

Daniel Lipson  
Winter 2008 – MW 10-11:35am, F 10-10:40am  
Office hours (Dewing 212F): Tue 10am-2pm & by appt.  
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Political Science 232  
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## Political Science 232: Environmental Policy & Politics

### *Revised Syllabus* (additions in blue font)

The natural environment plays a paradoxical role in the United States. For as long as humans have existed, our lives have been intimately connected with the natural resources upon which we depend. Yet much of modern history tells the story of humans' attempts to conquer – rather than sustain – the natural environment.

Our forefathers were in awe of the bounty of forests, freshwater, frontier, and wildlife; and they designed a political vision that was based on the value of protecting citizens' ability to horde and use as much of these resources as they could. Thus, it is not surprising that the United States leads the world in consumption, production, and, consequently, pollution – most noticeably in its contribution to the global climate crisis. Nor ought it to be surprising that the U.S. government continues to resist international treaties to curb global warming. While our nation was founded on the assumption of unlimited natural resources, Americans will soon need to come to terms with the scarcity of clean drinking water, affordable energy, rainforests, and other vital resources.

This course will analyze the role of American politics, economics, and culture in the formation of domestic and international environmental policies and laws. The class will weave together a pattern of interconnected forces that contribute to the quality of our planet's water, land, air, and human life. We will read case studies on such varied topics as the impacts that the growth of the fast food industry has had on the natural environment and human well-being and the role American oil dependency and depletion have played in contributing to global warming and resource wars.

By the end of this course, you will have developed the knowledge base to make sense of the political and policy problems that have contributed to the degradation of the environment and the political and policy solutions needed to conserve and preserve the very resources that humans need to sustain life for generations to come.

### **Course Requirements and Grading\***

The course requires a combination of reading, participation, and writing. You will complete three papers in addition to a group presentation and a separate group project. For the group presentation, you will pair up with one or two other students and lead the class in a discussion about an environmental issue to be determined. The group project will involve researching and writing a report on a major controversy during Spring 2007 involving a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) plan to remove PCBs from the Kalamazoo River Superfund site and dispose of them in the former Allied Paper Superfund site in the middle of Kalamazoo. Attendance and participation are crucial to the success of this class. Your grades will be based on your performance in the following assignments:

Assignment	Week	Date	Grade
<a href="#">Paper #1</a>	4	Wed Jan 30	20%
<a href="#">Paper #2</a>	8	Mon Feb 25	20%
<a href="#">Paper #3</a>	10	Fri Mar 14	20%
<a href="#">Service Learning Report</a>	10	Wed Mar 12	20%
<a href="#">Group Class Presentation</a>	You will be assigned a date		10%
<a href="#">Participation*</a>	Throughout course		10%

\* I may also require additional writing and oral assignments during class meetings, and your grade will be contingent on completing these assignments.

### **Required Reading**

**Books:** The following books are available for purchase at the bookstore and on reserve at the library.

Heinberg, Richard. 2005. *The Party's Over: Oil, War and the Fate of Industrial Societies*. 2nd ed. Gabriola Island, BC: New Society Publishers.

Kraft, Michael E. 2007. *Environmental Policy and Politics*. 4th ed. New York: Pearson/Longman.

Layzer, Judith A. 2006. *The Environmental Case: Translating Values into Policy*. 2nd ed. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

Schlosser, Eric. 2002. *Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal*. 1st Perennial ed. New York: Perennial.

### **Course/College Policies:**

**Academic Integrity:** I expect that you will perform your own work in all assignments and appropriately cite sources when you relying on other authors' arguments. Plagiarism of any kind will be dealt with severely – failure of the course is possible. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism or cheating, please ask me prior to turning in work.

**Physical and Learning Disabilities:** I will do everything I can to accommodate verified physical and learning disabilities. If you have a physical or learning disability that may impede your performance, please see me as soon as possible.

**Late-Work Policy:** I deduct 1/3 of a letter grade (e.g. from a B to a B-) for every day late, including day one.

## Course Schedule and Reading Assignments:

Week 01	Mon 1/07	<b>Introduction</b>		
	Wed 1/09	<b>Environmental Problems and Politics</b>		
		Layzer	Chapter 01	Introduction: Defining Problems in U.S. Environmental Politics 1- 25
		<i>Reserve</i>	<i>Stone</i>	<a href="#">Causal Stories &amp; the Formation of Policy Agendas</a> 20 pgs
	Fri 1/11	Kraft	Chapter 01	Environmental Problems & Politics 1- 25
		<i>Reserve</i>	<i>Lindblom</i>	<a href="#">The Market as Prison</a> 13 pgs
Week 02	Mon 1/14	<b>The State of the Environment</b>		
		Kraft	Chapter 02	Judging the State of the Environment 25- 55
	Wed 1/16	<b>The Policy-Making Process</b>		
		Kraft	Chapter 03	Making Environmental Policy 56- 84
	Wed 1/16	<b>“Climate Change at K.”</b> Discussion by President’s Climate Commitment Planning Committee on K College’s carbon reduction initiatives. Olmsted, 7pm, LAC.		
	Fri 1/18	<b>Urban Sprawl</b>		
		Layzer	Chapter 17	Making Tradeoffs: Urban Sprawl and the Evolving System of Growth Management in Portland, Oregon 466-490
		<i>Reserve</i>	<i>Schmidt</i>	<a href="#">Sprawl: The New Manifest Destiny?</a> 8 pgs
Week 03	Mon 1/21	<b>No Class – Martin Luther King, Jr., Holiday</b>		
	Wed 1/23	<b>The Evolution of Environmental Policy</b>		
		Kraft	Chapter 04	The Evolution of Environmental Policy and Politics 85-110
	Thu 1/24	<b>“How Local Foods Build Healthy, Strong Communities: A Detroit Case Study.”</b> Olmsted, 8pm, LAC.		
	Fri 1/25	<b>Group Presentation #1: Environmental Justice / Racism</b>		
		Layzer	Chapter 05	Community Activism and Environmental Justice: The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative 105-129
		<i>Reserve</i>	<i>Grunwald</i>	<a href="#">The Slow Drowning of New Orleans</a> 3 pgs
Week 04	Mon 1/28	<b>The Climate Crisis</b>		
		Layzer	Chapter 11	Climate Challenge: The Challenges of International Environmental Policymaking 278-313
		<i>Reserve</i>	<i>Heinberg</i>	<a href="#">Bridging Peak Oil and Climate Change Activism</a> 7 pgs
			<i>Fahrenthold</i>	<a href="#">Carbon Offsets: Cost of Saving the Climate Meets Real-World Hurdles</a> 3 pgs
	Wed 1/30	In-Class Viewing of “ <b>An Inconvenient Truth</b> ” Documentary		
		<b><u>Paper #1 due</u></b>		
	Wed 1/30	<b><u>Focus the Nation: “2% Solution” Webcast.</u></b> 8pm, location to be announced.		

	Thu 1/31	<b>Focus the Nation.</b> Campus events to be announced.			
	Fri 2/01	<b>Group Presentation #2: Threats to the Great Lakes</b>			
		<i>Reserve</i>	<i>Dempsey</i>	<a href="#"><i>On the Brink - Chapter 12: Hope for Home</i></a>	20 pgs
	Fri 2/01	<b>Focus the Nation.</b> Campus events to be announced.			
Week 05	Mon 2/04	<b>Oil Depletion and Resource Wars</b>			
		Heinberg	Introduction		1- 8
		Heinberg	Chapter 01	Energy, Nature, and Society	9- 42
		Heinberg	Chapter 02	Party Time: The Historic Interval of Cheap, Abundant Energy	43- 80
	Wed 2/06	Heinberg	Chapter 03	Lights Out: Approaching the Historic Interval's End	81-122
		Heinberg	Chapter 04	Non-Petroleum Energy Sources: Can the Party Continue?	123-166
	Fri 2/08	<b>Group Presentation #3: Logging and Endangered Species</b>			
		Layzer	Chapter 08	Jobs Versus the Environment: Saving the Northern Spotted Owl	191-222
Week 06	Mon 2/11	<b>Kurt Cobb Guest Lecture on Oil Depletion</b>			
		Heinberg	Chapter 05	A Banquet of Consequences	167-204
		Heinberg	Chapter 06	Managing the Collapse: Strategies and Recommendations	205-242
	Wed 2/13	<b>Environmental Protection Policy: Controlling Pollution</b>			
		Layzer	Chapter 02	The Nation Tackles Pollution: The Environmental Protection Agency and the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts	26- 53
		<i>Reserve</i>	<i>Drew &amp; Oppel</i>	<a href="#"><i>How Industry Won the Battle of Pollution Control at EPA</i></a>	7 pgs
	Fri 2/15	<b>Group Presentation #4: Acid Rain</b>			
		Layzer	Chapter 14	Market-Based Solutions: Acid Rain and the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990	26- 53
	Fri 2/15	<b>Jeff Rubin: "Antarctic Canaries: Petermann's Penguins."</b>			
		Dewing 103, 4:30 pm, LAC.			
Week 07	Mon 2/18	Layzer	Chapter 03	Love Canal: Hazardous Waste and the Politics of Fear	26- 53
	Wed 2/20	Layzer	Chapter 04	Government Secrets at Rocky Flats	81-104
	Fri 2/22	<b>Group Presentation #5: The Wise Use Movement</b>			
		Layzer	Chapter 13	Backlash: Wise Use, Property Rights, and the Antienvironmental Movement	346-374

Week 08	Mon	2/25			<b><u>Paper #2 due</u></b>	
	Wed	2/27	<b>Group Presentation #6: Drilling in Arctic National Wildlife Refuge</b>			
			Layzer	Chapter 06	Oil Versus Wilderness in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge	130-190
	Fri	2/29	<b>Group Presentation #7: Trade liberalization (a.k.a. “free trade”)</b>			
			Layzer	Chapter 12	Trade Versus the Environment: Dolphins, Turtles, And Global Economic Expansion	313-345
Week 09	Mon	3/03	<b>Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal</b>			
			Schlosser		Introduction	01- 12
			Schlosser	Chapter 05	Why the Fries Taste So Good	111-132
	Wed	3/05	Schlosser	Chapter 06	On the Range	133-148
			Schlosser	Chapter 07	Cogs in the Great Machine	149-168
			Schlosser	Chapter 08	The Most Dangerous Job	169-192
	Fri	3/07	<b>Ken Bowers Guest Lecture on Reducing our Ecological Footprint</b>			
			<i>Reserve</i>	<i>Heeter</i>	<a href="#"><i>The Oil in Your Oatmeal</i></a>	3 pgs
				<i>Fallows</i>	<a href="#"><i>The \$1.4 Trillion Question</i></a>	9 pgs
				<i>Sachs</i>	<a href="#"><i>Climate Change after Bali</i></a>	9 pgs
Week 10	Mon	3/10	Schlosser	Chapter 09	What’s in the Meat	193-224
			Schlosser	Epilogue	Have It Your Way	255-270
			Schlosser	Afterword	The Meaning of Mad Cow	271-288
	Wed	3/12	<b>Group Presentation #8: Federal Grazing Policy</b>			
			Layzer	Chapter 07	Federal Grazing Policy: Some Things Never Change	159-190
			<b><u>Final Draft of Service Learning Report Due</u></b>			
	Fri	3/14	<b>Conclusion</b>			
			Layzer	Chapter 18	Conclusions: Politics, Values, and Environmental Policy Change	491-500
					<b><u>Paper #3 due</u></b>	

\* This calendar serves only as a guide. As needs are assessed, revisions will be made.