

EVPP 337 - Environmental Policy Making in Developing Countries

Instructor: Dr. Susan Keltner

To Contact Instructor:

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Course Description:

Suggested Prerequisite: 60 credits. Overview of environmental policy process in developing countries around the world. Major focus on understanding distinctive problems and dynamics of environmental policy allowing countries to generate better policy decisions and management.

Course Objectives:

The primary objective of this course is to provide an overview of environmental policy making in developing nations. In doing so, we have to understand the distinctive characteristics of developing countries that may advance or limit their ability for sound environmental decision/policy making, including their economic structure (almost always natural resource-based), governance, cultural history, demographics, urbanization, and other factors. We will review the fundamentals of environmental science and the origins of environmental policies, and we will also become familiar with international initiatives relevant to both environment and development policies in the developing world. We will also cover the basic rationales for environmental policy-making.

Another important objective is the development of professional skills. This includes understanding professional and respectful behavior. Appropriate communication skills will also be stressed. One class session will be dedicated to the job search process, interviewing and professional decorum. Students generally find this section very helpful.

Writing intensive requirement:

This course fulfills in part the writing-intensive requirement for the Global Affairs BA program. The requirement is fulfilled through a semester-long *Case Study* on an environmental problem/issue and associated policies in a specific developing country. Students will apply the concepts learned in the course.

Submission Dates:

The date and time for submitting topics, proposals, case studies, exams, presentations, and term papers will be clearly stated, either in the class syllabus or by announcement in class and via e-mail should changes to the syllabus schedule be required. Unless you

have cleared with me in advance any late submission will be penalized by one letter grade per day. Bottom line: communicate with me as early as possible if you are having difficulty meeting a deadline.

Reading Assignments:

No text is required for this class. Course reads will be posted on Blackboard.

Class Participation:

Class participation is a two-way street, meaning that it is my responsibility to facilitate discussion, but it is your responsibility to participate! I can't force you guys to talk, but I can assure you, everyone has a better time when during participatory classes

One note about participation: In some instances, students over participate. If you discover that your participation accounts for up to 50% of the student voice, either in total amount of time talking or total number of questions asked, you may fall into this category. Remember that by over participating, you are limiting the opportunities for others to also share. Please try to police yourself. In some case I may ask students to limit participation. Respect and attentiveness to the other students and the instructor is essential, this includes participating only your fair share.

Second note about participation: If participation is particularly weak for a section, I reserve the right to alter the grading rubric to add participation in as a component of the total grade.

Attendance and Absence from Class:

Attendance at class meetings is expected and is essential for a high mark for class participation. Attendance will not be included in your grade. You must take notes of all material presented or discussed in class. Everything presented and discussed in class is testable. Lectures will not be available on blackboard.

Students with Disabilities:

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me if you are comfortable and contact the GMU Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 703-993-2474.

Cell Phones:

Use of cell phones will not be tolerated in this class, including texting. Cellphones are not to be on desks.

Computers:

Computers are also not allowed in class unless there is a justifiable need, which must be expressed by the student.

Grading:

Deliverable	Percent of Final Course Grade
Case Study Topic	5%
Proposal – 500 words	10%
Background paper – 1000 words	10%
Midterm exam	10%
Draft case study – 1800 words	10%
Final exam	10%
Case study presentation	20%
Case study paper – 2500 words	25%

Exams:

Two exams will be scheduled for the class, one near the middle of the term and one at the end of the term. The format of the exam will be announced in advance of the exams. The final will not be cumulative.

Failure to take the exam at the appropriate time will result in *significant* penalties to the student. Bottom line: Show up and take the exam.

Case Study - Critical analysis of a developing country's environmental policy:

Each student is expected to choose a developing nation in Latin America as an example illustrating the central themes of this course, and to prepare a 2500-word paper and an oral presentation on the country's environmental problem and policies. The selected nation should be one which allows the student to address both scientific and the policy perspectives in the developing world.

The Case Study will involve semester-length research on environmental issues/problems and policies in a specific developing country. One quarter of a student's final grade and a particularly important part of the learning from this course come from this case study. Case Study length is 2500 words, give or take 100 words. The Case Study **MUST** have, at a minimum, the following five sections: Introduction, Problem Location, Environmental Problem, Policy Solutions, and Conclusion. Sub-sections are encouraged.

Half-Page Case Study Topic:

A half page doubled-spaced topic description will be due in hard copy early in the semester. The case study topic will identify: 1) the *developing country* selected, and 2) the specific *environmental issue/problem* in the selected developing country. It is also best to determine at this time if there are environmental policies related to the environmental problem. Students are more successful when the country has known policy solutions.

500-Word Paper:

A few weeks into the semester a 500-word (approximately two pages double-spaced) proposal will be due. The proposal will elaborate on the specific environmental issue/problem in the selected developing country. Only *Problem Location* and the *Environmental Problem* sections should be discussed. The *Problem Location* section should detail pertinent information about your country/city/site. Oftentimes, there are specific geographic, political or climatic factors that may worsen the environmental problem. For instance, arid climates are likely to have limited available water. In your Problem Location section, you can discuss the arid climate and the general water scarcity. Likewise, if your area struggles with rapid population growth and political instability, these issues should also be addressed in the *Problem Location* section. In the *Environmental Problem* section, you will detail the specifics of the issue with which your country struggles. Using the previous example, you would examine the causes and the effects of water scarcity.

Many students have not had experience with writing intensive classes and their academic writing experience has been limited to essays. This course provides instruction in a different type of writing, which is more formal, more objective, and generally much more challenging and time intensive. The Case Study Proposal and all subsequent assignments will be written in a formal style. Your opinion should not be directly voiced, rather you can use citations to build a case. Avoid being preachy. Citations are required. Wikipedia and Mongabay are not acceptable sources!!! All internet sources must be from legitimate groups/institutes. Weak citations will result in a lower grade.

1000-Word Paper:

The purpose of the background paper is to fully develop your Problem Location and Environmental Problem sections. You should make the necessary corrections to your 500 word paper and expand the discussion. Do not include the environmental policy section for this paper. After the successful completion of this round, you will be nearly done with the Problem Location and Environmental Problem sections.

1800-Word Paper:

The preliminary draft is 1800-words. This draft will include the following sections: Problem Location, Environmental Problem, and Policy Solutions. Do not include an Introduction or Conclusion. I anticipate by this point your Problem Location and Environmental Problem sections will be nearly complete, as such your energies should focus on finding applicable environmental policies.

Policy solutions are those governmental, NGO or privately sponsored solutions to the environmental problem occurring within your country. Very often in the developing world the available policy is ineffective or even further detrimental. This is ok for your papers. Bad policy is still policy, you need to explain why the policy is ineffective. Remember that NGOs can be actively involved in problem solving within developing

countries. Likewise, private companies and citizens may also be attempting to find policy solutions.

*For those students who earned an **A or A+** on the previous draft, you will afford the opportunity to skip this draft and proceed directly to the final paper. (**NOTE: A- is not included in this exemption.**) Be sure to follow the guidelines for the final paper if you chose this option.*

I am offering this incentive to encourage students to be highly attentive to the quality of their work in earlier rounds, but I understand that this option is slightly higher risk for the student. Whatever grade you earn will count for two grades: the preliminary draft and the final paper. If you are uncomfortable with this risk, feel free to follow the original schedule.

If you did not earn an A or A+ on the previous draft and you fail to hand in the preliminary draft, you will receive a zero.

Final Paper:

Your final paper is to be 2500 words +/-100 words. Papers which are fall outside this word range will be penalized. This draft will include the following sections: Introduction, Problem Location, Environmental Problem, Policy Solutions and Conclusion.

For this round I expect you to address any remaining issues with your paper, as well as round out your policy solutions section. You also need to provide an introduction and conclusion. These sections should not exceed one page, and can be as short at one paragraph. The introduction should provide an overview of what the paper will cover. The conclusion should be a wrap up to the paper, summarize your findings, and possibly provide an analysis of what is likely to occur in the future within your problem location. Remember, this will be the last impression I have of your paper, make sure your conclusion is strong.

Presentations:

Students will make presentations to the class on their Case Study. Each presentation will be followed by a question and answer (Q&A) session. Presentation and question will be ten and five minutes respectively. Presentations will include the use of PowerPoint slides. Students will be held to the highest level of presentation standards. Slides with too much text, too small of font, without graphics making them dull with be penalized substantially. Consult the presentation on presentations on blackboard for more detailed information.

The instructor will serve as moderator for the presentations, and the ten-minute limit will be strictly enforced!!! The intent is to expose student to the finite amount of time available for either academic or professional presentations. If students practice their presentation, staying within the 10 minute format will not be challenging.

Students are required to submit their PowerPoint slides to the instructor one week prior to presentation for review. There are to be no offensive images within the PowerPoints. This includes, but is not limited to: dead animals and dead people. Students are also to submit a finalized, hard copy version to the instructor on the day of the presentation.

General Written Assignment Guidelines:

Written assignments will be graded on the basis of content, to include: substance, i.e., knowledge of the subject and selected topic; analysis and application of critical thinking to the subject; case study organization; adequacy of references; adherence to instructions in the syllabus; writing style; and the correct use of written English. Please follow these writing guidelines:

- Resubmit previous paper with current round
- Text will be double-spaced, 12 pt
- Word count required (excluding works cited)
- Sections are required, failure to include sections will result in significant penalties
- Sentences are NOT to exceed two lines across
- Paragraphs should be an average of 4-8 sentences. A full page of writing is absolutely not a paragraph - figure out how it can be divided into something more readable.
- Reference List will be single spaced – MLA or APA
- Pages numbered at the bottom, center of the page
- Put your name and date on the first page
- Feel free to print double sided, front and back like a book

GMU Writing Center:

If you need additional help with your writing, particularly with editing or syntax, please contact the Writing Center. They are an amazing, free resource for students! You can schedule an appointment.

Robinson Hall B, Room 213

Hours: Monday-Thursday 10:30 - 6:30 and Friday 9:30 - 2:30

Website: writingcenter.gmu.edu

Email: wcenter@gmu.edu

Phone: 703-993-1200

Keeping Work:

You must keep all grade writing assignments. These will be handed into me in to me at the end of the semester when you submit your final paper. Failure to maintain proper records will forfeit your ability to challenge your grade at the end of the semester.

Original Work:

All written and presented work submitted for this class must be original; i.e., it must be your work and your work alone. You must not simply cut-and-paste the work of others into your work, changing only one or two words. Even if cited, this is plagiarism. You must use quotations and the proper citation. Be warned: Plagiarism (defined below) will not be tolerated. If there is any suspicion of plagiarism the case will be turned over to GMU's Office of Academic Integrity with the instructor's recommendation for the maximum penalty. Plagiarism is a GMU Honor Code violation that will have a serious impact on your academic record.

Plagiarism includes the following:

1. Presenting as one's own the words, the work, or the opinions of someone else without proper acknowledgment
2. Borrowing the sequence of ideas, the arrangement of material, or the pattern of thought of someone else without proper acknowledgment

Lying:

Unfortunately lying and lack of accountability are growing issues on college campuses. If you lie to me, I will penalize your total grade by 30%. Don't lie to me – accept ownership for mistakes or shortcomings. We all make mistakes, whether purposefully or accidentally, it is your responsibility to navigate these times with integrity.