

GVPT 273: Introduction to Environmental Politics

Instructor:

email:

Office:

Office Hours: By appointment

Course Description

Environmental politics is a relatively new area of 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 major topics.

To do this, we cover multiple topics over the course of three weeks. Week 1 topics include an introduction to environmental politics, green political thought, and citizen movements and actions. Week 2 addresses green political parties and politics and introduces environmental policy. The themes of Week 3 are federal environmental policy, globalization's impact on the environment, and the relationship between the environment and conflict. Throughout the course, we critically engage with work from social scientists, environmentalists, journalists, and scientists.

Classes on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays consist of lecture, discussion and group activity, and a movie viewing. Each Thursday, there is an exam on the week's material. We also discuss the movie(s) of the week.

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, but we will never engage in personal attacks.

Course Requirements and Assignments

- Participation 30% of final grade
- Student Posts on ELMS 10% of final grade
- Exam 1 20% of final grade
- Exam 2 20% of final grade
- Exam 3 20% of final grade

Participation (30% of Final Grade): By registering for this course, you are making a commitment to come prepared to every class.

This includes active listening, taking notes, and asking questions during lectures.

All students are required to complete the assigned readings before each class. For example, the readings listed under “July 8: Environmental Philosophy and Theory” are to be completed prior to class on July 8. 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.

We’ll watch four different movies throughout the course and 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.

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.

Student Posts on ELMS (10% of Final Grade): Students will submit one question or comment per reading on ELMS for each day there are assigned readings. The posts are due before class. The question or comment should be well thought out in order to encourage discussion and debate in class. For example, you will post 5 questions or comments for July 8 readings. I reserve the right to issue reading pop quizzes in addition to the Student Posts.

Weekly Exams (Each Exam is 20% of the Final Grade): There are three exams that students are required to complete individually. Exam 1 is July 11, Exam 2 is July 18, and Exam 3 is July 25. You will take each exam during class and each will require one full class period to complete. They consist of multiple choice, True/False, short response, and/or essay questions. Exams include material from lectures, discussion, and the course readings. Exams are not cumulative; rather, each covers about one week of course material. Class time will be devoted to exam review and preparation, and I will also make study guides available.

Course Policies

Attendance. You are expected to come prepared for each session, having read *all required readings* watched the *videos* listed under that date in the schedule below, and ready to engage in discussion. You do

not need to alert me to the fact that you will be absent or bring me any official excuse letter. However, missing class means missing information. Many of these readings are demanding and may need clarification in class. Additionally, the lectures contain important supplemental information not found in the readings and slides, and you are responsible for this information in exams. If you cannot attend the lecture synchronously, I expect you to reach out to a fellow student to obtain lecture notes.

Missed exams. Missed exams in cases of illness or personal emergency can be accommodated only with proper documentation. Exams missed due to a university sponsored event or religious holiday may also be accommodated, provided that the student informs me of the conflict at least 3 days in advance. I reserve the right to accommodate a missed exam with a rebalancing of the remaining exams rather than a retake, should circumstances make this optimal.

Academic integrity. Cheating and plagiarism are unacceptable. If you are unsure as to what constitutes plagiarism, please ask me. When in doubt, always cite the source you have consulted. The university has a detailed code of academic integrity, which will apply to this course. You should familiarize yourself with this code, which is available at <https://policies.umd.edu/academic-affairs/university-of-maryland-code-of-academic-integrity>

Accommodation of disabilities. If you requires accommodations, please contact the Accessibility and Disability Services (ADS) office (<https://ads.umd.edu/>) to obtain a letter of accommodation *in advance*. I will make every effort to work with you to meet any special needs, provided that you have given me the proper ADS documentation.

Additional information. Please visit <https://ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies.html> for the Office of Undergraduate Studies' full list of campus-wide policies and follow up with me if you have questions.

Course Grades

A+: 98-100	B+: 88-89.9	C+: 78-79.9	D+: 68-69.9
A: 94-97.9	B: 84-87.9	C: 74-77.9	D: 64-66.9
A-: 90-93.9	B-: 80-83.9	C-: 70-73.9	D-: 60-63.9
			F: below 60

Course Outline

Week 1	
July 7	Introductions and Course Overview Start Waste Land movie
July 8	Environmental Philosophy and Theory Continue Waste Land movie
July 9	Public Opinion, Citizen Action, and Environmental Pressure Groups Complete Waste Land movie
July 10	Discuss Waste Land movie
July 11	Exam 1
Week 2	
July 14	Green Political Parties and Party Politics Begin Inside Japan's Nuclear Meltdown
July 15	Environmental Policy Problems and Paradigms Complete Inside Japan's Nuclear Meltdown and start Business of Disaster
July 16	Environmental Policy Instruments Finish Business of Disaster
July 17	Discuss Inside Japan's Nuclear Meltdown and Business of Disaster
July 18	Exam 2
Week 3	
July 21	Global Environmental Politics and Climate Change
July 22	Globalization, Trade, and International Environmental Law
July 23	Conflict and the Environment
July 24	
July 25	Exam 3

Detailed 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

July 7: Introductions and Course Overview

- No required reading

July 8: Environmental Philosophy and Theory

- Peter Singer. 1979. "Equality for Animals?" from *Practical Ethics*
- Arne Naess. 1973. "The Shallow and the Deep, Long-Range Ecology Movement" *Inquiry*
- Garrett Hardin. 1968. "The Tragedy of the Commons" *Science* 162: 1243-1248
- Bjorn Lomborg. Aug 2, 2001. "The Truth about the Environment" *The Economist*.
- Tom Burke. 2001. "Ten Pinches of Salt: A Reply to Bjorn Lomborg"

July 9: Public Opinion, Citizen Action, and Environmental Pressure Groups

- "For Earth Day, Here's How Americans view Environmental Issues" Apr 22, 2016. *Pew Research Center*
- David Roberts. Apr 21, 2016. "8 Maps that Reveal Americans' Incoherent Opinions on Climate Change"
- Matthew Feinberg and Robb Willer. 2012. "The Moral Roots of Environmental Attitudes" *Psychological Science*. 21(1): 56-62
- Dana R. Fisher. 2015. "Studying Large-Scale Protest: Understanding Mobilization and Participation at the People's Climate March"
- Joel Achenbach. Jun 30, 2016. "107 Nobel Laureates Sign Letter Blasting Greenpeace over GMOs" *The Washington Post*

July 10: Movie Discussion

- Discuss Week 1 Movie

July 11: Exam 1

- Exam 1 in class

Week 2

July 14: Green Political Parties and Party Politics

- Neil Carter. 2013. "Greening the Mainstream: Party Politics and the Environment" *Environmental Politics* 22(1): 73-94
- Thomas Poguntke. 2002. "Green Parties in National Governments: From Protest to Acquiescence?" *Environmental Policy* 11(1): 133-145
- "Austria Far Right Thwarted, Van der Bellen Elected President." May 23, 2016. *BBC News*.
- Kate Connolly and Philip Oltermann. May 23, 2016. "Austria Elected Green Candidate as President in Narrow Defeat for Far Right" *The Guardian*

July 15: Environmental Policy Problems and Paradigms

- Kofi Annan. 2002. "Towards a Sustainable Future" *Environment: Science and Policy for Sustainable Development* 44(7): 10-15
- Oluf Langhelle. 2000. "Why ecological modernization and sustainable development should not be conflated." *Journal of Environmental Policy and Planning* 2(4): 303-322
- Anna Maria Barry-Jester. Jan 26, 2016. "What Went Wrong In Flint" *FiveThirtyEight*

One of the following:

- *Energy and Air Pollution* Special Report by the International Energy Agency. Chapter 4 (United States) OR
- *Energy and Air Pollution* Special Report by the International Energy Agency. Executive Summary

July 16: Environmental Policy Instruments

- Christopher Rootes. 2013. "From local conflict to national issue: when and how environmental campaigns succeed in transcending the local" *Environmental Politics* 22(1):95-114
- 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
- "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*

July 17: Movie Discussion

- Discuss Week 2 Movies

July 18: Exam 2

- Exam 2 in class

Week 3

July 21: Global Environmental Politics and Climate Change

- Stephen M. Walt. 1998. "International Relations: One World, Many Theories" *Foreign Policy* 110: 29-46
- 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*

July 22: Globalization, Trade, and International Environmental Law

- 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
- Chelsea Harvey. Jan 19, 2016. "Why we've been hugely underestimating the overfishing of the oceans" *Washington Post*
- "The Global Risks Report." 2016. *World Economic Forum*.

July 23: Conflict and the Environment

- 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*
- Findings from the Selected Federal Reports: The National Security Implications of A Changing Climate *The White House Statements & Releases*

July 24: TBD

- Readings TBD

July 25: Exam 3

- Exam 3 in class