

ENVR 610 – 003/POLI 670 – 001: FOUNDATIONS OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY (FALL 2020)

Thursdays 8:35 - 11:25

Teaching Team

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Course Overview

Who designs environmental policy and through which processes? What forces structure environmental policy? In this course, we will examine the diverse sources of environmental policy, the systems through which policy is created/applied, and its consequences. From actions taken by governments and international organizations to those of businesses and environmental groups. Our core concerns are what types of agents, institutions and processes are involved in environmental policy-making, what policies have been advanced to date, what unique challenges do agents/institutions in each realm face, and how do different policy-making institutions interact with one another? The course will broadly introduce the key players, institutions, structures, and processes in domestic and international environmental policy by reviewing key works in theory and empirical case studies of contemporary environmental issue-areas.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course students should be able to:

- Identify key actors involved in the creation of public policy for the environment
- Recognise and critically assess some of the main approaches to collective decision-making and policy design and implementation
- Analyse the main challenges of policy-making for environmental protection and sustainability
- Understand and analyse the implications of policy-making and -implementation at different levels and by different types of actors and institutions
- Recognize the role of politics in conditioning public policy approaches and outcomes
- Read and critically interrogate work on public policy from different disciplines

- Research and write a graduate-level research paper on an environmental public policy topic
- Provide feedback to peers along the same guidelines as would be expected in a scholarly journal

Remote Delivery Format

Due to COVID-19, ENVR 610/POLI 670 will be delivered remotely in the Fall of 2020. The instructors wish to acknowledge that this is a far from ideal situation and will present new challenges for both students and instructors alike. With that said, the teaching team is committed to providing a supportive learning environment and making this the best possible version of ENVR 610/POLI 670 given the context. We encourage students encountering issues with remote learning or managing coursework during the pandemic to get in touch with an instructor at any point during the course. Students may find the following resources useful: [Student-specific Guidelines for Remote Teaching and Learning](#) and [Remote Learning Resources](#).

This course will be presented through a combination of pre-recorded lectures and fixed seminars. Both lectures and seminars may be shorter than usual owing to unique demands of remote learning. The additional time afforded by shorter classes will be reallocated to instructor office hours and peer review exercises.

Lectures: Lectures of 1 hour or shorter will be pre-recorded and uploaded to MyCourses alongside any accompanying materials by Monday morning on the week of the topic to be covered. Please consult the course schedule below for more details. Students can view or re-view lectures at their own pace, but you are expected to view the week's lecture before participating in the Thursday seminar.

Seminars: Seminars of one hour or shorter will take place live on Zoom on Thursdays at 8:35am (please see the URL and Zoom password in myCourses). *Seminar participation will NOT be assessed due to accessibility concerns for students in different time zones. Seminars WILL be recorded for students who are unable to participate in fixed sessions.* While not assessed, seminar participation is a valuable way to engage with the ideas and texts covered in this course and learn from peers and instructors. Seminars provide an opportunity to build on themes and questions raised in online discussion boards. The teaching team encourages all students who are able to attend fixed seminars to do so.

Required Course Materials

All assigned readings are available online through the McGill library or public sources.

Evaluation

Overview

Assessment breakdown	Due Date	% of final grade
Weekly reading reactions	11:59pm Mondays, week of the assigned reading	20
Online discussion board participation	Ongoing	10
Essay abstract	Sept. 24	5
World Climate Simulation	Oct. 8	10
Essay Outline	Oct. 29	10
Essay Draft	Nov. 26	5
Peer feedback exercises (3 pts abstracts, 4 points outlines, 3 points final draft)	Oct. 1, Nov. 5, Nov. 30	10
Final essay	Dec. 3	30
	Total	100

Weekly Reading Reactions (20%)

In order to keep up with the readings, practice reading critically, and prepare for seminars, students will write weekly reading reactions over the course of the term.

The reading reactions are designed to help students synthesize key themes in each text and pose questions for further engagement. Students may choose to either focus on a single text each week, or write a reaction that touches on themes in all of the week's readings. Each reading reaction is a maximum of 500 words and should include the following:

1. A brief summary of the reading(s) (~150 words)

2. A critique or discussion of key themes (~250 words)

Some questions students may want to use to interrogate the readings are:

- What points did the author(s) fail to consider?
- What are the limitations of their evidence?
- Where did the author's bias slip into their research?
- Which terms did the author(s) misuse?

3. New questions or points for discussion that arise from the week's readings (~100 words)

Reading reactions are due by 11:59pm (Montreal time) on the Monday of the week the readings are assigned. The first reading reaction is due by 11:59pm Tuesday Sept. 8. There will be no reading reaction during the week of the world climate simulation or the last week of the course. Please copy and paste your weekly reading reaction directly into the online discussion board on myCourses. Late reading reactions will receive a mark of zero unless excused by a valid note of accommodation or if the late submission occurs prior to the add/drop deadline.

Online discussion board participation (10%)

In lieu of grading participation in the Zoom seminars, students are asked to contribute to the online discussion board on MyCourses over the course of the term. These online discussion boards provide students with an opportunity to engage in a lively and collegial exchange of ideas with their peers. Discussion board participation will be assessed according to the quality and regularity of student participation over the course of the term. Students are expected to spend roughly 30 minutes each week thoughtfully considering and replying to the reading reactions and comments posted by their peers. Discussion board participation will be assessed at the end of the term.

Assessment of online discussion board participation is as follows:

9-10 points: Excellent and constructive contributions to discussion

7-8 points: Consistently active, constructive and engaging

4-6 points: Inconsistently or poorly engaged

0-3 points: Very little or no engagement

Note that the quality of a student's contributions is of greater importance than simply their frequency in the assessment of discussion board participation.

Essay Abstract (5% - due Sept. 24)

This assignment is intended to get students thinking about their final essay. Students will submit a short (250-word maximum) summary of their proposed research paper (see the description of the research paper below).

The abstract should include a provisional title and thesis for the final paper. Students will have the opportunity to receive peer and instructor feedback on their abstract through the online discussion board on yCourses.

Upload your abstract to the assignment folder on MyCourses by 11:59pm on Sept. 24.

World Climate Simulation (10% - due Oct. 8)

On Oct. 1, students will be randomly split into regional groups to represent negotiating blocks in the next round of UNFCCC negotiations. You will have one week to review the briefing materials posted on myCourses, conduct independent research into your region's negotiating position, and arrive at a consensus bargaining position within your group.

On Oct. 8 at 8:35am, one representative from each regional group will deliver a 3-minute opening statement (don't go over!) to the assembled parties of the UNFCCC. Imagine this is the first day of negotiations and your region is trying to outline a vision for what you would like to achieve by the end of negotiations. Be creative and play the part of your negotiating group. After opening statements, groups will have until the end of seminar to negotiate new positions that collectively move the world closer to staying below a 2-degree average temperature change.

We will gauge the prospects for a successful outcome using the C-ROADS climate simulator, the same tool that UN negotiators use when calculating the impacts of nationally determined contributions to the Paris Climate Agreement.

The evaluation breakdown for the simulation is as follows:

Negotiation prep (7%)

By 11:59pm on Oct. 7, students will submit a 500-word max (+ bibliography) memo uploaded to myCourses in the assignment section. The memo should summarize the student's *independent* research into the negotiating position for their regional block in global climate negotiations. Note: while you will negotiate at a team, the negotiation prep memo is an independent assignment that will allow all members of the regional group a foundation of knowledge.

Group effort (2%)

2% of your mark will be based on the accuracy of your broader regional group's positions and its success in achieving desirable negotiation outcomes. As much as possible, your group should strive to realistically represent the current position of your region in global climate negotiations; this exercise is not about what *should* happen but what *actually* happens in UNFCCC meetings.

Class outcome (1%)

If the class succeeds in reaching a final agreement that keeps average temperature increase below 2 degrees Celsius and raises \$100B/year in funding to the Green Climate Fund, everyone gets 1/1 on this section. By contrast, if the class fails, everyone gets 0/1 on this section.

Essay Outline (10% - due Oct 29)

In advance of writing the final paper, students will prepare a maximum two-page essay outline (not including the bibliography). This assignment is intended to help students structure their paper, gather key references, and obtain feedback before they start writing. The outline should summarize the main sub-arguments that will support the thesis and provide an indication of the type of evidence that will be used. The outline should include a bibliography with a **minimum of twelve sources** in addition to relevant course texts.

Upload your essay outline to the assignment folder on MyCourses by 11:59pm on Oct. 29.

Peer feedback exercises (10 % - due Oct. 1, Nov. 5, Nov. 30)

Students will provide feedback to their peers at various stages in the development of their final paper: abstract, outline, and draft. Grades will be awarded based on comprehension, promptness and quality of peer feedback - please consult the guidance below for details on how to give helpful feedback. Feedback groups will be randomly assigned prior to the deadline for each assignment. Marks for feedback are awarded as follows:

3 points: Feedback on abstracts (Review 3 abstracts)

4 points: Feedback on outlines (Review 2 outlines)

3 points: Feedback on draft (Review 1 draft paper)

For each assignment, read the assignment twice, once to get an overview and a second time to provide constructive criticism for the author to use when revising their assignment. You may wish to pose the following questions drawn from [this guideline](#):

1. Are the basic sections (intro, thesis, conclusion, etc.) adequate? If not, what is missing?
2. Is the thesis in the first paragraph? Does it make an argument?
3. Does each paragraph address one issue, and relate back to the main thesis? Explain.
4. Was the material ordered in a way that was logical, clear, and easy to follow? Explain.
5. Does the writer cite sources adequately and appropriately? Note any incorrect formatting.
6. Are there enough references to other sources?
7. Are there any grammatical or spelling problems?
8. Is the writer's writing style clear?

Upload your feedback to the appropriate assignment folder on yCourses by 11:59pm on the due date.

Final Essay (30% - due Dec 9)

Compare and contrast two existing policy approaches to a common issue (i.e., command-and-control regulation vs. voluntary market-based instruments) and argue which one holds the better prospects for achieving a successful environmental outcome. Policy approaches may be drawn from any of the realms we examine in the course (i.e., international, domestic, private sector, transnational standards, or individual/community).

Your essay may draw on a combination of course readings, lecture notes, and **at least 10** credible external sources. It must present a clear thesis statement within the first paragraph. The maximum length is 6,000 words, excluding footnotes and references. Include a title page, bibliography, and citations in an accepted reference style.

You must upload your final paper through MyCourses before 11:59pm on Dec. 9. **Name your file as follows:** lastname_firstname_ENVR_610_Paper.docx. Please submit your paper in either Word, RTF, or Adobe PDF format; no other types of files are permitted.

A note on style: Academic papers are not mystery novels. By the end of the first paragraph, you should clearly and directly state your thesis and the main thrust of your argument. If English/French is not your first language or you have trouble writing, consider making an appointment with the [McGill Writing Centre](#).

Course Schedule

Date	Topic/Instructor	Readings
Sep 3	Introductions and course overview (Ellis, van der Ven)	Course syllabus
Sep 10	Environmental policy: Some framing issues (Ellis)	Kerry H Whiteside, 'Precautionary Theory: Science, Uncertainty, and Political Authority', <i>Precautionary Politics: Principle and Practice in Confronting Environmental Risk</i> (MIT 2006). Chapter 4: The Political Philosophy of Quantification Theodore M Porter, <i>Trust in Numbers: The Pursuit of Objectivity in Science and Public Life</i> . (Princeton University Press 2001). Jens Steffek, 'The Output Legitimacy of International Organizations and the Global Public Interest' (2015) 7 <i>International Theory</i> 263.

Sep 17	International environmental agreements (van der Ven)	<p>Allan, Jen Iris. 2019. "Dangerous Incrementalism of the Paris Agreement." <i>Global Environmental Politics</i> 19(1): 4–11.</p> <p>Keohane, Robert O. 2016. "Keohane on Climate: What Price Equity and Justice?" <i>Climate Home News</i>. https://www.climatechangenews.com/2016/09/06/keohane-on-climate-what-price-equity-and-justice/ (November 22, 2019).</p> <p>Klinsky, Sonja et al. 2017. "Why Equity Is Fundamental in Climate Change Policy Research." <i>Global Environmental Change</i> 44: 170–73.</p>
Sep 24	Boundary organizations: Integration of scientific inputs (Ellis)	<p>James D Ford and others, 'Including Indigenous Knowledge and Experience in IPCC Assessment Reports' (2016) 6 <i>Nature Climate Change</i> 349.</p> <p>Jeroen P Van der Sluijs, Rinie Van Est and Monique Riphagen, 'Beyond Consensus: Reflections from a Democratic Perspective on the Interaction between Climate Politics and Science' (2010) 2 <i>Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability</i> 409.</p> <p>Edward A Morgan and Gabriela Marques Di Giulio, 'Science and Evidence-Based Climate Change Policy: Collaborative Approaches to Improve the Science–Policy Interface', <i>Communicating Climate Change Information for Decision-Making</i> (Springer 2018).</p>
Oct 1	National environmental policy (van der Ven)	<p>Janzwood, Amy, Angela Carter, and Kyla Tienhaara. 2020. "How to Build a Better Canada after COVID-19: Launch a Fossil-Free Future." <i>The Conversation</i>. http://theconversation.com/how-to-build-a-better-canada-after-covid-19-launch-a-fossil-free-future-140691 (July 3, 2020).</p> <p>Piggot, Georgia. 2018. "The Influence of Social Movements on Policies That Constrain Fossil Fuel Supply." <i>Climate Policy</i> 18(7): 942–54.</p> <p>Downie, Christian. 2016. "Fighting for King Coal's Crown: Business Actors in the US Coal and Utility Industries." <i>Global Environmental Politics</i> 17(1): 21–39.</p>
Oct 8	World climate sim	Briefing materials and relevant external sources for negotiations

Oct 15	Policy and regulatory approaches (Ellis)	<p>Coglianesse, C., & Mendelson, E. (2010). Meta-Regulation and Self-Regulation. In M. Cave, R. Baldwin, & M. Lodge (Eds.), <i>The Oxford Handbook on Regulation</i> (pp. 1–23). Oxford University Press. https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=2002755</p> <p>Neil Gunningham, 'Environment, Self-Regulation, and the Chemical Industry: Assessing Responsible Care' (1995) 17 <i>Law & Policy</i> 57.</p> <p>Jonathan Baert Wiener, 'Global Environmental Regulation: Instrument Choice in Legal Context' (1999) 108 <i>The Yale Law Journal</i> 677 (excerpts).</p>
Oct 22	Corporate environmental policy (van der Ven)	<p>Dauvergne, Peter. 2016. <i>Environmentalism of the Rich</i>. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. (Chapter 4)</p> <p>van der Ven, Hamish. 2014. "Socializing the C-Suite: Why Some Big-Box Retailers Are 'Greener' than Others." <i>Business and Politics</i> 16(1): 31–63.</p>
Oct 29	Uncertainty and non-linearity (Ellis)	<p>H Rittel and M Webber, 'Dilemmas in General Theory of Planning. 1973' 154 <i>Policy Sciences</i>.</p> <p>Herbert A Simon, 'The Structure of Ill-Structured Problems', <i>Models of discovery</i> (Springer 1977).</p> <p>SO Funtowicz and JR Ravetz, 'Uncertainty, Complexity and Post-Normal Science' (1994) 13 <i>Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry</i> 1881.</p>
Nov 5	Wicked problems (Ellis)	<p>HW Rittel and Melvin M Webber, 'Planning Problems Are Wicked' (1973) 4 <i>Polity</i> 155 (review).</p> <p>Kate Crowley and Brian W Head, 'The Enduring Challenge of 'wicked Problems': Revisiting Rittel and Webber' (2017) 50 <i>POLICY SCIENCES</i> 539.</p> <p>Brian W Head, 'Forty Years of Wicked Problems Literature: Forging Closer Links to Policy Studies' (2019) 38 <i>Policy and Society</i> 180.</p>
Nov 12	Transnational environmental standards (van der Ven)	<p>Grabs, Janina. 2020. <i>Selling Sustainability Short?: The Private Governance of Labor and the Environment in the Coffee Sector</i>. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. (Chapter 1)</p> <p>van der Ven, Hamish. 2019. <i>Beyond Greenwash? Explaining Credibility in Transnational Eco-Labeling</i>. New York: Oxford University Press. (Chapter 6)</p>

Nov 19	Micro-level environmental policy (van der Ven)	<p>Maniates, Michael F. 2001. "Individualization: Plant a Tree, Buy a Bike, Save the World?" <i>Global Environmental Politics</i> 1(3): 31–52.</p> <p>Goodyear, Dana. 2015. "What Milk Should I Drink?" <i>The New Yorker</i>. https://www.newyorker.com/news/daily-comment/what-milk-should-i-drink.</p> <p>Wapner, Paul, and John Willoughby. 2005. "The Irony of Environmentalism: The Ecological Futility but Political Necessity of Lifestyle Change." <i>Ethics & International Affairs</i> 19(3): 77–89.</p>
Nov 26	Resilience (Ellis)	<p>Carl Folke and others, 'Resilience Thinking: Integrating Resilience, Adaptability and Transformability' (2010) 15 <i>Ecology and Society</i>.</p> <p>Elinor Ostrom, 'Polycentric Systems for Coping with Collective Action and Global Environmental Change' (2010) 20 <i>Global Environmental Change</i> 550.</p> <p>Peter Bates, 'Inuit and Scientific Philosophies about Planning, Prediction, and Uncertainty' (2007) 44 <i>Arctic Anthropology</i> 87.</p>

Course Policies

Late Assignments

Late assignments will be penalized 3% per calendar day. Extensions will be granted only for valid reasons supported by documentation from credible sources. For more on obtaining documentation, see the [Student Wellness Hub](#).

Appeals

Students in this course have a right to an impartial and competent review of any mark, provided the appeal occurs no later than two weeks after the mark was received. If you are concerned about your mark on an exam, paper, or group assignment, please follow these procedures:

1. Wait 48 hours after the mark is returned before appealing. This is a "cool-down" period for you to re-read your work and reflect on the accuracy of the grader's comments.
2. Write a max. one page double-spaced response to your grader, indicating any areas you feel were incorrectly marked in the initial assessment. Your response should only deal with the content of your work and not any other conditions (i.e., I need an 'A' to get into law school!)
3. One of the instructors will review your mark. It may go up, down, or stay the same.

McGill Policy Statements:

Language of Submission

In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded. This does not apply to courses in which acquiring proficiency in a language is one of the objectives.

Conformément à la Charte des droits de l'étudiant de l'Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté (sauf dans le cas des cours dont l'un des objets est la maîtrise d'une langue).

Academic Integrity

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/ for more information).

L'université McGill attache une haute importance à l'honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l'on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l'étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le site www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/).

Additional Statements

We endeavor to provide an inclusive learning environment in this course. If you are experiencing barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with a member of the teaching team and/or the [Office for Students with Disabilities](#), 514-398-6009.

We value intellectual freedom and we also value creating a safe and respectful classroom environment. If you do not feel safe in the classroom by virtue of comments related to your race, gender, sexual orientation, physical ability or for any other reason, please come speak with the course instructors.

McGill has policies on sustainability, paper use and other initiatives to promote a culture of sustainability at McGill. (See the [Office of Sustainability](#).)

In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University's control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.

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