

POLS 3203
Environmental Policy & Institutions
University of Connecticut, Spring 2022
Tuesday & Thursday, 2:00-3:15

Professor Andrews

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Office: Oak Hall 403

Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday: 12:30-1:30 Tuesday: 3:30-4:30

Course Description

Development of environmental policies and institutions and their effects on the motivations and the actions of individuals and groups with implications for questions of equity, justice, and sustainability. Draws on approaches from comparative politics, public policy, and international relations.

Learning Objectives

Environmental policy is one of the most important and contentious areas of politics today. In this course we will cover what falls under the domain of environmental policy, and how do institutions shape environmental policy outcomes. Critically, we will consider how institutions respond to both changes in the environment, and the opinions of individuals, in shaping environmental policy. This course will consider policies from the local to the international level. This course will include three units, in which we will address the following:

1. **What is environmental policy, and how do institutions shape its formation?** In this first unit we will define what we mean by environmental policy and what issues it covers. We then will introduce a framework for understanding environmental problems and look at how key institutions in the United States address environmental problems.
2. **Applying our framework at the local, national, and international level.** In the second unit we will take what we've learned and apply it to issues of hydrofracking, e-waste, and congestion pricing. We will use these issues to think more deeply about how institutions change individual behavior, as well as whether individuals are able to change their institutions.
3. **The big environmental problem: Climate Change.** For the final unit in the course, we will dive deep into the problem of climate change. We will apply our framework to different solutions, ranging from transitioning to renewable energy to more contentious solutions like geoengineering. We will continue to examine the interface between the public and institutions, and how it affects potential climate outcomes.

Required Texts

The only required text in this course is Understanding Environmental policy (Steven Cohen), Second Edition, ISBN: 978-0231167758. You **MUST** get a copy of the second edition; the first

edition covers entirely different topics. The book is available for purchase in the bookstore, but you are welcome to purchase the book elsewhere. All other readings will be posted on HuskyCT.

Class during a pandemic

This class will meet in person as long as the university is in person, but at the time of writing this syllabus, **the first two weeks of the semester will be online**. That means we will meet online, and my office hours will be online (via appointment, please email me if you'd like to meet!).

More than ever, this syllabus is subject to change as we all respond to changing university policies and the state of the world. As we get through this next semester together, please know that what I care most about are your health, safety, and education. If you require additional assistance with any of the assignments, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.

Course Requirements

Reading Quizzes (10 points each, 50 points total)

In this class we will read a mix of scientific research papers, book chapters, and op-ed style articles from researchers. Generally, on Tuesdays, we will read book chapters and introductory material about environmental issues. On Thursday, the week before, I will post a reading quiz for the assigned reading. These reading quizzes are open book and open note and will close down 15 minutes before class begins. **You must complete 5 of these reading quizzes throughout the semester**. There will be 7 available reading quizzes throughout the semester, and it is up to you which quizzes you would like to take. Please note that once a quiz is closed, you cannot take it; as a result, you must complete these during the course of the semester, **you will not be able to complete all 5 quizzes in one day at the end of the semester**. In the list of readings and dates below, I have indicated which weeks have available quizzes.

Discussion Questions (5 points each, 25 points total)

Generally, on Thursdays we will read research articles to dive deeper into the topic for the week. When we have assigned research articles, you are responsible for posting two discussion questions on HuskyCT. Discussion questions are due one hour before class starts. **There will be a total of 7 weeks where discussion questions are due, but you only need to submit discussion questions 5 times for full credit**. In the list of readings and dates below, I have indicated which weeks have opportunities to submit discussion questions.

Midterm & Final Exam (80 points each, 160 points total)

In this class there will be one midterm and one final exam. The final exam will NOT be cumulative. Each exam will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions.

Policy Brief (100 points total)

During this semester, you are going to become an expert in a small slice of environmental policy. The objective of this assignment is for you to teach yourself (and others) more about an environmental problem that you want to know more about as well as potential policy solutions to that problem – as well as learn practical skills about policy communication. **You will complete this project in groups of 3 or 4**, which I will assign at the beginning of the semester. The project develops over the course of the semester with scaffolded assignments, as well as

opportunities to review each others' work and provide feedback. A short outline of each component is listed below, and much more detail about the assignment will be available on HuskyCT.

1. **Annotated Bibliography (20 points):** A bibliography (usually found at the end of a scholarly resource) provides the reader with the author, title, and publication details of a resource. An annotated bibliography adds a brief summary about the each of the sources. You and your group will produce an annotated bibliography of 8-12 sources about the policy you have chosen.
2. **Fact Sheet (20 points):** In this second part of the project, you will be creating a 3-4 page double spaced fact sheet. You have to put a lot of information into this relatively short document. They should be short and to the point and provide a substantial body of evidence to support the highlighted points. Your group will first create a rough draft, which you will share with another group for peer review. You will then turn in a final draft to me.
3. **Final policy Brief (55 Points):** A policy brief is a relatively short, to the point, jargon free document written for non-specialists. It presents research or project findings to policy actors, highlighting the relevance of the specific research to policy and offering recommendations for change. Your group will turn in a 2-3 page policy brief.
4. **Participation (5 Points):** You will be asked to (anonymously!) evaluate your group members. I will distribute rubrics for these evaluations. These evaluations will NOT be used to nitpick your performance, but instead to ensure no one is free riding off the effort of the rest of their group.

Tips for success: Each week, there will be time in class to discuss each of the assigned articles, as well as to meet with your group to discuss progress on your project. Please make use of this time! Also, my office hours are always available to you to meet and discuss your progress, and if those times don't work for you, please e-mail me and we will find time to meet.

Extra Credit: You can earn extra credit by completing more than the 5 required reading quizzes. Note: you can only count a reading quiz for extra credit after you've completed the 5 required reading quizzes. Extra credit quizzes are worth half the points of a real quiz, so the most points you can earn per extra credit quiz is 5.

Grading:

Discussion Questions: 25 points (5 sets of questions worth 5 points each)
Reading Quizzes: 50 points (5 quizzes worth 10 points each)
Policy Brief: 100 points
Midterm exam: 80 points
Final exam: 80 points
Total: 335 points

Your final grade will be determined according to the following system (I will round up to the nearest percent):

A = 94% or above	C = 74%-76%
A- = 90%-93%	C- = 70%-73%
B+ = 87%-89%	D+ = 67%-69%
B = 84%-86%	D = 64%-66%
B- = 80%-83%	D- = 60%-63%
C+ = 77%-79%	F = 0%-59%

Course Policies

Attendance Policy

If you are not feeling well, please stay home! Your health and safety, as well as the health and safety of those around you, is my top priority. All lecture slides will be posted on HuskyCT.

Mask Policy

Until further notice, to ensure a safe learning environment for everyone, **masks/face coverings must be worn at all times** when inside buildings, including in the classroom, regardless of vaccination status. If a student is not wearing a mask/face covering, they will be asked by the instructor to put one on immediately or leave the classroom. Repeatedly failing to follow this expectation will result in a referral to Community Standards. Activities that involve temporarily removing the mask, such as eating or drinking are not allowed. Please leave the classroom for such activities. If an instructor is not wearing a mask/face covering, students should feel comfortable asking the instructor to put one on immediately.

Although social distancing will not be required inside classrooms for vaccinated individuals, please be respectful of the wishes of others who prefer to maintain social distancing. For their own protection, unvaccinated individuals are requested to maintain 6 feet social distancing from others.

Subject to change notice

All material, assignments, and due dates are subject to change with prior notice. It is your responsibility to stay in touch with your instructor, review the course site regularly, or communicate with other students, to adjust as needed if assignments or due dates change.

Grade Disputes

In the event that a student wishes to dispute his or her grade on an assignment, the following procedure may be used. First, students must wait at least 48 hours after the assignment has been handed back. Second, students can email me to set up an appointment. This email should include a separate, typed summary of why they believe the grade is unfair. After meeting in person to discuss the assignment, I will then reevaluate the grade. However, revised grades may be higher or lower than the original, and this new grade will be final.

Communicating with the instructor

This course uses a “three before me” policy regarding student to faculty communications. This

policy will help you in potentially identifying answers before I can get back to you and it also helps your instructor from answering similar questions or concerns multiple times. When questions arise during the course of this class, please remember to check these three sources for an answer before asking me to reply to your individual questions:

1. Course syllabus
2. Announcements on HuskyCT
3. Your group members

If you have questions of a personal nature such as relating a personal emergency, questioning a grade on an assignment, or something else that needs to be communicated privately, you are welcome to contact me via email. I will usually respond to email messages from 9am to 5pm on weekdays, please allow 24 hours for me to respond.

Late Policy

Late policy briefs and their components will be accepted, but they will automatically be penalized 5% every 24 hours after the scheduled deadline beginning as soon as they are late.

Late quizzes and discussion questions will not be accepted but please remember you can miss several of each without penalty!

In the interest of fairness to all students, exceptions to these rules will only be granted in the case of incapacitating illness or significant personal or family emergencies. If such a situation occurs, student should reach out to me as early as possible to discuss alternative arrangements.

Topics and Key Dates

Key Dates to remember:

Assignment	Due Date
Annotated Bibliography	February 25 th , Midnight on HuskyCT
Fact sheet for peer review	March 22 nd , in class
Midterm Exam	March 24 th , in class
Final Fact Sheet	April 1 st , Midnight on HuskyCT
Final Policy Brief & Group Evaluations	April 29 th , Midnight on HuskyCT
Final Exam	TBD in class

Schedule of readings:

Week 1: January 17th – January 21st Online

Introduction to the course, and introduction to environmental policy, and tips for success.

Monday & Thursday:

- Watch online introductory lectures
- Read library resource pages to prepare for annotated bibliography

Part 1: What is environmental policy?

In this first unit we will learn the foundations of what environmental policy is and how it's made. We will focus on how institutions, the nature of environmental problems, and individual values and opinions shape environmental policy outcomes.

Week 2: January 24th – January 28th Online

An introduction to our framework: How do values, technology and science, economic forces, and management shape environmental policy outcomes?

Tuesday & Thursday:

- Watch online lectures
- Read Cohen Chapter 1 and Chapter 2

Week 3: January 31st – February 4th

The nature of environmental problems: What are collective action problems, and how do we overcome them?

Tuesday: *No assigned reading, welcome to in-person classes! We will cover more introductory material, answer your questions about the course, and learn about public goods today.*

Thursday: *Discussion Questions Due*

- Hardin. (1968). "The tragedy of the commons." *Science*.
- Ostrom. (1990). *Governing the commons: The evolution of institutions for collective action*. Chapter 1.

Week 4: February 7th – February 11th

How do individuals think about environmental problems? Do elected officials care what the public thinks?

Tuesday: *Quiz Due*

- DeSombre. (2018). *Why Good People do Bad Environmental Things*. Chapters 4 & 6

Thursday: *Discussion Questions Due*

- Lax & Phillips. (2009). “Gay rights in the states: Public opinion and policy responsiveness.” *American Political Science Review*.
- Butler & Nickerson. (2011). “Can learning constituency opinion affect how legislators vote? Results from a field experiment.” *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*

Week 5: February 14th – February 17th

How is environmental policy made in the U.S. context at the national level?

Tuesday: *Quiz Due*

- Kraft (2018) *Environmental Policy & Politics*, Chapter 3: Making Environmental Policy

Thursday: **No class today**, Prof. Andrews Presenting at the Center for the Study of Democratic Politics at Princeton University.

Part 2: Applying our framework at the local, national, and international level

Week 6: February 21st – February 25th

Environmental policy outcomes in the United States, and the problem of electronic waste.

Annotated bibliography due February 25th at midnight

Tuesday: *Quiz Due*

- Kraft (2018) *Environmental Policy & Politics*, Chapter 4: The Evolution of Environmental Policy and Politics

Thursday: *Discussion Questions Due*

- Cohen Chapter 4

Week 7: February 28th – March 4th

The example of congestion charges, and how we can shape individual behavior to address environmental problems.

Tuesday: *Quiz Due*

- DeSombre. (2018). *Why Good People do Bad Environmental Things*. Chapter 3.

Thursday: *Discussion Questions Due*

- Cohen Chapter 3
- Markoff. (2012). “Incentives for drivers who avoid traffic jams.” *The New York Times*.

Week 8: March 7th – March 11th

The example of hydrofracking, and whether the public can effectively hold their representatives accountable when they impose local costs or provide local benefits.

Tuesday: *Quiz Due*

- Cohen Chapter 5

Thursday: *Discussion Questions Due*

- Grimmer, Messing, & Westwood. (2012). “How words and money cultivate a personal vote: The effect of legislator credit claiming on constituent credit allocation.” *American Political Science Review*
- Gasper & Reeves. (2011). “Make it rain? Retrospection and the attentive electorate in the context of natural disasters.” *American Journal of Political Science*.

Week 9: March 14th – March 18th

Spring break, no class! Enjoy!

Week 10: March 21st – March 25th

Fact sheet first draft for peer review due Tuesday, March 22nd.

Tuesday: *No reading, fact sheet peer review and midterm review.*

Thursday: ~~Midterm Exam.~~ **Power outage**

Part 3: The big environmental problem: Climate Change

Week 11: March 28th – April 1st

An introduction to the climate problem

Fact sheet due Friday, April 1st at midnight

Tuesday: **No class**, Prof. Andrews giving guest lecture in EVST 1000e. Listen to: Science Vs. Climate Change, <https://gimletmedia.com/shows/science-vs/brhoa4>

Thursday: **Midterm Exam.**

Week 12: April 4th – April 8th

The nature of the climate problem, is this another example of collective action?

Note: This material is challenging! We will work through it together, and there will be no quiz or discussion questions this week.

Tuesday:

- Keohane & Victor. (2016). “Cooperation and discord in global climate policy.” *Nature Climate Change*.
- Aklin & Mildenberger. (2020). “Prisoners of the wrong dilemma: Why distributive conflict, not collective action, characterizes the politics of climate change.” *Global Environmental Politics*.

Thursday: **No class**, Prof. Andrews presenting at the Midwestern Political Science Association Annual Conference.

Week 13: April 11th – April 15th

What do everyday individuals think about climate change, and how do we change their opinions? Does talking about the potential climate change doomsday help or hurt? *Note: The new movie, Don't Look Up, on Netflix is also relevant for this week. If you're interested, I recommend watching it, but it is not required!*

Tuesday: *Quiz Due*

- Brulle, Carmichael, & Jenkins. (2012). “Shifting public opinion on climate change: An empirical assessment of the factors influencing concern over climate change in the US, 2002-2010.” *Climactic Change*.
- Simpson et al. (2020). “Climate change literacy in Africa.” *Nature Climate Change*.

Thursday: *Discussion Questions Due*

- Wallace-Wells. (2017). “The Uninhabitable Earth.” *New York Magazine*: <https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2017/07/climate-change-earth-too-hot-for-humans.html>
- Feinberg & Willer. (2011). “Apocalypse soon? Dire messages reduce belief in global warming by contradicting just-world beliefs.” *Psychological Science*.
- Andrews & Smirnov. (2020). “Who feels the impacts of climate change?” *Global Environmental Change*.

Week 14: April 18th – April 22nd

Solutions: How does switching to renewable and carbon-free energy sources help solve the climate problem? What are the barriers to making the change?

Tuesday: *Quiz Due*

- Schneider, Rosencranz, & Niles (2002) *Climate Change Policy*, Chapter 16: Renewable Energy Sources as a Response to Global Climate Concerns

Thursday: *Discussion Questions Due*

- Stokes. (2016). “Electoral backlash against climate policy: A natural experiment on retrospective voting and local resistance to public policy.” *American Journal of Political Science*.
- Bayulgen et al. (2021). “Tilting at windmills? Electoral repercussions of wind turbine projects in Minnesota.” *Energy Policy*.

Week 15: April 25th – 29th

Policy Brief Due Friday April 29th!

Contentious solutions: What role could nuclear power and geoengineering play in climate change mitigation? *No quiz or discussion questions this week as we start thinking about the final exam!*

Tuesday:

- Roberts. (2018). “Reckoning with climate change will demand ugly tradeoffs from environmentalists – and everyone else.” *VOX*: <https://www.vox.com/energy-and-environment/2018/1/27/16935382/climate-change-ugly-tradeoffs>
- Wagner. (2021) “We need to talk about geoengineering.” *Project Syndicate*: <https://www.project-syndicate.org/onpoint/geoengineering-research-need-to-see-risks-and-potential-by-gernot-wagner-2021-09>

Thursday: No reading, final exam review

Final exam date TBD.

University Policies

The University of Connecticut is committed to protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities and assuring that the learning environment is accessible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on disability or pregnancy, please let me know immediately so that we can discuss options. Students who require accommodations should contact the Center for Students with Disabilities, Wilbur Cross Building Room 204, [\(860\) 486-2020](tel:8604862020) or <http://csd.uconn.edu/>.

Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment and Related Interpersonal Violence

The University is committed to maintaining an environment free of discrimination or discriminatory harassment directed toward any person or group within its community – students, employees, or visitors. Academic and professional excellence can flourish only when each member of our community is assured an atmosphere of mutual respect. All members of the University community are responsible for the maintenance of an academic and work environment in which people are free to learn and work without fear of discrimination or discriminatory harassment. In addition, inappropriate amorous relationships can undermine the University’s mission when those in positions of authority abuse or appear to abuse their authority. To that end, and in accordance with federal and state law, the University prohibits discrimination and discriminatory harassment, as well as inappropriate amorous relationships, and such behavior will be met with appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the University. Additionally, to protect the campus community, all non-confidential University employees (including faculty) are required to report sexual assaults, intimate partner violence, and/or stalking involving a student that they witness or are told about to the Office of Institutional Equity. The University takes all reports with the utmost seriousness. Please be aware that while the information you provide will remain private, it will not be confidential and will be shared with University officials who can help. More information is available at equity.uconn.edu and titleix.uconn.edu.

Absences from Class Due to Religious Observances and Extra-Curricular Activities

Faculty and instructors are expected to reasonably accommodate individual religious practices unless doing so would result in fundamental alteration of class objectives or undue hardship to the University’s legitimate business purposes. Such accommodations may include rescheduling an exam or giving a make-up exam, allowing a presentation to be made on a different date or assigning the student appropriate make-up work that is intrinsically no more difficult than the original assignment. Faculty and instructors are strongly encouraged to allow students to complete work missed due to participation in extra-curricular activities that enrich their experience, support their scholarly development, and benefit the university community. Examples include participation in scholarly presentations, performing arts, and intercollegiate sports, when the participation is at the request of, or coordinated by, a University official. Students should be encouraged to review the course syllabus at the beginning of the semester for potential conflicts and promptly notify their instructor of any anticipated accommodation needs. Students are responsible for making arrangements in advance to make up missed work. For conflicts with final examinations, students should contact the Dean of Students Office. Faculty and instructors are also encouraged to respond when the Counseling Program for

Intercollegiate Athletes (CPIA) requests student progress reports. This will enable the counselors to give our students appropriate advice.

Office of Emergency Management on Emergency Preparedness

In case of inclement weather, a natural disaster, or a campus emergency, the University communicates through email and text message. Students are encouraged to sign up for alerts through <http://alert.uconn.edu>. Students should be aware of emergency procedures, and further information is available through the Office of Emergency Management at <http://publicsafety.uconn.edu/emergency/>.