Political Science 162:
Environmental Politics and Policy
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2 p.m. to 4:50 p.m.
Solis 111
Summer Session I, 2013

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Course Description:
This course examines contemporary environmental issues from the perspective of a policy analyst. Students will learn the basic tools of policy analysis and apply them to a variety of environmental problems and proposed policy solutions. The course has two objectives: (1) To train students how to inform public policy by providing decision makers with objective policy analysis. (2) To help students understand why public policy decisions often diverge from the recommendations made by policy analysts. In other words, this is a course about both policy analysis and the politics behind policymaking.

Required Readings:
-Selected readings provided by the instructor.

Assignments:
1. Course Participation (30% of Overall Grade)
Students are required to complete the readings assigned for each class ahead of time. A significant portion of each class will include a detailed discussion about the assigned case studies. In addition, students will be encouraged to apply the lessons from the readings to other real-world environmental problems. *This is not a lecture class.* Active participation from all students will be essential to making this class successful.

To earn participation credit one must do the assigned readings, show up to each class, and participate in the discussion.

2. Problem Set (30% of Overall Grade) – DUE JULY 18 BY 2:00 P.M.
In this assignment, students will apply the skills learned in class to examine several relevant and controversial policy questions. The assignment will include approximately 4 exercises.

3. Policy Analysis (40% of Overall Grade) - DUE AUGUST 3 BY 3:30 P.M.
Each student will complete an analysis of an environmental policy of his or her choosing. Students should pick topics early in the term, and consult with the instructor about the appropriateness of the topic. The analysis should define an environmental problem, explain the failure of current policy to solve it, and analyze at least one potential policy prescription that may be offered to address it. The paper should be approximately 10 pages in length. *A hard copy of your paper must be submitted to the designated box outside of Social Sciences Building Room 331. An electronic copy must be uploaded to Turnitin via ted.ucsd.edu.*
Late Policy:
The problem set is due at the beginning of class. Assignments submitted more than 15 minutes after the class has begun will be assessed a 5 percent late penalty, and assignments submitted after the class has ended will be assessed a 15 percent penalty. Late problem sets submitted after 2 p.m. on July 19 will receive no credit. No late final policy papers will be accepted.

Academic Honesty:
Refer to the UCSD policy on integrity of scholarship. http://students.ucsd.edu/academics/academic-integrity

Class Correspondence:
When communicating via email, you must use your official UCSD email account to ensure that we receive it (and will not end up in our junk mail). Also, to maintain student privacy we are unable to discuss student matters if correspondence does not come from an official UCSD address. We will do our best to respond to you within 24-48 hours of your email, though during the weekend, response times may be longer.

Course Schedule:

1) Tuesday, July 2  
   Introduction

2) Tuesday, July 9  
   Defining the Problem  
   Case Study: Analyzing Long-Enduring, Self-Organized, and Self-Governed Common Pool Resources (CPRs)

   Readings:  
   - Nick Hanley, Jason F. Shogren, and Ben White, Introduction to Environmental Economics — Pages 12-25.  
   - Elinor Ostrom, Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action — Pages 58-76.

   Reading Questions:  
   - What properties do environmental goods possess that causes rational individuals to use them in a socially inefficient way?  
   - What solution would Ronald Coase recommend for averting the “tragedy of the commons?” Under what conditions would his solution lead to socially optimal policy?  
   - What would be Garret Hardin’s prediction for the cases that Elinor Ostrom examines in her book? According to Ostrom, why did Hardin’s prediction not come true?

Hand Out Problem Set

3) Thursday, July 11  
   Assessing Alternatives  
   Case Studies: Regulating Pesticides and Arsenic

   Readings:  

Reading Questions:
-In what ways does the “risk tradeoff analysis” (RTA) framework that Graham and Weiner advocate differ from the way we “intuitively” think about environmental risks?
-When doing RTA, what two key criteria do Graham and Weiner argue policy makers must pay attention to?
-In “The Arithmetic of Arsenic,” what potentially controversial assumptions did the EPA need to make before completing its analysis, and what impact did these assumptions have on the final policy?
-Based on your reading of “The Arithmetic of Arsenic,” which presidential administration — Clinton or Bush — did a better job of applying RTA to the issue of arsenic in drinking water?

Hand Out Final Paper Prompt

4) Tuesday, July 16
Precautionary Principle and Its Critics
Case Studies: Cranberry Scare

Readings:
-Bardach — Pages 31-79.
-Nick Hanley, Jason F. Shogren, and Ben White, Introduction to Environmental Economics — Chapter 4.
-Carolyn Raffensberger and Joel A. Tickner, Protecting Public Health & the Environment: Implementing the Precautionary Principle — Introduction, Chapter 1(parts).

Reading Questions:
-The “Precautionary Principle” provides policy makers with a decision rule (or series of decision rules) they should follow when evaluating policy alternatives. In no more than three sentences, summarizes the precautionary principle in your own words and explain how it differs from more conventional cost-benefit analysis.
-In the last chapter of his book Wildavsky offers a provocative — although dense and perhaps difficult to understand — criticism of the precautionary principle. Restate Wildavsky’s main point in your words.
-Wildavsky and his co-author suggest that the “Cranberry Scare” provides one example of how the precautionary principle may lead us pursue policies that actually make us all worse off. Briefly summarize their main argument.

5) Thursday, July 18 – PROBLEM SET DUE
Public Opinion and Public Policy
Case Study: Global Warming

Readings:

Reading Questions:
-In Chapter 3, Smith describes three “models” that seek to explain how and why public opinion changes over time. Identify each of these models and explain which factor each identifies as the primary driver of public opinion change.
-Is Smith’s analysis of public opinion toward energy and environmental issues over time consistent with any of the three models you identified above?
-According to Smith, what explains why public opinion on these issues has changed over the period he studies?

6) Tuesday, July 23

**Interest Group Politics**

**Case Studies: Water in California**

Readings:

Reading Questions:
- Hall and Deardorff review two popular accounts of interest group activity: “exchange” and “persuasion” models of lobbying. Briefly describe each, and discuss how well the predictions from these models match what we actually observe in the real world.
- Describe Hall and Deardorff “legislative subsidy” model of lobbying, and explain how it differs from both “exchange” and “persuasion” accounts.
- According to Scholz and Wang, what role do local interest groups play in enforcing federal clean water laws? When are these groups most effective?
- Identify the interest groups that played an active role in the policy debate over building the “peripheral canal” in California in the 1970s. Explain each group’s broad interests or goals and how these shaped their position on this particular issue.

7) Thursday, July 25

**Political Institutions and Veto Players**

**Case Studies: Cap and Trade**

Readings:

Reading Questions:
- According to the “revolving gridlock” model of lawmaking, certain political actors are critical to understanding the policymaking process because they have the power to veto policies they don’t like and thus determine the fate of legislation. Which actors are “pivotal” in this sense when it comes to policy change at the federal level?
- In Brady and Volden’s account of policymaking, what causes gridlock? How is gridlock broken?
- Under the “revolving gridlock” model, what has to be true for the president to successfully pass the policies that he wants? What tools does the president have at his disposal to make such passage more likely?

8) Tuesday, July 30

*Film and meetings with grader/instructor to discuss final paper outline*
9) Thursday, August 1

*Policy and the Courts*

*Case Studies: TVA v. Hill*

Readings:

Reading Questions:
- Be prepared to discuss film from July 30.
- Strategic analyses of judicial behavior must start with some assumptions about what we think judges want. What goal(s) do most such studies assume judges seek to maximize, according to Epstein and Jacobi?
- Briefly, discuss what other actors an individual judge must pay attention to — and whose behavior they must anticipate — in order to achieve her goal(s). What actions do judges take (and not take) because they act strategically (i.e., anticipate the behavior of others)?
- TVA v. Hill presents a curious puzzle: The conservative justices on the Supreme Court voted for a strict application of the Endangered Species Act while the liberal justices voted for a more forgiving interpretation (to allow the dam to be built even if it resulted in the extinction of the snail darter). How does the strategic account of judicial decision-making help explain this apparently puzzling outcome?

Saturday, August 3

Final paper due by 3:30pm. Submit paper to box outside of Social Sciences Building Room 331. Also submit electronic copy to Turnitin via ted.ucsd.edu