

Environmental Politics

2:20-3:40p, T/TH

Spring 2022

Hawthorne 100

Office hours: 10-11:30 T/TH, 1-4 W

Schedule a meeting with me on [Calendly](#)

Instructor: Dr. Bi Zhao

Office: Lindaman 203

E-mail: bzhao@whitworth.edu

Office phone: 509-777-4844

Course Description

This course introduces students to a variety of political and policy design issues related to the environment. After starting with some theoretical ideas about the policy process, the environment, and property rights, we will spend the majority of our time considering different approaches by policy-makers to solving environmental problems, including command and control regulation, administration by scientific experts, and market-based policies. The course then looks at additional complications in making environmental policy at the international level, including a discussion of sustainable development.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

This course seeks to help students to:

- learn about the fundamental **knowledge** in environmental politics both domestically and globally;
Students will become familiar with several different approaches to solving public policy problems, including their strengths and weaknesses. Students will also gain a basic understanding of core policies related to environmental problems, in the U.S. and internationally.
- develop **writing and practical skills** to address environmental issues;
Students will participate in community-based service projects and volunteering opportunities. Through hands-on experience, students will learn about environmental issues firsthand. In addition, students will also write a policy memo on an environmental issue.
- articulate a **worldview or religious commitments** relate to environmental issues and environmental protection;
We will tie in the discussion of faith and religion when considering the protection of the environment. Our goal is to articulate, as individuals, how our broader worldview informs our understanding of the environment, and the relationship between human and the nature.

Textbooks and Readings

In this class, we will primarily use *Environmental Policy and Politics* as the textbook. It offers the conceptual and theoretical foundation of environmental politics. Additional readings and lab handouts will be made available through Blackboard.

- Kraft, Michael. 2018 *Environmental Policy and Politics, 7th Edition*. New York: Routledge.

How should I focus my attention on the readings? It is easy to get lost when reading a long chapter of the textbook. But course readings are an important part of our learning experience. Your goal in reading is not to memorize all of the details of the chapter or article, but instead to be able to do the following:

1. **Identify and define key concepts and terms:** what new concepts, theories, and phenomena are important to know in order to understand this chapter/reading?
2. **Articulate the main question(s) and the argument the author makes:** what is this chapter/reading about? What is the topic? What is the puzzle the author trying to explain?
3. **Describe the evidence the author uses:** what real world examples does the author use to support the argument(s)? Is it convincing?
4. **Be critical:** Interrogate the logic-what are the assumptions the author makes? Are the assumptions problematic? Are there real world events or phenomena that the theory/argument fail to explain?

You are also encouraged to keep up with environmental news in the US and around the world. We will discuss current news and issues as we go. Many news media outlets have an environmental section, for example:

- [The New York Times's Climate and Environment section](#)
- [BBC's Science and Environment](#)
- [Environmental News Network](#) provides a global perspective on environmental issues.
- [Grist](#) is another trustworthy source that publishes environmental and commentaries. Fun fact: its headquarter is in Seattle. Its CEO is former state representative Brady Walkinshaw.
- [Sightline](#) covers the environment and sustainability news of the Pacific Northwest.

Finally, if you are a podcast fan like I am, here are a few I would recommend to track environment and climate news-some of them come with in-depth analysis and good comments too.

- [No Place Like Home](#) focuses on climate change; many episodes embody a Christian faith perspective;
- [Environment: NPR](#) features short episodes on the latest environmental news;
- [Living Planet](#) is a weekly podcast produced by Deutsche Welle, Germany's international broadcaster. It covers many environmental issues in a very accessible way.
- [Parts Per Billion](#) is a podcast from Bloomberg Law focusing on environmental policy-making in the US.

How to succeed in this course

1. Always try your best. Be self-motivated and disciplined. "Speak up" when questions arise. I am here to help you!
2. Know your syllabus. If there are any changes to the syllabus, I will notify you as soon as possible. It is your responsibility to be informed about the content and any changes in this syllabus.
3. Class attendance and active participation in class discussion. Students are expected to attend every class session according to the schedule and to participate in classroom discussions of the assigned readings. Active participation is crucial to your success in this class.
4. Read the assigned readings prior to each class meeting. It is your responsibility to be prepared for the class. Significant input from class members, with thoughts and questions about the readings and issues is, a large component of the entire classroom learning experience. So come to class prepared!

Assessments and grading Policy

- **Attendance and participation, 10%.** Class attendance will be graded both by the percentage of classes attended and the degree of active participation during class. The basic attendance grade will be the percentage of classes a student attends (not counting exams): for example, a student who comes to 28 out of 30 classes would get a grade of 93%, or an A. This percentage will then be adjusted upwards by as much as 10% based on active, constructive class participation. For this system, there are no excused or unexcused absences, except for students with documented reasons requiring them to miss class for official extra-curricular activities.

What is class participation? Participation does not simply mean talking a lot in class, although joining in discussion is strongly encouraged. Participation also involves coming to class prepared (having done the reading), thinking and listening carefully, and contributing to an open classroom environment where thought and discussion are possible. In addition, students are welcome and encouraged to visit the instructor individually during office hours or by appointment.

What if I am sick or in quarantine? Please alert me via email if you are ill or isolating, and are not able to come to class in-person. This is your responsibility. Please communicate with me at your earliest convenience.

- **Quizzes, 10%.** There will be **four** quizzes throughout the semester, covering *only the reading material for that day*. Most quiz days, we will take the quiz at the beginning of class. The dates of the quizzes will *not* be announced in advance. Quizzes are designed to provide a quick evaluation of how well you keep up with readings and understand the contents. Each quiz is worth 10 points. The average of the four quiz scores will be calculated into the final score.

If you know that you will miss class because of a school-sponsored activity or a doctor-excused medical condition, then you may make up the quiz. You must tell me in advance about your excused absence (other than a medical emergency) and I will arrange a time to complete the quiz. If you are too late (if we have already finished the quiz) or miss class, you may not make up the quiz.

- **Homework assignments, 15%.** We will have 4-6 homework assignments throughout the semester. Detailed instructions can be found on Blackboard. For each assignment, you will complete assigned reading materials or watch some video and documentaries to explore environmental issues. Each assignment is worth 15 points. The final score for asynchronous assignments will be the average of all your submissions.

- **Community-service learning project, 25%.** For this class, we will partner with Whitworth's Dorn-sife Center to explore opportunities in our community and volunteer for local environmental groups, broadly defined. You will take the initiative to contact a local group of your choice, proved by the instructor and Daniel Geiter from the Dornsife Center. You will volunteer with the group for at least 10 hours throughout the semester. You will be graded based on volunteering hours and journaling throughout the semester (10%), a self-reflection paper (5%), and a policy memo (10%) that are due at the end of the semester.

If for any reasons you will not be able to participate in community volunteering, please let me know within the first two weeks of the semester. There will be an alternative assignment (a 15-page research paper).

- **Midterm and final exams, 40%.** There will be one midterm exam and one final exam. Dates of exams TBD.
- **Missed or late work.** Late work will be penalized by one letter grade for each day after the deadline. For example, an A- for a homework assignment turned in one day late will become a B-. Late work would only be accepted without grade-penalty if the student has a university-accepted excuse or is sick/in quarantine. Again, please alert me via email at your earliest convenience about late submission.

• Final grades:

A	B	C	D	F
A+=97-100	B+=87-89.99	C+=77-79.99	D=60-69.99	F=below 60
A=93-96.99	B=83-86.99	C=73-76.99		
A-=90-92.99	B-=80-82.99	C-=70-72.99		

Academic Integrity and Honesty

Please note that I take extremely seriously the university's policy on the need for academic honesty in all your work. **Please READ CAREFULLY the university's policy on academic honesty (see next page and available in the Whitworth Catalog and the Student Handbook).**

How is plagiarism checked for this class?

1. During the first two weeks of the class, I will conduct plagiarism checks on the assignments each one of you turns in. I will provide a plagiarism score and feed-backs if necessary. If the overall risk is shown as *high* (meaning overall text matching with existing sources exceeds 40%), you will receive a warning, then you will rewrite and resubmit it. If your overall risk is medium (meaning the text matching is between 15 and 40%), you are required to review your writing and references, but rewrite-and-resubmit is optional. I can also help you think through the steps for your research and writing together, to avoid plagiarism.
2. Plagiarism scores. I will use a number of different procedures to evaluate plagiarism. This includes using the SafeAssign function in Blackboard to check for plagiarism. SafeAssign provides an overall risk score and specific matching scores for blocks of texts that the software identifies as matching existing sources. More information on how to interpret the scores can be found [here](#).
3. After the first two assignments, I will run random checks on the assignments and exams for the rest of the semester. If plagiarism is found or if "high risk" is reported by SafeAssign, there will be no more warnings. The assignment will be failed and written reports will be submitted to political science department chair and Whitworth academic affairs office. (For detailed consequences, see next page or the Student Handbook.)

Whitworth Student Handbook on Academic Honesty

Just as the faculty, staff and administration at Whitworth strive to be forthright, direct and honest, and to value integrity in all their dealings, the university expects all students to function in like manner. Students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty and to refrain from any dishonest or unethical action.

In all academic exercises, examinations, papers and reports, students are expected to submit their own work. The use of the words or ideas of others is always to be indicated through an acceptable form of citation. This policy will be specified in the syllabus for each course.

- **Violations of the Policy on Academic Honesty**

1. **Definition of Plagiarism**

Plagiarism occurs whenever a person attempts to pass off as his or her own work, either verbally or in writing, the words and ideas of others. Plagiarism most often occurs in projects that require independent preparation (outside of class); although it can occur in essay examinations, this is not generally the case. Plagiarism can be either inadvertent (a failure to understand the responsibility for acknowledgment or the means by which acknowledgment should be made) or willful (with a conscious intent to deceive).

2. **Definition of Cheating and Dry-Labbing**

Cheating is any academic activity in which the student submits for a grade or credit work that is not their own and/or that has not been done within the structure and context established by the assignment. Students may plagiarize in a variety of ways: copying another student's test, bringing unauthorized notes or materials to an exam, copying another student's lab notes, or making up fictitious lab results (also known as "dry-labbing"). All cheating is regarded as willful deception.

- **Consequences of Violations of the Policy on Academic Honesty**

1. The faculty member will confront the student(s) in cases of suspected violations of the policy on academic honesty and will keep a written record of the incident.
2. The faculty member will assess the gravity of the violation and will determine the consequences, which may range from a failing grade on the specific assignment to a failing grade in the course.
3. The faculty member will submit a written report of policy violations, with their consequences, to the academic affairs office.
4. The student has a right to appeal any faculty member's decision by submitting a written appeal to the associate provost.
5. The associate provost may then review the appeal in consultation with the Academic Policies Appeal Committee, if such review is deemed necessary. All decisions of the associate provost and the Academic Policies Appeals Committee will be final.
6. All violations of the academic honesty policy become part of a student's educational record. More than one violation may result in suspension for the remainder of the current term, or for a longer period, depending on the nature of the violations.

Schedule and daily learning goals

The schedule is tentative and subject to change.

There is a "Weekly learning components" section on Blackboard. There you will find readings organized into weekly folders. Please familiarize yourself with the contents on Blackboard. Reserve enough time before each class to check the required readings and preparation.

Week 01, 01/31 - 02/04: Introduction and course overview

Week 02, 02/07 - 02/11: What is environmental policy?

Week 03, 02/14 - 02/18: State of the environment

Week 04, 02/21 - 02/25: The policy process

Week 05, 02/28 - 03/04: Tragedy of the Commons

Week 06, 03/07 - 03/11: Environmental movements

Week 07, 03/14 - 03/18: Policy tools 1: command and control

Week 08, 03/21 - 03/25: Command and control: waste/toxics/Love Canal Superfund; *Midterm*

Week 09, 03/28 - 04/01: Spring break, no classes

Week 10, 04/04 - 04/08: Environmental Policy tools 2: scientific management

Week 11, 04/11 - 04/15: Scientific management: forests/endangered species/NEPA

Week 12, 04/18 - 04/22: Environmental Policy tools 3: market-based policy

Week 13, 04/25 - 04/29: Market-based policy: Taxes/Cap'n Trade/Energy policy

Week 14, 05/02 - 05/06: International environmental politics: climate change/biodiversity

Week 15, 05/09 - 05/13: Environmental justice

Week 16, 05/16 - 05/20: *Final exam*

COVID-related Policies

Face coverings/masks

During restrictions due to Covid-19, strict adherence to safety policies will be followed in this class. This is meant to protect both the students and the instructor. With due respect, I expect students to **wear masks in class at all times**, unless the mask policy changes. No exceptions will be made regarding masks or face coverings (if a documented medical reason prevents a student from wearing a mask, a face shield will be required).

Audio/visual recording

I may choose to record class sessions in order to serve students who are unable to attend. Please note that **for both faculty and students**, the act of recording and the use of any recordings must comply with [Whitworth's policy on recording and livestreaming](#). Students will be notified before recording begins and may request seating that will ensure they are out of the camera's field of view.

In case we need to switch to virtual learning...

Detailed instructions will be available in case we need to shift to virtual learning. In which case, we will comply with University policy. Expect to meet on Zoom during normal class hours. When you join the class through Zoom, I expect you to be proper, professional, and respectful to the learning environment we all share. I expect you to **turn on the video function** during class. It helps to see your reactions and it fosters an engaging environment when you interact with one another. If you do not feel comfortable showcasing the room you are in, use a virtual background, as long as it does not distract others. As a general rule, **wear the kind of clothes you would normally wear to school**. (Well, fingers-crossed this does not happen. But, aren't we all Zoom-gurus now. ٩_(_)(^)_/ ^)

University Policies

Academic Integrity and Honesty

Please note that I take extremely seriously the university's policy on the need for academic honesty in all your work. **Please note the university's policy on academic honesty (available in the Whitworth Catalog and the Student Handbook). Consequences for any form of dishonesty may range from a failing grade on a specific assignment to a failing grade in the course. Violations of the academic honesty policy become part of your educational record.**

Accommodations for Religious Observances

In accord with SSB 5166, Whitworth University accommodates student absences, for up to two days per academic year, for reasons of faith or conscience, or for an organized activity conducted under the auspices of a religious denomination, church, or religious organization. Written notice and request for accommodation must be given within the first two weeks of the beginning of the course and provide specific dates the student requests accommodation. Faculty will work with

such students to reach mutual agreement about the terms of the accommodation. Grievances about a failure to accommodate should be directed to the Associate Provost.

Accommodations (ADA/504)

Whitworth University is committed to providing its students access to education. If you have a documented physical or mental/psychological impairment that impacts your ability to learn and perform to your potential in the classroom, contact the Office of Educational Support Services (ESS) in Student Life to identify accommodations that can help mitigate barriers to your success. Students must contact ESS each term in order for faculty/staff to be notified of your accommodations. Services are not retroactive.

To request accommodation, fill out an application on the ESS webpage:

<https://www.whitworth.edu/cms/administration/educational-support-services/>

Contact Information

Katie McCray, Coordinator for Educational Support Services

Phone: 509.777.3380

Email: kmccray@whitworth.edu

Title IX

Whitworth University faculty members are committed to the well-being of each student. It is common for students to discuss non-course related issues with faculty and, when possible, faculty will keep such conversations strictly confidential. However, because federal law views faculty members as mandated reporters of any incidents of sexual misconduct, if a student informs a faculty member of an issue of sexual harassment, sexual assault, or discrimination, the faculty member is required by federal law to bring it to the attention of the Title IX Coordinator, Rhosetta Rhodes. The Title IX Coordinator will make the student aware of all options and resources available to them under Whitworth University policies and under the law.

There are Whitworth University employees whom federal law does not view as mandatory reporters, to whom a student could speak without the conversation being reported to the Title IX Coordinator. These include counselors in Counseling Services, health center staff, and any of the university chaplains on the staff of Campus Ministries.

Contact Information

Rhosetta Rhodes, Title IX Coordinator, Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students

Phone: 509.777.4536; Email: titleixcoordinator@whitworth.edu

Counseling Center: 509-777-3259; Schumacher Hall

Campus Ministries: 509-777-4345; Beeksma Family Theology Center

Health Center: 509-777-3259; Schumacher Hall

Non-discrimination

Whitworth University is committed to delivering a mission-driven educational program that cultivates in students the capacity to engage effectively across myriad dimensions of diversity. Whitworth University is committed to the fair and equal treatment of all students in its educational programs and activities. The University does not discriminate against students based

on race, color, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, age, or disability and complies with all applicable federal or state non-discrimination laws in its instructional programs.

Fair and equitable treatment

Whitworth University professors strive to treat all students fairly and equitably, applying the same rigorous standards and expectations to each of our students and working to invite students from all backgrounds into the challenges and rewards of our academic disciplines. Students who have concerns about classroom fairness should contact Associate Provost Brooke Kiener, McEachran Hall 220, 509.777.4657, bkiener@whitworth.edu.

Safety Information

Whitworth University cares about your welfare in the event of an emergency. During the first week of this course, please familiarize yourself with safety information posted in this classroom. Please visit <https://www.whitworth.edu/generalinformation/healthsafety/index.htm> if you have further questions.

Classroom Behavior (from the 2020-2021 catalog)

Students and faculty are expected to demonstrate civility, understanding and mutual respect. Disruptive classroom behavior will not be tolerated. Disruptive behavior may include, but is not limited to, threatening or abusive language or behavior, making unreasonable demands on faculty for time and attention, erratic and/or irrational behavior, continually speaking without being recognized, other verbal or behavioral expressions that interfere with the classroom environment, bringing unregistered persons to class without the permission of the instructor, and persistent disruptions including inappropriate computer use, ringing of electronic devices, etc. If a student exhibits disruptive classroom behavior, the faculty member should confront the student, clearly identify the disruptive behavior, and require that the behavior cease. A faculty member may at any time remove a student from the classroom for disruptive behavior. A faculty member, in consultation with the department chair or program director, may develop a classroom behavioral contract outlining expectations and consequences for a student who does not meet expectations, or may refer a disruptive student to the associate provost for instruction.

The associate provost will meet with any student who is referred, or who continues to disrupt the learning environment. Students may be placed on behavioral probation or suspension based on the nature of the disruption. Behavioral suspension may include suspension from one or more classes for the duration of the current term or for a longer period.