Environmental Politics and Democratization
GOVT/EAST/ENVS 304

Overview
This is an upper division interdisciplinary seminar that investigates the connections between environmental politics and democratization. While environmental policy will be of some consideration, the focus of the course will be on the politics of the environment—the political, social, and cultural battles that occur around environmental issues. We will be examining the ways that these confrontations shape the broader political landscape in communities, states, and the world. Of particular concern will be the ways that politics around the issue of the environment shapes, for good and for ill, democratic participation and politics.

This seminar will cover very wide geographic and intellectual ground. We will investigate ultra-local environmental issues, engaging in participant observation of environmental politics in our own Middletown community. We will also study how global environmental actors such as international nongovernmental organizations and multinational corporations are shaping the process and the content of environmental policy around the world.

Our seminar is a Permission Of Instruction (POI) course, which means that each of you has been chosen by the professor because you represent a diverse array of interests and bring a wide variety of experiences and knowledge to our seminar. It is expected that each of you will be actively contributing to our collective learning experience throughout the semester. The course is cross listed in three departments, so we will be utilizing a multidisciplinary approach to this topic throughout the course. This means that you should expect to feel very comfortable with the subject matter and methodological approaches during some weeks but quite uncomfortable and at a loss on other weeks. This feeling of disorientation is an intended component of the course and becoming comfortable with different ways of thinking and engaging with subject matters is one of the skills that you will be building and enhancing throughout the semester.

Although the course is pitched at a high level and in class we will be discussing rather general topics, each of you will become an expert in the environmental politics of a particular country by the end of the semester. Each week you will be conducting research about your country, updating your wiki, and contributing your country-specific knowledge to our general discussion. At the end of the semester you will hand in a final paper that includes a summary of the collective information that you have gathered about your country, an analysis of that information, and a reflection on your experience in the seminar. Each student will also “do” some environmental politics during the semester, and your experiences and reflections on those experiences will enhance our understanding of how the abstract theories and far-away policies that we discuss in class take on shape and context in real life.
Learning Objectives

- Enhanced knowledge of different types of environmental politics
- Enhanced understanding of the complex ways that environmental politics interacts with democracy
- Enhanced ability to think about ethical challenges related to the environment in multiple cultural contexts
- Enhanced ability to understand and utilize multi-disciplinary modes of inquiry
- Deeper knowledge about the environmental politics about a particular country
- Greater sense of empowerment to become positively involved in environmental politics

I hope that you will look to me as a resource. I highly encourage you to take advantage of my office hours to stop by and talk about issues raised in the course or other questions you have. I am very open to feedback about the course and would appreciate you sharing any thoughts you might have for improvement earlier rather than later in the semester. I am very excited about this course, and I hope that we can all have an interesting and productive semester!

Assignments

Your seminar grade will be comprised of five parts:

Class Participation

Seminars rely on quality participation by their members in order to be successful. Students are expected to come to class prepared and engage productively with the material and with their peers during class meetings. Participation in the feet to the fire module will be reflected in this grade. 13%

Public Event Response Papers

One page response papers to public talks/films/performances related to the class that include 1) articulation of the main argument of the talk/film/event, 2) description of the evidence used to support the argument, and 3) three questions that emerge from the event. Two papers minimum. The average of all papers will be the final grade for this section. 2%

Participant Observation Assignment

Each student will participate in some form of environmental politics. The activity must be part of an organized environmental politics related event (e.g., public hearing at city hall, public protest, community clean-up, etc.). After the activity the student must submit a 2-3 page response paper that includes: 1) a description of what the student did, 2) how it relates to one or more topics discussed in class, and 3) two questions/responses that have emerged for the student from the experience (e.g., now that I understand X, I wonder why…; now that I have done A, I would like to…). 5%

Wiki

Throughout the semester students will maintain and update their wiki about the environmental politics of one particular country. The wiki should be 45%
updated each week with information related to the topic of that week and include issues specifically related to those raised by the readings. (5% per paper for 8 weeks plus a 5% creativity bonus)

Topic Papers
Students must write two 5-6 page topic-focused papers over the course of the semester. Each paper will be a reflection on one of the weekly topic. The papers must have a clear argument and use the readings as well as the wiki contributions of classmates as evidence to support that argument. (2 papers 10% each)

Final Paper
The final 18-20 page paper will represent a culmination of the class. 15 of the pages will summarize the student’s wiki and analyze how their country case fits in with other cases covered in the readings and in class, and the final 3 pages will be a personal reflection on what the student takes away from the class both in terms of knowledge as well as personal growth.

The two topic papers and the final paper will be turned into me in two forms: (1) hard copy handed directly to me or dropped off in the course box in front of the government department AND (2) submitted electronically to turnitin.com. The Turnitin.com submission time will be the one that will determine whether your paper is on time or late. Course wikis must acknowledge sources appropriately. I am not tolerant of cheating or plagiarism. I will give you all the tools you need to do well on your assignments throughout the quarter, so there should be no need for unacceptable assistance. All papers must be submitted to turnitin.com to help protect everyone against plagiarism. For questions about Wesleyan’s policies on plagiarism see: www.wesleyan.edu/studenthandbook/3_honorsystem.ctt

Complaints:
Grade complaints will not be entertained until 24 hours after the assignment is returned to you or more than two weeks after the exam/assignment has been returned. If you have a question concerning the grade you have received:
1) Wait 24 hours.
2) Write out an explanation of your question, including the reasons why you think your grade should be changed.
3) Submit your written complaint/question to me, and make an appointment to meet with me either during my office hours or at some other time.

Course Readings
There is one book for this course: William Powers. Blue Clay People: Seasons on Africa’s Fragile Edge (Blumsbury 2006). The book is available at the bookstore. All other readings are available online either through a direct link to the article or through the library’s online course reserves system (found at: http://eres.olin.wesleyan.edu/eres/courseindex.aspx). If the link to an article is broken or not working, please look up the article yourself using the “journal locator” function at the library website (http://www.wesleyan.edu:9092/libr/php/journallocator/jlocate.php3). Full citations for all
articles are given, so you should not have trouble finding a copy. If you cannot find the readings having looked in these three places, please contact me so that I can get you the reading before class.

## Reading Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 10</td>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
<td>Think about/pick country that will be your research focus for the semester.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Why is the environment such an issue?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Who are the main actors?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What are the main issues?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What tradeoffs do policymakers make?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Why/how is environmental politics related to democracy? To capitalism?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• International regulatory framework</td>
<td>Busch et al. “The Global Diffusion of Regulatory Instruments”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• National regulatory framework</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sub-national regulatory framework</td>
<td><strong>Update Wiki</strong>: List main actors involved in environmental politics and what they do in your country. Include 1-2 paragraphs discussing how the issues raised in the reading relate to your country.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Why is regulation necessary?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Who regulates?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Who is regulated?</td>
<td>Peter M. Haas. “Banning Chlorofluorocarbons.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What is the purpose of regulation?</td>
<td>Kim Reimann, “Building Global Civil Society from the Outside In?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What kind of regulation is effective?</td>
<td><strong>Update Wiki</strong>: List transnational organizations involved in your country and what they do. Include 1-2 paragraphs discussing how issues raised in the readings relate to your country.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How does regulatory capacity vary across regulatory bodies/countries?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 24</td>
<td><strong>International/Transnational Organizations</strong></td>
<td><strong>Participant Observation assignment handed out</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Which intergovernmental organizations are involved in the environment? What do they do?</td>
<td>Peter M. Haas. “Banning Chlorofluorocarbons.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Which international, non-governmental organizations are involved? What do they do?</td>
<td>Kim Reimann, “Building Global Civil Society from the Outside In?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How do transnational actors connect to environmental politics on the ground?</td>
<td><strong>Update Wiki</strong>: List transnational organizations involved in your country and what they do. Include 1-2 paragraphs discussing how issues raised in the readings relate to your country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 1</td>
<td><strong>Environmental Ethics</strong></td>
<td>Stanford Encyclopedia on Environmental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What is environmental ethics?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
- What are some of the issues related to environmental ethics?
- How does cultural heritage affect environmental ethics?
- How are environmental ethics issues resolved/ameliorated?


Figueroa and Mills “Environmental Justice”

Tu Weiming, “The Continuity of Being: Chinese Visions of Nature”

**Update Wiki**: What are the environmental ethics issues in your country. Include 1-2 paragraphs discussing how the issues raised in the readings relate to your country.

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**Oct. 8**

**Feet to the Fire Movement Workshop—arts and environmental politics**

- What role does art play in environmental politics?
- Does the involvement of artists have different significance in democratic and non-democratic societies?
- How does artistic expression alter your relationship to the environment?
- Does it change your ideas about environmental politics?

Jacqueline Adams. “Art in Social Movements.”

Doug Blandy et al “Art, Ecological Restoration, and Art Education.”

**Update Wiki**: List types of artists involved in environmental politics and what they do in your country. Include 1-2 paragraphs discussing how the issues raised in the reading relate to your country.

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**Oct. 15**

**Conservation Politics**

- Who are the main actors involved in conservation politics?
- What are some of the features of conservation politics that makes it distinct from other forms of environmental politics?
- Which features are similar to other kinds of politics?
- Do these political processes vary in democratic and non-democratic contexts?

Peterson et al “A Tale of Two Species”

Ralph Litsinger, “In Search of the Grassroots”

**Update Wiki**: Describe main conservation issues and actors in your country. Include 1-2 paragraphs discussing how the issues raised in the reading relate to your country.

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**Oct. 22**

**The Politicization of Science**

- Who identifies environmental “problems”?
- How is science used in political battles concerning the environment?
- How do different actors use/view science and knowledge differently?

Connie Ozawa. “Science in Environmental Conflict.”

Paul Robbins. “The Practical Politics of Knowing”

**Update Wiki**: How is science used
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GOVT/EAST/ENVS 304

Mary Alice Haddad

• What are the ethical components of the treatment of different kinds of knowledge?

Oct. 29 NIMBY Politics
• What is NIMBY politics?
• How is NIMBY politics related to other kinds of environmental politics?
• What are the ethical issues related to NIMBY politics?
• How does NIMBY politics vary by cultural context?

Daniel Aldrich. “Dam the Rivers”
Eileen McGurty “From NIMBY to Civil Rights”

Update Wiki: What are some of the main NIMBY battles in your country. Include 1-2 paragraphs discussing how the issues raised in the reading relate to your country.

Oct. 29 MANDITORY TALK: Aldrich 4:30 at EAST

Nov. 5 Eco-terrorism
• What is ecoterrorism?
• Why do people engage in ecoterrorism?
• What are the differences between local and transnational ecoterrorists?
• When (if ever) is ecoterrorism a legitimate political tactic?
• How does democracy make a difference?

Ronald Shaiko, “Greenpeace USA”
Muzaffar Assadi.“Tribals on Warpath”

Update Wiki: Describe eco-terrorists in your country. Include 1-2 paragraphs discussing issues raised in the readings/clip in your country.

Nov. 12 The Benefits of Authoritarianism and Costs of Democracy
• What are some of the benefits of authoritarianism for environmental protection and sustainable development?
• What are some of the costs of democracy?

David Carruthers. “Environmental Politics in Chile”

Nov. 19 Environmental Activism Leading to Democratization?
• How does environmental politics operate in a undemocratic context?
• How can environmental activism

Participant Observation Assignment Due
Shannon O'Lear. “Networks of Engagement.”
promote democratization?
• Why do authoritarian governments allow environmental activism?

Robert Weller. *Alternate Civilities*. ch.6
Start reading *Blue Clay People*.

Nov. 26  **THANKSGIVING—NO CLASS**
Eat Much, Sleep Much, Be Merry 😊

Dec. 3  **Bringing It All Together—Negative forces converge in developing countries**
• What are the main environmental issues in Liberia?
• What are the ethical issues involved?
• How are environmental politics related to democratization and development in Liberia?

William Powers. *Blue Clay People*

Dec. 10  **Working towards solutions around the world—Wrapping Up**
One news article/link about positive action in your country posted to class wiki by midnight Tuesday Dec. 8th. Read all posts by class on Thursday.

Dec. 21  **Final Paper Due**—Turnitin.com before midnight Dec. 21;
Turn in hard copy directly to me or to course box by noon on Dec. 22.

**Full Bibliography of Readings**


