

Introduction to Environmental Planning and Policy

UAP 3354 / CRN: 95089

Logistics

Class meets Monday and Wednesday 2:30-3:45 PM in Rand 211
Final Exam is scheduled for Monday Dec 11 from 10:05 – 12:05PM

Professor: Bruce Goldstein (brugo@vt.edu)
Office location: 103 Architecture Annex
Office Hours:.... TBA and by appointment

Course Description

This course will expose you to conceptual tools for understanding the two principal avenues through which the natural and built environment are managed -- the rule-making procedures of **environmental policy** and the future-imagining of **environmental planning**. The course includes accounts of hotly contested environmental issues, which will give you a feel for the key policy actors, methods, processes, and decision criteria of environmental decision-making, as well as the way that people with conflicting social interests and core values contend for influence and exert power in the realm of environmental policy. This course is not going to teach you specific techniques for practicing as an environmental policy analyst or environmental planner or give you detailed and specific knowledge of areas of particular environmental knowledge such as air and water pollution or wildlife management. Rather, the course objective is to lay the conceptual groundwork to acquire and use this knowledge and experience effectively, whether you become an environmental professional or participate in environmental affairs as an informed and engaged citizen.

The course is organized into two units:

Unit one introduces some of the core concepts of environmental policymaking. We begin by examining the diversity of environmental values in the U.S., and then explore how these values inform very different perceptions of problems and their solutions. We then examine how experts and citizens perceive risk and interpret scientific expertise in order to protect themselves and their environment.

Unit two focuses on environmental planning. We survey some technical tools and collaborative techniques that are essential to environmental planning, and then consider if “telling tales” is a useful way of understanding environmental planning. Then we turn our attention to three storylines that originated within the environmental planning and policymaking community and have gripped the imagination of many people who are concerned about the environment: smart growth, watershed and ecosystem management, and the all-inclusive idea of environmental sustainability.

Readings

The principal texts of the course, which may be purchased online or at the University bookstore as soon as they are in, are:

- Randolph, John. 2004. Environmental Land Use Planning and Management, Island Press, Washington, D.C.
- Walter A. Rosenbaum (2006) Environmental Politics & Policy, 7th edition, CQ Press.

The remainder of the readings for the class will either be in the reader or be made available on the blackboard website (www.learn.vt.edu).

Requirements and Grading

Our two weekly sessions will delve into the primary topic for the week, covering theoretical and analytical issues as well as the substantive questions raised in the reading material. You are expected to attend all class-room sessions, arrive on time and stay the course of the class. You are also expected to read the materials prescribed for each class *before* you come to the lecture. Moreover, you are expected to check the blackboard Web pages (www.learn.vt.edu) the day before each class for any announcements from the instructor.

Grades will be determined by student performance on the following:

- **In-class participation: (5% of grade)**
 - This portion of the grade will be determined by considering how regularly students participate in class discussion. **Students are encouraged to ask questions and offer comments during class.**
- **Printout of the Reader (2% of grade)**
 - Please bring in a printed copy of the class Reader to the second class on the second week of classes to receive these points.
- **Pop Quizzes (3 points each. Unknown percentage of grade – to be subtracted proportionally from mid-term and final)**
 - When the instructor perceives the need, he will administer pop quizzes during class. No excuses will be accepted for missing these quizzes, except for documented medical emergencies. Students must provide hardcopy documentation of medical emergencies to the professor within 1 week of the quiz by intercampus mail.
- **Weekly Questions: (11% of grade - 1 point each)**
 - You are required to submit two typed, printed questions that you had about the day's readings at the end of Wednesday's class. Hand-written questions are not acceptable. Questions should be short enough to be asked in class. Questions that reflect little awareness of the content or themes of the class will not receive credit.

Your lowest score will be dropped. Submitting someone else's questions will be considered a violation of the VT honor code (see <http://www.honorsystem.vt.edu/index.html>).

- **Think pieces: (25% of grade – 5 points each)**
 - Think pieces are 1-2 page (typed, 1.5 spaced, 1 inch margins, 12 pt. type) assignments that will allow you to creatively work with the concepts presented in the class lectures and in the readings. There will be 6 think pieces that will be introduced in class on Wednesday and posted on the blackboard website.
Thinkpieces will only be accepted if submitted on the blackboard dropbox at least 15 minutes before the beginning of the following Monday class. Your lowest score will be dropped (only 5 count towards final grade). Think pieces will only draw on material from the prior week. No make-up's allowed. Students must provide hardcopy documentation of medical emergencies to the professor within 1 week of due date of the Thinkpiece by intercampus mail.
- **Mid-term Exam: (27% of grade)**
- **Final Exam: (30% of grade)**
 - The format of the mid-term and final exams will be multiple choice, brief questions, and short essays with a series of analytical problems or circumstances requiring commentary. The intent is to measure your grasp of the concepts and issues discussed over the semester. The Final is integrative, although it will focus principally on the material in the second half of the class.

A Few Basic Rules of Engagement

I have tried to organize this course to enable you to learn about politics and society from me, from your course texts, from your classmates and from the rest of your life. You will greatly enhance your potential to learn if you follow these rules of engagement.

- **READ THE SYLLABUS**---I spent a lot of time preparing these pages to guide your learning experiences in this course. I suggest that you read this EARLY IN THE SEMESTER. Then you won't have any surprises later.
- **ASK QUESTIONS**---If you don't understand an assignment, a reading, or something that's said in class---ask me!
- **CIVILITY:** Our discussions in this course may sometimes arouse strong feelings. While we may not always *agree* with each other, it is important that we always *show respect* for each other. I promise that your grade for this course will *not* be based on the extent to which you agree with me or with your classmates on any particular issue. I do reserve the right to facilitate or end discussion in the interests of time or civility.
- **COMPLETING ASSIGNMENTS:** If you have not submitted an assignment by the beginning of class, you will lose all credit for the assignment.
- **GETTING THE GRADE YOU WANT:** You will do well in this course if you keep up with the readings and assignments, follow the guidelines in preparing written assignments, attend class regularly, speak up occasionally, and contribute in a positive way to the work of your team. You will do poorly in this course if you slack off on the

readings and assignments, ignore the guidelines in preparing written assignments, miss a lot of class meetings, and never speak up. Email queries about grading issues are discouraged – please come to office hours if you have any questions.

- **COLLABORATION VERSUS CHEATING:** I encourage student-to-student collaboration in my classes. It can be a valuable learning strategy. I define collaboration to include such activities as studying together, reviewing and commenting on each other's written material, or sharing ideas or resources related to a topic within your team. On the other hand, I actively discourage the practices of plagiarism, cheating, and falsification of information. Please check the Virginia Tech Honor System at (<http://www.honorsystem.vt.edu/index.html>) for official definitions of these practices and possible consequences.

Disabilities

If there is anyone in the class who has special circumstances that require some assistance in completing the assignments or to promote better learning, see the instructor to make these arrangements early in the semester. This applies to both those who are formally recognized by the university as having disabilities and those who are not. The intent is to ensure everyone an environment in which they can effectively learn. For more detailed information on your rights please refer to: <http://www.dos.vt.edu/SSD/default.html>

Schedule of Topics and Readings

Week 1: Course introduction

Wednesday, 8/23: Introduction

- Randolph, Ch. 1: Managing Human-Environment Interactions (Pp. 3-6)

Unit 1: Environmental Policy

Week 2: Roots of Environmental Policymaking

Monday, 8/28: Environmental Consciousness in America

- Selections from Markham, Andy, 1994. Why Care? Pollution, Nature, and Ethics. A Brief History of Pollution, Earthscan Books, London. Pp. 24-30.
- Selections from Golley, Frank, 1992. Environmental Attitudes in North America. In R.J. Berry (ed.) Environmental Dilemmas: Ethics and Decisions. Chapman and Hall: London, Pp. 209-32.

Wednesday, 8/30: Environmental Values

- Randolph, selection from Chapter 1: “Visions of Paradise” and “Historical Paradigms” Pp. 6-14 (note that this is in the first selection in the reader).
- Selections from O’Riordon, Timothy, 1981. Ecocentrism and Technocentrism. In Environmentalism. Pion Books, London, Pp. 1-12.

(Remember question assignment – bring in printed copy of two questions about class readings)

Week 3: National Environmental Policymaking System

Monday, 9/4: Introduction to Environmental Politics: Actors in the Federal System

- Chapter 2, Rosenbaum, Walter A. Environmental Politics and Policy. CQ Press, Washington, D.C.

Students must produce the reader in class today to receive 2 points credit

Wednesday, 9/6: Introduction to Environmental Policymaking: Organizations and Institutional Cultures

- Chapter 3, Rosenbaum, Walter A. In Environmental Politics and Policy. CQ Press, Washington, D.C.

Week 4: Environmental Values in Action

Monday, 9/11: Killer Fogs in Appalachia and London

- Chapter 1 and 2 (Pp. 1-54) in Davis, Devra. 2002. *When Smoke Ran Like Water*. Basic Books, New York.

Wednesday, 9/13: Values in Action: In-class video and discussion: *El Dorado*

- Selections from Leopold, Aldo. 1949. *The Land Ethic*. In *The Sand County Almanac – and Sketches Here and There*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Week 5: Environmental Risk

Monday, 9/18: Who Chooses, Who Suffers?

- Chapter 4, Rosenbaum, Walter A. In Environmental Politics and Policy. CQ Press, Washington, D.C.

Wednesday, 9/20: Is Risk in the Eye of the Beholder?

- Slovic, Paul. 1991. Beyond numbers: A broader perspective on risk perception and communication. In D.G. Mayo and R. Hollander (eds.). Acceptable Evidence: Science and Values in Risk Communication. Oxford University Press, Pp.48-65.

Week 6: Science and Politics in Risk Assessment

Monday, 9/25: Science and Politics in Risk Assessment

- Proctor, Robert N. The politics of cancer. *Dissent*. 1994; 41(2):215-223 (in reader).
- O'Brien, Mary. 1994. Facing down pesticide risk assessment. *Global Pesticides Quarterly*, 4(1), Pp. 1, 12-13, 17 (in reader).

Wednesday, 9/27: Local Acceptance of Scientific Oversight

- Weeks, Priscilla and Packard, Jane M. Acceptance of scientific management by natural resource dependent communities. *Conservation Biology*. 1997; 11(1):236-245 (in reader).

Week 7: Midterm

Monday, 10/2: Midterm Review

Wednesday, 10/4: Midterm Exam

(No question due this week)

Unit 2: Environmental Planning

Week 8: Environmental Planning I

Monday, 10/9: Fall Break

Wednesday, 9/11: Introduction to Planning

- Randolph, Ch. 2: Environmental Planning (Pp. 16-35).

Week 9: Environmental Planning II

Monday, 10/16: Areas of Environmental Planning

- Paper by John Randolph (2004) (in reader)

Wednesday, 10/18: No Class

In lieu of meeting today, the professor will identify an appropriate on-campus event to attend during the term (please sign the record of attendance there). In order to receive thinkpiece credit for attending this event, please write a 1-page review of the event, including 1) Summary of the “main message” of the event 2) Discussion of how the event relates to 3 distinct class themes.

(No question due this week)

Week 10: Environmental Planning as Technical Practice

Monday, 10/23: The Birds, the Bees, and the Helpful Planning Professional

- Randolph, Ch. 17: Land Use, Wildlife Habitats and Biodiversity (Pp. 555-590)

Wednesday, 10/25: Holistic Planning Analysis

- Randolph, Ch. 18: Integration Methods For Environmental Land Analysis (Pp. 591-624).

Week 11: Environmental Planning as Social Interaction

Monday, 10/30:: Environmental Planner as Facilitator, and Mediator

- Randolph, Ch. 4: Collaborative Environmental Management and Public Participation (Pp. 53-74).

Wednesday, 11/1: The Critical Role of Storytelling

- Sandercock, Leonie. 2003. Out of the Closet: The Importance of Stories and Storytelling in Planning Practice. *Planning Theory and Practice* 4(1), Pp.11-28 (in reader).

Week 12: City Planning and Smart growth

Monday, 11/6: Smart Growth

- Randolph, Ch. 6: Design With Nature for People (Pp. 106-140)

Wednesday, 11/8: No Class

(No question due this week)

Week 13: Watershed and Ecosystem Management

Monday, 11/13: Planning Practices

- Randolph, Ch. 10: Ecosystem and Watershed Management (Pp. 244-272)

Wednesday, 11/15: Messy Politics

- Chapter 9, Rosenbaum, Walter A. In Environmental Politics and Policy. CQ Press, Washington, D.C.

Week 14: Thanksgiving Break

Week 15: Bringing Society and Nature Together Sustainably

Monday, 11/27: Global-scale Sustainability

- Chapter 10, Rosenbaum, Walter A. Environmental Politics & Policy.

Wednesday, 11/29: City-scale Sustainability

- Bernard, Ted and Jora Young. 1997. The Ecology of Hope: Communities collaborate for sustainability. Pp. 61-92 (Virginia and Tennessee case studies) (in reader)

Week 16: The Consequences of Not Taking Action

Monday, 12/4: Unsustainability

- Gladwell, Malcolm. 2005. The Vanishing. Review of Jared Diamond's "Collapse". The New Yorker, January 3, 2005.
- Diamond, Jared. 2000. Ecological Collapse of Pre-Industrial Societies. The Tanner Lectures on Human Values, Stanford University, May 22-24, 2000.

Wednesday, 12/6: Summary and Review

(No question due this week)

Final Exam scheduled: Monday Dec 11 from 10:05 – 12:05PM