

**Environmental Policy Theory**  
**PADM 6570-70i**  
Fall Semester, 2015

Instructor: Kevin Wright  
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Course Days and Times:  
ONLINE MODE: Lectures and Readings Available Through Modules Set-Up in the Canvas LMS

ONLINE Office Hours: Phone by Appointment

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course develops a theoretical context that focuses on the relationship between political inputs—interest groups, lobbying, institutional biases, public opinion, science, etc.—and the goals of environmental policy and the actions of public policymakers. Environmental Policy Theory will introduce students to the social side of environmental administration, with a special emphasis on relevant historic and current western public land policy and issues. Students will critically analyze the roles of resource scarcity, sub-governments, special interest groups, government subsidies, science vs. politics, economic growth, and western traditions/culture (e.g. “old west” vs. “new west”) in natural resource management. These issues will be explored through a variety of readings, current events and case studies, guest speakers, research, and social engagement. This course is not a history of environmental and public land policy. Rather, we will use case studies, drawn primarily from western land policy, to illustrate theoretical concepts.

The course objectives are:

1. Provide a concise understanding of why governments make certain kinds of decisions that affect the relationship between humans and their environment.
2. Provide a conceptual framework for enhanced understanding of political conflicts over natural resources.
3. Explain how natural resources policy is made in the American system of government.
4. Focus on the relationship between democratic processes and environmental policymaking.
5. Explore the role of special interests in the policy-making process, and how they affect the distribution of public goods and services.
6. Explore what you can do to “make it happen.”

The mission of Southern Utah University’s MPA program is to:

- Prepare pre-service and in-service students to meet the challenges of public and nonprofit service.

- Develop student knowledge and competencies through scholarly activity, experiential learning, and applied research.
- Ensure the MPA coursework presents a framework of understanding based on academic materials and skill development through activities, projects, and assignments.
- Promote public service values, leadership and management skills, and ethical decision-making in all aspects of public and nonprofit sector organizations.
- Ensure our on-campus and online students have comparable academic experiences that develop knowledge and skills for public service.

We accomplish our mission when students who complete the MPA program demonstrate the following competencies:

1. Think critically.
2. Solve problems using analytic tools and best practices.
3. Synthesize diverse perspectives and information.
4. Implement policies in an efficient and effective manner.
5. Act ethically and effectively in pursuit of the public interest

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### Required Course Readings

1. *Breakthrough: From the Death of Environmentalism to the Politics of Possibility*, by Michael Nordhaus and Ted Shellenberger. Houghton Mifflin, 2007.
2. *Our Limits Transgressed: Environmental Political Thought in America*, by Bob Taylor. University Press of Kansas, 1992.
3. Other Readings as assigned through Canvas modules
4. Each module will include supplemental readings that will enhance the students understanding of concepts of those modules. Though they are not required readings, they are additional resources that can aid students in exams and research.

## GRADING

There is a total of 200 points that can be earned from the assignment listed below.

<i>Points</i>	<i>Grade</i>
185-200	A
180-184	A-
165-179	B
160-164	B-
145-159	C
140-144	C-
125-139	D

110-124 <109	D- F
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## ASSIGNMENTS

### 1. Complete weekly reading assignments, reading comprehension questions, and discuss and post comments through Canvas discussion forums accordingly (95 points)

Required reading assignments appear under weekly topics. You are expected to remain current on the readings and comment on them substantively each week. To receive full credit for reading comprehension and discussion questions, students must demonstrate an understanding of the assigned material reading by referencing material in their threads.

**ONLINE** students are expected to actively participate through online discussion threads on the Canvas site for this course. For online discussion, I will post specific questions each week for your consideration and comment.

### 2. Social Engagement Activity (35 points) Due October 18<sup>th</sup>

Students are required to pick **one** of the following activities to participate in an environmental issue that interests them and for which they want to find out more:

- Interview a director of a non-profit/non-governmental organization that is involved in activism, whether through litigation or lobbying. Find out why they got involved in their issue and why they think they are making a difference. Submit one page minimum summarizing the interview.
- Interview a public lands manager. Find out about their background and what they like/dislike about their position. How do they approach the controversies and conflicts that come with managing public land? Submit one page minimum summarizing the interview.
- Participate in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) public process for an Environmental Assessment (EA) or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). For example, most EAs and all EISs prepared by the federal government required a public comment period. Read the EA or EIS and submit substantive comments to the lead agency. Submit and copy of the comments.
- Listen to a live or archived broadcast of a House or Senate Committee Hearing on a bill effecting public land policy. Most environmental legislation passes through the following committees:
  - House Committee on Natural Resources:  
<http://naturalresources.house.gov/>
  - Senate Committee on Energy & Natural Resources  
<http://www.energy.senate.gov/public/>

Live or archived hearings can be found on these websites. Submit a minimum one-page write up on what the issue the hearing was on, the federal agency's

position, and what type of comments and questions the witnesses received from elected officials. What was the tone of the meeting?

**3. Comprehensive final exam.** Due December 10th.  
(70 points)

Minimum of 10 pages typed double-spaced.

The purpose of this exam is to demonstrate your ability to analyze the materials covered in this class--it is your chance to show off what you have learned in this class. You will do this by researching an environmental issue that you're interested in; though the class has focused on western public land issues, you may choose any issue related to natural resource management. The research paper must include the following components:

1. Clearly define the issue from a historical perspective (e.g. why is it an issue, what policies and regulations are pertinent to the issue, etc.)
2. What is the current standing of the issue (e.g. who are the major players involved; what are the on-going planning, administrative, or legislative efforts to resolve the issue, what are the controversies surrounding the issue, etc.)
3. In what direction is the issue headed in the future, (e.g. are the major players involved progressing towards a resolution. If so, why. If not, develop some strategic ideas of how it could be resolved; where is the resolution; what type of leadership needs to occur, etc.)

In order to receive full credit for the final exam, you must include references to at least two (preferably more) principles and theories learned throughout the semester as they pertain to your research topic. References to the theories and principles discussed in class should include material from the **required reading, supplemental readings, websites, class lectures, etc.**; be comprehensive. All material in your answers that comes from sources other than your own head must be referenced. Information from printed sources should be referenced with the name of the author and the page number where it was found.

The key to success on the final take-home exam should be when I'm finished reading your research, I should be able to comfortably say that you have been fully engaged in the class, critically read all the required reading, and is able to synthesize and utilized that information in a coherent way as it relates to an environmental issue.

Use the websites referenced at the end of the syllabus if you need help finding a topic. Please contact me if you need additional help finding a topic to research.

### **SUU AND DEPARTMENT POLICY STATEMENTS**

**ACADEMIC RIGOR:** The Department of Political Science and Criminal Justice is committed to academic rigor. Students should expect to be challenged in every course. Students are accountable for their performance, which will be reflected in the grade they earn in accordance with the standards set forth in the syllabus for each class. Students are

expected to think critically, read and engage course materials, apply and synthesize ideas, and express themselves well orally and in writing.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** Scholastic dishonesty will not be tolerated and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent. You are expected to have read and understood the current issue of the student handbook (published by Student Services) regarding student responsibilities and rights, and the intellectual property policy, for information about procedures and about what constitutes acceptable on-campus behavior.

**ADA STATEMENT:** Students with medical, psychological, learning or other disabilities desiring academic adjustments, accommodations or auxiliary aids will need to contact the Southern Utah University Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD), in Room 206F of the Sharwan Smith Center or phone (435) 865-8022. SSD determines eligibility for and authorizes the provision of services.

**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT STATEMENT:** In case of emergency, the University's Emergency Notification System (ENS) will be activated. Students are encouraged to maintain updated contact information using the link on the homepage of the mySUU portal. In addition, students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the Emergency Response Protocols posted in each classroom. Detailed information about the University's emergency management plan can be found at <http://www.suu.edu/ad/facilities/emergency-procedures.html>

**HEOA Compliance statement:** The sharing of copyrighted material through peer-to-peer (P2P) file sharing, except as provided under U.S. copyright law, is prohibited by law. Detailed information can be found at <http://www.suu.edu/it/p2p-student-notice.html>.

Information contained in this syllabus, other than the grading, late assignments, makeup work and attendance policies, may be subject to change with advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor.

## CLASS ORGANIZATION AND WEEKLY TOPIC ASSIGNMENTS

### **Theme I: Looking back on environmental policy making and theory**

Week 1(August 24-30): Introduction history to Environmental Policy in the United States

- Required Readings:
  - Course Syllabus
- Required Viewing:
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cBVGzf-fF10>
  - <http://video.idahoptv.org/video/2157454200/>

Week 2 (August 31-September 6): History of Environmental Political Thought Part 1

- Required Reading: Our Limits Transgressed, chapters 1-3
  - Pastoralism vs. Progressive Conservation (Thoreau and Pinchot)

- Neo-Malthusians
- Liberal Reformulations of Progressive Conservationism

Week 3 (September 7-September 13): History of Environmental Political Thought Part 2

- Required Reading: Out Limits Transgressed, chapters 4-6
  - Spiritualization of Nature
    - Transcendentalism
    - Deep Ecology
  - Biocentrism
  - Late 20th century version of Thoreau's pastoralism

Week 4 (September 14- September 20): History of Environmental Political Thought Part 3

- Required Reading:
  - Wise-Use Movement: <http://www.cdfc.org/center-projects/wise-use/>
  - Case study: Private property and the Utah prairie dog

**Theme II: Present Day Public Land Policy Issues and Case Studies**

Week 5 (September 21-September 27): Tragedy of the Commons

- Required Reading
  - Hardin, Garrett. 1968. "Tragedy of the Commons." Science, 162: 1243-1248.
- Case Study: National Park Service and visitor use limits

Week 6 (September 28-October 4): Iron Triangles and Sub-governments

- Required Reading:
  - Canvas Narrative
- Supplemental information
  - Livestock grazing and the BLM
    - <http://content.lib.utah.edu/cdm/ref/collection/etd2/id/879>
    - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federal\\_Land\\_Policy\\_and\\_Management\\_Act](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federal_Land_Policy_and_Management_Act)
    - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taylor\\_Grazing\\_Act\\_of\\_1934](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taylor_Grazing_Act_of_1934)

Week 7 (October 5-October 11): Pluralism

- Required Viewing:
  - Case study: Wild Horse and Burro Act of 1971  
<http://www.kued.org/whatson/kued-local-productions/wild-horses-the-west>

Week 8 (October 12-October 18): Science and politics

- Required Readings
  - Politics in the Guise of Pure Science:  
[http://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/24/science/24tier.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/24/science/24tier.html?_r=0)
  - Murphy Complex Fire Case Study scanned documents

- Supplemental information
  - The War on Science: <http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2015/03/science-doubters/achenbach-text>
  - Viewpoint: The importance of range science to federal grazing policy
  - Exposing Anti-Livestock Bias in Federal Culture

SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT ASSIGNMENT DUE OCT. 18<sup>TH</sup>.

Week 9 (October 19-October 25)

FALL BREAK - NO CLASS or ASSIGNMENTS DUE

Week 10 (October 26-November 1): Wise Use movement today

- Required Readings
  - Federal vs. States rights case study
    - Utah Public Lands Transfer Act and other readings in Canvas
- Required listening:
  - <http://radiowest.kuer.org/post/utahs-public-lands-pursuit>

### **Theme III: The Future of Public Land Policy and Administration**

Week 11 (November 2-November 8): New West vs. Old West

- Required Reading:
  - Week 11 narrative and linked articles
  - Break Through Part I

Week 12 (November 9-November 15): Break Through Discussion

- Required Reading:
  - Break Through Part II

Week 13 (November 16-November 22): Education vs. Mandates

- Case Study: California condor reintroduction

Week 14 (November 23-November 29)

HAPPY THANKSGIVING – NO ASSIGNMENTS DUE

Week 15 (November 30-December 6): Leadership in public land management

- Required reading
  - Chojnacky, Cindy C. 2012. “Leadership impact on Forest Service operations: Intriguing ideas from public administration theories.” *Journal of Forestry* 110(8): 457-462

FINAL COMPREHENSIVE TAKE HOME EXAM DUE DECEMBER 10

### **General Resources**

<http://blogs.berkeley.edu/category/energy/>  
<http://thewesterner.blogspot.com/>  
<https://www.hcn.org/>  
<http://www.eenews.net/>  
<http://www.nytimes.com/pages/science/earth/index.html>  
<http://e360.yale.edu/>  
<http://news.discovery.com/earth>

**Important Congressional Committees**

<http://www.energy.senate.gov/public/>  
<http://naturalresources.house.gov/>