Course Objectives

The main purpose of this course is to examine the relationships between institutional decisions, administrative processes and the implementation of environmental policies in the United States using examples drawn from natural resources, energy and pollution control programs.

Key learning objectives include the consideration of:

- Various models of policy design, implementation and change.

- Roles played by policy actors or networks and political institutions such as courts, the chief executive, staff agency or legislatures in shaping the decisions of agency decision-makers.

- Alternative ways of structuring administrative decisions. Whether agencies choose to undertake or not undertake a particular course of action may depend upon considerations such as cost, perceived risks, and the role of science or scientists.

- How decisions are affected by specifying the form of governmental intervention (e.g., regulation), the appropriate level of government for the assumption of program management responsibilities (e.g., federalism), or by integrating sustainable policy concerns within non-environmental policy arenas.

- How policy indicators can help us understand program value.

There are three contact hours per week and it is expected that each student will be responsible for twelve hours of outside work for the same period of time.

Course Format

The format of this course is largely based on readings and discussion. Supplemental lectures will occasionally be presented on a particular topic or as a means of setting the discussion agenda.

For each session, several students will be designated as discussion leaders and will bear the responsibility for discussing at least one of the suggested readings. Each discussion leader is expected to make a 15-20 minute presentation of the key points and issues raised by the author(s) of the readings, including a critical analysis of how well the objectives of the research are carried out. A one page precis should be completed with copies for everyone. Please present your
analysis in a conversational manner; i.e., do not read your precis. A brief period of time will be allocated for questions and discussion after each presentation.

**Course Requirements**

Students will be evaluated on the basis of their performance on two exams (a midterm and a final), a term paper and class participation (25% each). The latter activity is based on attendance plus quality of your commentary plus article analyses.

This course adheres to the Academic Integrity Policy of the Colorado State University General Catalog and the Student Conduct Code. Colorado State University has long upheld values of academic and scholastic integrity. The General Catalog's "Policies and Guiding Principles" asserts that CSU "expects students to maintain standards of personal integrity that are in harmony with the educational goals of the institution" - citing "principles of academic honesty" as the first example. (1.6 Page 1).

**Term Paper Assignment**

One of the objectives of this course is to encourage you to write a paper of sufficient quality to warrant its presentation at a professional conference. Accordingly, you will be asked to submit a paper proposal by **February 15**. A draft or detailed outline is due **March 22** and a completed project should be turned in on or **April 5**. Everyone will offer a 12-15 minute presentation of her/his project on **April 26**.

Let us begin with the proposal. It should be relatively brief (no more than 2-3 pages) and should identify the research problem, the purpose of the research and how you intend to do it. The research problem is often based on the critical examination of a conceptual framework, theory or model, an effort to resolve or reconcile competing arguments or, in some cases, the lack of information about a particular topic. For example, the model's usefulness is contingent upon its ability to explain or predict political events or decisions. An examination of a controversy or the analysis of data may reveal that a particular facet of the model is useful or irrelevant (e.g., the importance of agency staffing levels in the implementation of air quality programs).

Another example is a research focus on a topic which evokes disagreement from differing analysts such as the usefulness of cost/benefit analysis as a means of justifying a given project or course of action by a governmental agency. Finally, there are certain topics such as the state regulation of organic agriculture that have not received attention from political scientists; thus, a synthesis of research from disparate sources (e.g., other social science journals such as rural sociology; government documents; dissertation abstracts; news magazines; and, on occasion, newspaper sources such as the New York Times, Washington Post, Wall Street Journal or High Country News) is appropriate.

Having isolated the research problem, you will then state the purpose of the research (e.g., the purpose of this paper is to assess the validity of social science indices used in the preparation of environmental impact statements by the U.S. Department of Energy). This can be done very succinctly, depending on how you choose to define the boundaries of the research problem. It is
easy to say that water quality concerns will be examined but it is also necessary to think in terms of problem type (point source vs. nonpoint source), who (urban vs. rural users), when (the analysis of water quality before and after the abatement program is in place), and level of government (local, district, county, state, regional or national). In short, the research questions one wishes to address are to be included in this section.

Finally, the question of how these issues will be addressed should be included. Usually this means that a particular mode of analysis is employed; e.g., a survey of the literature, documents research, participant observation, or the analysis of data (usually surveys or government statistics). To the extent that more than one type of analysis is performed, so much the better - as long as you remain consistent in the research focus or theme under examination. If the paper is data based, an additional sentence or two describing the techniques to be used is appropriate.

**Course Readings**


**Course Outline**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tr>
<td>1/18</td>
<td>Approaches to the Design and Implementation of Environmental Programs</td>
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**Required Readings**

Press, Ch 1; Steelman Ch 1


**Suggested Readings**


1/25 The Institutional Context of Environmental Policy Decisions

Required Readings

VK, Ch 4,5,6 & 7; KS, Ch 2, 3 & 5

Suggested Readings


Brian Ellison, "Bureaucratic Politics, the Bureau of Reclamation, and the Animas-La Plata Project,” Natural Resources Journal (Spring, 2009).


2/1 Environmental Policy Implementation and Change

Required Readings

Steelman, Ch 2-6


Suggested Readings:


2/8 Science and Environmental Policy

**Required Reading**


**Suggested Readings**


Keller, Ann C. "Credibility and relevance in environmental policy: Measuring strategies and performance among science assessment organizations." *Journal of Public Administration*
Research and Theory (2009).


2/15* Environmental Regulation

Required Readings

KS, Ch 4; VK, Ch 10; Press, Ch 4 & 5

Suggested Readings:


2/22 Industry Compliance with Environmental Policies

Required Readings

VK, Ch 11


*Paper proposal is due
and environmental performance: Controlling truck emissions in the US,” Regulation and Governance (September, 2008).

Suggested Readings:


3/1 Collaborative Decision-making

Required Readings

KS, Ch 6

Tomas M. Koontz, Craig W. Thomas, “What Do We Know and Need to Know about the Environmental Outcomes of Collaborative Management?” Public Administration Review V66 (December, 2006).

Suggested Readings


3/8 EXAM

3/15 Spring Break

3/22 Environmental Federalism

**Required Readings**

McAdam & Boudet (all)


**Suggested Readings**


NOTE: I’ll circulate a sign-up sheet for consultation times

3/29 Term Project Consultation
4/5*  Shaping State and Local Policies

Required Readings

VK, Ch 2 & 12; KS, Ch 7

Suggested Readings


4/12       WPSA Conference – no class

4/19       Some Pathways to Improved Environmental Governance

Required Readings

Press, Ch 6


Suggested Readings


*Final version of the term paper is due.


4/26 Presentation of Student Project Reports

5/3* Indicators of Environmental Quality: Have Policies Made a Difference?

**Required Reading**

Press, Ch 2; VK, Ch 16

**Suggested Readings**


*Take home exam will be distributed. It is due by 2 PM on Wednesday, May 10."