



EVPP 361-001/GOVT 361
Introduction to Environmental Policy
Fall 2020

Place and time: Innovation Hall 133, Tue/Thur 10:30-11:45 am
Instructor: Dr. Younsung Kim
Contact info: ykih@gmu.edu, 703-993-5165 (e-mail preferred)
Website: Blackboard: log in at <http://mymasonportal.gmu.edu>
Office hours: David King Hall 3020, Tue/Thur 12:00-1:45 pm and by appointment (please email in advance if you plan to come by).

Introduction:

This course provides an introduction to the complex world of environmental politics and policy. During the course, we will assess efforts to manage natural resources effectively and mitigate the adverse effects of environmental pollution. We will consider environmental issues at the local, state, and national level in the US and address global concerns such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and energy demand and supply. The overarching theme of sustainability and collaborative governance will serve as a focus for our analysis and activities.

By the end of the semester students will be able to:

- identify important actors in environmental politics and policymaking;
- explain relevant scientific and policy controversies;
- demonstrate the ability to apply the essential tools of environmental policy analysis—i.e., to assess trade-offs, risks, costs, benefits, cost-effectiveness, political feasibility, and equity in developing policy recommendations;
- define sustainability, and identify and describe possible ways to overcome the social, political, economic, and technical constraints to achieving sustainability

Readings

The main reading assignments will come from the following required book:

- **Vig, N. & M. E. Kraft. 2018. *Environmental Policy*, 10th ed. Washington, DC: CQ Press.**

The required book is available from the campus bookstore and various online booksellers. Some reading assignments come from journal or media articles. I will also post supplementary readings and announcements on the handouts page of the course Blackboard site. Be sure to take a look at the website before each class. When using Blackboard, please look for the crosslisted Blackboard option for this course, which should appear as EVPP/GOVT 361(Fall 2020). The EVPP and GOVT sections are also listed separately, but I won't be using them.

Supplementary Reading Materials

Check Blackboard regularly for supplementary readings, handouts and announcements. I also recommend following the excellent multimedia environmental websites maintained by the *New York Times* (<https://www.nytimes.com/section/climate>) and the *Washington Post* (<https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/>);

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-solutions/>). There are many other Internet sources relevant for environmental policy, but these are particularly worth following.

Grading

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| Class participation & reading quizzes | 20% |
| Lesson-based assignments | 20% |
| Midterm exam | 20% |
| Final exam | 20% |
| Policy memo | 20% |

Class Participation

Class participation is a component of overall grades. Participation will be based on factors such as contributing to discussions, asking questions and offering commentary, doing the background preparation for simulations and exercises, and answering to the written questions given in class or after class. Be sure that class participation is not class attendance. Note that you will never be penalized for participating. I expect that you will take advantage of our class time to ask questions and engage in class discussions. The reason for the emphasis on student participation is that learning is often greater when students are actively engaged in the classroom. Significant class participation also makes our time together more interesting. To facilitate class participation, it is imperative that all reading assignments be completed *before class*.

For class participation, note that it's your job to help me know who you are. So keep a name placard on your desk, or remind me of your name when you speak in class, or introduce yourself occasionally at the beginning or end of class, etc. If I don't know who you are, it'll be hard for me to give a good participation grade at the end of the semester.

The pop-up reading quizzes will be executed to affirm the completion of required readings before class. The two quizzes with highest scores will be used for your grade component, and the quizzes will take account for 5% of your grade.

Because entering or leaving the classroom during class time is disruptive to the learning environment, I expect you will not do so, except in an emergency.

Lesson-Based Assignments

There are two lesson-based assignments to augment your understanding of lesson topics. Each will account for 10% of your grade in total.

Policy Memo & Exams

You will develop a policy memo in this class. For the **policy memo assignment**, you'll choose a topic, conduct research, and prepare a memo with policy recommendations for a relevant policymaker. Each memo should be 1,000 words long, using single-spacing, 1-inch margins, 12-pt font, and proper memo format. **Do not copy and paste language off the internet into your memo.** For library/internet research, include references in a recognized citation format (the references can be on a separate page that won't count against the length limit). To illustrate what I'm looking for, I'll post memo-writing guidelines, samples of good memos from previous semesters, and a detailed grading rubric. You may choose to work on the memo assignment in a small group (maximum 3

persons). For students working in a group, the length limit for the memo is extended to 4 pages (2 people-3 pages, 3 people-4 pages). Students in each group will get the same grade for the assignment.

The **in-class midterm exam** and **take-home final exam** will be based on course readings, lectures, and class discussions. I will discuss the formats and contents of each exam as time approaches.

Grade Ranges:

| | | |
|------------|------------|------------------|
| A+ = 97 up | B+ = 88-89 | C+ = 78-79 |
| A = 92-96 | B = 82-87 | C = 72-77 |
| A- = 90-91 | B- = 80-81 | C- = 70-71, etc. |

Important Notes about Course Policies and Processes

- I rely on "...@gmu.edu" email addresses for communicating with students. To set up your "gmu.edu" email account, see http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/memo/memo_www.htm. To forward "gmu.edu" messages to a different email address, see http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/memo_forward.htm. Also please be sure to keep track of your gmu email account to make sure it doesn't go over quota.
- Please use email for communications and for handing in all assignments.
- Please contact me right away if personal circumstances arise that may interfere with class participation or completion of assignments.
- Do not cut and paste language off the web without correct attribution. If you take more than a word or two in succession from a source, you must give a citation and use quotation marks. If you have questions about how to cite sources, please let me know. Mason's writing center also has useful guidelines (<http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>).
- George Mason University has an Honor Code, which requires all members of this community to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing are all prohibited. All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee. For more detailed information, see <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode>.
- Students are responsible for verifying enrollment. Please note the deadlines published in the Schedule of Classes. Last day to drop without tuition penalty: 2/4/2020; Final drop deadline (with no tuition refund): 2/11/2020. After the last day to drop a class, withdrawing from this class requires the approval of the dean and is only allowed for nonacademic reasons.
- **Laptop policy:** This course relies on the contributions of all of the students. As a result, laptop use will only be allowed only for learning-related activities. You cannot use your laptop computers during class to send and receive email messages, surf the internet, and the like. Hence, I will only allow you to use laptop computers to take notes and not for any other purpose.
- **Failure to comply with the restrictions on laptop use-**if you violate the use-of-laptop policy (such as by using it to surf the internet instead of taking notes), I reserve the right to bank you from using the laptop in class for the remainder of the semester.
- **Class notes and handouts:** If you have missed class outlines or handouts, it is your responsibility to obtain class notes, outlines, and other handouts from your peers. Please do not contact me about these matters.

- **Late-work policy: Late work is not accepted.** If you need to request an exception due to personal or medical emergency, contact the instructor at least 3 days earlier than the submission dates of assignments.

Other Useful Campus Resources

University Libraries “Ask a Librarian” <http://library.gmu.edu/mudge/IM/IMRef.html>.

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS): (703) 993-2380; <http://caps.gmu.edu>.

University Policies: The University Catalog, <http://catalog.gmu.edu>, is the central resource for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university academic affairs. Other policies are available at <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/>. All members of the university community are responsible for knowing and following established policies.

Academic Integrity

Mason is an Honor Code university; please see the University Catalog for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated gravely. What does academic integrity mean in this course? Essentially this: when you are responsible for a task, you will perform that task. When you rely on someone else’s work in an aspect of the performance of that task, you will give full credit in the proper, accepted form. Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the firm expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions. When in doubt (of any kind) please ask for guidance and clarification.

Course Outline

“V&K” refers to the book edited by Vig and Kraft and the numbers represent the chapters assigned for the class sessions. Journal articles and other book chapters will be available on Blackboard.

| | Dates | Topics | Readings |
|----|-------------------------|--|---|
| 1 | Tue 8/25 Thur 8/27 | Introductions to the class and ourselves Foundation of environmental policy; NEPA | Assigned articles on BB |
| 2 | Tue 9/1 Thur 9/3 | US Environmental policy history and regulatory framework US Environmental policy history and trends | V&K 1 V&K 4 |
| 3 | Tue 9/8 Thur 9/10 | Policymaking process and actors Environmental interest groups and public participation | V&K 5 & 6 V&K 3 |
| 4 | Tue 9/15 Thur 9/17 | Federalism and the states Federalism and the states | V&K 2 Assigned articles on BB |
| 5 | Tue 9/22 Thur 9/24 | Science in environmental policymaking Science, biodiversity loss and conservation | V&K 7, assigned articles on BB Assigned articles on BB |
| 6 | Tue 9/29 Thur 10/1 | Economics in environmental policymaking Business and environmental policy | V&K 10 V&K 11 |
| 7 | Tue 10/6 Thur 10/8 | Midterm exam review Midterm exam | |
| 8 | Tue 10/13 Thur 10/15 | No class due to Columbus Holiday Coal and climate change science | |
| 9 | Tue 10/20 Thur 10/22 | Climate change science and impacts Climate change mitigation/adaptation strategies and policies | IPCC (2018) Assigned articles on BB |
| 10 | Tue 10/27 Thur 10/29 | Climate change mitigation/adaptation strategies and policies (cont'd) | Assigned articles on BB |
| 11 | Tue 11/3 Thur 11/5 | Global climate change governance Energy and the environment | V&K 13 V&K 8 |
| 12 | Tue 11/10 Thur 11/12 | Environmental justice Environmental justice | Assigned articles on BB |
| 13 | Tue 11/17 Thur 11/19 | Cities and the environment Sustainability and future direction to environmental policy | V&K 12 V&K 14 & V&K 15 |
| 14 | Tue 11/24 Thur 11/26 | Thanksgiving Holiday | |
| 15 | Tue 12/1 Thur 12/3 | Final exam review | |
| 16 | Tue 12/8 | Final exam due | |