ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE AND PUBLIC POLICY
EVPP 641 Spring 2021

Place and time:	Online by Zoom Wednesdays 4:30-7:10 pm
Instructor:	Dr. Cindy Smith, csmitc@gmu.edu
Course website:	Blackboard: log in at https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu
Office hours:	David King 3024 (Fairfax Campus), when COVID ends (Wed. 2-4:00pm online or by appointment **Please email first.** Emails are typically answered within 24 hours during the week, M – F from 9-5pm.

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 species and pesticides. This survey course does not require a high-level understanding of environmental science or policy.

Course Objectives

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, policies and stakeholder views. Students will demonstrate the ability to synthesize research and policy information through their research paper and presentation, and should be relatively expert in at least one specific environmental area.

Readings

Readings, viewings guiding questions and database links will be posted in the weekly Blackboard modules by topic. Guest speakers will add live content and readings to our learning materials.

Grading

Point Totals	
Exam Total Points	200
Mid-Term exam	100
Final Exam	100
Research Paper	170
Bibliography	15
First Draft	25
3 peer reviews of papers in Discussion Board 10pts each	30
Uploaded readings for peers, so they can prepare for your presentation	
Final Paper	100
Research Presentation	100
Slides recorded in Kaltura uploaded an available for peer review	
Live presentation	100
Course total	470

Letter grade percentages (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

Grading details

Participation includes regular attendance and active participation in both live and online discussion boards. 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 is offered for extra credit. For each, a short (one page) writeup with photo of yourself in attendance where I can view you and the speaker is expected.

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 and Inclusion

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.

Mason Honor Code

To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this honor code: **Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.**

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 | Phone: (703) 993-2474

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

Below is our draft schedule. Topics may change if our science and/or policy guest speakers have schedule issues. I will give advanced notice if this occurs

Week	Dates	Topic	Due (see Weekly Folder)
1	1/27	Introductions. Overview of class, local and global environmental issues.	
2	2/3	Global population trends, environmental and resource impacts.	Read: Global population articles, databases
3	2/10	Environmental Agency Overview	Read: Environmental agency overview content
4	2/17	Pesticides: Benefits/Impacts on agriculture, food safety, human health	**Paper topic due** Read: Pesticides: Benefits/Impacts on agriculture, food safety, human health
5	2/24	**Andrew Bray, NALP** How policy is made, behind the scenes. Read: references on glyphosate and neonics	Read: Plant-Pollinator interactions and biodiversity issues and actions
6	3/3	Plant-Pollinator interactions and biodiversity issues and actions	Read: Plant-Pollinator interactions and biodiversity issues and actions
7	3/10	Air Quality - Urban air quality issues; criteria air pollutants.	**Bibliography file due** Read: Air Quality - Urban air quality issues; criteria air pollutants.
8	3/17	**Congressman Rob Wittman** – Environmental Bills, Committees and Voting. He may address Chesapeake Bay Policy and Regulations	**Mid-term due**
9	3/24	**LeAnne Astin** - Fairfax County Office of Stormwater. Water quality issues; standards and criteria pollutants, emerging pollutants	**Read:** Chesapeake Bay Policy and Regulations
10	3/31	Chesapeake Bay Policy and Regulations - continued	**Work on your research paper draft.** Prepare and submit 3 sources for peers to read. Provide guiding questions for them to assist them with engagement in your topic.
11	4/7	Student presentations	**Research Paper draft due**, peer review Student assigned readings
12	4/14	Student presentations:	Student assigned readings
13	4/21	Student presentations:	Student assigned readings
14	4/28	Student presentations:	Student assigned readings **Final Paper due**
15	5/5	**Final Exam**	