

Carleton University  
Department of Political Science

**PSCI 3801A**  
**Environmental Politics**  
**Monday and Wednesday 14:35 – 17:25**  
Please confirm location on Carleton Central

Instructor: Alda Kokallaj  
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**Course description:**

This course provides an introduction to concepts and debates in the field of environmental politics for students who already have some background in political science, environmental studies or policy studies. As John Dryzek and David Schlosberg note in the introduction to the course text,

...environmental politics is about how humanity organizes itself to relate to the nature that sustains it. Thus it encompasses matters of how people deal with the planet and its life, and how they relate to each other through the medium of the environment. It impinges on other areas of political concern such as those related to poverty, social justice, education, race, the economy, international relations, and human rights in as much as what happens in these areas affects our environment (and vice versa).

Clearly, the field of environmental politics has a wide scope. In order to narrow this scope into a 12-week course, I propose to focus on three themes: environmental discourses; environmental policy-making; and ecological democracy. Each of these three themes is woven through course readings, lectures, and assignments.

Environmental Discourses:

This course provides students with the opportunity to become acquainted with, and debate, some of the key ontological and normative issues in environmental politics. These issues range from competing views of the state of the environment and how it came to be this way, to proposals put forward for improving the condition of human-environment relations from across the political spectrum. I call this theme environmental “discourses” because even as we engage in conversations about what “is” or “should” be I think it is important that students learn to critically reflect on the way that (their own and others’) positions are framed, and the assumptions that underpin those framings.

### Environmental Policy Development:

This course will not review lists of regulatory and policy tools used in environmental and resource management, with a view to systematically examining the pros and cons of each. Rather, while we will discuss a number of policy and regulatory strategies, my aim is to help students understand how and why particular policies are adopted. In other words, the focus will be on the politics of policy development and implementation, with an emphasis on the Canadian experience. Why, for example, is the Canadian government slow to act on climate change while leading the international community in discussions on eliminating the use of persistent organic pollutants? We will be looking at these and other policy debates in terms of three inter-related fields of political activity, or what International Political Economy theorist Robert Cox calls “relations of force”: ideas, institutions and material capabilities.

### Ecological Democracy:

Environmental controversies often appear to be about debates about facts: Is climate change happening (or really a problem)? Are these forestry management practices sustainable? Are genetically modified organisms damaging to the environment? As a result, governments typically see environmental issues through technocratic lenses, as questions that are best answered by competent scientists and economists. Despite these moves, conflicts over the environment often turn out to be much messier, and harder to manage, than governments expect. This is because a “factual” disagreement is often simply the tip of the iceberg, with interested parties holding widely divergent values and assumptions that inform their framing of the facts. For these reasons, environmental politics is often about trying to create the discursive space for more and better democratic conversations about human-environment relations, rather than (or as a way of better informing) technocratic solutions. This democratic impulse in environmental politics raises a wide range of important questions, from whether and how non-human nature can have its voice(s) included in the conversation, to how to establish better international democratic processes for the many issues that are inherently global in scope.

### **Texts**

Required texts:

- Dryzek, John, and David Scholsberg. 2005. *Debating the Earth: The Environmental Politics Reader* (Second Edition). Oxford University Press: Oxford

-MacDonald, Douglas. 2007. *Business and Environmental Politics in Canada*. Broadview Press: Peterborough, Ontario

- Adkin, Laurie E. 2009. *Environmental Conflict and Democracy in Canada*. UBC Press: Vancouver

These texts are available at Haven Books. <http://www.havenbooks.ca/carletonsite/carletonhome-e.php>

They are also on reserve in the library.

Useful supplementary material:

- Stoett, P. and C. Gore. 2008. *Environmental Challenges and Opportunities: Local–Global Perspectives on Canadian Issues*. Emond- Montgomery: Toronto

- Boyd, David. *Unnatural Law: Rethinking Canadian Environmental Law and Policy* (UBC Press, 2003).
- McKenzie, Judith. *Environmental Politics in Canada* (Oxford University Press, 2002).
- Carter, Neil. *The Politics of the Environment: Ideas, Activism, Policy* (Cambridge University Press, 2001)

**Evaluation**

Attendance and participation:	15%
Group presentations:	20%
Policy Research Essay (part I): (Due July 21)	25%
Policy Research Essay (part II): (Due August 6)	40%

**Participation:** Your participation grade will be divided between attendance and class participation. 5% will be based on attendance in class. Attendance for this course is mandatory. Absences will only be excused if you can provide suitable documentation (e.g. a doctor’s note). The other 10% is based on the quality of your contributions to class discussions and your ability to interact with your fellow classmates in a respectful manner.

**Group Presentations:** Students must sign up for group presentations in the first class. There will be up to six students in each group. The class presentation should take the form of a moderated debate. In this debate the goal is to present a variety of contrasting positions on the topic of that day's class by taking the position of stakeholders in a real-world scenario regarding the issues relevant to the general topic of the class. A key component that is expected to be covered during the presentations is a proposed solution to the issue. This solution should be collectively thought out and it should address the concerns of all parties involved. Specific case study scenarios and presentation topics will be made available during the first class. These topics will be then distributed to each of the groups. You are encouraged to be creative in your presentation of the debate. Presentations should not exceed 30 minutes, and will take place during the second half of the class. In the presentation you should state your key sources that inform your positions on the issue, and submit a summary of the positions (including all references and any parts of the presentation to be read aloud) to the instructor prior to the presentation. Grading criteria for the presentation will be discussed and decided during the first day of class. Regular attendance is important for this class component.

**Policy Research Essay (part I):** You are to select a specific Canadian environmental policy issue (at the municipal, provincial, national or international level) that you will deal with in both of your essays. The goal of your first essay will be to address a (more specific) variant on the question: What are the key factors that led to the adoption of this particular policy or decision? In your argumentative response, you should focus on what you see as the key economic, institutional and ideational/discursive factors that shaped the policy outcome, drawing on suitable academic sources to help you substantiate your argument. In the proposal, you should include, in narrative form (and not necessarily in this order): 1) a brief description of the environmental issue at stake; 2) a thesis statement for this essay; 3) an introduction to the key state and non-state actors involved in the issue (including how they frame the relevant science and policy options and how they work to influence decisions on the issue, both inside and

outside of formal political processes); 4) a description of a key policy document that is relevant to your issue area (such as regulations, legislation, policy decision, etc.) and the specific section(s) of that document that you are focusing on; 5) a discussion of how a specific policy debate or outcome was shaped by actor positions and activities, institutional structures, scientific and economic factors, etc.; 6) two political science research questions raised by your studies to date that you believe warrant further examination in your second essay. Your essay should cite at least two academic journal articles or books, one (or more) of which must help provide the theoretical frame for your argument. You should also cite at least one government document, NGO material (web site or otherwise), and material (web site or otherwise) on at least one other central actor (e.g. First Nation, industry organization, etc.) Citations should follow APA style. **The first essay is due at the beginning of class on July 21. It should be 1500-2000 words in length, with the word-count noted on the first page.**

**Policy Research Essay (Part II):** In your second essay, you are to address one of the questions you suggested in your first essay, taking into account any feedback you received on that paper. You should: 1) briefly review some of the background on the issue area in order to set up your paper; 2) present the focus of this work in a research question or thesis statement; and 3) develop your argument based on relevant primary and secondary sources. Given that you are writing on the same subject matter as your first essay, there will be some overlap between these two papers (up to 750 words maximum). However, I expect to see improvement in depth of analysis, theoretical sophistication and overall knowledge of the issue. This essay should cite at least ten sources, including at least four secondary sources (e.g. academic journal articles or books, including at least one course reading) and six primary sources (e.g. gov't documents or actor-generated documents). Needless to say, the essay should take into account any feedback you received on your first essay. This essay should be 2500-3000 words in length (word count must be indicated). **The Second Policy Research Essay is due in class on August 6. You are expected to submit your graded first essay (or a photocopy of it) along with this second essay. Failure to do so will result in the loss of 2/3 of a letter grade (e.g. B- to C).**

Late essays (only) may be submitted to the Political Science department's mail box outside B640 Loeb and will be penalized one-third of a letter grade per business day (e.g. a B paper handed in two days late would be reduced to a C+). Retain a copy of all written assignments. The departmental drop box cut off time is 4pm. Any assignments submitted after 4pm will be date stamped for the following weekday.

**Written Assignment Environmental Policy:** In the interest of minimizing paper use, I encourage you to print your essays double-sided or on re-used paper (e.g. paper that has already been used on one side) and not to include a full cover page. Simply put the details (name, title, course #, word count, etc.) at the top of your first page of text. Essays should still be double-spaced in a size 12 font to allow for written feedback.

## **Schedule:**

### **Week 1**

#### Monday, July 7

Introduction and course overview

#### Wednesday, July 9

Nature of the problem- assessing limits

- Hardin, Garrett. The Tragedy of the Commons Dryzek and Schlosberg pp.25-37
- Brown, Lester. A Planet under Stress Dryzek and Schlosberg pp.37-48
- Lomborg, Bjorn. The Truth about the Environment. Dryzek and Schlosberg pp.74-79

Supplementary readings:

- Simon, Julian L. and Herman Kahn. Introduction to *The Resourceful Earth*. Dryzek and Schlosberg pp.51-73

- Burke, Tom. Ten Pinches of Salt: A Reply to Bjorn Lomborg Dryzek and Schlosberg pp.80-88

Discussion questions: Which of the arguments presented by these authors do you accept (or not) and why? What kind of social changes do you think Brown's 'Plan B' might entail, and are these realistic? What do the differences between these authors reveal to you about the nature of environmental politics?

### **Week 2**

#### Monday, July 14

Environment and Economics

- Stavins, Robert and Bradley Whitehead. Market-Based Environmental Policies, Dryzek and Schlosberg pp.229-238
- Goodin, Robert E, Selling Environmental Indulgences, Dryzek and Schlosberg pp.239-256
- Barry, John. Ecological Modernization, Dryzek and Schlosberg pp.303-320.

Discussion questions: Which of the arguments presented in this week's readings do you accept and why? How do the views of market liberals change across the spectrum? Where does the perspective of ecological modernization stand on this spectrum and what does it propose for balancing out economic growth and environmental protection?

#### Wednesday, July 16

Environmental Policy: Understanding actor involvement in policy development

- MacDonald, Douglas. Business and Environmental Politics (Chaps 1 and 2) p.1-68

Discussion questions: How have businesses responded to the challenge of environmentalism? Why? How is the way that businesses engage in environmental policy development similar or different to the way other actors engage with environmental issues? What have you read in MacDonald's first two chapters that sheds some light on the policy field you are researching for this course?

### Week 3

#### Monday, July 21

Business responses to the environment in Canada

Required Readings:

- MacDonald, Douglas. Business and Environmental Politics (Chap 3) p.69-94
- Harrison, Donna. Salmon Aquaculture and First Nations Resistance in British Columbia. Adkin pp.51-68
- Andrée, Peter and Sharratt, Lucy. Unsatisfactory Democracy: Conflict over Monsanto's Genetically-Engineered Wheat. Adkin pp,16-32

Discussion questions: Describe the Relationship(s) between environmental/resource issues and democratic practice. Provide specific examples to back your points, from the readings or your own experience. What strategies do Canadian businesses use for responding to environmental concerns and why have these strategies changed over time? What do you see as the benefits or drawbacks of alternatives assessment vs. risk assessment? Do you think "alternatives assessment" represent a realistic regulatory approach? Why or why not?

#### Wednesday, July 23

Environmental Activism and Green Politics

- Wapner, Paul. Politics Beyond the State: Environmental Activism and World Civic Politics. p. 525-549
- Paguntke, Thomas. Green Parties in National Governments: From Protest to Acquiescence? Dryzek and Schlosberg pp. 573-584
- Werkele, G.R., L. Anders Sandberg, and Liette Gilbert. Taking a Stand in Exurbia: Environmental Movements to Preserve Nature and Resist Sprawl. Adkin pp.279-297

Discussion questions: When are civil society organizations powerful in environmental politics? Why? How are they influential? How does the experience of green parties in Europe compare with what you know of their experience in North America?

### Week 4

#### Monday, July 28

Environmental Policy in Canada: Sustainable development in practice

- MacDonald, Douglas. Business and Environmental Politics (Chap 4) p. 95-132
- Meadowcroft, James. Sustainable Development: A New(ish) Idea for a New Century? p. 267 - 284
- Berny, Nathalie, Raymond Hudson, and Maxime Ouellet. Regulating Farm Pollution in Quebec: Environmentalists and the Union des Producteurs Agricoles contest the Meaning of Sustainable Development. Adkin pp.33-50

Supplementary Readings:

- Carruthers, David. The Remaking of Sustainable Development. Dryzek and Schlosberg pp. 285-300
- World Commission on Environment and Development. From One Earth to One World. p. 259-266

Discussion questions: What have been the implications of the widespread adoption of the discourse of sustainable development for environmental policy and environmental politics? Has this been a positive step for the environment? Why or why not?

### Wednesday, July 30

#### Environmental Justice

- First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit. Principles of Environmental Justice. p. 429-430
- Bullard, Robert D. Environmental; Justice in the 21st Century. p.431-449
- Krauss, Clene. Women of Color on the Front Line. p. 450-460
- LaDuke, All our Relations. p.489-496
- Stiegman, M. Fisheries Privatization versus Community-Based Management in Nova Scotia: Emerging Alliances between First Nations and Non-Native Fishers. Adkin pp.69-83

Discussion questions: Is the notion of “environmental justice” relevant in Canada? What are some examples of how issues of social justice and equity arise in public debates over the environment in Canada?

### Week 5

#### **Monday, August 4 - University Closed**

### Wednesday, August 6

#### Democracy and the environment

- MacDonald, Douglas. Business and Environmental Politics (Chap 5) p. 133-172
- Paehlke, Robert. Democracy and Environmentalism: Opening the Door to the Administrative State. p. 163-179
- Adkin, Laurie E. Ecology, Citizenship and Democracy. Adkin pp.1-15

Discussion questions: How would you characterize the relationships between democracy, liberalism and the environment? Do you think democratic practices need to change to better respond to the challenge of the ecological crisis?

### Week 6

### Monday, August 11

#### Ecocentric discourses: rethinking human nature

- Foreman, Dave. Putting the Earth First. Dryzek and Schlosberg pp.348-354
- Bookchin, Murray. Society and Ecology. p.385-398
- Eckersley, Robyn. Ecocentric Discourses: Problems and Future Prospects for Nature Advocacy. Dryzek and Schlosberg pp. 364-382
- Naess, Arne. The Shallow and the Deep, Long-Range Ecology Movement: A Summary. Dryzek and Schlosberg pp. 343-347

Discussion questions: Should we adopt more “ecocentric” worldviews in order to overcome the short-sightedness of mainstream religious and secular perspectives?

Wednesday, August 13

Ecological Democracy- Rethinking society

- Plumwood, Val. Inequality, Ecojustice and Ecological Rationality. Dryzek and Schlosberg pp. 608-632

- Beck, Ulrich. Politics of Risk Society. Dryzek and Schlosberg pp.587-595

- King, Ynestra. Towards and Ecological Feminism and a Feminist Ecology p. 399-407

- Adkin, Laurie E. Democracy from the Trenches: Environmental Conflicts and Ecological Citizenship. Adkin pp.298-318

- Dryzek, John. S. Political and Ecological Communication. Dryzek and Schlosberg pp. 633-652

Supplementary Reading:

- Torgerson, Douglas. Farewell to the Green Movement? Political Action and the Green Public Sphere. p.509-524

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### **Academic Accommodations**

The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or [pmc@carleton.ca](mailto:pmc@carleton.ca) for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your **Letter of Accommodation** at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (*if applicable*). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (*if applicable*).

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**For Religious Observance:** Students requesting accommodation for religious observances should apply in writing to their instructor for alternate dates and/or means of satisfying academic requirements. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist, but no later than two weeks before the compulsory academic event. Accommodation is to be worked out directly and on an individual basis between the student and the instructor(s) involved. Instructors will make accommodations in a way that avoids academic disadvantage to the student. Instructors and students may contact an Equity Services Advisor for assistance ([www.carleton.ca/equity](http://www.carleton.ca/equity)).

**For Pregnancy:** Pregnant students requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact an Equity Advisor in Equity Services to complete a *letter of accommodation*. Then, make an appointment to discuss your needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first academic event in which it is anticipated the accommodation will be required.

**Plagiarism:** The University Senate defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in "substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.

Plagiarism is a serious offence which cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They include a mark of zero for the plagiarized work or a final grade of "F" for the course.

**Oral Examination:** At the discretion of the instructor, students may be required to pass a brief oral examination on research papers and essays.

**Submission and Return of Term Work:** Papers must be handed directly to the instructor and will not be date-stamped in the departmental office. Late assignments may be submitted to the drop box in the corridor outside B640 Loeb. Assignments will be retrieved every business day at **4 p.m.**, stamped with that day's date, and then distributed to the instructor. For essays not returned in class please attach a **stamped, self-addressed envelope** if you wish to have your assignment returned by mail. Please note that assignments sent via fax or email will not be accepted. Final exams are intended solely for the purpose of evaluation and will not be returned.

**Grading:** Assignments and exams will be graded with a percentage grade. To convert this to a letter grade or to the university 12-point system, please refer to the following table.

Percentage	Letter grade	12-point scale	Percentage	Letter grade	12-point scale
90-100	A+	12	67-69	C+	6
85-89	A	11	63-66	C	5
80-84	A-	10	60-62	C-	4
77-79	B+	9	57-59	D+	3
73-76	B	8	53-56	D	2
70-72	B-	7	50-52	D-	1

**Grades:** Final grades are derived from the completion of course assignments. Failure to write the final exam will result in the grade ABS. Deferred final exams are available ONLY if the student is in good standing in the course.

**Approval of final grades:** Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by an instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

**Carleton E-mail Accounts:** All email communication to students from the Department of Political Science will be via official Carleton university e-mail accounts and/or cuLearn. As important course and University information is distributed this way, it is the student's responsibility to monitor their Carleton and cuLearn accounts.

**Carleton Political Science Society:** The Carleton Political Science Society (CPSS) has made its mission to provide a social environment for politically inclined students and faculty. Holding social events, debates, and panel discussions, CPSS aims to involve all political science students at Carleton University. Our mandate is to arrange social and academic activities in order to instill a sense of belonging within the Department and the larger University community. Members can benefit through numerous opportunities which will complement both academic and social life at Carleton University. To find out more, visit <http://facebook.com/CarletonPoliticalScienceSociety> or come to our office in Loeb D688.

**Official Course Outline:** The course outline posted to the Political Science website is the official course outline.