

EVRN 320: Environmental Policy  
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GEOG 379: Topics in Cultural Geography – Environmental Policy

Course Syllabus – Spring 2008

**Instructor:** Shannon O’Lear, Ph.D.  
Department of Geography and Environmental Studies Program

**Class meetings:** Mondays and Wednesdays 9:00 – 10:15 a.m.  
Lindley Hall Room 317

**Office hours and contact information:**

Mondays 1:30-3:00 pm, Wednesdays 12:30-2:00 pm, & by appointment  
219 B Lindley Hall; Telephone: 864.2041  
E-mail: olear@ku.edu  
(Please note: E-mail hours will coincide with regular office hours)

**Required course texts:**

1. *Environmental Politics and Policy, 7<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> Edition*, by Walter A. Rosenbaum, CQ Press (paperback)
2. *Global Environmental Politics: Power, Perspectives, and Practice, Institutions*, by Ronnie D. Lipschutz, CQ Press (paperback)
3. Additional assigned readings are available on the course Blackboard site. They are posted under “Course Documents” in a “Readings” folder and are arranged by author.

**Course description:**

The objective of this course is to expose advanced undergraduate students to policy aspects of human-environment relations, a core theme in contemporary Geography. At the national and international levels, issues of agenda setting, institutional frameworks, risk assessment and regulation will be addressed theoretically and through case studies both in economically developed and in economically developing contexts. A main learning objective is for students to be able to discuss, compare, and critique these and other processes of decision-making both orally and in written form. This course provides an opportunity for students to explore in greater depth topics introduced in 100- or 200-level Environmental Studies and Geography courses and to develop a critical understanding of environmental policy processes.

### **Student assignments, attendance, and assessment:**

You will have several opportunities to reflect on and write about material that we will cover in this class. First, I will ask you to write short responses to reading material throughout the semester. Five writing assignment scores will count toward your grade. Writing assignments are to be typed and submitted in hard copy in class on the due date. You will have some choice in selecting the readings to which you will respond. The assignment system will be explained and discussed in class.

A few points to keep in mind when preparing your written responses for this class:

- A quality response will include definitions for key terms, will draw examples from readings or class discussion, will be well-organized in overall structure (e.g., will include an introductory statement as a foundation to the response and will clearly link ideas), and will demonstrate a mastery of basic grammar, syntax and spelling.
- The length of responses may vary, but a completed assignment should be approximately—but not more than—one page in length (single spaced, 10 point font, one inch margins).
- Think of your written work in this class as an opportunity to demonstrate your understanding of environmental policy issues. As the semester evolves, focus less on summarizing the readings and more on discussing them in relation to previous course material – Are there any familiar themes, problems or trends that reappear from earlier readings, unique or consistent policy-related challenges, etc.? Integrate words and concepts that we have discussed or read about if they are relevant to the current reading. You need not use formal citations of class readings, but a simple reference will do (e.g., “...a key idea from Rosenbaum Ch. 3, ...”).

Make-up assignments may be considered on an individual basis and will require prior arrangement and/or official documentation (e.g., from a doctor, an employer or a court).

We will have a few guest speakers in the class this semester, and I will ask you to turn in written reactions to these presentations. Three guest lecture responses will count toward your grade. These responses should summarize the main topic of the presentation in a few sentences but mostly emphasize how the presented ideas and material relate to concepts or issues we have discussed in the class. These responses are an opportunity for you to think creatively about the guest speakers’ work and about class material. These responses should be shorter than a reading response. Aim for about half a page, but no more than one page.

While I am away at a conference in April, you will watch two thought-provoking videos that highlight different topics of this course. I will ask you to write a short response to each video, and this work will also count toward your grade. In these video responses, concentrate on the policy dimensions of each story depicted. How do these videos illustrate problems or concepts that we have discussed in class?

Finally, we will have two written exams in this course as a way to gauge your comprehension of material as well as your ability to write intelligently and within a concise timeframe about perspectives and arguments discussed in class. The first exam will cover material from the first part of the semester, and the second exam will focus primarily on material from the second part of the semester but will build on themes

and concepts introduced in the first part of the semester. Participation in class, including regular attendance, will be used on a subjective basis to help determine your final grade for the course.

**Grades** for this class will be based on the following components (point values are approximate):

Writing assignments (5 @ 10 points each)	=	50 points
Guest lecture responses (3 @ 5 points each)	=	15 points
Video responses (2 @ 5 points each)	=	10 points
2 Exams (100 points each)	=	<u>200 points</u>
Total possible	=	275 points

Academic integrity

“The University has the responsibility for maintaining academic integrity so as to protect the quality of education and research on our campus and to protect those who depend upon our integrity. It is the responsibility of the student to refrain from infractions of academic integrity, from conduct that may lead to suspicion of such infractions, and from conduct that aids others in such infractions.”

In this course, you are expected to do your own, original work that has not been previously or concurrently submitted for credit. If you have additional questions or concerns about academic integrity, please bring these to my attention.

Special Needs

The staff of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD), located at 135 Strong Hall (864.2620), coordinates accommodations and services for KU courses. If you have a disability for which you may request accommodation in KU classes and have not contacted them, please do so as soon as possible. Please also see me privately in regard to this course.

**Schedule of reading assignments** (subject to change); (\*) denotes readings available on the course Blackboard site under “Course Documents” in the “Readings” folder. Those readings are listed by author in the folder.

WEEK	DATE	READING
Week I	Wed. 23 Jan.	(*) “In Praise of Clumsiness: Understanding Man and Nature as a Single But Complex System”, Thompson, M. and M. F. Price, <i>IHDP Newsletter</i> January 2002, pp. 14-16.  “Pork’s Dirty Secret: The nation’s top hog producer is also one of America’s worst polluters”, <i>Rolling Stone</i> December 2006. <b>Available online:</b> <a href="http://www.rollingstone.com/politics/story/12840743/porks_dirty_secret_the_nations_top_hog_producer_is_also_one_of_americas_worst_polluters">http://www.rollingstone.com/politics/story/12840743/porks_dirty_secret_the_nations_top_hog_producer_is_also_one_of_americas_worst_polluters</a>

Week 2	Mon. 28 Jan.	Rosenbaum Ch. 1: After Earth Day: American Environmentalism in Transformation  (*) "Indicators of Progress--The State of the Nation's Ecosystems: Measuring the Lands, Waters, and Living Resources of the United States", (reviewed by Clarke, D. P.), <i>Environment</i> 45:5 (June 03), pp. 40-43
	Wed. 30 Jan.	Rosenbaum Ch. 2: Making Policy: The Process  (*) "From Weapons to Wildlife: The Transformation of Rocky Mountain Arsenal", Wiley, K .B. and S. L. Rhodes, <i>Environment</i> 40:5 (June 98), pp. 4-35.
Week 3	Mon. 4 Feb.	Rosenbaum Ch. 3: Making Policy: Institutions and Politics  (*) "Navigating the Maze: Corporate Influence Over Federal Environmental Rulemaking", Kamieniecki, S., <i>Environment</i> 48:5 (June 06), pp. 8-20.
	Wed. 6 Feb.	Rosenbaum Ch. 4: Common Policy Challenges: Risk Assessment and Environmental Justice  (*) "Toxic Inaction: Why Poisonous, Unregulated Chemicals End Up In Our Blood", Schapiro, M. Harper's Magazine October 2007, pp. 78-83.
Week 4	Mon. 11 Feb.	Rosenbaum Ch. 5: More Choice: The Battle Over Regulatory Economics  (*) "Emissions Trading Systems and Environmental Justice", Solomon, B. D. and R. Lee, <i>Environment</i> 42:8 (Oct 00), pp. 32-45.
	Wed. 13 Feb.	Science vs. policy: Movie and discussion: <i>Scientific Spin Doctors</i>
Week 5	Mon. 18 Feb.	Rosenbaum Ch. 6: Command and Control in Action: Air and Water Pollution Regulation  (*) "Using Today's Science To Plan For Tomorrow's Water Policies", Hirsch, R. M., T. L. Miller, and P. A. Hamilton, <i>Environment</i> 43:1 (Jan/Feb 01), pp. 8-17.
	Wed. 20 Feb.	Rosenbaum Ch. 7: A Regulatory Thicket: Toxic and Hazardous Substances  (*) "Managing Hazardous Materials Along the U.S. - Mexico Border", Varady, R., P. R. Lankao, and K. Hankins, <i>Environment</i> 43:10 (Dec 01), pp. 22-36.
Week 6	Mon. 25 Feb.	Rosenbaum Ch. 8: Energy: Nuclear Dreams, Black Gold and Vanishing Crude  (*) "A Graceful Exit? Decommissioning Nuclear Power Reactors", Farber, D. and J. Weeks, <i>Environment</i> 43:6 (Jul/Aug 01), pp. 9-21.

	Wed. 27 Feb.	Rosenbaum Ch. 9: 635 Million Acres of Politics: The Battle for Public Lands Movie and discussion: <i>Motor</i>
Week 7	Mon. 3 Mar.	Rosenbaum Ch. 10: The United States and Climate Diplomacy: The Emerging Politics of Global Environmentalism  (* “Climate Change and a Global City” (NY), Rosenzweig, C. and W. D. Solecki, <i>Environment</i> 43:3 (April 01), pp. 8-18.
	Wed. 5 Mar.	(* “The Oil We Eat: Following the Food Chain Back to Iraq”, Manning, R. <i>Harper’s Magazine</i> February 2004, pp. 37-45.
Week 8	Mon. 10 Mar.	Review for Midterm Exam
	Wed. 12 Mar.	Midterm Exam
Week 9	Mon. 17 Mar.	Spring break -- No class
	Wed. 19 Mar.	Spring break -- No class
Week 10	Mon. 24 Mar.	Lipschutz Ch. 1: What are “Global Environmental Politics”?  -- No additional reading for today!
	Wed. 26 Mar.	Lipschutz Ch. 2: Deconstructing “Global Environment”, pp. 33-59.  (* “Protecting Eden: Setting Standards for the Ecotourism Industry”, Honey, M.S. <i>Environment</i> 45:6 (July/August 2003), pp. 9-21.
Week 11	Mon. 31 Mar.	Guest lecturer: Sharon Ashworth
	Wed. 2 Apr.	Guest lecturer: J. Christopher Brown
Week 12	Mon. 7 Apr.	Guest lecturer: Dorothy Daley
	Wed. 9 Apr.	Lipschutz Ch. 2: Deconstructing “Global Environment”, pp. 59-107.  (* “Traveling Toxics: The Science, Policy and Management of Persistent Organic Pollutants”, Eckley, N., <i>Environment</i> 43:7 (Sept 01), pp. 24-36.
Week 13	Mon. 14 Apr.	Movie and discussion: <i>Shaman’s Apprentice</i>

	Wed. 16 Apr.	Movie and discussion: <i>Who Stole the Electric Car?</i>
Week 14	Mon. 21 Apr.	Lipschutz Ch. 3: Capitalism, Globalization, and the Environment (All)  -- No additional reading for today!
	Wed. 23 Apr.	(* "The Tragedy of the Commons 30 Years Later", J. Burger and M. Gochfeld, <i>Environment</i> 40:10 (December 98), pp. 4-27.
Week 15	Mon. 28 Apr.	Lipschutz Ch. 4: Civic Politics and Social Power: Environmental Politics "On the Ground", pp. 132-156.  (* "Forest Resource Scarcity & Social Conflict in Indonesia", C. V. Barber, <i>Environment</i> 40:4 (May 98), pp. 4-37.
	Mon. 30 Apr.	Lipschutz Ch. 5: The National Origins of International Environmental Policies and Practices: "My Country Is <i>in</i> the World", pp. 177-194
Week 16	Mon. 5 May	Lipschutz Ch. 6: Global Environmental Politics and You: "The World Is My Country" (All)  -- No additional reading for today!
	Wed. 7 May	Review for final exam

### Final Exam

The final exam will be held in our usual classroom on Tuesday 13 May 7:30-10:00 am (As posted on [http://www.registrar.ku.edu/pdf/082final\\_rev100+2007.pdf](http://www.registrar.ku.edu/pdf/082final_rev100+2007.pdf) -- Double check this exam time!) in the regular classroom unless announced otherwise.