

Albion College, ENVN 220

Economics, Politics, and Environmental Policy

Spring Semester 2016

Professor Greg Saltzman

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Office hours: MW 10:00 – 11:30 AM

Please feel free to stop by my office without an appointment, though you can make an appointment if you wish. I am frequently in my Albion office at the following times:

Mondays	9:15-11:45 AM, 1:15-2:00 PM
Tuesdays	9:15-10:15 AM, 1:15-2:00 PM
Wednesdays	9:15-11:45 AM, 1:15-2:00 PM
Thursdays	9:15-10:15 AM, 1:15-2:00 PM
Fridays	Almost never (usually in Ann Arbor)

If you make prior arrangements with me, then I am also happy to meet with you in my office most Mondays and Wednesdays from 11:45 AM to 1:15 PM.

Class meets TuTh 10:30 AM – 12:20 PM, Robinson 402

Course Description

Examines decisions affecting environmental quality made by government, businesses and individuals; economic analysis relevant to such decisions; the policy-making process; and dispute resolution techniques that may be useful in conflicts over environmental issues. Focuses on current national and local environmental policies, with comparisons to practices in other countries.

This course explores how social scientists address environmental policy issues. It is designed for students who have some knowledge of environmental issues but who may have little or no background in economics, political science, or history. This course is required for students completing the Environmental Science major or concentration, the Environmental Studies concentration, or the Sustainability Studies major. This course is an elective for the Environmental Studies major and for the Public Policy major.

This course does **NOT** meet the Albion College environmental studies category requirement.

Learning Objectives:

- Describe economic and political issues in major current debates in environmental policy
- Synthesize information and develop and defend an environmental policy proposal
- Demonstrate independent ability to identify and interpret relevant social science literature on environmental policy
- Demonstrate clear, concise, and persuasive writing and oral presentation skills

Required Readings

Stephen Smith, *Environmental Economics: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 2011, ISBN 978-0-19-958358-4), paperback.

Jennifer Clapp and Peter Dauvergne, *Paths to a Green World: The Political Economy of the Global Environment*, 2nd ed. (MIT Press, 2011, ISBN 978-0-262-51582-5), paperback.

Jared Diamond, *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed* (Penguin, 2011, ISBN 978-0-14-311700-1), paperback. [2005 edition also OK, but it lacks the new afterword]

Short readings available on the course web: <http://courses.albion.edu/course/view.php?id=3580>
Log in with your username and password, and then choose ENVN 220 from the left side. You need to use this enrollment key (password) for the ENVN 220 site: ENVN_220_spring_2016

I will distribute paper copies of three environmental negotiation role-play exercises; each student will have to pay about \$11 for copyright fees charged by the Harvard Program on Negotiation.

For your environmental policy proposal, you should consult paper or online resources available through the Albion College Library. The College Library includes some high-quality news sources with occasional articles about environmental policy: *The Economist* (both paper and online), *National Journal* (paper), and *The New York Times* (online).

Course Requirements and Grading Weights

Course Requirement	Grading Weight
Exam 1, Thursday, February 18 (35%)	70%
Exam 2, Thursday, April 14 (35%)	
Group Project – work in groups of 2-3 students to make an environmental policy proposal	30%
Group PowerPoint presentation (April 26 or 28) (15%)	
Group paper, due Tuesday, April 26 (15%)	
Environmental dispute resolution exercises	ungraded

Details of the policy proposal requirement and dispute resolution exercises will be provided in separate documents.

Assignments will be graded on a curve. I anticipate an average course grade for this class of 3.3.

Academic Integrity

Albion College has adopted the following statement on academic integrity: “As an academic community, Albion College is firmly committed to honor and integrity in the pursuit of knowledge. Therefore, as a member of this academic community, each student acknowledges responsibility for his or her actions and commits to the highest standards of integrity. In doing so, each student makes a covenant with the college not to engage in any form of academic dishonesty, fraud, cheating, or theft.”

I expect you to cite your sources for ideas presented in your papers. I expect you to include quotation marks and provide a citation if you use somebody else’s words in your papers. You may not consult any notes, books, Internet resources, or persons (other than Greg Saltzman) during either of the exams for this course.

Disability Statement

Any student with a disability who believes the requirements of this course may require accommodations or modifications should contact the Learning Support Center (LSC) Director, Dr. Pamela Schwartz, who will work with you to develop a plan for reasonable accommodations based on your information and supporting documentation. If you have completed this process and have requested accommodations through the LSC for this semester, plan to meet with me as early as possible to discuss a plan for implementing these modifications in this class. It is best if we can talk at least one week prior to their implementation. The LSC is located in 114 Ferguson Hall (on the first floor of the administration building) and is open during regular business hours throughout the school year. The main phone is 517/629-0825, and the number for the Adaptive Technology Office is 517/629-0411.

Attendance

Regular attendance in all classes is expected. Every absence from class is inevitably a loss—usually one that can never be made up. I understand that students occasionally get sick or must be off campus for a job interview or a family obligation. But missing an excessive number of classes can adversely affect your grade in this course.

I expect you to inform me in advance, if at all possible, of any absences on the days when there is an exam (February 18 and April 14), a negotiation exercise (February 16, April 7, and April 12), or a student presentation (April 26 and 28).

Tentative Class Schedule and Readings

<u>Week</u>	<u>Topic and Reading Assignment</u>
Jan 19	<p>Public Opinion on Environmental Issues Aaron M. McCright and Riley E. Dunlap, “The Politicization of Climate Change and Polarization in the American Public’s Views of Global Warming, 2001-2010,” <i>Sociological Quarterly</i>, Vol. 52, No. 2, Spring 2011, 155-194.</p> <p>Economic Theory of Efficient Pollution Control Smith, <i>Environmental Economics</i>, Introduction, chapters 1 and 2 Don Fullerton and Robert N. Stavins, “How Economists See the Environment,” <i>Nature</i>, Vol. 395, October 1, 1998, 433-434.</p>
Jan 26	<p>Pollution Regulation vs. Putting a Price on Pollution Smith, <i>Environmental Economics</i>, chapter 3 Laurence H. Goulder, “Markets for Pollution Allowances: What Are the (New) Lessons?,” <i>Journal of Economic Perspectives</i>, Vol. 27, No. 1, Winter 2013, 87-102.</p> <p>Costs of Pollution Control Karen Palmer, Wallace E. Oates, and Paul R. Portney, “Tightening Environmental Standards: The Benefit-Cost or the No-Cost Paradigm?,” <i>Journal of Economic Perspectives</i>, Vol. 9, No. 4, Fall 1995, 119-132.</p>
Feb 2	<p>Placing a Dollar Value on Environmental Protection Smith, <i>Environmental Economics</i>, chapter 4 Trudy Ann Cameron, “Euthanizing the Value of a Statistical Life,” <i>Review of Environmental Economics and Policy</i>, Vol. 4, No. 2, Summer 2010, 161-178. Cass R. Sunstein and Richard Zeckhauser, “Overreaction to Fearsome Risks,” <i>Environmental and Resource Economics</i>, Vol. 48, No. 3, March 2011, 435-449.</p>

<u>Week</u>	<u>Topic and Reading Assignment</u>
Feb 9	<p>Economics and Politics of Climate Change Smith, <i>Environmental Economics</i>, chapter 5 David J. C. MacKay, <i>et al.</i>, “Price carbon—I will if you will,” <i>Nature</i>, Vol. 526, October 15, 2015, 315-316. “Hopelessness and determination: the Paris agreement will not stabilise the climate; but the efforts it makes possible could still achieve a lot,” <i>The Economist</i>, December 19, 2015. Jeff Tolleson and Kenneth R. Weiss, “Nations adopt historic global climate accord,” <i>Nature</i>, Vol. 528, December 17, 2015, 315-316. William Nordhaus, “Critical Assumptions in the Stern Review on Climate Change,” <i>Science</i>, Vol. 317, No. 5835, July 13, 2007, 201-202. Nicholas Stern and Chris Taylor, “Climate Change: Risk, Ethics, and the Stern Review.” <i>Science</i>, Vol. 317, No. 5835, July 13, 2007, 203-204. Damian Tago and Alban Thomas, “Failure to address global warming will cost many lives,” <i>The Economist</i>, published online December 10, 2015. Theda Skocpol, “You Can’t Change the Climate from Inside Washington,” <i>Foreign Policy</i>, published online January 24, 2013.</p> <p>Sustainability Robert M. Solow, “Sustainability: An Economist’s Perspective,” lecture presented at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute, June 14, 1991.</p>
Feb 16	<p>Tuesday: Racism and Environmental Justice Negotiation role-playing exercise: Beaumont Incinerator Course web readings: Mireya Navarro, “In Fight Against Trash Station, Upper East Side Cites Injustice,” <i>The New York Times</i>, July 1, 2011. Louise Seamster and Jessica Welburn, “How a Racist System Has Poisoned the Water in Flint, Mich.,” <i>The Root</i>, January 9, 2016, accessed online January 17, 2016, at http://www.theroot.com/articles/politics/2016/01/how_a_racist_system_has_poisoned_the_water_in_flint_mich.html</p> <p>*Exam 1: Thursday, February 18* (covers through February 11)</p>
Feb 23	<p>Discuss answers to exam 1</p> <p>Politics of U.S. Environmental Policy Christopher McGrory Klyza and David J. Sousa, <i>American Environmental Policy: Beyond Gridlock</i>, updated and expanded edition (MIT Press, 2013), chapter 2.</p>

<u>Week</u>	<u>Topic and Reading Assignment</u>
Mar 1	Political Economy of Globalization and the Environment Clapp and Dauvergne, <i>Paths to a Green World</i> : chapters 1-4
Mar 8	<i>No classes (Albion spring break)</i>
Mar 15	Clapp and Dauvergne, <i>Paths to a Green World</i> : chs. 5-8
Mar 22	Environmental Conditions and the Fate of Societies Diamond, <i>Collapse</i> : prologue, chs. 1, 2, 5
Mar 29	Diamond, <i>Collapse</i> : chs. 9-13
Apr 5	Diamond, <i>Collapse</i> : chs. 14-16 and afterword Thursday—Negotiation role-playing exercise: Flooding
Apr 12	Tuesday—Negotiation role-playing exercise: Dirty Stuff II <i>*Exam 2: Thursday, April 14*</i> (Covers February 25-April 5)
Apr 19	Tuesday: go over answers to exam 2 Thursday: <i>No class</i> (<i>Albion College Elkin Isaac Research Symposium</i>)
Apr 26	Group presentations of policy proposals <i>*Group policy proposal papers due Tuesday, April 26, 10:30 AM*</i>

Please email your papers in Microsoft Word format and your presentations in Microsoft PowerPoint format to gsaltzman@albion.edu. (Save a tree, even if you do greatly inconvenience an electron).

Note that this course does NOT have an exam during finals week.