PPPA 6066: Environmental Policy  
Section 10, Summer 2014

Class Meetings: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 6:10-8:20pm, Duques 361  
Instructor: Peter Linquiti, PhD (linquiti@gwu.edu)  
Office Hours: By appointment

**Course Description**

This course offers an expansive survey of public policies, and their underlying drivers, that affect environmental management, primarily in the United States. Consistent with the nature of a survey course, many topics will be covered, but few will be explored in deep detail. Nonetheless, the scope of the course will help the student form a coherent understanding of the broad outlines of U.S. environmental policy, and the associated economic, legal, and political issues.

Aaron Wildavsky – one of the founders of the modern discipline of public policy analysis – says that policy analysis “can be learned but not taught.” Accordingly, students will be given ample opportunity to practice their policy analysis skills in discussions of the design, evaluation, and implementation of environmental policy.

There are no prerequisites, other than an enthusiasm for the subject matter and a willingness to tackle policy questions for which there are no easy (or definitive) answers. Helpful prior classes include microeconomics (e.g., PPPA6014, ECON6217, PPPA6003) and policy analysis (PPPA6006, PPPA6011).

**Learning Objectives**

This course seeks to improve students’ ability to:

- Characterize market failures, including externalities and public goods, that create environmental problems; understand environmental sustainability in the context of the stocks and flows of natural, manufactured, and human/social capital; distinguish weak and strong sustainability

- Appropriately apply a range of environmental policy tools, including command-and-control regulations, market-based instruments, process requirements, and public-private partnerships; characterize the pros and cons of specific policy tools for particular environmental problems

- Understand the political and economic actors relevant to environmental policymaking, and evaluate their motives, resources, and tactics; understand the intergovernmental institutional relationships that exist in a federal system of environmental policymaking and implementation

- Design and implement effective environmental policies in dynamic, complex, coupled human-natural systems; understand the connection between technological change and environmental policy; craft innovative environmental policies to match evolving conditions

- Characterize relevant issues associated with international efforts to address global environmental issues; understand the capabilities and motives of countries at different stages of economic and political development that face different environmental challenges
**READINGS**

There are two required textbooks

All other readings will be available on Blackboard (blackboard.gwu.edu). Not all readings are required; some are designated as “Recommended” for those students interested in a particular topic.

Students should also scan Greenwire and the NCSE Environmental News Digest on a daily basis. Both email services are available free of charge to GW students (you must use your @gwu.edu address).
- To subscribe to Greenwire, visit [http://www.eenews.net/email_alerts](http://www.eenews.net/email_alerts). Check the box that you are a current subscriber. Select “Greenwire” (and any other news service you want). Then, for the section on “Account Type”, you should check the box “I am not sure what type of account I have.” For “Organization,” enter GWU. Click Sign Up Now. Within 24 hours, you will receive login credentials.
- To subscribe to the NCSE digest, go to news.ncseonline.org and enter your email address in the box labeled “Receive the daily news by email” on the right side of the home page.

**A NOTE ABOUT THE SUMMER SCHEDULE**

The summer session is only six weeks, as compared to the 14-week Fall and Spring semesters. Students should thus expect the weekly workload to be roughly twice that of the usual course offering.

One upside of our schedule is that our class will overlap the Obama Administration’s June 2nd release of its proposed greenhouse gas controls for existing power plants. On Monday, May 19, Politico called this “the most dramatic anti-pollution regulation in a generation.” Background reading will be posted on Blackboard, and we will take time during our class sessions to identify the links between the President’s proposal and the themes of the course.

**CLASS SCHEDULE AND OUTLINE**

**Session 1 (May 20): Laying the Foundations**
- **Key Topics**
  - Course Logistics, Syllabus, Introductions
  - Core Concepts: The “environment,” public policy, policy analysis, tradeoffs
- **Readings**

**Session 2 (May 22): Environmental Economics – A Brief Primer**
- **Key Topics**
  - Optimal Level of Pollution ≠ 0
  - Externalities & public goods
  - Tragedy of the Commons & Managing the Commons
Readings

- G&P, Ch 1 (Four Economic Questions); Ch 2 (Ethics & Economics); Ch 3 (Pollution & Resource Degradation as Externalities); Ch 4 (The Efficiency Standard)
- Dietz et al, Science, “The Struggle to Govern the Commons,” 12/12/03

Session 3 (May 27): Sustainability

Key Topics

- Types of Capital: Natural, manufactured, human, social; weak & strong sustainability
- Limits to Growth, Prometheans, Simon-Ehrlich wager in context of IPAT formulation
- Safety and Sustainability Standards

Readings

- G&P, Ch 7 (The Safety Standard); Ch 8 (The Sustainability Standard); Ch 9 (Measuring Sustainability)
- K&K, Ch 4 (Evolving Concepts of Sustainability in Environmental Policy)
- Shellenberger & Nordhaus, Breakthrough Institute, “Evolve: The Case for Modernization as the Road to Salvation,” September 2012.

Session 4 (May 29): U.S. Environmental History & Institutional Actors

Key Topics

- Westward Expansion, Progressive Era; Modern Environmentalism; Bounded Oscillation
- Congress, Presidency, Courts

Readings

- K&K, Ch 2 (Environmental Politics & Policy in Historical Perspective); Ch 3 (Green Political Ideas & Environmental Policy); Ch 12 (Courts, Legal Analysis, & Environmental Policy); Ch 13 (Congress & Environmental Policy); Ch 14 (The American Presidency & Environmental Policy)
- Snider, Greenwire, “Court Rules EPA Lacks Authority to Regulate Surrogates,” 1/4/13, and VA DOT vs. US EPA, District Court for Eastern District of Virginia, 1/3/13 (read together as one item).

Session 5 (June 3): U.S. Institutional Processes & Policy Tools I (Coercive)

Key Topics

- Processes: Rulemaking, Federalism, Non-Environmental Processes
- Coercive Tools: Command & Control

Readings (Note: The readings for Sessions 5, 6, & 7 don’t align precisely with the content of each class meeting, due to the innate connections among the topics we will be discussing.)

- G&P, Ch 14 (The Regulatory Record)
- K&K, Ch 15 (Environmental Bureaucracies: EPA); Ch 18 (Environmental Federalism)

Assignment Due: Multi-Lens Analysis
Session 6 (June 5): Policy Tools II (Incentive-Based)

- **Key Topics**
  - Market-based Instruments (Pollution Charges, Cap & Trade)
  - Broad Tax Policy, Public Private Partnerships, Federal Procurement, R&D Policy
- **Readings**
  - G&P, Ch 15 (Incentive-Based Regulation: Theory); Ch 16 (Incentive-Based Regulation: Practice); Ch 17 (Promoting Clean Technology)
  - K&K, Ch 25 (The Role of Market Incentives in Environmental Policy)

Session 7 (June 10): Policy Tools III (Process Oriented)

- **Key Topics**
  - Process Tools: RIA, NEPA/EIS, Risk Assessment
  - Corporate Social Responsibility
  - Next Gen Policies
- **Readings**
  - K&K, Ch 17 (Defining Environmental Rulemaking); Ch 19 (Promise & Performance of Collaborative Governance); Ch 26 (Flexible Approaches to Environmental Regulation)

Session 8 (June 12): Environmental Politics

- **Key Topics**
  - Interest Group Behavior (across the ideological spectrum)
  - Public Opinion on Environmental Protection
  - Congressional gridlock & President’s use of executive authority
- **Readings**
  - K&K, Ch 20 (Issue Framing, Agenda Setting, & Environmental Discourse); Ch 23 (Organized Interests & Environmental Policy); Ch 24 (Parties, Campaigns, & Elections)
- **Assignment Due:** None, but Take-Home Mid-Term released on Blackboard after class
Session 9 (June 17): Pollution Policies

- **Key Topics**
  - CAA, CWA, RCRA, CERCLA, TSCA, SDWA, FIFRA, RPS

- **Readings**
  - G&P, Ch 13 (Overview of Environmental Legislation)
  - Congressional Research Service, “Environmental Laws: Summaries of Major Statutes Administered by EPA,” 12/20/13 (don’t worry about all the details of each statute; instead, read for a broad overview of the full set of statutes)
  - DOE, RPS Map, March 2013
  - Assignment Due: Mid-Term

Session 10 (June 19): Resource Policies

- **Key Topics**
  - Federal land use/management (NPS, USFS, BLM)
  - Endangered Species Act
  - Ecosystem-Based Management

- **Readings**
  - G&P, Ch 10 (Natural Resources & Ecosystem Services)
  - K&K, Ch 16 (Bureaucracy & Natural Resource Policy); Ch 27 (Ecosystem-Based Management & Restoration)
  - Congressional Research Service, “Federal Land Ownership: Overview & Data,” 2/8/12 (don’t worry about all the data; read for a broad overview of institutional roles and responsibilities).

Session 11 (June 24): Policy Interventions in Complex Coupled Systems

- **Key Topics**
  - Individual Systems
  - Coupled Human-Natural Systems

- **Readings**
  - K&K, Ch 8 (U.S. Climate Change Politics: Federalism & Complexity); Ch 29 (Environmental Policy & Science)

Session 12 (June 26): International Environmental Policy

- **Key Topics**
  - Globalization: Spatial disconnection of Production & Consumption
  - Climate Change Negotiations

- **Readings**
  - G&P, Ch 21 (Economics of Global Agreements)
  - K&K, Ch 10 (U.S. International Environmental Policy); Ch 11 (Global Environmental Policymaking)


Assignment Due: None, but Final Environmental Policy Analysis Memos are in hardcopy to the instructor’s mailbox in MPA601, by 5pm on Thursday, July 3.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

There are three graded assignments for this course, each worth one-third of your overall grade.

Multi-Lens Analysis: Choose an environmental issue you are interested in. As a practical matter, it would be best not to choose a sprawling topic (e.g., “urban air quality in Houston” would be a better topic than “climate change.”) Do sufficient research, relying on credible sources, to characterize the issue through at least four of the eight lenses in the Linquiti reading.

In your written submission, first summarize the environmental issue from the perspective of each individual lens. This first section should be in outline form, with one major heading for each of the lenses you are applying. Under each heading, you should provide three to five insights about the issue as viewed through that lens. Each insight should be a separate bullet point of no more than two or three sentences. Next, in narrative form, contrast the insights you can glean from the simultaneous application of multiple lenses to the issue you’ve selected. Finally, reflect on the value (if any) of taking a multi-lens perspective; if you feel that the approach is unhelpful, explain your reasoning.

Your goal is not to make an argument for a particular policy action, but to instead create a comprehensive picture of all facets of the issue (hint: be sure to thoughtfully “voice” the opinions of those you personally disagree with).

There is no fixed page limit, but a good paper might devote about four single-spaced pages to the lens-specific outline, another three double-spaced pages to the integrated, analytic narrative, and then two double-spaced pages to the final reflections section.

Take Home Mid-Term: The take-home midterm will consist of five questions, your answers to which should be based on course readings and discussions. Each answer will be limited to two paragraphs.

Final Environmental Policy Analysis Memo: This 12-page, double-spaced memo will provide a complete analysis of an environmental policy issue. You may choose any environmental issue you like, other than the one you selected for your Multi-Lens Analysis. You should start with a problem definition that uses both evidence and logic to demonstrate why the problem needs to be addressed. Then, describe your proposal for addressing the problem. Explain if/how you considered alternative ways of addressing the problem and why you discarded them. Make a convincing case for your recommendation while bearing in mind that one-sided arguments and exaggerated rhetoric are rarely convincing. Be sure to identify the essential tradeoffs associated with your recommendation (e.g., the tradeoff between the economic well-being of poor, Appalachian coal mining communities and the goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions from power plants in order to mitigate climate change). While this is not a research project per se, you must investigate your selected topic in sufficient detail – relying on credible sources – to
allow you to draw evidence-based conclusions. Citations can follow any format, as long as they are clear and consistent. Citations should be on a separate page and do not count against the page limit. Your paper must clearly demonstrate your understanding of course readings and class discussions.

CLASS PARTICIPATION

Policy analysis is a collective activity that benefits from discussion and debate. And, as more art than science, learning to do policy analysis depends on active student engagement. Students are expected to contribute to class discussions with critical thinking, creative suggestions, and substantive questions. Students can expect to be called on by name from time to time if class discussion bogs down or only a narrow range of perspectives is being heard. Students are expected to remain respectful of others’ opinions and encouraged to keep an open mind about their own opinions.

Class participation will not be graded, but each student will be randomly assigned several readings from the syllabus and be expected to help launch the discussion of the assigned reading. Reading assignments will be posted on Blackboard prior to the second class meeting.

GRADING

- Grades for assignments and for the course as a whole reflect the following philosophy:
  - **A Excellent**: Exceptional work for a graduate student. Work at this level is unusually thorough, well reasoned, creative, methodologically sophisticated, and well written. Work is of exceptional, professional quality.
  - **A- Very Good**: Very strong work for a graduate student. Shows signs of creativity and a strong understanding of appropriate analytical approaches, is thorough and well reasoned, and meets professional standards.
  - **B+ Good**: Sound work for a graduate student; well reasoned and thorough, without serious analytical shortcomings. Indicates the student has fully accomplished the basic objectives of this graduate course.
  - **B Adequate**: Competent work for a graduate student with some evident weaknesses. Demonstrates competency in the key course objectives but the understanding or application of some important issues is less than complete.
  - **B- Borderline**: Weak work for a graduate student but meets minimal expectations. Understanding of key issues is incomplete. (A "B-" average in all courses is not sufficient to sustain graduate status in 'good standing'.)
  - **C+ / C / C- Deficient**: Inadequate work for a graduate student; rarely meets minimal expectations for the course. Work is poorly developed or flawed by numerous errors and misunderstandings of important issues.
  - **F Unacceptable**: Work fails to meet minimal expectations or course credit for a graduate student. Performance has consistently failed to meet minimum course requirements. Weaknesses and limitations are pervasive.

ADDITIONAL POLICIES AND INFORMATION

- **Blackboard**: Blackboard will be used to communicate with students. Please make sure that you can access the course and that you regularly check whatever email account Blackboard uses for you. If you have problems with Blackboard, contact the Helpdesk at 202-994-5530 or helpdesk.gwu.edu.
- **Attendance**: Please try not to miss class! Policy analysis is a skill that is learned by doing and we will be practicing these skills in class. If you do miss a class, please make sure you get notes from a classmate and download assigned materials from Blackboard.
- **Turning Things In**: Assignments are due in hardcopy at the start of class. Electronic submission of assignments is not permitted. Multi-page assignments should be stapled; covers are unnecessary.
Late Work: Unless an exception is made by the instructor, late work will be penalized with a one grade step reduction (e.g. from an A- to a B+) per day.

Laptops: You are welcome to use a laptop to take notes. Please refrain from checking email and surfing the web during class. It is extraordinarily distracting to people sitting behind you!

Collaboration: Unless specified in writing by the instructor, all assignments must be completed by students working on their own.

Academic Honesty: All examinations, papers, and other graded work products and assignments are to be completed in conformance with the George Washington University Code of Academic Integrity. (See http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html).

Incompletes: A student must consult with the instructor to obtain an “incomplete” before the last day of class. The student and instructor will sign the CCAS contract for incompletes and submit it to the School Director. Consult the TSPPPA Student Handbook for the relevant CCAS policy.

Grades: No grade changes can be made after the conclusion of semester, except for clerical error.

Syllabus: This syllabus is a guide to the course. Sound educational practice requires flexibility and the instructor may revise content and requirements during the semester.

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities: If you need additional time or other accommodation due to a disability, let the instructor know in first week of the class. For accommodation on the basis of disability, you need to provide documentation to the Office of Disability Support Services.

University Student-Support Resources: Help in addressing academic, social, and personal issues is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week through the University Counseling Service which can be reached at 202 994 5300.