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 policymaking and planning activities.

Contemporary environmental policymaking and planning debates typically appear at the surface to hinge on disagreements about scientific questions and appropriate analytical 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 to prepare students to be competent environmental policy analysts and planners. The principal goal will be to provide students with the knowledge and skills they will need to be thoughtful and creative professionals, capable of recognizing the disconnects in communication and analysis that often hinder effective and satisfying environmental policy and planning solutions.

The focus of this course will be on environmental planning and policymaking 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 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%
- Short papers/journal: 30% (3 journal entries, worth 10% each)
- Short Research Paper: 25% (5 – 10 page paper)
- Final Group Paper/Report: 30%

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 (available at the North Campus Bookstore)


Course reader (a copy is on reserve at the AAE Library).

Recommended Texts (on reserve at the AAE Library)


Reading Assignments

Note: An asterisk (*) indicates required readings.

Wednesday, September 8
Course overview
Planning as argumentation
Environmental planning conflicts as wicked dilemmas

PART I: The Environment: Pulp for Paper, Paradise, or …What?

Monday, September 13
Overview of environmental planning and management
Review of traditional philosophical ethics

*Randolph: 3-35 (Chapters 1 and 2)
*DesJardins: 3-24 (Chapter 1)

Wednesday, September 15
Journal
Is there an environmental crisis?

*Reader: Hardin 1243-1248
*Reader: Ehrlich and Ehrlich 91-105

Additional:

Monday, September 20
Journal
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

Additional:

Wednesday, September 22
Journal
The economics view defended and critiqued

*DesJardins: 108-115 (Freeman)
*Reader: Sagoff, in VanDeVeer and Pierce 315-324
*Reader: Edwards, in Armstrong & Botzler 231-237
*Reader: Sagoff, in Armstrong & Botzler 238-244
*DesJardins: 116-26 (Sagoff)
*DesJardins: 126-36 (Daly, Discussion Cases)
**Monday, September 27**

Journal

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)

**Wednesday, September 29**

Open class (Expanded Horizons)

**Monday, October 4**

Journal

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: 246-55 (Worster)
*DesJardins: 256-57 (Discussion Cases)

**Wednesday, October 6**

Journal

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)

**Monday, October 11**

Journal

Environmental problems: growth and development

*DesJardins: 394-436 (Chapter 12)

**Wednesday, October 13**

Journal

Deep Ecology, Social Ecology, and Ecofeminism

*DesJardins: 523-54 (Chapter 15)

**Monday, October 18**

No Class (Fall Recess)

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**PART II: Environmental Land Use Planning and Management**

We will work through Randolph for the balance of the term, with readings assigned on an ongoing basis.