

Professor Peter F. Cannavò

Hamilton College

Fall 2006

Wednesday and Friday, 1:00-2:15 PM

Science Center G027

## Government 285F: Introduction to Environmental Politics

*Version dated 8/30/06*

**Office:**

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**Office Hours:**

Wednesday and Friday, 10-12, or by appointment



<http://www.indybay.org/olduploads/shutdownpge.jpghceflw.jpg>

## ***Introduction***

This course is an introduction to environmental politics and policy. A survey like this is inevitably going to cover either too much or too little, depending on your particular area of interest, but it should give you a handle on the main ideas, issues, and conflicts in environmental politics today. My aim is to first provide an overview of environmental politics, then explore some important concepts, and then finally apply our knowledge to what is perhaps the most important environmental issue today: climate change. The climate change unit will involve a role-playing exercise. We will simulate a Senate hearing on the Kyoto treaty.

In presenting this contentious material, I try to be evenhanded, presenting several sides to the debates. That said, my own biases will inevitably come through, so I invite you to challenge them (and me)! I can also guarantee that whatever your views on environmental politics, you'll find them challenged by the course material. On the whole, I think you'll find this to be a fascinating and fun journey through what is arguably the most important set of concerns facing humanity today.

The course roughly follows a lecture format, though I will leave time for questions and discussion as often as possible (see participation requirement).

## ***Blackboard Site***

The course has a Blackboard site, where I will post readings, study questions, important information, etc. Please make sure to regularly visit the site.

## ***Course Requirements***

**Readings:** Because this is an introduction to such a large topic, the readings are inevitably extensive. I have made several texts available for purchase. (I have included detailed publication information so that you may shop elsewhere or on-line, if you choose, and so that you purchase the correct edition). So that you don't break the bank, I will also make as many of these texts as possible available through other means: reserves and the course's Blackboard website. I will inform you of the avenues of availability for specific texts.

The following books are available for purchase:

***Books Available for Purchase:***

Sir John Houghton, *Global Warming: The Complete Briefing*  
Cambridge University Press; ISBN: 0521528747; 3rd edition (August 5, 2004)

Tim Flannery, *The Weather Makers: How Man is Changing the Climate and What It Means for Life on Earth*

Atlantic Monthly Press; ISBN: 0871139359 (February 2006)

Judith A. Layzer, *The Environmental Case: Translating Values into Policy*, Second Edition

Congressional Quarterly Press; ISBN: 1568028989; (December 2005)

Bjorn Lomborg, *The Skeptical Environmentalist: Measuring the Real State of the World*

Cambridge University Press; ISBN: 0521010683; Reprint edition (September 2001)

Norman Vig and Michael E. Kraft, *Environmental Policy: New Directions for the Twenty-First Century*, Sixth Edition

Congressional Quarterly Press; ISBN: 1933116013; 6th edition (July 2005)

**Papers and the Climate Change Exercise:** You will be assigned two papers. A paper of 5 pages, on the issue of whether the environmental movement is dead, will be due at 5 PM on Thursday, September 22, 2005 (this will be based on the course readings). An 8 to 10-page paper on climate change will be due at 5 PM on Monday, December 11, 2005. Only the second paper will use outside research.

***Climate Change Exercise***

The second paper will be part of a larger climate change project. The last few weeks of the course will be devoted to the topic of climate change. We will end the semester with a simulated, all-day U.S. Senate hearing. It will be held outside of class, on Thursday, December 7, from 4-7 PM, place TBA. Dinner will be provided right afterwards. You will pick roles and form groups for this event.

The roles will be as follows:

9 Senators: R-Alaska, D-California, D-Colorado, R-Florida, D-New York, R-Iowa, R-Louisiana, R-Texas, D-West Virginia.

*And, the following groups (5 persons each) who will present testimony before the Senate panel:*

- 1) Climatologists.
- 2) Skeptics.
- 3) Environmentalists.
- 4) Fossil fuel industry.
- 5) Representatives from developing countries.
- 6) Representatives from the European Union.

Each group will present for 15 minutes. The remaining 90 minutes of total time will be devoted to questions from the Senators and the audience. At the end, the Senators will each make a statement and then vote on whether or not to ratify the Kyoto treaty. Your presentation must be circulated among all participants by midnight on December 4/5 so that everyone can fully prepare for the hearing. The climate change exercise is a major project and you need to start thinking about it much earlier in the semester (your role and group must be picked by November 3). Therefore, you should start the climate change reading early – think of it as research for your presentation and paper.

Your climate change paper will be an individual project related to the topic pursued by your group. Papers will be about 8-10 pages in length. You will use outside research, but should consult with me on your sources. Your paper, unlike your testimony, will not be partisan, but will instead be marked by objective analysis.

In preparing your presentation, you should schedule an appointment with the Oral Communication Lab. I will tell you more about that.

### ***Writing Guidelines***

#### *Extensions*

Any papers turned in late without a valid prior excuse (except in cases of medical or other *documented* emergency) will be downgraded 3 points for each day (or part of a day) overdue (weekends count as one day). Those papers penalized more than 40 points will automatically receive a failing grade of 0, though you can still be credited for completion of the assignment.

#### *Writing Center and Writing Workshop*

I recommend that ALL students make appointments with the Writing Center. Even a seasoned academic like me is frequently guilty of bad writing, so don't hesitate to get assistance.

#### *Plagiarism and References*

I take the issue of plagiarism very seriously. All sources, including those on the course syllabus, must be carefully cited. That means the following: phrases or passages taken verbatim from texts must be in quotes, paraphrased sections or any ideas taken from texts must be cited through the use of footnotes or parentheticals. A paper whose basic argument and structure are more or less taken from another source amounts to an instance of plagiarism, even if the source is cited. I have caught plagiarism in the past and I am on guard for it. You can get information on plagiarism at the Writing Center.

Regarding citations, I'm not particular on the format, only that you be CONSISTENT. Therefore, you may use parentheticals, footnotes, or endnotes, though I prefer footnotes. In using footnotes or endnotes to cite sources, you don't need a full citation each time. Only cite fully the first time. Just don't use *Ibid.*, *Op. cit.*, etc. I prefer a shortened version of the reference. Thus, Peter F. Cannavò, *Let's Trash the Planet*, becomes Cannavò, *Trash the Planet*, or Cannavò, *Let's Trash*.

If you use parentheticals, place the reference after you close quotes (after all, the reference does *not* appear in the original quote!). For example, this is INCORRECT: "Polluting the Earth is lots of fun. We should all do it (Cannavò 2005, p.2345)." This is CORRECT: "Polluting the Earth is lots of fun. We should all do it" (Cannavò 2005, p.2345). Also, parentheticals must be accompanied by a list of references at the end of the paper.

Individual articles within a collection should be cited separately. For example:

Oxin, Di., "Fifty-Seven Endangered Species Recipes," in Joe Landfill and Polly Vinyl, *Fifty Ways to Pollute the Earth*, Sixth Edition (Glowing River, NJ: Toxic Press, 2005), pp.34-56 (35).

After the first citation (if you're using footnotes or endnotes), you can shorten this as follows (if you're using page 39, for example):

Oxin, "Endangered Species Recipes," p.39.

### *Writing Mechanics and Style*

Plurals are not possessives! This is not correct: "Toxic **waste's** should not be used as an ingredient in breakfast cereals. They are too low in fiber." THIS is correct: "Toxic **wastes** should not be used as an ingredient in breakfast cereals. They are too low in fiber."

It's perfectly OK to use the first person in your writing. Thus, the following is acceptable in terms of pronoun use: "In this essay, I will argue that most (probably about 99.37 %) environmentalists are snobby, elitist, cabernet-quaffing, hybrid-driving urbanites who haven't a clue about how nature works."

The above quote, however, is unacceptable in that it is too laden with partisan rhetoric. Your papers are to be objective analyses, written from a detached academic standpoint. Thus, I would rewrite the above burst of invective as follows: “In this essay, I will argue that the environmental movement has a largely urban constituency which is detached from a first-hand experience of nonhuman nature.”

Also, all of your assertions must be backed up by evidence from readings or research.

**Exams:** There are two midterms, but no final. The first exam will be held in class, on Friday, October 13 (I hope you’re not superstitious), and the second will be a take-home essay exam, assigned on Wednesday, November 8, and due on Wednesday, November 15 in class. Together, the midterms will cover all the material up to, but not including, the unit on climate change.

**Participation:** Five percent of your grade is based on your overall participation in the course. This includes participation in class discussions and debates (questions count as participation), questions and comments outside of class, turning in drafts and outlines of papers, and attendance at office hours. It is up to you how to apportion your participation. For example, not every student feels comfortable speaking in class and not every student will be able to come by my office hours (though I strongly urge ALL students to meet with me at least once).

### *Attendance*

Attendance counts! You will get 2 absences with no questions asked. After that, you will lose one-half point off of your final grade for each absence. I will therefore hand out an attendance sheet. If you have a valid excuse for being absent – as in documented illness, serious personal or family emergency, job interview, out-of-town game, conference, or other major outside commitment – please let me know. Sleeping in, having been up late, driving a friend to the airport, leaving early for vacation, headaches from ice-cold drinks, etc. are not considered valid excuses – I don’t want to hear about them, and please don’t contact me every time you miss a class. ***If you miss more than 10 classes without a valid excuse, you will automatically fail the course, no matter the quality of your work.***

### *Grading*

I grade on a 100-point scale but also translate numerical grades into letter grades:

98 and above: A+	94-97: A	90-93: A-
87-89: B+	83-86: B	80-82: B-
77-79: C+	73-76: C	70-72: C-
67-69: D+	63-66: D	60-62: D-
59 or below: F		

***You must complete all assignments in order to pass the course. You will also be required to complete a very brief evaluation of the course before Fall Break.***

The final grade is calculated as follows:

**Paper one: 15%**  
**In-class exam: 20%**  
**Take-home exam: 20%**  
**Climate change project**  
     ***Presentation: 15%* (includes written testimony)**  
     ***Paper: 25%***  
**Participation: 5%**

### ***My Availability***

I try to be as available as possible for my students. I urge that you try to meet with me during my office hours, but I will make other arrangements if my office hours are not good for you. If you wish to reach me, the best way is by e-mail, as I check my e-mail at home as well. However, I do not always respond immediately to e-mails, especially those sent at night. You can call me at home only if you've made every other effort to contact me. My home phone number is (315) 471-7530. Please don't call after 9:30 PM.

### ***Course Outline and Reading Assignments***

#### **Wednesday, August 30 - Wednesday, September 6: The History of Environmental Politics**

Norman J. Vig and Michael E. Kraft, editors, *Environmental Policy (Sixth Edition)*, Chapters 1, 5-6 (pp.1-33, 100-147). (about 14 pages of this are footnotes and references)

“The Convenientest Truth,” *The Colbert Report*, July 19, 2006 (in class)

#### ***Week of September 4: Film screenings of Blue Vinyl: The World's First Toxic Comedy (2001)***

#### **Friday, September 8 & Wednesday, September 13: Environmental Values**

Aldo Leopold, “The Land Ethic,” in Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*, pp.201-226

Garrett Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons," and Robert Paehlke, "Environmental Values for a Sustainable Society," in John S. Dryzek and David Schlosberg, eds., *Debating the Earth*, pp.23-39, 147-161

Layzer, pp.130-158

Mark Sagoff, "Settling America: The Concept of Place in Environmental Politics" in Philip D. Brick and R. McGregor Cawley, eds., *A Wolf in the Garden: The Land Rights Movement and the New Environmental Debate*, pp.249-260

William Cronon, "The Trouble with Wilderness; or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature," in William Cronon, ed., *Uncommon Ground: Toward Reinventing Nature*, pp.69-90

### **Friday, September 15 - Friday, September 22: The Contemporary Environmental Political and Cultural Landscape**

Vig and Kraft, Chapter 4 (pp.78-99)

Judith A. Layzer, *The Environmental Case: Translating Values into Policy*, pp.346-374

Felicity Barringer, "Property Rights Law May Alter Oregon Landscape," *New York Times*, November 26, 2004, p.A1

Michael Shellenberger and Ted Nordhaus, *The Death of Environmentalism: Global Warming Politics in a Post-Environmental World*

Noel Molland, "The Spark That Ignited A Flame: The Evolution of the Earth Liberation Front," in Steven Best and Anthony J. Nocella, III, *Igniting A Revolution: Voices in Defense of the Earth* (Oakland: AK Press, 2006), pp.47-58.

Jerry Adler, "Going Green," *Newsweek*, July 17, 2006

Benjamin Wittes, "The Hapless Toad," *Atlantic Monthly*, May 2005

Gina Chon, "High Fuel Prices Don't Dent Love of Gas Guzzlers," *The Wall Street Journal*, July 18, 2006, p.D1.

Richard Louv, *Last Child in the Woods*, pp.1-35.

Dr. Seuss, *The Lorax*

Sheryl Henderson Blunt, "The New Climate Coalition," *Christianity Today*, February 6,

2006

The Interfaith Stewardship Alliance, “The Cornwall Declaration”

***Paper One (5 pages) due Wednesday, September 27 in class***

***Topic: Is environmentalism dead? If not, in what direction is it going?***

**Wednesday, September 27 & Friday, September 29: The Domestic Environmental Policy Process**

Vig and Kraft, Chapters 2, 7-8 (pp.34-56, 148-192)

**Wednesday, October 4 – Wednesday, October 11: Economics and the Environment**

Vig and Kraft, Chapter 9 (pp.193-214)

Steven Kelman, “Cost-Benefit Analysis: An Ethical Critique,” in Donald VanDeVeer and Christine Pierce, *People, Penguins, and Plastic Trees: Basic Issues in Environmental Ethics*, pp. 242-249

Layzer, pp.375-403

William C. Mitchell and Randy T. Simmons, “Political Pursuit of Private Gain: Environmental Goods,” in John S. Dryzek and David Schlosberg, eds., *Debating the Earth*, pp.224-236

Michael J. Sandel, “Should We Buy the Right to Pollute?” in Sandel, *Public Philosophy: Essays on Morality in Politics*, pp.93-96

**Friday, October 13: MIDTERM ONE (in class)**

**Wednesday, October 18 – Wednesday, October 25: Risk Assessment, Science, and Values**

Vig and Kraft, Chapter 10 (pp.215-238)

Paul Slovic and Elke U. Weber, “Perception of Risk Posed by Extreme Events,” Paper prepared for the conference “Risk Management Strategies in an Uncertain World,” Palisades, New York, April 12-13, 2002

Layzer, pp.54-80

Bjorn Lomborg, *The Skeptical Environmentalist: Measuring the Real State of the World*, pp.1-42

Roger A. Pielke, "Forests, Tornadoes, and Abortion: Thinking About Science, Politics, and Policy," in Karen Arabas and Joe Bowersox, eds., *Forest Futures*, pp.143-152

***Wednesday, October 18, at 4 PM (in the Events Barn): Lecture, by Elizabeth C. Economy, Council on Foreign Relations and author of The River Runs Black: The Environmental Challenges to China's Future***

**Friday, October 27 - Friday, November 3: Democracy and Distributive Justice**

Vig and Kraft, Chapter 11 (pp.239-263)

Layzer, pp.105-129, 436-465

Donald Snow, "Coming Home: An Introduction to Collaborative Conservation" in Philip Brick, Donald Snow, and Sarah Van De Wetering, *Across the Great Divide: Explorations in Collaborative Conservation and the American West*, pp.1-11

***Due Friday, November 3: You must choose your role in the Congressional hearing and have your group organized.***

***Week of November 6: Film screenings of An Inconvenient Truth (2006)***

**Wednesday, November 8 & Friday, November 10: The Global Policy Arena and the North/South Divide**

Vig and Kraft, Chapters 15-16 (pp.333-373)

Ramachandra Guha, *Environmentalism: A Global History*, pp.98-124

Peter S. Wenz, "Justice, Democracy, and Global Warming," in Ben A. Minteer and Bob Pepperman Taylor, editors, *Democracy and the Claims of Nature: Critical Perspectives for a New Century*, pp.191-213

***Take-home Essay Exam assigned on Friday, November 10, and due Monday, November 20 at 5 PM***

***Tuesday, November 14, at 7:30 PM (in Science AUD - G027): Phil Terrie, on current Adirondack issues***

**Wednesday, November 15, at 4:15 PM (in KJ AUD): Two short films - Hands (1934; 4 minutes) by Ralph Steiner (produced by the Works Projects Administration) and The Plow That Broke the Plains (1936; 28 minutes), written and directed by Pare Lorenz for the Resettlement Administration, with cinematography by Ralph Steiner, Paul Strand, and Leo Hurwitz, and music by Virgil Thomson.**

### **Wednesday, November 15 - Wednesday, December 6: Global Climate Change**

James Houghton, *Global Warming: The Complete Briefing*, Third Edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) (sections TBA)

Tim Flannery, *The Weather Makers* (entire)

Layzer, pp.209-237

Bill McKibben, "Future Shock," *Adirondack Life*, March/April 2002, pp.51-57

Bjørn Lomborg, "A Question of Priorities," *Global Agenda*, January 2006, Vol. 4, Issue 1

Lomborg, pp.258-324 (*skim*)

James Schlesinger, "The Theology of Global Warming," *Wall Street Journal*, August 13, 2005

Article Packet: Debating *An Inconvenient Truth*

Chris Mooney, "Blinded By Science: How 'Balanced' Coverage Lets the Scientific Fringe Hijack Reality," *Columbia Journalism Review*, November/December 2004.

Beckerman, *A Poverty of Reason*, pp.31-42

Steven F. Hayward, "Cooled Down: The Global-Warming Hype is Running Out of (Greenhouse?) Gas, As it Very Much Deserves," *National Review*, January 31, 2005

Josh Goodman, "Greenhouse Gumption," *Governing*, May 2006

Global warming PSAs

(<http://www.fightglobalwarming.com/viewads.cfm?video=thegift&ve=wma>) (in class)

Competitive Enterprise Institute ads (<http://www.cei.org/pages/co2.cfm>) (in class)

“Colbert & Tim Flannery: An Inconvenient Truth - Part II,” *The Colbert Report* (in class)

***The following recommended materials are resources that can help in your research:***

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reports

David G. Victor, *Climate Change: Debating America's Policy Options* (Council on Foreign Relations Press, 2004)

Packet: Articles on Climate Change

Additional resources TBA

***Thursday, December 7 from 4 - 7 PM: Simulated Senate hearing on Kyoto treaty, place TBA***

**Friday, December 8: Conclusion – The Environment and the Future of Liberal Democracy**

***Monday, December 11: Paper on climate change due at 5 PM.***