

**UES 210-WR**  
**ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS & POLICY**  
**Birmingham-Southern College**  
**Spring 2017**

Instructor: William Holt, Ph.D./J.D.  
Course: Tuesdays/Thursdays  
Time: 12:30 PM - 1:50 PM  
Location: Harbert 325  
E-Mail: [wholt@bsc.edu](mailto:wholt@bsc.edu)

Office: Harbert 203C  
Telephone: (205) 226-4834  
Office Hours: Mondays/  
Wednesdays, 9 AM-11AM;  
or by appointment

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

In the U.S. billions of American dollars are expended annually on complying with environmental laws. Millions of facilities and pollution sources are regulated (wastewater and drinking water treatment plants, factories, landfills, animal feeding operations, automobiles), but how effective are our major federal environmental laws? Is the quality of our air and water improving? How do major environmental laws work, and is there adequate flexibility to address major differences in human and natural features that exist in the U.S.?

In an international context, there are over 300 bilateral (two countries) and multilateral (more than two countries) agreements that address diverse environmental issues ranging from transboundary air pollution to trade in endangered species to nuclear nonproliferation. In addition to the issues that challenge the effective implementation of national environmental laws, international environmental law must (or should) reflect the will of an extremely broad range of social, economic, ideological, and cultural considerations, and is plagued by strong power imbalances among nations and a lack of “teeth” or enforcement power.

Despite the many challenges faced in the context of national and international environmental policy, many actors (states, nongovernmental organizations, some corporations, international governmental organizations, scientific organizations, and others) continue to push us toward a more sustainable global society. But will such efforts be enough to curb the ever growing impacts of population growth and increased consumption worldwide?

This course serves as a Leadership Studies designated class. This course will provide students insight into the national and global processes of formulating and implementing environmental policies and is broken up into three major sections:

1) An overview of major local, U.S. and global environmental problems and an introduction to major concepts (e.g. polluter pays principle, risk prioritization, precautionary principle, externalities, justice and fairness), approaches (e.g. taxes, incentives, penalties, innovation), and actors involved in U.S. and international environmental policy.

2) Focused study of air, water, land and energy policies and issues. Examination of domestic and international policies concerning climate change. Comparative global focus on environmental justice issues.

3) Student presentations and papers on their semester-long project on an international environmental policy topic developed as a part of the class' participation in the BSC Planning & Design (BP&D) "consulting firm."

Through discussions, readings, videos, interactive classroom exercises, and assignments, the course will explore challenges of designing and implementing U.S. and international environmental policy from geographical, social, economic, legal, and natural science perspectives. The course is vital to students in environment related majors because of the vast investments in compliance, infrastructure, data collection, product innovation, and basic and applied research which are driven by major federal and international environmental laws. Students in pre-law or pre-business will also benefit from the course, as compliance, the link between profitability and proactively addressing environmental concerns, and environmental and social responsibility are all growing issues and areas of employment/practice in private, public, and NGO( non-governmental organizations) sectors.

### **CATALOG DESCRIPTION**

An introduction to U.S. and international policies that address our many significant environmental problems. There are more than 30 major U.S. environmental laws, and over 300 international agreements addressing environmental issues ranging from transboundary air pollution to trade in endangered species to nuclear non-proliferation. Selected U.S. and international policies and processes are highlighted; and challenges and successes of U.S. and international environmental policy are explored. A Leadership Studies designated course.

### **COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES**

This course reinforces writing skills. As such, class time will be dedicated to honing and refining drafts of writing assignments. Students will develop their research policy papers over the course of the term submitting abstracts and annotated bibliographies with argument and findings sections drafts for revisions. The instructor encourages students to set up meetings to discuss their projects.

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to do the following:

- 1) Demonstrate competency in the fields of American and comparative environmental policy.
- 2) Think critically about contemporary environmental issues and challenges through in class exams in which students must develop essay questions written for a professional policy agency.

- 3) Conduct independent research and data analysis through library resources needed to develop a policy paper.
- 4) Understand ethics of academic citations through *ASA Style Guide*.
- 5) Develop a research policy paper written to take a position in the context of work suitable for a governmental or non-profit agency memorandum.
- 6) Hone skills in organizing a research policy paper including developing an abstract, introduction, argument, findings section, conclusion and bibliography.
- 7) Present research findings in a professional manner, both orally and in report form.

### **Writing Reinforcement Outcomes**

Through the Exploration's curriculum writing reinforcement emphasis (Writing Reinforcement) students will be able to:

- 1) Address specific purposes, contexts, and audiences
- 2) Develop ideas to meet the demands of the rhetorical situation
- 3) Utilize appropriate genre and disciplinary conventions (i.e., organization, content, presentation, style)
- 4) Identify sources suitable to the genre or academic discipline
- 5) Employ syntax and mechanics standard to genre or disciplinary practices
- 6) Demonstrate the ethics of academic writing

### **LEADERSHIP STUDIES DESIGNATION**

This is a Distinction in Leadership Studies designated course: we will examine the roles and contexts within which individuals, groups, institutions, and governments influence, formulate, implement, and revise local, national, and international environmental policy. Throughout the semester, we will examine the effectiveness of different approaches to environmental protection and the influences of various actors. Distinction in Leadership Studies (DLS) students who have taken LS 200 and wish to obtain LS credit for this course will be required to apply leadership studies concepts in the research project.

Students should inform the professor of their intention to complete the course for the DLS program; courses must be completed following or concurrently with LS 200.

This course is a Leadership Studies Designated Course and may be used to fulfill requirements in the Distinction in Leadership Studies Program. As an LS-Designate course, UES 210WR challenges students to apply critical and theoretical conceptions of leadership to new situations and to integrate leadership with the concepts and materials considered in this course. All DLS students are expected to:

- 1) Meet with the professor as soon as possible to discuss the course and your role as a DLS student

- 2) Complete a course project or assignment focused on leadership by integrating or reflecting on the relationship between the course materials and your study of leadership
- 3) Demonstrate and model effective classroom engagement
- 4) Complete at least a 500-word reflection on the relationship you see between leadership and the materials considered in this course. Submit your reflection to the instructor and the DLS Program Director.

### **LIST OF READINGS & UNITS RELATED TO LEADERSHIP ISSUES**

Vig & Kraft 2016. Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 (*the roles of states, presidents, congress, courts, and the EPA*)

Axelrod *et al.* 2015. Chapters 2, 4, 5, 10, 11 and 12 (*the roles of international institutions and regimes, and nations*)

### **GENERAL EXPECTATIONS**

- 1) Attend all classes and always arrive for class on time
- 2) Complete readings and assignments on time
- 3) Ask questions and participate actively and effectively in regular class meetings
- 4) Treat everyone in the class with respect, regardless of their viewpoints

### **REQUIRED TEXTS**

The following texts are required for this course:

American Sociological Association (ASA). 2014. *ASA Style Guide*. 5<sup>th</sup> ed. Washington, D.C.: ASA.

Axelrod, Regina S., Stacy D. VanDeveer, and David L. Downie, eds. 2015. *The Global Environment: Institutions, Law, and Policy*. 4th Edition. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press. (readings noted as GE)

Vig, N.J. and Kraft, M.E., eds. 2016. *Environmental Policy: New Directions for the Twenty-First Century*, 9<sup>th</sup> ed. CQ Press. (readings noted as EP)

These texts are available in the BSC Bookstore. Other materials indicated by an asterisk(\*) on the syllabus is available electronically on Moodle.

### **GRADING & EVALUATIONS**

#### Grading

You will receive a numerical score for each grade. The course will use the BSC grading scale (listed below) for all assignments and your term grade.

#### BSC Grading Scale

A	100-93	C	76-73
A-	92-90	C-	72-70
B+	89-87	D+	69-67
B	86-83	D	66-60
B-	82-80	F	59 & below
C+	79-77		

Evaluation

Your final grade in this course will be arrived on the basis of an average of your grades for the required components of the course, weighted, as spelled out below. Each assignment and activity will first be scored from 0 to 100 points. Required work not submitted will be scored as 0. Then your score for each component will be multiplied by a weighting factor to yield the points for that component. The total points will be your average for the course.

<u>% of Final Average</u>	<u>Component</u>	<u>Grade 0-100 pts.</u>	<u>Weighted Factor</u>	<u>Points</u>
15%	Class Participation	_____	.15	_____
20%	Exam One	_____	.20	_____
20%	Exam Two	_____	.20	_____
10%	Annotated Bibliography	_____	.10	_____
30%	Research Paper	_____	.30	_____
5%	Class Presentation	_____	.05	_____
100%	FINAL AVERAGE=TOTAL WEIGHTED POINTS			_____

Assignment Deadlines

Thursday, March 2	Research Policy Paper Assignment Distributed
Thursday, March 9	Review of <i>ASA Style Guide</i> Exam One-distributed in class
Thursday, March 16	Exam One due in class BSC Library Workshop on conducting data analysis
Tuesday, March 23	Abstract and Annotated Bibliography due
Thursday, April 6	Discuss graded abstracts and annotated bibliographies in class with class exercise
Thursday, April 13	Policy Research Paper Argument and Finding Sections drafts due in class.
Tuesday, April 18	Discuss graded Policy Research Paper drafts in class Class Exercise-Students review and comment on drafts Argument and Finding Section drafts returned in class.

Tuesday, May 2  
Wednesday, May 24

Policy Research Paper Final Version  
Class Oral Presentations  
Exam Two – due at 12:30PM during BSC  
scheduled exam period

### Class Participation

Class participation and interaction with instructors and students is one of the hallmarks of liberal arts education. This particular class is no different. Some of the concepts we will explore may be difficult to grasp at first; if every member of the class contributes and asks questions from a variety of perspectives, our learning experience will be enhanced. To participate actively means that you are engaging in readings, which will help you prepare for tests and exams.

Expectations for class participation:

- You should strive to contribute at least once in each class period.
  - Participation will be judged on the quality and depth of your contribution and not just on how often you speak.
  - When interactive activities are scheduled, make sure to prepare adequately so that you are able to participate in a well-informed manner.
- \*\*If you are uncomfortable speaking in class, would like me to call on you, or would like to discuss how you can contribute more effectively please contact me so we can discuss this as soon in the semester as possible.

### Attendance

Class attendance is expected as part of your enrollment in this course. An attendance list will be distributed at each class. It is your responsibility to sign this list each class. This list will serve as your official attendance record for class. Students who are absent three days in succession will be reported to Student Affairs. Absences due to illness, family emergency or participation in a BSC-sponsored activity are considered excused but will require documentation. If you miss an in-class exam, you should expect to make up this work within a week of the class date.

### Exams

The class includes two exams with each counting 20% of your term grade. The take home exams allow you to demonstrate your knowledge of class readings, lectures, and other materials. Since this is a writing reinforcement course, each exam will contain two essay questions in which you will be required to organize formal essays drawing on course materials to develop an argument.

### Research Project and Class Presentations

In order to understand contemporary environmental issues, the class will be part of a simulated environmental consulting firm, BSC Planning & Design (BP&D). Each BP&D member will develop their own 12-page policy paper examining a topic within the larger team issue. This paper will involve selecting an

environmental problem and then comparing a U.S. policy with an international policy addressing this issue.

Also, at the end of the term each team will have a class period in which each member presents on their individual topic. These presentations will precede a class question and answer session on the topic. The research project will include an annotated bibliography (10%) as well as your final paper (35%). The class presentation represents 5% of your term grade.

## **OTHER IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF THE COURSE**

### Backup

To avoid problems that arise when computers crash, laptops are broken or stolen, or pets consume the only existing paper copy of your assignment, obtain a flash or external hard drive on which to back up your work. You should have 10 GB or more of storage space on your flash/hard drive, and that you consider obtaining more than one so that you can make multiple copies of your work.

### Moodle

It is vital for you to familiarize yourself with Moodle for this course as soon as possible. We will use Moodle throughout the semester for posting readings and announcements. Moodle is accessible via a link at the bottom of the BSC homepage <http://www.bsc.edu>.

### Late Assignments

Assignments that are not accompanied by a valid excuse (e.g. illness or family emergency) will lose 10% of their graded value for each day they are late. For example, an assignment that received a 98 out of 100 points, but was turned in one day late would be graded as an 88 losing ten points for lateness.

### Plagiarism and Cheating

Plagiarism and cheating are serious offenses and will be reported to the honor council. Appropriate penalties will be assigned for work that does not meet the standards of academic integrity. Please refer to your copy of the honor code as well as the following sources on plagiarism: <http://plagiarism.org/index.html> and <http://www.turnitin.com>

### BSC Resources for Writers

The Writing Center, located in the Humanities Center 102, offers one-on-one consultation with student writers. The Writing Center serves all writers, in any BSC course, at all levels and at all points in the writing process. Peer tutors spend thirty minutes to an hour per appointment, and there is no limit to the number of tutoring sessions you can have. Drop in during regular hours (M-Thurs, 3:30-10 or Sunday 5-10) or email [writingcenter@bsc.edu](mailto:writingcenter@bsc.edu) to make an appointment. Visit the Writing Center website at <http://www.bsc.edu/academics/arc/writing.cfm> for more information.

### Academic Accommodation

If you are registered for accommodations/ academic adjustments, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss accommodations/ academic adjustments that may be necessary. During this discussion, you are not expected to disclose any details concerning your disability, though you may discuss these details at your discretion. If you have a disability but have not contacted Angie Smith, the Coordinator for Academic Accessibility at BSC, please call 226-7909 or visit Student Development on the second floor of Norton Center to initiate the process. You may also contact her at awsmith@bsc.edu if you have any questions or need more information. Her office hours are Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays 8:30-4:30 or Mondays and Fridays, by appointment.

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

### **PART ONE: URBAN SUSTAINABILITY & ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY**

	<u>Introduction</u>
<b>February 7</b>	Contemporary Environmental Issues-class exercise
<b>February 9</b> <b>February 14</b>	<u>What's Environmental Policy? National v. International</u> Axelrod, Regina S., Stacy D. VanDeveer, and Norman Vig. 2015. "Introduction: Governing the International Environment." Pp. 1-25. GE Axelrod, Regina, <i>et al.</i> 2011. "Environmental Policy Making in the European Union." Pp. 213-238. GE Kraft, Michael E., and Norman J. Vig. 2016. "Achievements and New Directions." Pp. 2-32. EP Najam, Adil. "The View from the South: Developing Countries in Global Environmental Politics." Pp. 213-233 GE.
<b>February 16</b>	<u>Urban Sustainability: The U.S. Environment</u> Bosso, Christopher J., and Nicole E. Tichnor. 2016. "Eating and the Environment: Ecological Impacts of Food Production." Pp. 194-214. EP Nisbet, Matthew C. 2016. Environmental Advocacy in the Obama Years: Assessing New Strategies for Political Change. Pp. 58-78. EP Portney, Kent E. 2016. "Taking Sustainable Cities Seriously: What Cities Are Doing." Pp. 265-285. EP Rabe, Barry G. 2016. "Racing to the Top, the Bottom, or the Middle of the Pack? The Evolving State Government Role in Environmental Protection." Pp. 33-57. EP Weber, Edward, David Burnell, and Hilary S. Boudet. 2016. "Energy Policy: Fracking, Renewables, and the Keystone XL Pipeline. Pp. 172-193. EP



- February 21**  
**February 23**
- The Global Environment  
*Stop Disasters!*-A Disaster Simulation Game in class.  
DeSombre, Elizabeth R. 2015. "Domestic Sources of U.S. Unilateralism." Pp. 133-156. GE  
Esty, Daniel C. 2015. "Free Trade and Environmental Protection. Pp. 330-349. GE  
O'Neil, Kate. 2015. "Architects, Agitators, and Entrepreneurs: International and Nongovernmental Organizations in Global Environmental Politics." Pp. 26-52. GE  
Gallagher, Kelly Sims, and Joanna I. Lewis. 2016. "China's Quest for a Green Economy." Pp. 333-356. EP  
Tobin, Richard J. 2016. "Environment, Population and the Developing World." Pp. 311-332. EP
- February 28**
- Power Up Alabama* Energy Conference-Norton Center
- March 2**
- Evaluating Environmental Policy  
Olmstead, Sheila. 2016. "Applying Market Principles to Environmental Policy." Pp. 215-238. EP  
Press, Daniel, and Daniel A. Mazmanian. 2016. "Toward Sustainable Production: Finding Workable Strategies for Government and Industry. Pp. 239-264. EP  
Selin, Henrik, and Stacy D. VanDeveer. 2016. "Global Climate Change Governance: The Long Road to Paris." Pp. 288-310.  
**Research Policy Paper Assignment Distributed**  
**Review of American Sociological Association (ASA).**  
**2014. ASA Style Guide. 5<sup>th</sup> ed. Washington, D.C.: ASA. Pp.1-38.**
- March 7**
- U.S. Environmental Policy Actors  
Andrews, Richard N.L. 2016. "The Environmental Protection Agency." Pp. 151-170. EP  
Kraft, Michael E. 2016. "Environmental Policy in Congress." Pp. 103-127. EP  
O'Leary, Rosemary. 2016. "Environmental Policy in the Courts." Pp. 128-150. EP  
Vig, Norman. 2016. "Presidential Powers and Environmental Policy." Pp. 80-102. EP
- March 9**
- International Actors  
Downie, David Leonard. 2015. "International Environmental Regimes and the Success of Global Ozone Policy." Pp. 83-109. GE  
McCormick, John. 2011. "The Role of Environmental NGO's International Regimes." Pp. 92-110. GE  
Peel, Jacqueline. 2011. "Environmental Protection in the

21<sup>st</sup> Century: The Role of International Law. Pp. 48-69. GE

**Exam One-distributed in class**

**March 14**                    **Exam One-discussion session**

**PART TWO: ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ISSUES**

BP&D Team Meetings

**March 16**                    Class meets at BSC Library Computer Room with UES Reference Librarian Steven Laughlin to discuss conducting data searches for policy research paper assignment.

**Exam One-due in class**

Land

**March 21**                    Club of Rome. 2012. <http://clubofrome.org>.  
Beatley, Timothy. (2003). Planning for Sustainability in European Cities: A Review of Practice in Leading Cities. In R. LeGates and F. Stout, eds. *The City Reader*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. London: Routledge, 411-21.\*  
Smith, David & Michael Timberlake. 2002. Hierarchies of Dominance Among World Cities: A Network Approach. In Saskia Sassen, ed., *Global Networks: Linked Cities*. New York: Routledge, 117-41.\*  
van Naerssen, Ton. 2001. "Cities and the Globalization of Urban Development Policy." Pp. 177-195 in *Globalization and Development Studies*, edited by Frans J. Schuurman. London: Sage.\*

Environmental Impact Statements

**March 23**                    See Moodle attachments.  
**Abstract and Annotated Bibliography-due in class**

**March 28**                    **Spring Break-classes do not meet.**  
**March 30**

CERCLA (Superfund)

**April 4**                    Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation,  
**April 6**                    and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA). US EPA.  
[www.epa.gov/superfund](http://www.epa.gov/superfund)

**Discuss graded abstracts and annotated bibliographies in class.**

Air

**April 11**                    U.S Environmental Protection Agency. 2012. *Summary of the Clean Air Act*. Washington, D.C.: USEPA.\*  
See Moodle for CAA cases.

Water and Riparian Rights

**April 13**                    Copeland, Claudia. 2010. *Clean Water Act: A Summary of the Law*. Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research

Service.\*

Millennium Ecosystem Assessment. 2005. *Ecosystems and Human Well-Being: Wetlands and Water Synthesis*. Washington, D.C.: World Resources Institute.\*

**Policy Research Paper: Argument and Finding Section drafts due in class.**

Hazardous and Solid Wastes

**April 18**

**Discuss Policy Research Paper drafts in class**

**Class Exercise-Students review and comment on drafts Argument and Finding Section drafts returned in class.**

**April 20**

Hazardous Waste; RCRA Subtitle C. 2013. U.S. EPA.  
<http://www.epa.gov/region02/waste/csummary.htm>

Chemicals and Toxins

See Moodle attachments.

Selin, Henrik. 2015. "Global Politics and Policy on Hazardous Chemicals." Pp. 259-282. GE

Energy

**April 25**

Achenbach, Joel. 2010. "The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Grid: Can We Fix the Infrastructure that Powers Our Lives?" *National Geographic*. July 2010:118-39.\*

Axelrod, Regina. 2015. "Democracy and the Global Nuclear Renaissance: From the Czech Republic to Fukushima." Pp. 305-329. GE

Lewis, Joanna I., and Kelly Sims Gallagher. 2015. "Energy and Environment in China: National and Global Challenges." Pp. 187-212 GE

**April 27**

Endangered Species

See Moodle attachments.

Rosendale, G. Kristin. 2015. "Global Biodiversity Governance: Genetic Resources, Species and Ecosystems." Pp. 283-304.

**May 2**

International Environmental Law

Faure, Michael, and Jurgen Lefevere. 2015. "Compliance with Global Environmental Policy: Climate Change and Ozone Layer Cases." Pp. 110-132. GE

**Policy Paper – due in class.**

**May 4**

Climate Change

Betsill, Michele M. 2015. "International Climate Change Policy: Complex Multilevel Governance." Pp. 234-258. GE

McCright, Aaron, and Riley Dunlap. 2000. "Challenging Global Warming as a Social Problem: An Analysis of the Conservative Movement's Counter-Claims." *Social Problems* 47(4): 499-522.\*

**May 9**

The Future of Environmental Policy

Kraft, Michael E., and Norman J. Vig. 2016. "Conclusion: Future Environmental Challenges and Solutions." Pp. 358-378. EP

VanDeveer, Stacy D. 2015. "Consumption, Commodity Chains and Global and Local Environments." Pp. 350-372. GE

**May 11**

**Honors Day-class does not meet**

**May 16**

Conclusions

**Exam Two Distributed**

**May 24**

**Exam Two – due at 12:30pm during scheduled BSC exam period.**

**Class Presentations during exam period**