

**PUAD 749, Spring 2004, Wed. 7:20-10 pm, Enterprise 176, <http://classweb.gmu.edu/pbalint>
Instructor: Peter Balint, pbalint@gmu.edu, (703) 993-1404
Office and office hours: Robinson A216, Wed. 5-7 pm, and by appointment**

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

Assignments

Class participation
Three required textbooks
Three policy memos
One research paper, with a related oral presentation
Final exam

Introduction

This course provides an introduction to the complex world of environmental politics and policymaking. We will focus primarily on efforts in the United States from the 1970s to the present to improve and protect the quality of the nation's air, water, and land. We will also consider international issues with important environmental implications that have become prominent on the environmental policy agenda during recent decades—particularly biodiversity loss, stratospheric ozone depletion, and global climate change. During the course, we will examine the histories of various statutory and regulatory responses to national and international environmental problems, assess outcomes, and review specific case studies that illustrate recurring themes in environmental politics and policymaking. Classes will be a mix of lecture, discussion, and other participatory activities.

By the end of the course, students will be familiar with

- the histories and strengths and weaknesses of the U.S. Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, Toxic Substances Control Act, Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, Superfund, and Endangered Species Act—and of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the entity primarily responsible for administering these statutes;
- the important players in U.S. environmental politics and policymaking;
- the scientific controversies related to estimating the human and environmental impacts of global biodiversity loss, ozone depletion, and climate change, the policy options available for addressing these impacts, and the political struggles surrounding both the estimates of potential damage and the proposed policy responses;
- the essential tools of environmental policy analysis, including the assessment of trade-offs, benefits, costs, cost-effectiveness, political feasibility, equity, and justice.

Grading

Class attendance and participation:	10%
Policy memos:	45%
Research paper and presentation:	25%
Final exam:	20%

Books

The main reading assignments will come from the following required books:

1. Fiorino, D. J. 1995. *Making Environmental Policy*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press [ISBN 0-520-08918-9].
2. Portney, P. R., and R. N. Stavins. 2000. *Public Policies for Environmental Protection*, 2nd ed. Washington, DC: Resources for the Future [ISBN 1-891853-03-1].
3. Vig, N. J., and M. E. Kraft. 2003. *Environmental Policy*, 5th ed. Washington, DC: CQ Press. [ISBN 1-56802-698-6].

Other readings from a variety of sources will be required or recommended. Where possible, I will post links to these supplementary readings on the class webpage.

Comments about the Main Assignments

One of the important course requirements is a **research paper** of approximately 3500 words. The final version of the paper is due on April 29, the last class session. The paper can address any issue of interest relevant to environmental policymaking. Students should make an appointment to see me and have a **topic approved** during the week after Spring Break (at the latest). Students who want to have a chance to make revisions based on my feedback before submitting the final version should hand in a well-prepared **draft** no later than April 15, two weeks before the final paper is due. I will get comments back within a week, leaving a week for revisions. (Handing in a draft is recommended but not required.) In class as we go through the first half of the semester, I'll highlight possible paper topics as they come up in readings or discussions. Some time before Spring Break, I'll post on the Website a guide-sheet with a more detailed description of the kind of paper I'm looking for, with recommendations for form and content.

Towards the end of the semester each student will give a brief **oral presentation** on the results of the research for the paper. The presentation will include background information, findings, and policy recommendations. In the early weeks of the second half of the course, I'll post on the Website presentation guidelines with more details about this assignment.

Three policy memos are also required on topics related to the environmental issues we are discussing at the time. A fourth memo is optional. (Students who hand in the fourth memo will have the option of getting extra credit or replacing a grade from one of the earlier memos.) I will post memo-writing guidelines on the Website before the first memo is due.

The **final exam** will be take-home. Questions will be based on readings, lectures, and class discussions. We will discuss the form and content of the final exam in the last couple of class sessions.

Important Notes about Course Policies

1) I will rely on "...@gmu.edu" email addresses for communicating with students (for setup, see <http://www.gmu.edu/email/memo/index.htm>).

- 2) Please contact me right away if personal circumstances arise that may interfere with class participation or completion of assignments.
- 3) Written work should be original, properly referenced, and handed in on time.
- 4) Please read and follow the University and Department Honor Codes, on the Web at:
<http://mason.gmu.edu/%7Emontecin/plagiarism.htm>
<http://www.gmu.edu/departments/pia/r-links/pia-honor-code.htm>

Course Outline

This schedule is tentative; I'll announce changes as we go along. Readings from the main texts are indicated with the lead author's last name followed by the numbers of the required chapters. I'll give information about additional readings as they come due.

Week	Dates	Due	Topic
1	Wed 1/21		Introduction; framework for environmental policy; optimists vs. pessimists
2	Wed 1/28	Vig 1, 3, 12; Reading #1	Sustainability; environment and development; local and global problems
3	Wed 2/4*	Fiorino 1-2; Portney 2; Vig 8	Environment on the agenda; birth of the EPA; major laws; players and politics; key terms
4	Wed 2/11	Fiorino 3; Portney 4; Vig 6	Clean Air Act; cap-and-trade schemes; economic efficiency; environmental justice, tragedy of the commons
5	Wed 2/18**	Portney 3; Vig 9; Reading #2; Memo #1	
6	Wed 2/25	Portney 6; Vig 7	Clean Water Act; federalism; point vs non-point; role of the courts; how clean is clean?
7	Wed 3/3	Reading #3 Memo #2	CWA continued, mid-course review
8	Wed 3/10	No class	Spring Break
9	Wed 3/17	Fiorino 4; Portney 7 Paper topic	Toxic substances; TSCA, RCRA, and Superfund; precautionary principle; risk; regulation; cost-benefit analysis
10	Wed 3/24	Fiorino 5-6; Vig 10 Memo #3	
11	Wed 3/31	Portney 5; Vig 13, 15	Global issues: biodiversity; ozone, climate change; trade; intergenerational justice; wicked problems and uncertainty; international environmental politics
12	Wed 4/7	Vig 14, 16; Reading #4 Memo #4 (optional)	
13	Wed 4/14	Draft paper (optional)	
14	Wed 4/21		Presentations
15	Wed 4/28	Final paper Final exam posted	Presentations
16	Wed 5/5	Final exam, due 10:15 pm	

* 2/3 is last day to add, or to drop without tuition liability. ** 2/20 is last day to drop.