

CARLETON UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY & ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES
ENST 4006A, WINTER 2022

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ANALYSIS
(DRAFT OUTLINE)

Instructor:	Jamie Brownlee
Classroom:	online – asynchronous course delivery
Class Time:	2:35-5:25pm Monday
Email:	jamiebrownlee@cunet.carleton.ca
Phone Number:	613-899-2193
Pre-requisites:	Fourth year standing in Environmental Studies, Geography or permission of the department

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course critically examines how environmental policies are connected to the structures of global capitalism, domestic and international political systems, and relations of power and inequality. Throughout the course, we will explore how the development, implementation and effectiveness of environmental policies (both in Canada and around the world) are shaped and controlled by elite interests and institutions. We will look specifically at how transnational corporations, states and governments, international regulatory bodies and trade agreements, the mass media, the advertising and public relations industries, and scientists and researchers shape environmental policy-making, including on specific issues such as climate change, resource extraction, biodiversity and modern agriculture. We will also discuss our own role as citizens and consumers in influencing the policy-making process. Finally, this course will review a range of proposed policy and other solutions – from market reforms and ‘green capitalism’ to broader institutional transformations – to environmental problems.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

This course will encourage students to think critically about the social, economic and political conditions that underlie environmental policies and problems. How are current ecological challenges – and the policy responses to them – connected to our social and intellectual history? How and why are current institutional structures at the root of environmental degradation? What are the links between the policy-making process, struggles over power and resources, and growing economic inequality? At a more general level, this course will challenge students to identify their beliefs and assumptions about the social and the political world, and to identify opportunities for engagement with these issues beyond the boundaries of the classroom.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION:

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| 1. | <i>CLASS PARTICIPATION, PRESENTATIONS AND ATTENDANCE</i> | 25% |
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This is a reading intensive course. Students are strongly encouraged to keep up with the assigned readings and come to class prepared to discuss them. This is also a student-driven course, meaning that students are expected to be active participants. The grade for this requirement will be distributed over three kinds of participation throughout the term: class participation, attendance and a presentation.

Presentation: Seminar participants will be expected to present on the readings and facilitate seminar discussions once during the term. The purpose of the presentations is to briefly review and analyze the main arguments and themes presented in the readings, and then stimulate class discussion. Oral presentations should be approximately 15 minutes. The presentations will begin the second class.

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| 2. | <i>SHORT ASSIGNMENT</i> | 20% |
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This paper will give students the opportunity to analyze the state of knowledge around a particular ecological problem and set of corresponding environmental policies. The paper should be approximately 6-7 double-spaced pages. Additional details to follow in class.

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| 3. | <i>CRITICAL REACTION PAPER</i> | 20% |
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The critical reaction paper will involve writing a critically reflective piece of approximately 6-7 double-spaced pages on all of the readings from one of the weeks during the term. The paper should briefly summarize some of the main arguments of the readings and then *analyze* the arguments within them. The point of the paper is to allow for a more sustained engagement with a topic that especially interests you. Additional details to follow in class.

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| 4. | <i>FINAL PAPER</i> | 35% |
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Students will select their own paper topic, understanding that it must be relevant to the issues addressed in the course. While the paper can engage with some of the weekly readings, it must also reference additional academic sources. Papers will be graded on the quality of your research and writing, strength of your arguments and analysis, and your ability to situate your arguments within existing debates. Students are encouraged to discuss paper ideas with me at any point during the term. The final paper should be approximately 12-15 double-spaced pages.