Course Themes

This course is an introduction to U.S. environmental policy with a focus on natural resources such as forests and wildlife. The course challenges students to think critically about natural resource policy and investigates the policy-making process, concepts of property, and science, economics, and justice in policy-making. We begin with the idea that institutions and policies are not a fixed inheritance but are instead choices that are constantly being revised. Students will become familiar with the major laws, public agencies, and stakeholders that have shaped resource policy in the U.S. In order to understand current natural resource conflicts and trends, we will trace transformations in resource governance through the history of the US and use this framework to delve into specific cases, assessing ecological, social, and economic outcomes. We will explore tools in public policy such as regulation, incentives, and ecolabelling which are increasingly interwoven in the multilayered environmental policy system of the 21st century. The goal of the course is to prepare students to engage in the policy-making process by providing a foundational knowledge of US natural resources politics and policy.

Critical Questions

By the end of this course you should be able to answer these fundamental questions:

1) What are the major federal laws and agencies that shape natural resources policy?
2) Who owns, and who controls, natural resources on public and private lands?
3) What is the role of science and economics in natural resource policy and politics?
4) What are the implications of natural resource policy and law for justice, accountability, and democracy?

Participatory Learning

Active participation facilitates learning. Specifically, students will be expected to:

- Read the assigned texts before each class session. The reading will range from 20-70 pages per class. Students are required to do this reading, and it will lay the basis for much of the class dialogue and learning.
- Participate fully in class discussions. The classes will combine lecture and discussion. Engagement with the readings and topics is critical to the learning experience.
- Complete three short assignments during the semester. These learning exercises are focused on applications in natural resources policy. Writing and editing are critical tasks for researchers, policymakers, and advocates. Some assignments will include a graded first and revised second
draft to focus on your writing and editing skills. Late assignments will be counted down one grade (i.e., from A to AB to B) for every day they are late.

- Conduct substantive policy research on a natural resource policy topic. This research project involves a final paper, short in-class presentation, and policy letter submitted to an external audience. Mid-semester, students will submit an outline for a proposed project and a bibliography of sources for the project. Students will need to interview an expert, attend a public meeting if possible, and submit a comment letter to a relevant legislator, resource agency, or other external audience. Students will meet with Prof. Rissman at least once during the semester to discuss their plans for the term project. Students who need additional help to improve their writing are encouraged to consult with the UW Writing Center on campus: http://writing.wisc.edu.
- Present your project research to the class in a short oral presentation.
- Take a midterm and final exam.

**Evaluation**

The course grade will be based on the following activities:

- 20% Class participation
- 15% Assignments
- 15% Midterm
- 30% Policy Project (outline, paper, policy letter, presentation)
- 20% Final Exam

Here is how percentages translate into letter grades. Grades are not curved, although I do try to maintain equity from year to year.

- A: 94-100%
- AB: 89-94%
- B: 84-89%
- BC: 79-84%
- C: 72-79%
- D: 65-72%
- F: under 65%

**Required Texts**


*Available at the UW Bookstore, one copy on reserve at Steenbock Library.*

Additional readings are on Learn@UW. Please bring these readings to class to aid in our discussions (printed or on a laptop).

**Academic Honesty**

In fairness to students who put in an honest effort, cheaters will be treated very strictly. Any evidence of cheating will result in a score of zero on the assignment. Incidences of cheating or plagiarism will be reported to the campus, which may administer additional punishment. Plagiarism includes appropriation of whole passages with or without credit, appropriation of words and phrases without credit, appropriation
of both main and supporting ideas without credit, and paraphrasing without credit. Plagiarism also includes submitting a paper written by someone else. Ethical research requires that you properly document the sources you use. Even when you do not quote directly from another work, if reading that source contributed to the ideas presented in your paper, you must give the authors proper credit. If you are unsure of how to properly cite sources, ask Prof. Rissman for guidance, or visit the Writing Center webpage. http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QuotingSources.html

For more information on academic misconduct, please visit: http://students.wisc.edu/saja/misconduct/academic_misconduct.html
Schedule of Topics and Readings

Unit 1: Course Themes

1. January 21. Introduction to Natural Resources and Environmental Policy

   Rosenbaum Chapters 1 and 2

   Rosenbaum Chapter 3


5. February 4. Environmental Justice and Public Participation
   Rosenbaum Chapter 4

   Rosenbaum Chapter 5

7. February 11. Property and the Commons
   Hardin, Garrett. 1968. The tragedy of the commons. Science. Pages 1243-1248


   Other Readings TBA.

**Unit 2: Transformations in US Natural Resources Policy, Pre-Civil War to Present**

9. February 18. Overview; The Public Estate and Indian Land Dispossession


10. February 20. Zach Peery, Applying science to high-conflict public land management: spotted owl case study in the Sierra Nevada


   Dana & Fairfax. 1980. Chapter 1-6 Introductions (23 pages).


12. February 27. Library Day.


   Price, Jennifer. 2000. When women were women, men were men, and birds were hats. in Flight maps: adventures with nature in modern America. Pages 55-73.


15. March 11. Guest Lecture

   Readings TBA


[March 15-23 Spring Break]

   Please watch this 18 minute video on Professor Susan Yackee’s research public participation in rule-making: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZrpOLlwpXw8&feature=youtu.be


   Chapter 9 in Rosenbaum.


18. March 27. Endangered Species Act


19. April 1. Regulatory Model: Clean Air

Chapter 6 in Rosenbaum

20. April 3. Regulatory Model: Clean Water


21. April 8. Toxic and Hazardous Substances

Chapter 7 in Rosenbaum


22. April 10. Energy and Bioenergy

Chapter 8 in Rosenbaum

23. April 15. Climate Change Policy and Politics

Chapter 10 in Rosenbaum


25. April 22. State Governments and Decentralized Governance

Rabe, Barry G. Racing to the top, the bottom, or the middle of the pack? The evolving state government role in environmental protection. Chapter 2 in Environmental Policy: New Directions for the 21st Century. Pages 30-53.
26. April 24. Nonprofit and Market-Based Approaches


27. April 29. Policy Research Presentations
30. May 8. Review, **Final Papers Due**

Final Exam May 14, 2014 5:05-7:05pm