

 **Sample Course Syllabus**

PS 475/575

Environmental Politics and Policy

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IMPORTANT: Using the Blackboard Portal and your ONID email account are required for this course. Assignments must be submitted using Blackboard and all communication will use ONID email. You can have your ONID email account forwarded to another email account by going to the ONID website and following the instructions for forwarding email. Note: Students who do not submit assignments or communicate with the instructor during the quarter will receive a failing course grade.

I. INTRODUCTION

OSU Catalog description: "Environmental and natural resource issues and policies in national and regional context, emphasizing public attitudes, elections, Congress, public policy, and relevant national and state agencies." While there is a prerequisite for the lecture version of the course, there is no prerequisite for the web version of the course taught by Professor Steel.

This is a web-based course, which examines the politics of environmental and natural resource environmental policy issues, with an emphasis on Western public lands. Many of the materials required for the course are located at this web site. There are also various web sites with links to many environmental research organizations and interest groups. It will be necessary to acquire an internet account to successfully complete the course.

The Ecampus version of the Environmental Politics and Policy course at OSU will begin with a discussion of environmental politics in general, and then proceed to discuss issues of great concern to the Pacific Northwest-especially those involving the management of public lands and waters (e.g., forests, rangelands, and salmon restoration efforts).

Throughout the term your readings and assignments will have you consider:

- >Values concerning the environment and people's interaction with the natural world.
- >Properties of policy-formulating systems--particularly concerning the environment.
- >Distinguishing characteristics of natural resource and environmental issues.
- >Over the term fundamental features of policy processes will be developed (e.g., incrementalism, interest groups, governmental structures, regulatory capture, symbolic politics, etc.). In addition, distinguishing characteristics of natural resource and environmental issues will be developed (e.g., common pool resource or public good features, complexity and uncertainty, long feedback loops, exponentially escalating effects, etc.). Understanding of the political and value origins of environmental problems will emerge as we try to integrate these topics.

II. COURSE APPROACH

Alternatively, through the term, we will consider:

- >Values concerning the environment and people's interaction with the natural world.
- >Properties of policy-formulating systems--particularly concerning the environment.
- >Distinguishing characteristics of natural resource and environmental issues.
- >Over the term fundamental features of policy processes will be developed (e.g., incrementalism, interest groups, governmental structures, regulatory capture, symbolic politics, etc.). In addition, distinguishing characteristics of natural resource and environmental issues will be developed (e.g., common pool resource or public good features, complexity and uncertainty, long feedback loops, exponentially escalating effects, etc.). Understanding of the political and value origins of environmental problems will emerge as we try to integrate these topics; we will discover ways in which political systems are and are not suited to the requirements of natural resource and environmental issues from a national and international perspective.

III. COURSE FORMAT

This course was designed to offer students the flexibility of taking an undergraduate or graduate course via the World Wide Web.

All instruction, some readings, and assignments will be provided via the World Wide Web and email. All students enrolling in the web version of PS 449/549 must be self-motivated and comfortable using the electronic medium.

There are a few general guidelines for success in this course. First, keep up with

your readings and assignments. Second, ask if you do not understand something--use your ONID email.

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IV. REQUIRED TEXTS

Available through the OSU Bookstore (www.bookstore.mu.orst.edu):

- >Vig, Norman and Michael Kraft, Environmental Policy: New Directions for the Twenty-First Century (CQ Press).
- >Davis, Charles ed., Western Public Lands and Environmental Politics (Westview Press).

Web Readings Available at this site:

- >Steel, Brent, "Competing Natural Resource Management Paradigms in the West." [Reading #1]
- >Steel, Brent, Mark Brunson and Courtland Smith, "Social Assessment Manual for Natural Resource Managers." [Reading #2]
- >Steel, Brent, "Environmental Values and Behavior: Hypocrisy or Consistency?" [Reading #3]
- >Brunson, Mark, and Bruce Shindler and Brent Steel, "Rural versus Urban Differences in Natural Resource Management Preferences." [Reading #4]
- >Steel, Brent, "Interest Group and Industry Techniques in the Policy Process." [Reading #5]
- >Steel, Brent and Courtland Smith "Salmon Policy in Oregon"[Reading #6]
OSU Extension Salmon Tabloid

V. ASSIGNMENTS

- >You are expected to participate in at least five on-line discussions during the quarter using the Blackboard portal. [50 points]
- >There are four 'thinkpieces' assigned, which will have you discuss and analyze course materials. [400 points total]
- >Graduate students (those enrolled in PS 575) will be required to do an additional book review for the course from a suggested list of books: Graduate Students. [100 points]

VI. COURSE POLICIES

1. Advanced notice is required for late assignments.

2. Extra credit will not be allowed in this course.
3. All OSU academic regulations will be followed in this course. Academic regulations are available at:
<http://catalog.oregonstate.edu/ChapterDetail.aspx?key=75> This includes the university policy concerning incompletes: "When a requirement of a course has not been completed for reasons acceptable to the instructor and the rest of the academic work is passing, a report of I may be made and additional time granted."
4. You are expected to do all required reading.
5. Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated in this course. Engaging in such behaviors will result in a failing course grade. You are to do ALL of your own work. Plagiarism is defined as representing (and using) another person's ideas, writings, and work as one's own. Appropriate citation must be used for all materials incorporated into you work.
6. Proper spelling, grammar, and citation should be used in all assignments. We all make typos, but try to catch them as best you can.

VII. ESSAY/EXAM EVALUATION CRITERIA

The following criteria will be used for evaluating written assignments and exams:
[1=Poor; 2=Average; 3=Good; 4=Excellent]

- >COMMITMENT-did you cover all relevant materials/questions?
- >AMBITION-did you take each issue to task?
- >ENGAGEMENT-did you make connections between issues?
- >CLARITY-was the paper readable and well organized?
- >READINGS/COURSE MATERIALS-did you use appropriate reading and other course materials in your work? [note: cite everything appropriately] You are also strongly encouraged to use additional resources: see "External Links" at this site.
- >COMPARISON-in general, how did your work compare to the rest of the class?
- >DIRECTIONS-a "no brainer" here. Did you follow directions?

VIII. EVALUATION

Four Think Pieces--100 points each [400 points total]

Five on-line discussions--10 points each [50 points total]

Graduate student book review (graduate students only)- [100 points total]

IX. DUE DATES

Assignment [Due date]:

- >Thinkpiece #1 [XXXX by Midnight]
- >Thinkpiece #2 [XXXX by Midnight]
- >Thinkpiece #3 [XXXX by Midnight]
- >Thinkpiece #4 [XXXX by Midnight]
- >Participation [Finish XXXX by Midnight or other scheduled times]
- >Graduate student book review [Finish by XXXX Midnight]

X. FINAL GRADE DISTRIBUTION

Letter Grade Percent of points possible

- A [95-100%]
- A- [90-94%]
- B+ [87-89%]
- B [83-86%]
- B- [80-82%]
- C+ [77-79%]
- C [73-76%]
- C- [70-72%]
- D+ [67-69%]
- D [63-66%]
- D- [60-62%]
- F [0-59%]

XI. TOPICS AND READINGS

Topics and Readings [note: topic readings are not proportionate. Some topics require more reading materials than others]:

1. INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE AND THE WEB- Review course Syllabus and Introduction; send Professor Steel a practice email and try sending an attachment. Readings: Web Reading #2 -this will introduce you to the various approaches used by social scientists to study the social values of environmental and natural resource issues.

2. THE EMERGENCE OF MAINSTREAM (WESTERN) ENVIRONMENTALISM AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY-Rise of conservation and environmental movements in Western societies; changing environmental and natural resource management paradigms; changing science and technology and the impact on society; "yogurt eaters for wilderness." Readings: Web Reading #1; Web Reading #3; Web Reading #4; Vig & Kraft et al., Chapter 1.

3. THE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY INSTITUTIONS, PROCESS AND

PARTICIPANTS- Introduction to environmental policy processes and the actors involved; strategies of influence in the policy process; interest groups; government agencies; value of participation to political systems.

- a. Federalism and Environmental Policy- Vig & Kraft et al., Chapter 2
- b. Public Opinion and the Media- Vig & Kraft et al., Chapter 3
- c. Political Parties and Interest Groups- Vig & Kraft et al., Chapter 4; Web Reading #5
- d. Congress- Vig & Kraft et al., Chapter 5
- e. President- Vig & Kraft et al., Chapter 6
- f. Agencies- Vig & Kraft et al., Chapter 7
- g. Courts- Vig & Kraft et al., Chapter 8

4. WESTERN PUBLIC LANDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS- Politics, policy and change in western public lands management.

- a. Introduction to Western Public Lands Issues- Davis ed., Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4
 - b. Public Rangelands Policy- C. Davis in Davis ed. Chapter 5
 - c. Mining Policy- C.M. Klyza in Davis ed. Chapter 6
 - d. Energy Policy- D.H. Davis in Davis ed. Chapter 7
 - e. National Parks Policy- W.R. Lowry in Davis ed. Chapter 8
 - f. Wilderness Policy- C.W. Allin in Davis ed. Chapter 9
 - g. Salmon Policy in Oregon- Steel and Smith Web Reading #6; and OSU Extension Salmon Tabloid
 - h. Policy Change- C. Davis in Davis ed. Chapter 11
 - i. Policy Change- C. Davis in Davis ed. Chapter 11
5. CONCLUSION- Environmental Politics in the United States. Reading: Vig & Kraft et al., Chapter 10.

Note: "Students with documented disabilities who may need accommodations, who have any emergency medical information the instructor should know, or who need special arrangements in the event of evacuation, should make an appointment with the instructor as early as possible (use email for this class), no later than the first week of the term. In order to arrange alternative testing the student should make the request at least one week in advance of the test. Students seeking accommodations should be registered with the Office of Services for Students with disabilities."

Course evaluation

We encourage you to engage in the course evaluation process each term – online, of course. The evaluation form will be available toward the end of each term, and you will be sent instructions by Ecampus. You will login to “Student Online Services” to respond to the online questionnaire. The results on the form are anonymous and are not tabulated until after grades are posted.