

**ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE AND PUBLIC POLICY**  
**EVPP 641**  
**Spring 2020**

**Place and time:** Mason Global Center 1320C Wednesdays 4:30-7:10 pm  
**Instructor:** Dr. Cindy Smith, [csmite@gmu.edu](mailto:csmite@gmu.edu)

**Course website:** Blackboard: log in at <https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu>  
**Office hours:** David King 3024 (Fairfax Campus), Wed. 2-4:00pm or by appointment  
**Please email first.**

**Readings**

Readings, guiding questions and database links will be posted in the weekly Blackboard Modules by topic.

**Course description**

Environmental Science and Public Policy is a graduate level introduction to broad aspects of (anthropocentric) environmental issues and the policies around them. The academic approach to this information is intended to be that of an environmental professional rather than that of an advocate for any particular position. The central focus of the course is an inquiry into the influence of human activities on the environment, methodologies used to understand and ameliorate those impacts, as well as and how efforts to reduce environment risks are administered and enforced. We consider topics including air quality, global population impacts, stormwater and wastewater treatment, land contamination, invasive and pesticides.

At the end of the course it is anticipated that successful students will also have achieved a level of professionalism with regard to environmental science and environmental policy issues such that they are confident of their own ability to investigate, understand and critically evaluate the range of environmental issues. Students will be conversant with a broad range of issues and, through their research paper and presentation, they should be relatively expert in at least one specific environmental area. This survey course does not require a high-level understanding of environmental science or policy.

**Grading**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	
Prepared participation in weekly discussions:	10%	Letter grade categories (no rounding): A+ 98-100; A 93-97; A- 90-92; B+ 88-89; B 83-87; B- 80-82; C 70-79; D 65-69; F <65
Presentation:	25%	
Paper:	25%	
Midterm exam:	20%	
Final exam:	20%	
Environmental science seminar/event write-ups	Extra credit	

**Grading category details**

**Participation** includes regular attendance and active participation. You are expected to read assigned readings and complete assigned questions such that you are well prepared to constructively contribute to class discussions and activities. Please bring a laptop or device to class (if possible), as we will have in class activities every week.

Attending seminars or events, outside of class, focused on the science behind an environmental issue, the policy and/or environmental economics. For each, a short (one page) writeup with photo of yourself in attendance

where I can view you and the speaker is expected. Please see me for guidance on seminars and events (stream clean-ups, invasive plant removal etc..) to attend.

As community of learners with diverse backgrounds and fields, we will learn from our peers. The research **paper** and associated **class presentation** will be described in detail on blackboard.

The **midterm** and **final exams** will be in-class and consist of questions based on topics and methods discussed in class and from readings. Additional details will be provided as the exam dates near.

### **Academic integrity**

I expect each student to submit his or her own work, and provide attribution for any sources used. Please read the Mason Honor Code: <http://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/> . The integrity of the University community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. Mason has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. No grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct. Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving the person credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes. Paraphrased material must also be cited, using proper MLA or APA format. If you have any doubts about what constitutes plagiarism, please see me. If you do not understand a topic, please talk to me.

### **Diversity**

George Mason University celebrates a strong commitment to diversity and inclusion (see: <http://stearnscenter.gmu.edu/professional-development/mason-diversity-statement> ). In my courses, I create an intentionally inclusive community, promote and maintain an equitable and just work and learning environment. I fully expect there to be differing views on topics relevant to course content and I hope you all are comfortable expressing your individual views. Please see me to discuss, if this is not the case. Sharing your views makes for an inclusive and expansive learning opportunity.

### **Disability Accommodations**

Disability Services at George Mason University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students by upholding the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities. If you are seeking accommodations for this class, please first visit <http://ds.gmu.edu/> for detailed information about the Disability Services registration process. Then please discuss your approved accommodations with me. Disability Services is located in Student Union Building I (SUB I), Suite 2500. Email: [ods@gmu.edu](mailto:ods@gmu.edu) | Phone: (703) 993-2474

**Draft Course schedule – we will update after course content survey**

Please check Blackboard frequently for additional material. Assigned readings, viewings and slides will be posted in Blackboard Modules by topic.

<b>Week</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Due</b>
1	1/22	Introductions. Overview of class, local and global environmental issues	
2	1/29	Environmental Agency overview	Read and Respond to questions in BB folder
3	2/5	Global population trends, environmental and resource impacts.	Read: Tragedy of the Commons articles.
4	2/12	<b>Bill Graves</b> , Environmental Consultant Our regulatory environment – What is really going on?	Review his website, read articles <a href="http://www.ensatems.com">http://www.ensatems.com</a>
5	2/19	Air Quality - Urban air quality issues; criteria air pollutants.	<b>Paper topic due</b>
6	2/26	Plant-Pollinator interactions and biodiversity issues and actions	Read: TBA
7	3/4	Pesticides: Benefits/Impacts on agriculture, food safety, human health	Read: TBA
8	3/7	<b>Midterm</b>	-
	3/11	Spring break – <b>NO CLASS</b>	–
9	3/18	Chesapeake Bay TMDL	<b>Bibliography file due</b> Read: TBA
10	3/25	<b>LeAnne Astin</b> – Fairfax County Office of Stormwater. Water quality issues; standards and criteria pollutants, emerging pollutants	Read: TBA
11	4/1	<b>Ray Funkhouser</b> : Pesticide Manufacturing and testing.	Read: TBA
12	4/8	<b>Nick Yakish</b> : VA DCR Nutrient Manager, Water – pollutants of concern in bay emerging pollutants. Peer Review of 3 papers	<b>Research Paper draft due</b> Read: TBA
13	4/15	Bill Gill, Large scale livestock production impacts/benefits	TBA
14	4/22	Student presentations	Student assigned readings
15	4/29	Student presentations	Student assigned readings.
16	5/1	Student presentations	Student assigned readings. Final Paper due
	5/6	<b>Final Exam</b>	