Urban and Regional Planning Program  
College of Architecture and Urban Planning  

The University of Michigan

Urban Planning 502  
Environmental Planning: Issues and Concepts

Fall 2002  Richard Norton, Assistant Professor  
Tuesdays & Thursdays 3:00 – 4:30 pm  1248C A&AB / 936-0197  
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Office Hours: By appointment

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 cut across those various environmental policy-making and planning activities. Although we will focus in some detail on site planning and impact assessment 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. One goal of the course will be prepare students to be competent environmental policy analysts and planners. The principal goal, however, 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 disconnects in communication and analysis that often hinder 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 they will likely encounter in their professional work.
The focus of this course will be on environmental planning and policy-making in the United States. 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 winter 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 planning, 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 participate actively in class discussions and write several papers and other short assignments that present synthetic analyses of a selection of the topics covered. There will be no mid-term or final exam.

Course Requirements and Grading

The final grade for the course will be based on the following distribution:

- In-class participation: 15%
- 5-minute memos: 20% (20 sessions, 1 point each)
- Short papers/journal: 20% (5 journal entries, 4 points each)
- 1st Paper: 20% (5 – 10 page paper)
- 2nd Paper: 25% (10 – 15 page paper)

Note regarding written assignments: As graduate students, I expect you to turn in papers that are well organized and that do not require extensive copy-editing. Papers that are not well written will be downgraded accordingly. If you are concerned about your writing skills, avail yourself of the Sweetland Writing Center’s services: http://www.lsa.umich.edu/swc/mainmenu.html. If you turn in a paper that requires substantial editing, I will require a re-write and refer you to the writing center.

Required Texts


Reader and additional course materials to be provided on-line.
Recommended Texts


Summary Outline

Course Introduction

Part I: Environmental Policy-Making and Planning: Overview and Institutions

- Historical context and debates
- Overview of environmental protection, planning, and law
- Environmental policy analysis described and critiqued
- Pollution control and wildlife protection
- Recent trends: development dispute resolution

Part II: The Environment: Pulp for Paper, Paradise, or … What?

- Environmental planning conflicts as wicked dilemmas
- 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 III: Environmental Planning in Theory and Practice

- Environmental planning and management
- Development management planning and suitability analysis
- Site design for urban stream protection / conservation by design / habitat conservation planning
- Watershed planning and urban sprawl in Washtenaw County
- Open-space protection / land trusts
- Environmental planning in coastal settings
- Paradise and parking lots (transportation, land use planning, and sprawl)
- 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 Policy-Making & Planning: Overview and Institutions

Tuesday, September 3
Introduction and course overview
Course themes
Argumentation

Thursday, September 5
Historical roots of current environmental problems
Land policy in the U.S.
The conservationist v. preservationist debate

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

Tuesday, September 10
Institutions: Overview of environmental protection, planning, and law

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

Thursday, September 12
Environmental policy analysis described and critiqued

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

Tuesday, September 17
Pollution control and wildlife protection

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

Thursday, September 19
Recent trends: development dispute resolution

*Reader: Godschalk 368-78
*Reader: Noah 101-106
*Reader: Campbell and Floyd 235-47
*Reader: McCloskey 36-37
SKIM: Godschalk et al. 11-72 – On reserve at the Media Union
PART II: *The Environment: Pulp for Paper, Paradise, or …What?*

**Tuesday, September 24**
Environmental planning conflicts as *wicked* dilemmas
Review of traditional philosophical ethics

*Reader:* Rittel and Webber 155-69  
*DesJardins:* 3-24 (Chapter 1)

Additional:

**Thursday, September 26**
Is there an environmental crisis?

*DesJardins:* 59-91 (Chapter 3 – Simon, Easterbrook, Bast et al., Meadows, et al.)  
*Reader:* Hardin 1243-48  
*Reader:* Ehrlich and Ehrlich 91-105

Additional:

**Tuesday, October 1**
The economics view defended and critiqued

*DesJardins:* 108-115 (Freeman)  
*Reader:* Sagoff, in VanDeVeer and Pierce 315-324  
*Reader:* Edwards, in Armstrong & Botzler 231-37  
*Reader:* Sagoff, in Armstrong & Botzler 238-44  
*DesJardins:* 116-26 (Sagoff)  
*DesJardins:* 126-36 (Daly, Discussion Cases)

**Thursday, October 3**
Open session (Expanded Horizons)

**Tuesday, October 8**
Private property and public welfare

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

Additional:
**Thursday, October 10**
What value nature?
Aesthetic and spiritual values
Wilderness preservation

*DesJardins: 145-56 (Krieger)
*DesJardins: 156-63 (Elliot)
*DesJardins: 177-78 (Discussion Cases)
*DesJardins: Chapter 11 (Nelson, Cronon, Rolston and Discussion Cases)

Additional:

**Tuesday, October 15**
NO CLASS – Fall Break

**Thursday, October 17**
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 22**
Deep Ecology, Social Ecology, and Ecofeminism

*DesJardins: 523-54 (Chapter 15)

**Thursday, October 24**
Environmental problems: Pollution and Environmental Justice

*DesJardins: 259-60 (Introduction to Part III)
*DesJardins: 261-62 (Introduction to Chapter 8)
SKIM DesJardins: 262-74 (Misch)
*DesJardins: 274-86 (Baxter, Steidlmeier, Discussion Cases)
*DesJardins: 437-57 (Introduction to Chapter 13, Bullard, Wenz)
*DesJardins: 473-74 (Discussion Cases)

**Tuesday, October 29**
Environmental problems: growth and development
Section wrap-up

*DesJardins: 394-436 (Chapter 12)
PART III: Environmental Planning in Theory and Practice

Thursday, October 31
Environmental Planning and Management

*Reader: Syme et al. 1-15
*Reader: Margerum 459-75

Tuesday, November 5
Development management planning
Land suitability analysis
Buildout analysis

*Reader: Porter 83-115
*Reader: Kaiser et al. 398-419
*Reader: P&ZN

Thursday, November 7
Impervious surfaces
Site design for urban stream protection
Conservation by design
Habitat conservation planning
Guest Speaker: Professor Elizabeth Brabec, SNRE

*Reader: Brabec/Arendt
*Reader: Brabec et al.
*On reserve: Schueler (for both the November 7 and 12 sessions)

Tuesday, November 12
Watershed planning and urban sprawl in Washtenaw County
Guest Speaker: Janis Bobrin, Washtenaw County Drain Commissioner

Thursday, November 14
Open-space protection / land trusts
Guest Speaker to be announced

*Reader: Arendt 226-88

Tuesday, November 19
Environmental planning in coastal settings

*Reader: (Selected reports)

Thursday, November 21
Paradise and Parking Lots
VIDEO: Paving the American Dream
**Tuesday, November 26**  
Environmental impact assessment  

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

**Thursday, November 28**  
NO CLASS—Thanksgiving  

**Tuesday, December 3**  
Environmental impact assessment (continued)  

**Thursday, December 5**  
Environmental impact assessment (continued)  

**Tuesday, December 10**  
Course wrap-up  

**References**  


