Environmental Politics and Policy
ENVI 215

Macalester College, Autumn 2023


Instructor
Eric Wojchik, Visiting Assistant Professor

Student drop-in hours: Friday afternoons (1:00pm -4:00pm), after class, also by appointment
Office location: Olin-Rice 248
Email: Primary: ewojchik@macalester.edu; Secondary: eric.wojchik@metc.state.mn.us
Phone: 507-316-2614

My Availability
I can usually meet before and after class. See Moodle for sign up link to my office hours. It may take me 24 hours to respond to email.

Course Details
Location/Time: In-person, Monday evenings, 7:00pm – 10:00pm, Carnegie 305
Prerequisite: None. Credit info: 4-credit course.
Required Texts: No required texts. We will be reading excerpts from The Politics of the Earth by John Dryzek. However, all readings from this text will be available on Moodle. You can purchase or check out this book if you prefer to read a physical copy.

All readings are essential (unless stated otherwise). All materials will be available in the Course Moodle.

Course Description
The American environmental movement has transformed the nature of politics and the politics of nature over the last six decades. Because of seminal laws, like the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts, the U.S. is now party to significant regional and international treaties. While these transformations have been profound, there are many challenges that continue to confront...
lasting environmental protection and management, including issues of implementation and regulation. As an introduction to the field of Environmental Politics & Policy, we will chart the evolution of the environmental movement in the U.S. and how the U.S. has engaged in international commitments.

This course provides an introduction to the field of Environmental Politics and Policy. Using a comparative approach, the course engages the meaning and development of environmental governance. We will explore the tandem rise of the modern environmental movement and profound new environmental legislation in the U.S. and internationally. Topics investigated will include: deforestation, hazardous wastes, climate change, population growth, and loss of biodiversity.

Course Learning Objectives
By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Identify the historical, institutional and political contexts within which environmental policy is created and implemented.
- Learn and recognize the policy-making process.
- Perform a group project exploring the policy and politics of a particular environmental policy.
- Develop an enhanced sense of social responsibility and commitment to civic participation.

In addition, I hope that we develop a community that deeply engages with the material, generously listens to and learns from each other with humility, kindness, and respect, and has a bit of fun along the way.

Teaching Philosophy
Before getting into the detailed aspects of our course and its content, I would like to share some general thoughts that are guiding how I’m approaching this course.

We belong to institutions and participate in structures that recreate and reinforce inequality and violence. I have designed this course to push us to see local structures, policies, and practices that sustain or exacerbate inequity and envision ways to improve the lives of local residents.

I will do everything I can to guide this community through ever-changing circumstances. Please know that just as I will stretch for you, I ask that you be flexible with me. Just as I will work to empathize with you, I ask you to empathize with me. I request generosity toward one another as we navigate our challenges.

Grading
Grading for this course is in accordance with University standards:

A = exceptional achievement;
B = above average performance;
C = satisfactory performance;
D = below average performance;
F = unacceptable performance.

A (95-100); A- (90-94); B+ (87-90); B (83-87); B- (80-83). Similar ranges for C grades (70-79) and D grades (60-69); Below 60 is a failing grade.

Incompletes will be awarded only when there is a documented medical emergency, documented family emergency, or documented legal reason for not completing the required course work by the end of the semester. Awarding an incomplete requires a written agreement between instructor and student outlining how and when the work will be completed. Students must sign a contract with the instructor for an “I” grade—non-attendance or missing work will not yield an “I”. Students registered on a P/F basis must achieve a grade of at least C- to receive an P.

**Student Assessment**

**Attendance (15%)**

Attending class and engaging in small and full group discussions. Participation includes hosting an enviro news briefing once during the semester.

Attendance plays an essential role in learning; you are warmly invited, encouraged, and expected to attend all class meetings. Attendance will be important not only for your learning, but also for our ability to build a community together and maintain a sense of connection and commitment to one another. Your presence in class matters. (Attendance + Participation = 30% of your grade)

Each student in the course gets one free pass (not related to prolonged illness). You may use this pass at any point in the semester (though please remain cognizant of how your choices and actions may affect your peers, me, and your own ability to complete excellent work) for a 24 hour extension on an assignment or to miss ONE class. Once you have used your free pass (not related to prolonged illness), extensions and absences can only be granted in extreme circumstances.

You are expected to attend each class meeting, to have prepared assigned reading and writing, and to participate in all in-class editing, revising, and discussion sessions. If you do arrive late, it is your responsibility to let me know at the end of class that you were present, but tardy. More than three tardies will consist of an absence. I will not record class for those that are absent unless agreed to with notice.

**Participation (15%)**

Participation is distinct from attendance and is also an essential part of this course. This class will not work unless all class members show up every day prepared to exchange ideas. In-class discussions, on-line discussion forums, responses to brief ungraded writing assignments, etc. will be factored into your course grade. (Attendance + Participation = 30% of your grade)

**Minor Assignments**

These are ungraded assignments which will count towards your overall attendance + participation grade. These include in-class reflections to engage with the readings, quizzes, forum posts, and politics deliberations. I will often require 2-3min in class to answer questions
connected to the readings. This will get us started in our discussions. I will collect these writings in class. They will help me to know if you have done the reading.

**Group Assignments (25%)**

**Discussion Lead Assignment (5%)**

Important: Part of your class presence and effort grade includes leading on weekly discussion based on the topic for that week. To lead your discussion, you may wish to identify a recent news article or academic journal reading covering the subject. Recommended Environmental News sites:

http://www.grist.com/
http://www.eenews.net/eed/
http://www.ens-newswire.com
https://www.nytimes.com/section/climate
https://www.npr.org/sections/environment/
https://orionmagazine.org/
https://www.vox.com/energy-and-environment
https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/
https://www.hcn.org/
https://www.mprnews.org/environment
https://www.mprnews.org/environment/climate-change
https://streets.mn/

We will form groups early in the semester to explore environmental issues that pertain to a particular week’s subject matter and readings. The group project will include the following:

- Work with the instructor to add any pertinent readings, one week in advance
- Present on the topic area, providing analysis and synthesis of ideas
- Ask a series of questions to fellow students to lead the discussion
  - This can be small groups or a similar method to engage your peers
  - Feel free to use technology and polling, as needed
  - Discussion should last at least 20min

The particular format of the project is somewhat open. Feel free to be creative with this. There will be an opportunity to anonymously evaluate group members.

**Engagement on Regional Climate and Natural Systems Policy (5%)**

Create engagement questions and approach, conduct semi-structured peer to peer interviews, and disseminate findings in a class memo.

**Group Policy Proposal Presentation Project (10%)**

We will form groups early in the semester to explore environmental issues. The group project will include a presentation on a policy proposal following the assignment rubric. Policy proposals are a **key tool to present research and recommendations to a non-specialized audience**. They serve as a vehicle for providing evidence-based policy advice to help readers make informed decisions. A strong policy proposal distills research findings in plain language and draws clear links to policy initiatives.
**Writing Assignment (20%)**

*Rewriting:* Rewriting is the reorganizing and restructuring of ideas, paragraphs and sentences within your paper. I strongly recommend peer review or a visit to the MAX center for help with this phase of the writing process. All assignment rubrics can be found the assignments folder in Google drive - [Assignment Rubrics](#)

*Editing:* When completing assignments for inclusion in your final portfolio, papers should be free from mistakes and errors. I strongly recommend peer review or a virtual visit to the MAX center for help with this phase of the writing process.

**Op-ed Essay (20%)**

Intended to develop your public advocacy skills, you will submit a polished, persuasive opinion editorial about a policy that you would like to propose, see implemented, strengthened or defended at the regional, national or international level. Drafts will be peer reviewed.

**Midterm/Final (30% - 15% each)**

Exams will help refine your understanding of terms, institutions and events.

**Extra Credit**

- **Public Comment (5%; 50pts)** – Intended for an expert audience, your assignment is to write a public comment on a particular project or policy from an environmental perspective. Please follow the rubric for this assignment.
- **Informational Interview of an Environmental Professional (5%; 50pts)** – Conduct an informational interview of a professional in the environmental field for extra credit. Please follow the rubric for this assignment.
- **Sustainability Webinar or Environmental Meeting Assignment (5%; 50pts)** - Watch a sustainability webinar or environmental meeting and write a summary of the event.

**Portfolio folder**

All assignments should be submitted via Google Drive, unless otherwise indicated on the assignment sheet.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Grade %</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance &amp; Participation - including minor assignments (in-class reflections, forum posts, political deliberations, and quizzes)</td>
<td>30% (300pts)</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writing Assignment</strong></td>
<td>20% (200pts)</td>
<td><strong>Writing Assignments</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Op-ed (20%; 200pts)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Op-ed: Oct 9th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group Assignments</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Group Assignments</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Policy Proposal Presentation Project (10%; 100pts)</td>
<td>20% (200pts)</td>
<td>Policy Proposal Project: Dec 4th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Discussion Lead (5%; 50pts)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion Lead: 1 week prior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Engagement on Regional Climate and Natural Systems Policy (5%; 50pts)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Engagement on Regional Climate and Natural Systems Policy: Nov 27th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Midterm/Final</strong></td>
<td>30% (300pts)</td>
<td><strong>Mid-term: Oct 23rd</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Mid-term (15%; 150pts)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Final: Dec 11th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Final (15%; 150pts)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course Expectations

**Mode:** This course is scheduled as an in-person course. I intend to hold all class sessions in-person except if situational factors arise, such as personal illness of the instructor, when the class may be held synchronously via Zoom or recorded for later viewing.

**Readings:** Readings will be provided by the course instructor either within Moodle. There is one required text for class - *The Politics of the Earth by John Dryzek*. However, all readings from this text will be available on Moodle. You can purchase or check out this book if you prefer to read a physical copy. There is no need to purchase reading materials for this class. New readings/materials may be added to the Course Schedule, but I will give you at least a week’s notice in these instances.

**Preparedness:** In order to be an active participant in class, you will need to read all articles and truly digest the contents. You’ll need to consistently track what’s happening in your chosen city. Consider yourself ill-prepared if you are not taking notes on the readings and confident in your ability to write or speak in small group discussions.

**Completing work:** All major assignments must be **completed and shared via Google Doc** by the due date listed.

**Forgiveness:** I recognize that there are unavoidable circumstances that sometimes make it impossible for you to attend class or participate at your full potential. Although I hope it isn’t the case, those unavoidable circumstances are possible this semester, given that we are still in the midst of a pandemic. **If you will not be in class for any reason, it is your responsibility to inform me in advance via email. It is also your responsibility to make up work you missed in your absence** (we can work together on a plan but you need to communicate!). Students with disabilities should discuss their accommodations with me early in the course to work out a plan that aligns with maintaining course expectations and learning goals.

**Academic Integrity:** Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty in their college work; violations of academic integrity are serious offenses. Students found guilty of any form of academic dishonesty—including, for instance, forgery, cheating, and plagiarism—are subject to disciplinary action. Examples of behavior that violates this policy, as well as the process and sanctions involved, can be found on the Academic Programs [website](#). If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, please reach out to me before an assignment is due.

**Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Policy:**
In this course, you may use AI tools (such as Bard or ChatGPT) to help you generate ideas and to brainstorm. However, you should note that the material generated by these tools may be inaccurate, incomplete, or otherwise problematic. Beware that overuse of AI may stifle your own independent thinking and creativity, and use any tools (for generating text, code, video, audio, images, or translation) wisely and carefully.
You may not submit any work generated by an AI program as your own. If you include material—including both ideas and language—generated by an AI program, it should be cited like any other reference material, both in this course and at Macalester College in general. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

**Technology & Privacy:** I ask you to respect me and your classmates and do not look at your cell phones during class. Laptops will be permitted, but stay on course material, otherwise the cell phone rule will apply.

I may, at times, record synchronous class sessions in a manner consistent with [Macalester’s classroom recording policy](#). I will share these recordings in a password-protected (and not public) place. If you download any class recordings, you must store them in a password-protected file or on a password-protected site. Please note that the recording policy clearly states that you may not share, replicate, or publish any class recording, in whole or in part, or use any of the recordings for any purpose besides knowing what happened during the class period, without my written approval. If I use any recorded content from any of our classes for purposes beyond our class, I will— in accordance with the policy—obtain your written permission to do so.

**Email Policy:** Email is an essential form of communication; please remember to use correct grammar and address when writing to your professor. I check my email constantly and respond within a 24-hour period (excluding weekends). Please keep this in mind and budget your time accordingly when emailing questions. Avoid writing emails at the last minute about a due assignment; chances are you will not receive a response in time to address the issue.

**Project Due Dates:** Materials should be turned in via Google Drive, unless otherwise indicated. Assignments and projects must be completed at appointed times or absences arranged PRIOR to the due date. See Grading for the list of due dates and the dates for the projects and exam.

**Course Policies**

**Community Health:** I am strongly committed to the health and safety of all of you, myself, and everyone in our respective communities and beyond.

If you do not feel well or are exhibiting any symptoms of COVID-19, please do not come to class. If you feel up to participating remotely, please do so. If you are too ill to participate at all, please be in touch proactively if at all possible.

Please adhere to the [Mac Stays Safer Community Commitment](#), which outlines practices to maintain your own health and that of others around you: wear a mask, maintain a 6 foot distance from others, wash your hands frequently, use hand sanitizer when handwashing is not available.

*I encourage you to make your well-being a priority* throughout this semester and your career here. Investing time into taking care of yourself will help you engage more fully in your academic experience. Remember that beyond being a student, you are a human being carrying your own experiences, thoughts, emotions, and identities with you. It is important to acknowledge any stressors you may be facing, which can be mental, emotional, physical, financial, etc., and how
they can have an academic impact. If you are having difficulties maintaining your well-being, please contact me and/or find support from other resources listed here: http://bit.ly/2zcyuqU.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity: I am committed to making our class and our campus a welcoming, safe, equitable and inclusive space for students of all identities and backgrounds. I intend to foster a classroom environment based on mutual respect where diverse perspectives are recognized and viewed as a resource, strength, and benefit. I do not condone discrimination against any member of the school's community on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, gender, sexual orientation, national origin or ancestry, ability status, health status, age, or veteran status. I welcome your ideas and suggestions about how to ensure the creation of such an inclusive learning community. If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in barriers to your inclusion, accurate assessment, or achievement, please let me know as soon as possible.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: I am committed to supporting the learning of all students in my class. If you are encountering barriers to your learning that I can mitigate, please bring them to my attention. If you need disability related accommodations please contact the Disability Services office by emailing disabilityservices@macalester.edu, or by calling 651-696-6874 to schedule an appointment to discuss your individual needs.

Religious Observance: Students may wish to take part in religious observances that occur during this semester. If you have a religious observance/practice that conflicts with your participation in the course, please contact me before the end of the first week of class to discuss appropriate accommodations.

Sexual Misconduct/Title IX Statement: Macalester is committed to providing a safe and open learning and living environment for all students, staff, and faculty. If you (or someone you know) has experienced any form of sexual misconduct, including sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, please know that you are not alone, and that help and support are available. Please be aware that as a faculty member, I am a non-confidential resource, although I will keep anything you disclose to me private. This means that if I become aware of incidents or allegations of sexual misconduct, I am required to share the matter with the Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Title IX Coordinators. This College policy is intended to ensure that you receive the resources and support you need. If you would like to contact the Title IX office call 651-696-6258 or email titleixcordinator@macalester.edu. You can also file a report: Macalester Incident Report.

If you would like to talk to someone who would not have to share what you tell them with the Title IX office, confidential support resources through Macalester are also available to you:

- **Free, Urgent, Phone Counseling (Press 2) is available to Macalester students anywhere in the world, 24/7/365.** Speak to a licensed mental health counselor 24 hours a day by calling Hamre Center at 651-696-6275, then press or say option 2 when prompted.
- **To make an appointment with one of our counselors or medical providers, call 651-696-6275 or email health@macalester.edu**
- **To contact support through the Center for Religious and Spiritual Life, call 651-696-6298 or email religiouslife@macalester.edu**
Other Resources:
- Time Management Tips: https://www.macalester.edu/max/studyskills/
- Orientation to Moodle: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hc_0PkJ44pl&ab_channel=WagnerCollegeITTraining
- Tech Support: https://www.macalester.edu/its/
- Health and Wellness: https://www.macalester.edu/healthandwellness/
- Emergency Funds: https://www.macalester.edu/financialaid/emergencyaid/
- Information on Food and Housing Insecurity: https://www.macalester.edu/residential-life/; https://www.macalester.edu/offcampus/listings/; https://www.macalester.edu/campus-operations/campuscenter/open-pantry/
- Tips for Successful Online Learning: https://online.uc.edu/successful-online-students/
- Everything Else: Professor Wojchik, ewojchik@macalester.edu

Dash will feature ALL semester