People's Climate March"
- Matt McGrath. Dec 11, 2014. "Greenpeace sorry for Nazca lines stunt in Peru" *BBC*

Green Political Parties

- Thomas Poguntke. 2002. "Green Parties in National Governments: From Protest to Acquiescence?" *Environmental Policy* 11(1): 133-145

Week 5

Green Politics and Party Politics

- Neil Carter. 2013. "Greening the Mainstream: Party Politics and the Environment" *Environmental Politics* 22(1): 73-94
- "Austria Far Right Thwarted, Van der Bellen Elected President." May 23, 2016. *BBC News*.
- Kate Connolly and Philip Olterman. May 23, 2016. "Austria Elected Green Candidate as President in Narrow Defeat for Far Right" *The Guardian*

Environmental Policy Problems

- Kofi Annan. 2002. "Towards a Sustainable Future" *Environment: Science and Policy for Sustainable Development* 44(7): 10-15
- Anna Maria Barry-Jester. Jan 26, 2016. "What Went Wrong In Flint" *FiveThirtyEight*

Week 6

The Fukushima Daiichi Meltdown

- No readings assigned

Environmental Policy Paradigms

- Oluf Langhelle. 2000. "Why ecological modernization and sustainable development should not be conflated." *Journal of Environmental Policy and Planning* 2(4): 303-322

Week 7

Midterm Review

Midterm I

Week 8

Environmental Policy Instruments

- "China wants to clear the air with a market-based approach to pollution" Sep 24, 2015. *The Economist*
- Henry Fountain. "Rethinking the Airplane, for Climate's Sake" Jan 11, 2016. *New York Times*
- Christie Aschwanden. Jan 2, 2015. "Every Time You Fly, You Trash the Planet –And There's No Easy Fix" *FiveThirtyEight*

Global Environmental Politics I

- Miranda A. Schruers. 2003. "Divergent Paths: Environmental Policy in Germany, the United States, and Japan." *Environment: Science and Policy for Sustainable Development* 45(8): 8-17
- Stephen M. Walt. 1998. "International Relations: One World, Many Theories" *Foreign Policy* 110: 29-46

Week 9

Global Environmental Politics II

- Suzanne Goldenberg. "The six key road blocks at the UN climate talks in Paris" Dec 10, 2015. *The Guardian*
- Matt McGrath. Jun 30 2016. "Healing detected in Antarctic Ozone Hole" *BBC News*

Library Session with Judy Markowitz

Week 10

Presentation Preparation in-class

Week 11

Movie –Waste Land

Week 12

Group Presentations

Week 13

Globalization and Trade

- Ian F. Fergusson. 2007. "The World Trade Organization: Background and Issues" *CRS Report for Congress*
- Eric Neumayer. 2004. "The WTO and the Environment: Its Past Record is Better than Critics Believe, but the Future Outlook is Bleak" in *Global Environmental Politics* 4(3): 1-8
- Clare Leschin-Hoar. Dec 14, 2015. "Fish Stocks are Struggling to Rebound. Why Climate Change is On The Hook" *NPR*

No Class –Thanksgiving Break

Week 14

International Environmental Law

- Daniel Bodansky. 1999. "The Legitimacy of International Governance: A Coming Challenge for International Environmental Law?" *The American Journal of International Law*

Conflict and the Environment

- Findings from the Selected Federal Reports: The National Security Implications of A Changing Climate *The White House Statements & Releases*
- Craig Welch. 2015. "Climate Change Helped Spark Syrian War by Craig Welch" in *National Geographic*
- Jan Selby and Mike Hulme. Nov 29, 2015. "Is Climate Change Really to Blame for Syria's Civil War?" *The Guardian*

Week 15

Paper Workshop

Midterm II Review

Week 16

Midterm II in class

Group Paper Due