Course Description

This is an introductory graduate-level course on the fundamental concepts and issues that confront environmental policy makers and planners in practice. The term “environmental planning” encompasses a wide array of planning techniques and institutional settings. Rather than focusing on one particular type of planning (e.g., cost-benefit analysis, impact assessment, site design), the course is designed to address recurrent value-based and analytical conflicts that cross that array of various environmental policy-making and planning activities. Although we will focus in some detail on site planning and impact assessment in particular at the end of the term, the course is not designed as a hands-on, studio-oriented course.

Contemporary environmental policy-making and planning debates typically appear at the surface to hinge on disagreements about scientific questions and appropriate policy-making and planning techniques. These debates, however, often mask at their core hidden (and unquestioned) disagreements over fundamental philosophical values and analytical assumptions. Rather than attempting solely to prepare students to be competent environmental policy analyst and planner technicians, the principle goal of this course will be to provide students with the knowledge and skills they will need in order to be thoughtful and creative professionals capable of recognizing the key disjunctions in communication and analysis that often hinder the achievement of effective and satisfying environmental policy and planning solutions. Specifically, the course is designed to:

- provide students the ability to recognize and tease apart the competing values and analytical assumptions made by various stakeholders in environmental policy-making and planning debates;
- consider how those debates are shaped by and play themselves out within the political, legal, and administrative processes that characterize environmental policy-making and planning in the U.S.; and
- familiarize students with the various forms of contemporary environmental policy-making and planning practice that they will likely encounter in their professional work.

The focus of this course will be on domestic environmental planning and policy-making, although students are encouraged to address international environmental planning issues through their independent work if they wish to do so. This class will not address in great depth the concept of sustainable development, but has been designed as a foundational course for the
sustainable development course that will be offered during the spring term. This course should also provide a good complement to a variety of other planning and natural resource management courses that focus on particular topics or analytical techniques, such as land use planning and design, landscape planning, watershed design, dispute resolution, and analytical tools for environmental policy.

**Course Format**

Because of the nature of the topics to be addressed by this class—topics that lend themselves to healthy debate—I hope to conduct the class as part recitation and part seminar, with as little lecturing by me and as much discussion by all as possible. You will be expected to keep a journal of short summaries and critiques for each set of readings, participate actively in class discussions, and write two papers that present synthetic analyses of a selection of the topics covered. There will not be a mid-term or final exam.

I will assign a question each at the end of class for the following class’s journal entry. Journal entries should be printed, double-spaced and 1 to 2 pages in length (no longer than 2 pages with standard fonts and margins). Note your name, the session date, and the question addressed at the top of each entry. I will typically give a one-class warning before collecting journals. Use the journals both to summarize briefly the key points being made in the readings and to critique the readings.

**Course Requirements and Grading**

Grades will be assigned for the journal entries on a √- / √ / √+ basis. Well-written entries that respond to the assigned question will be given a check and summed (i.e., by completing all of the entries thoughtfully you will be able to earn the maximum for that component of your final grade). The papers and in-class participation will be given letter grades. The final grades will be based on the following distribution:

- Journal: 30%
- In-class participation: 30%
- 1st Paper: 15%
- 2nd Paper: 25%

**Readings**

*Required texts:*


Course Reader (on reserve with Tawny Pruitt for students to copy individually).
Recommended texts:


Summary Outline

Course Introduction / Review of Traditional Philosophical Ethics

Part I: Environmental Ethics

- Historical context and debates
- Is there an environmental crisis?
- The economics view defended and critiqued
- Private property and public welfare
- What value nature?
- Alternative visions: anthropocentrism, extensionism, and ecocentric (holistic) ethics
- Deep Ecology, Social Ecology, and Ecofeminism
- Environmental problems: pollution and environmental justice
- Environmental problems: growth and development

Part II: Environmental Policy-Making and Planning Institutions and Techniques

- Overview of environmental protection, planning, and law
- Environmental policy analysis described and critiqued
- Pollution control and wildlife protection
- Recent trends: development dispute resolution
- Development management planning and suitability analysis
- Intergovernmental growth management
- Case-study: land use planning in coastal North Carolina

Part III: Selected Applications of Environmental Planning

- Transportation, land use planning, and sprawl
- Open-space protection
- Site design for urban stream protection / habitat conservation planning
- Watershed planning and urban sprawl in Washtenaw County
- Environmental impact assessment


Reading Assignments

Note: An asterisk (*) indicates required readings; additional readings are noted throughout that are recommended but not required.

PART I: Environmental Ethics

Thursday, September 6
Introduction and course overview
Course themes
Argumentation
Review of traditional philosophical ethics

*DesJardins: 3-24 (Chapter 1)

Additional:

Tuesday, September 11
Historical roots of current environmental problems
Land policy in the U.S.
The conservationist v. preservationist debate

*Reader: 1-4 (Hughes, in Armstrong & Botzler 167-72)
*DesJardins: 46-52 (White)
*Reader: 5-37 (Udall, Intro, 13-24, 39-82)
*DesJardins: 327-328 (Pinchot)
*DesJardins: 138-44 (Muir)

Thursday, September 13
Is there an environmental crisis?

*Reader: 38-43 (Hardin 1243-48)
*Reader: 44-51 (Ehrlich and Ehrlich 91-105)

Additional:

Tuesday, September 18
The economics view defended and critiqued

*DesJardins: 108-115 (Freeman)
*Reader: 52-61 (Sagoff, in VanDeVeer and Pierce 315-324)
*Reader: 62-65 (Edwards, in Armstrong & Botzler 231-37)
*Reader: 66-69 (Sagoff, in Armstrong & Botzler 238-44)
*DesJardins: 116-26 (Sagoff)
*DesJardins: 126-36 (Daly, Discussion Cases)
**Thursday, September 20**
Private property and public welfare

*DesJardins 97-107 (Stroup et al.)
*DesJardins: 337-48 (Hargrove)
*Reader: 70-73 (Locke, in VanDeVeer and Pierce 430-33)
*Reader: 73-74 (Shrader-Frechette, in VanDeVeer and Pierce 433-34)
*Reader: 74-89 (Goodin, in VanDeVeer and Pierce 434-51)

Additional:

**Tuesday, September 25**
What value nature?
Aesthetic and spiritual values
Wilderness preservation

*DesJardins: 145-56 (Krieger)
*DesJardins: 156-63 (Elliot)
*DesJardins: 177-78 (Discussion Cases)
*DesJardins: Chapter 5 (Nelson, Cronon, Rolston and Discussion Cases)

Additional:

**Thursday, September 27**
Alternative visions: from anthropocentrism and extensionism to ecocentric (holistic) ethics

*DesJardins: 179-80 (Intro to Chapter 6)
SKIM DesJardins: 181-95 (Feinberg, Singer, Regan)
*DesJardins: 203-14 (Stone and Discussion Cases)
*DesJardins: 217-45 (Intro to Chapter 7, Leopold, Callicott, Marietta)
*DesJardins: 256-57 (Discussion Cases)

Additional:
DesJardins: 246-55 (Worster)

**Tuesday, October 2**
Deep Ecology, Social Ecology, and Ecofeminism

*DesJardins: 523-54 (Chapter 15)

**Thursday, October 4**
Environmental problems: Pollution and Environmental Justice

*DesJardins: 259-60 (Introduction to Part III)
*DesJardins: 261-62 (Introduction to Chapter 8)
Tuesday, October 9
Environmental problems: growth and development
Section wrap-up

*DesJardins: 394-436 (Chapter 12)

PART II: Environmental Policy-Making & Planning Institutions and Techniques

Thursday, October 11
Overview of environmental protection, planning, and law

*Buck: 1-33, 61-88 (Chapters 1, 2, and 4)

Tuesday, October 16
Environmental policy analysis described and critiqued

*Buck: 34-60 (Chapter 3)
*Reader: 90-105 (Cost-Benefit Analysis, in VanDeVeer and Pierce 324-39)

Thursday, October 18
Pollution control and wildlife protection

*Buck: 89-154 (Chapters 5 and 6)

Tuesday, October 23
Recent trends: development dispute resolution

*Reader: 106-116 (Godschalk 1992:368-78)
*Reader: 136-137 (McCloskey 1996:36-37)
SKIM: Godschalk et al. 11-72 – On reserve w/ Tawny Pruitt

Thursday, October 25
Development management planning
Suitability analysis

*Reader: 138-154 (Porter 83-115)
*Reader: 155-176 (Kaiser et al. 398-419)

Tuesday, October 30
Intergovernmental growth management

*Reader: 177-198 (Porter 219-60)
*Reader: 199-207 (Burby and May 1-17)
Thursday, November 1  
Case-study: land use planning in coastal North Carolina  
Section wrap up

*Reader: 208-222 (Norton 5-19)  
*Reader: 223-236 (Norton 271-84)

PART III: Selected Applications of Environmental Planning

Tuesday, November 1  
Transportation and Land Use Planning  
*Guest Speaker: Jonathon Levine

*Reader: 237-266 (Benfield et al. 29-87)

Thursday, November 8  
VIDEO: Paving the American Dream

Tuesday, November 13  
Open-space acquisition / land trusts  
*Guest Speaker: Barry Lonik, Washtenaw Land Trust

SKIM: Arendt 226-88 – On reserve w/ Tawny Pruitt

Thursday, November 15  
Site design for urban stream protection  
Habitat conservation planning  
*Guest Speaker: Dr. Donald Tilton, Tilton & Associates

SKIM: Schueler (for both the November 15 and 20 sessions)

Tuesday, November 20  
Watershed planning and urban sprawl in Washtenaw County  
*Guest Speaker: Janis Bobrin, Washtenaw County Drain Commissioner

Thursday, November 22  
NO CLASS—Thanksgiving

Tuesday, November 27 through Thursday, December 6 (4 sessions)  
Environmental impact assessment

Readings will be drawn from Bass et al. (TBA)

Tuesday, December 11  
Course wrap-up
References


