

Pols 364: Air Climate and Energy Policy Analysis

Meeting Time: T/TH 9:30-10:45AM, Walnut 103

Professor: Dr. Ryan Scott

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Clark C335

Office Hours: T/TH, 2-3PM, TH11AM-12PM

The primary purpose of this course is to provide skills, experience, and resources for analyzing and communicating about policy options related to air, climate, and energy. The course assignments and learning objectives will prepare you to create policy analysis that can inform decision making.

Objectives

1. Identify goals for energy policy and environmental human health
2. Characterize policy problems in domestic and international energy systems
3. Identify policy alternatives that can address policy problems
4. Synthesize evidence about how alternatives meet policy objectives
5. Evaluate and recommend policy alternatives based on evidence
6. Communicate policy opinions and analysis to decision makers

Course Plan

On canvas you will find modules that guide us through the various lessons needed to master the learning objectives. These are organized into sections as follows:

Week 1: Context

Week 2: Policy analysis

Week 3-6: Goals

Week 7-11: Solutions

Week 12-15: Analysis and recommendations

Readings and a summary of basic knowledge for each week are to be accessed via canvas under the "modules" page".

Readings:

There are two textbooks for the course. While you can purchase these books from the bookstore, I encourage you to leverage course reserves in the library. The version of book on reserve is a past edition; however, it will suffice for our purposes here. The chapters are short, you could go to the library, read and take notes, and probably spend no more than one hour

their on the assigned textbook readings each week. For those of you who cannot go to the library, the books are available in the bookstore.

- Smith, Catherine, "Writing Public Policy: A practical guide to communicating in the Policy Making Process", version 3, 4, or 5. Oxford University Press
- Bardach, Eugene, "The Eightfold Path: A practical guide for policy analysis". Versions 3, 4, 5, or 6.

Our textbooks DO NOT focus on air, climate, or energy, but, I expect they will help you to identify, characterize, synthesize, evaluate. Accordingly, in addition to the textbook, there will be required readings from scholarly journals, research groups, governments, and energy blogs and news resources. All readings will be linked from canvas via the modules page.

Assignments:

Course preparation, participation in discussion, participation in peer review (10%)

During each week we will complete a reading response exercise and/or peer review exercise in class. Some weeks there may be an exercise both days. This will be used to track participation and effort in take-home sections of the course, promote progress on progress, and provide you credit for assisting classmates in learning. Exercises will usually entail a short writing response, exercise, or application of materials from readings.

Policy Communication Assignments 7, each is worth 5% (35%)

These assignments will ask you to communicate effectively about the materials covered in class, and will provide you graded practice in applying the course learning objectives in short communicative exercises.

Policy Analysis Memorandum (50%)

You will work with another classmate to complete a policy analysis of an energy policy problem. This will constitute over 50% of your course grade though the specific tasks will be spread throughout the semester. The final product will be a policy memorandum where you must characterize a policy problem and suggest solutions to it. Your final memo must have the following sections. Page estimates here are in double-space, 12 inch font.

Executive Summary (1 page)
Introduction (1-3 page)
Problem Definition (2-3 pages)
Criteria (2-3 page)
Alternatives (2-4 pages)
Policy Matrix (1 page)
Analysis and Evaluation (4-6 pages)
Conclusion and Recommendations (2-3 page)
Works Cited

Each memo must be directed to a client, make a recommendation, and directly reflect achievement of the learning objectives for the course. The final memo will be graded for mastery of the course learning objectives within the memo sections above.

Memo #1: 10 % Introduction, Problem Definition, and Criteria, October 18 9PM

Pick one of the project ideas from the policy project options page. For that project, write a memo to the client in which you 1) introduce your project, 2) define the problem and, 3) identify your goals/criteria for solving the problem. The memo should be approximately 6 pages double spaced. One memo will be submitted by each team. Cite all materials using Chicago, Turabian, or APA style.

Memo #2: 10%, Due November 11, 9PM

In a second memo to your client, clearly describe your progress on your project, which now should include problem definition, goals and criteria, and a description of at least three potential policy alternatives. In this memo, you should include a decision matrix. Your full memo should now be 8-10 pages not including works cited. Your grade here will be assessed on how clearly, creatively, and critically identify policy alternatives that can address policy problems while potentially achieving policy goals.

Poster Presentation: 15%, Posters submitted to Canvas by Monday, Dec. 9, 8PM

For your presentation, you and your partner will pick one of the analysis methods discussed in class (risk assessment, benefit cost analysis, life cycle assessment, input-output analysis, decision analysis, or environmental justice/equity assessment), and try to use that method to the

best of your abilities given constraints to evaluate your policy problem. In your poster, you should include,

1. The problem
2. The criteria you try to assess using your method
3. The method
4. Results
5. The conclusions
6. Limitations

You will be graded on this assignment for your ability to create an effective piece of communication, discuss evidence, and evaluate alternatives based on evidence. All posters must make an effort to quantify achievement of a policy criteria while recognizing the limitations of measurement. Posters will be submitted to canvas and printed by Dr. Scott. Note: I cannot print in color, so please plan accordingly.

Final memo 20%, Due Thursday, December 19, 8:20 PM

Your final memo must provide a full policy analysis of energy policy alternatives. This memo will be due during the final examination period.

Teamwork

You will work with a teammate on the policy memo portions of the project. You will be given in-class time to structure a work-plan for each memo. Working in teams can be a challenge especially given busy schedules. I expect everyone to contribute proportionally to the final project but acknowledge that could look different for different teams. To gain an understanding of how your team is functioning, after submitting each memo you will also turn in a survey where you will self-rate yourself and write a brief description of your contributions to your memo. This will be submitted via a canvas survey. The survey will ask,

“How confident are you that the grade you will receive reflects your personal effort and contributions?”,

“How well could you respond to individual queries about the content of the memo?”,

“What contributions to the memo are you most proud of?”

“Are there any outstanding gaps in knowledge after completing the memo you would like to be addressed in class?”

In cases where problems emerge between team members, please contact Dr. Scott after discussing challenges with your teammate.

Complementary Teams and Class Submission

I encourage you to work collaboratively, solve problems as teams, and struggle through projects together. Accordingly, you will have a complimentary team you meet with throughout the semester. Your complementary team will be a peer reviewer for all of your assignments. You will be expected to meet in-class with your complimentary team to discuss your memo progress, compare analysis, exchange resources, and make recommendations to dually improve each groups' memo. When you have a memo due you will meet with the complementary team on that Thursday. To facilitate discussion, you need to submit at least one-page of content for peer review to canvas by Wednesday at noon. You will need to review your complementary teams material prior to class Thursday.

Late work:

Late communication assignments will not be accepted. If one of your memos is late, your maximum assignment grade will be reduced by 20% for each day the assignment is late. If you have an extenuating circumstance, feel free to let Dr. Scott know with at least 48 hours advance notice.

Academic Integrity:

This course will abide by the CSU Academic Conduct Code <https://tilt.colostate.edu/integrity/knowTheCode/>. Please read the code, and follow it. Violations of the code will be referred to Student Conduct and receive at minimum a grading penalty.

Safe Workspace:

This classroom is an open and inclusive classroom. I will need your help in making sure everyone feels welcome. My goal is to build a collaborative learning environment.

Grading:

I will utilize the grade scheme here: <https://canvas.colostate.edu/grading-schemes/>
If you email me at the end of the quarter asking me to round your grade up, I will not do so. Each assignment will be graded for demonstrated mastery of the learning objectives.