

## EVPP 337 - Environmental Policy Making in Developing Countries – Spring 2021

**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 several programs. 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 work 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:**

We are in a pandemic, and class participation will look different than usual. I am requesting that each student participate at least once per session. I know this will be difficult for some, but given our circumstances, the class will greatly suffer if we don't have robust participation. I also request that you keep your cameras on unless you have a bandwidth issue.

**Attendance and Absence from Class:**

Our class will meet synchronously each Thursdays from 4:30-7:10. Attendance at class meetings is expected and is essential for a high mark for class participation. Attendance will be taken.

**Students with Disabilities:**

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please reach out to be privately if you or comfortable and contact the GMU Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 703-993-2474.

**Grading:**

Paper Round 1 – 2 pages	15%
Paper Round 2 – 2 pages	15%
WWRs	6%
WWRs	6%
WWRs	6%
WWRs	6%
WWRs	6%
Paper Round 3 – 2 pages	15%
Class participation	10%
Final Paper – 2 pages	15%

100%

**Weekly Writing Reflections:**

In lieu of exams, students will submit weekly writing reflections. Only five total are required throughout the semester. The format is below:

- o **Requirement 1: Students read** what is assigned, then choose and describe the three most important aspects (concepts, issues, factual information, etc.) of the reading, justifying their choices.

- **Requirement 2: Students** describe the three most important aspects (concepts, issues, factual information, etc.) of our PRIOR session, justifying their choices.

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

Each student is expected to choose a developing nation in Latin America (or cleared with me if an outside areas is desired) to study throughout the semester. Developed over four rounds, growing in length, students will prepare a paper 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. 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:**

Early in the semester, a half page doubled-spaced topic description will be due. 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. The topic description will not be graded, but failure to submit the topic on time could lead to a reduced grade on the Case Study.

**Round 1/ 2-pages: Problem Location**

A few weeks later, two pages double-spaced paper will be due. The proposal will include an *Introduction* and the *Problem Location*. The *Introduction* should provide a brief background on the environmental issue which will be explore in greater depth in Round 2. 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.

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. This proposal, as well as subsequent assignments on the same topic, 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.

### **Round 2/2-pages: Environmental Problem**

The purpose of this 2-page paper is to fully develop your *Environmental Problem* section. This should be an in-depth exploration of the environmental issue which you chose to explore.

Make sure your work remains organized. You may want to think of the environmental problem in terms of cause and effect. For example, what are the causes and effects of water scarcity in Egypt? Students find it helpful to create lists of the key causes and effects. Then write a paragraph surrounding each issue. Be sure to use the technical language of the trade.

### **Round 3/2-pages: Policy Section**

For this round, students will explore the applicable environmental policies for the topic. *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 a **93 or above** on your Round 2, you are afforded the opportunity to skip this draft and proceed directly to the final paper. (NOTE: **92 and below are not included in this exemption.**)*

*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: Round 3 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 third round, you will receive a zero.*

### **Round 4/1-page: Conclusion**

For your final round, compose a 1-page conclusion which summarizes the important findings of your paper. You can insert a few new facts if they support your case, or you can restate the most important information. Essentially, in 1-page summarize your paper using facts as evidence to build your case.

### **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:

- 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 on the page
- Put your name and date on the first page

**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, nor should you simply paraphrase existing work. 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.