

Class: PA 5355 Environmental Policy
Semester: Fall 2020
Professor: Dr. Dianne Rahm
Time: Thursday 3:30 - 6:20
Place: Zoom
Office: Zoom
Office Phone: 512-245-1565
Office Fax: 512-245-7815
Email: dr37@txstate.edu
Office Hours: By appointment via zoom

Course Objectives:

This course will introduce students to the public policy process and the details of U.S. environmental policy and administration. Problems and policies dealing with air, water, solid waste, hazardous waste, energy, natural resources, business regulation, sustainability, and global environmental governance will be discussed. The relationship between science and politics, especially dealing with international environmental issues, will be addressed. A primary goal of the class is to provide students with factual knowledge about environmental policy including an awareness of the terminology specific to environmental policy, classifications used within the field, methods of environmental analysis and decision making, and overall trends in environmental quality both in the United States and internationally. Other goals of this class include helping students to analyze and critically evaluate the controversies in environmental policy involving ideas, arguments, and points of view. Many of these controversies stem from fundamental differences in values, disparate views of risk and uncertainty, as well as disagreements regarding how best to implement and obtain policy objectives. Finally, the class material will provide students with the substance of environmental law and regulation, including specific details of how environmental regulations are implemented.

Required Readings:

Hawken, Paul editor *Drawdown: The Most Comprehensive Plan Ever Proposed to Reverse Global Warming*. 2017, Penguin Books. ISBN 9780143130444 (pbk) ISBN 97815224704650 (ebook)

Rahm, Dianne *U.S. Environmental Policy: Domestic and Global Perspectives*. West Academic Publishing, 2019. (You do not have to purchase this unless you want a printed copy – a PDF will be available on the TRACS site).

Rhodes, Richard, *Energy: A Human History*. Simon & Schuster, 2018. ISBN 9781501105357 (hbk) ISBN 99781501105371 (ebook)

Newspapers: Available for free online are the New York Times, Reuters, etc.

Requirements:

This class is structured as a graduate seminar. Attendance at each session is assumed. Students are required to read all assigned reading *before* each class and be ready to discuss the readings in class. We will meet remotely via Zoom.

Students are required to write the 3 essays listed below. Essays should be about 5 pages in length, typed double spaced, and should answer the question by drawing on the material discussed in the assigned reading. Use citations when referring to material read for class (page numbers only) or examined elsewhere (full citation). Essays are due as noted on the schedule.

Students are required to present 3 current event news articles in class over the course of the semester. It is up to each student to decide when to present a current event article but students should plan to stagger their presentations over the months of the semester. Only one article should be presented at a time. Each article should address a current event being reported in the press that links to an issue discussed in class. Students will turn in a copy of the article or link to it along with a 1 page summary that *ties the article topic to class material*. Students may select articles in one main area of interest or they may vary their selections to include multiple topics.

Grading:

Essays – 90% (30 points each)

News Articles – 10% (3.3 points each)

Plagiarism:

The student handbook states: "Violation of the Honor Code includes, but is not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource material." The Department of Political Science's policy on plagiarism is as follows: "A student who submits plagiarized work earns a failing grade for that work. This act of academic dishonesty may also warrant a failing grade in the course. All students should be familiar with the policies described in the Texas State Student Handbook."

In Class Use of Electronic Devices:

Attention in class is important for learning; therefore, students should not use electronic devices for any purpose not directly related to material being covered in class. Emailing, surfing the web, texting, instant messaging, use of a social networking site or any other form of electronic communication is strictly prohibited during class time.

Students with Special Needs:

Students with special needs should identify themselves within the first several weeks of the semester and provide the necessary documentation from the Office of Disability Services so that accommodation may be made.

Department of Political Science Information:

* “Learning Outcomes: The Department of Political Science has adopted student learning outcomes for general education courses (POSI 2310 and POSI 2320) and for all undergraduate and graduate degree programs offered in the Department of Political Science. These outcomes are available for your review at <http://www.polisci.txstate.edu> On the side panel under Resources click “Learning Outcomes.”

Department of Political Science Information: Undergraduate Academic Center (UAC) Rm. 355; Telephone number: (512) 245-2143; Fax number: (512) 245-7815; Website: <http://www.polisci.txstate.edu>

Classroom Computer Lab: Undergraduate Academic Center (UAC) 342 will be open M-F 8-5 with socially distanced computers cleaned after each use. Students without personal equipment may use this lab to Zoom.

Liberal Arts Computer Lab: Undergraduate Academic Center (UAC) 440

Campus Health, Wellness, and Safety:

Reminder on [10 Guiding Principles for Health, Safety, and Wellness](#) at Texas State, including requirement to wear a [cloth face covering](#) and perform a [self-assessment](#) each day before coming to campus.

Importance of the [Bobcat Pledge](#), including the shared responsibility to practice healthy behaviors and follow the health and safety guidelines, which shows respect for others and helps prevent the spread of COVID-19 on campus and in the surrounding community. Link to the [Student Roadmap](#) for more information on students’ return to campus.

Statement on Civility and Compliance in the Classroom:

Civility in the classroom is very important for the educational process and it is everyone’s responsibility. If you have questions about appropriate behavior in a particular class, please address them with your instructor first. Disciplinary procedures may be implemented for refusing to follow an instructor’s directive, refusing to leave the classroom, not following the university’s requirement to wear a cloth face covering, not complying with social distancing or sneeze and cough etiquette, and refusing to implement other health and safety measures as required by the university. Additionally, the instructor, in consultation with the department chair/school director, may refer the student to the Office of the Dean of Students for further disciplinary review. Such reviews may result in consequences ranging from warnings to sanctions from the university. For more information regarding conduct in the classroom, please review the following policies at [AA/PPS 02.03.02](#), Section 03: Courteous and Civil Learning Environment, and [Code of Student Conduct](#), number II, Responsibilities of Students, Section 02.02: Conduct Prohibited.

Schedule:

August 27: Class introduction.

September 3: Actors and Policymaking/Population and Carrying Capacity (Rahm chapters 1-3)

September 10: Air, Water, Solid Waste, and Hazardous Substances Policies (Rahm chapters 4-7)

September 17: Land, Natural Resources, Wildlife, and the Oceans (Rahm chapters 8-9)

September 24: Energy (Rahm chapters 10-12)

October 1: Ozone Layer and Climate Change (Rahm chapters 13-14)

October 8: Methodology, Energy, Food, Women and Girls, Buildings and Cities. (Hawken, read these sections).

Essay 1 due

October 15: Land Use, transport, Materials, Coming Attractions (Hawken, read these sections).

October 22: Power (Rhodes, chapters 1-5).

Essay 2 due

October 29: Power and Light (Rhodes, chapters 6-9)

November 5: Light (Rhodes chapters 10-14)

November 12: New Fires (Rhodes chapters 15-17)

November 19: New Fires (Rhodes 18-20)

November 26: No Class, Thanksgiving!

December 3: Wrap up

Essay 3 due

Essays

Essay # 1: Rahm discusses the implementation of U.S. environmental policy within the context of international environmental policy. She points out that environmental policy has been implemented using a variety of policy actors and mechanisms. Discuss the key actors and policy mechanisms used both domestically and internationally. What are the strengths and weaknesses of these actors and approaches? Highlight your discussion by drawing from specific policy issues.

Essay #2: Hawken's Project Drawdown proposes solutions to climate change. Some of these solutions require action by governments or large organizations, but not all. What are the actions that individuals or small groups can take to be part of the solution?

Essay #3: Rhodes illustrates the transformation of the world as wood gave way to coal, coal gave way to oil, and oil is now making room for natural gas, renewable energy and nuclear power. Describe the key events in these transformations. How can this history of transformations inform us regarding the next vitally needed energy transformation to combat climate change?