Climate change and environmental degradation pose some of the greatest risks to modern civilization and are two of the most complex (and interesting!) policy problems governments have to grapple with. The MPA/PhD class has two overarching deliverables. First, it will provide an overview of the key themes that define climate and environmental policy and research, and introduce students to concepts, debates, and processes that characterize decision-making in these policy domains. We will ask questions such as: Do climate policy and environmental policy differ from one another and other issues, and if yes, how so? What shapes public opinion and client perspectives on climate change and the environment? How are citizen voices, scientific evidence, and industry preferences incorporated into environmental and climate policy and workaday decisions in government agencies? What are the “most likely” pathways (and likewise, the barriers) to adopting laws and regulations on climate change and the environment? And how do diverse policy networks and collaborative decision venues affect policy planning and implementation? We will focus heavily on the U.S. case to answer these questions but will occasionally use examples from other countries when comparative approaches are informative. Second, the class will provide students with an overview of some of the key policies on environmental management and climate change in the U.S. in order to prepare students interested in working in this (or a related) field.

The central objective of this class is to challenge typical conceptions and assumptions of this policy area by constructing a more complete analytical scaffolding of the factors that influence decision-making. Specific learning objectives include (1) gaining a well-rounded understanding of the U.S. policies on climate change and the environment in their historical context, (2) building a broad comprehension of the (sociopolitical, economic, and technical) drivers shaping decision-making in this policy domain, which can be applied to situations encountered in professional settings and used to advance academic and policy research, and (3) improving our consumption and communication of research and policy-relevant information in this field, which often involves multidisciplinary data and dimensions. These objectives satisfy elements of all five MPA program core competencies.

This course is reading and discussion heavy, meaning the vast majority of how we learn and meet assignment requirements will be accomplished by preparing for and contributing to class every week. Students should consider their ability to commit to strong participation before taking this course.
COURSE DELIVERY

The state of the pandemic continues to be difficult and evolving. Please be patient with me and with one another as we navigate this [less] new educational world together. Course delivery is as follows:

The class will be hybrid synchronous, where half the class attends in-person and half attends online. Students will rotate biweekly (i.e., you will be in the classroom every other week). There is a fully online option as well, no questions asked. Please email me ASAP if you plan on taking the course online only so I can sort out in-person rotations. If everyone opts to be online, I will teach from my home office (i.e., maskless). If we are hybrid synchronous, everyone will need to log into the Zoom session and stay muted unless speaking. To encourage participation and protect privacy, sessions will not be recorded – please take good notes. Good note taking is a useful professional skill, will help you integrate your interpretation and questions during class prep with the weekly discussion, and also prevents boredom! Plus, you can use your good notes as a reference later (I do this all the time).

Please note that class will likely be held fully online on several occasions even if we conduct a hybrid synchronous format. I will announce these online sessions in the event that they occur. Please also note that for personal reasons, class may go fully online during the semester. If this is a problem for you, please consider dropping taking the course another time.

I will hold the office hours specified at the top of the syllabus on Zoom. To ensure that everyone has an opportunity to meet with me, please reserve your spot at We Join (https://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/ville) and you will be places in the Zoom waiting room. The Zoom link to the meeting is posted to “Course Overview” in our eLC site. Those without reservations will be asked to leave and re-book. Email me to book a Zoom appointment if you are unavailable during weekly office hours.

Finally, if you are struggling with online learning either for personal or technical reasons, please notify me as soon as possible so we can come up with solutions. Your success is my success!

UNIVERSITY-WIDE COVID POLICIES

Face Coverings: As a reminder, the University of Georgia—along with all University System of Georgia (USG) institutions—requires all faculty, staff, students, and visitors to wear an appropriate face covering while inside campus facilities/buildings where six feet social distancing may not always be possible. Anyone not using a face covering when required will be asked to wear one or must leave the area. Reasonable accommodations may be made for those who are unable to wear a face covering for documented health reasons. Students seeking an accommodation related to face coverings should contact Disability Services at https://drc.uga.edu/.

DawgCheck: Please perform a quick symptom check each weekday on DawgCheck—on the UGA app or website—whether you feel sick or not. It will help health providers monitor the health situation on campus: https://dawgcheck.uga.edu/

Students with symptoms: Students showing symptoms should self-isolate and schedule an appointment with the University Health Center by calling 706-542-1162 (Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.). Please DO NOT walk-in. For emergencies and after-hours care, see https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies.
What do I do if you are notified that you have been exposed: Effective Jan. 4, 2021, students who learn they have been directly exposed to COVID-19 but are not showing symptoms should self-quarantine for **10 days** (consistent with updated Department of Public Health (DPH) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines). Those quarantining for 10 days must have been symptom-free throughout the monitoring period. Please correspond with your instructor via email, with a cc: to Student Care & Outreach at sco@uga.edu, to coordinate continuing your coursework while self-quarantined. We strongly encourage students to voluntarily take a COVID-19 test within 48 hours of the end of the 10-day quarantine period (test to be administered between days 8 and 10). Students may obtain these tests at Legion Field (https://clia.vetview.vet.uga.edu/) or at the University Health Center by calling 706-542-1162 (Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.). Please DO NOT walk-in the University Health Center without an appointment. For emergencies and after-hours care, see https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies. If the test is negative, the individual may return to campus, but MUST continue to closely monitor for any new COVID-19 symptoms through 14 days. DawgCheck is the best method for monitoring these symptoms. If new symptoms occur, the individual must not come to campus and must seek further testing/evaluation. If the test is positive at the end of the 10-day period, the individual must begin a 10-day isolation period from the date of the test.

To get a COVID-19 test: Students who are demonstrating symptoms of COVID-19 should call the University Health Center. UHC is offering testing by appointment for students; appointments may be booked by calling 706-542-1162. UGA will also be recruiting asymptomatic students to participate in surveillance tests. Students living in residence halls, Greek housing and off-campus apartment complexes are encouraged to participate.

If you test positive: Any student with a positive COVID-19 test is **required** to report the test in DawgCheck and should self-isolate immediately. Students should not attend classes in-person until the isolation period is completed. Once you report the positive test through DawgCheck, UGA Student Care and Outreach will follow up with you.

How do I participate in surveillance testing if I have NO symptoms? We strongly encourage you to take advantage of the expanded surveillance testing that is being offered from January 4 – 22: up to 1,500 free tests per day at Legion Field and pop-up locations. Testing at Legion Field can be scheduled at [https://clia.vetview.vet.uga.edu/](https://clia.vetview.vet.uga.edu/). Walk-up appointments can usually be accommodated at Legion Field, and pop-up saliva testing does not require pre-registration. For planning purposes, precise sites and schedules for the pop-up clinics are published on the UHC’s website and its social media as they are secured: [https://www.uhs.uga.edu/healthtopics/covid-surveillance-testing](https://www.uhs.uga.edu/healthtopics/covid-surveillance-testing).

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

This is an elective graduate level course and I therefore expect dedication and commitment to meeting the course objectives. I also expect civility, respect, and professionalism during class. We are studying controversial policy domains and in one of the most tense, polarized, and traumatic times in modern history, and we come to class with different opinions, politics, experiences, and values. It is our job to learn, discuss, and debate material with an open mind, actively listen to one another, and build common understandings of the material despite differences in policy preferences and/or beliefs. If you cannot meet these standards, please do not take this course. Failure to meet them will
be considered a violation of the University of Georgia’s Code of Academic Conduct (Section 5.3, Disorderly Conduct) and will be treated as such.

I will try to learn your names as quickly as possible; I will ask for your name until I’ve learned names so please be prepared to share it with the class every time you speak for the first few weeks. This is especially difficult with masks – if in-person, please sit in the same seat until I get to know you.

The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary. Please retain flexibility and read announcements posted to eLC.

Correspondence with instructor: I am delighted to correspond with students about the course via email. I will respond within 48 hours, but do not expect a response on the weekend or holidays.

Technology use: Preferably laptops but any portable device is required because we all need to log into Zoom to hear one another in hybrid format. Devices will be strictly used access Zoom, take notes, or review course materials. Please do not have your phone visible unless you are using it to access Zoom and put it on silent (not vibrate). Students who disrupt class will be asked to leave.

You are required to have your full name visible in Zoom. Please check your name and update it accordingly or I will ask you to do so.

Technology tips for online interactions:

- If you have a wireless WiFi connection, try to get as close to your router as possible. Make sure all other wireless or streaming devices are turned off.
- Turn off computer notifications are turned off and your phone is on silent or vibrate.
- Have mics on mute when you are not speaking.
- Cameras should be on unless you have a special circumstance, in which case you should notify me in advance that your camera will be off (you do not need to tell me why).
- If you have difficulty with a stable connection, please turn off your video. If you are having audio difficulties, please leave the meeting and try to reconnect.
- It is best to avoid virtual and distracting backgrounds if possible. Position the camera so you are displayed from the chest up.

Prohibition on recording or sharing lectures: In the absence of written authorization from the UGA Disability Resource Center, students may not make a visual or audio recording of any aspect of this course. Students who have a recording accommodation agree in writing that they:

- Will use the records only for personal academic use during the specific course.
- Understand that faculty members have copyright interest in their class lectures and that they agree not to infringe on this right in any way.
- Understand that the faculty member and students in the class have privacy rights and agree not to violate those rights by using recordings for any reason other than their own personal study.
- Will not release, digitally upload, broadcast, transcribe, or otherwise share all or any part of the recordings. They agree that they will not profit financially and will not allow others to benefit personally or financially from lecture recordings or other course materials.
- Will erase/delete all recordings at the end of the semester.
• Understand that violation of these terms may subject them to discipline under the Student Code of Conduct or subject them to liability under copyright laws.

Attendance policy: Attendance in discussion sections is expected unless — as in a profession — you are ill or give advanced notice of an absence for other occasional, reasonable causes, including observance of religious holidays. You will not be penalized for these absences and will have opportunities to make up your participation points. Please give me advance notice if you will be absent. If you will be absent due to religious holidays, I need notice by January 31st.

Late policy: Given the difficult circumstances, I have a more flexible late policy this semester. If you miss your assigned presentations, you will have the opportunity to make it up by presenting with another group or presenting individually (I will make that decision). For late written assignments, you will be docked 3 percentage points each day passed the due date. Please email me if you become sick and are unable to keep up with work and we will work something out—open lines of communication are very important this year.

Academic honesty: Students are expected to comply with the UGA Student Honor Code: “I will be academically honest in all of my academic work and will not tolerate academic dishonesty of others.” “Academic Honesty” is “performing all academic work without plagiarism, cheating, lying, tampering, stealing, giving or receiving unauthorized assistance from any other person, or using any source of information that is not common knowledge without properly acknowledging the source”. Students suspected of violating the Student Honor Code will be reported and may receive a score of 0 on the assignment in which violation is suspected. A Culture of Honesty, the University’s policy and procedures for handling cases of suspected dishonesty, can be found at https://ovpi.uga.edu/.

Accessibility and disabilities: If you are concerned about your performance in this class due to a disability (including health issues) or an accessibility issue (e.g., access to technology), please notify me right away so we can come up with a plan to ensure your success in this course. Please notify the Office for Disability Services (https://drc.uga.edu) as soon as possible if you require accommodations. Documentation of a disability and our email exchanges are confidential.

Land and labor acknowledgement: I acknowledge that the land in which we learn and work at UGA is the territory of the Muscogee-Creek, Cherokee, and Chickasaw Peoples, and that UGA benefited from the labor of enslaved peoples, primarily of African descent, during the antebellum period (for slavery at UGA, see https://digihum.libs.uga.edu/exhibits/show/slavery).

ON-CAMPUS RESOURCES

Academic
• Library: https://www.libs.uga.edu/
• Division of Academic Enhancement Services: https://dae.uga.edu/services
• Division of Academic Enhancement Resources: https://dae.uga.edu/resources
• Printing kiosks: https://eits.uga.edu/support/printing_kiosks/
• Campus software: https://eits.uga.edu/hardware_and_software/
• Virtual computer lab (Vlab): https://eits.uga.edu/support/vlab/
• EITS support: https://eits.uga.edu/support/
• Office of experiential learning: https://el.uga.edu/
• Office of service-learning: https://servicelearning.uga.edu/

Personal
• Student Veteran Resource Center: https://svrc.uga.edu/
• Disability Resource Center: https://drc.uga.edu/site
• Financial Hardship Support: https://financialhardship.uga.edu/
• Women’s Resource Center: https://women.uga.edu/
• LGBT Resource Center: https://lgbtcenter.uga.edu/
• Office of Institutional Diversity: https://diversity.uga.edu/index.php/resources

Mental Health and Wellness
• If you or someone you know needs assistance, you are encouraged to contact Student Care and Outreach (https://sco.uga.edu/) in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-7774. They will help you navigate any difficult circumstances you may be facing by connecting you with the appropriate resources or services.
• Crisis support: https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies
• Counseling services: https://www.uhs.uga.edu/caps/welcome
• If you need help managing stress anxiety, relationships, etc., please visit BeWellUGA (https://uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga) for a list of FREE workshops, classes, mentoring, and health coaching led by licensed clinicians and health educators in the University Health Center.
• Additional resources can be accessed through the UGA App

ASSIGNMENTS

Grading allocation (and due dates) of assignments is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scenario proposal (MPA only) 2/19</td>
<td></td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interests brief (MPA only) 3/26</td>
<td></td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy memo (MPA only) 5/3</td>
<td></td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research paper (PhD only) 5/3</td>
<td></td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Class contributions</td>
<td></td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Policy presentation</td>
<td></td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Discussion leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Participation** is 50% of your grade because it is central to meeting our objectives. The subject area of this course is huge—we will barely cover a surface level introduction to some of the main themes. Discussing material, sharing critical reflections as well as experiences, and asking thoughtful questions will exponentiate our learning and help us draw key takeaways in a complex field—I cannot achieve this by lecturing, and will do very little of it. Full credit for “class contributions” means showing up to class and making contributions, demonstrating you have completed and considered the assigned materials, participating in activities, and bringing specific, thoughtful discussion questions based on the assigned material each week to class. In a normal class setting we would typically break into groups to initiate discussion and get comfortable speaking, but this may not be possible in the hybrid format. Please do your best to speak up and get involved.
Again, this class is heavy on reading and preparation; assigned material is essential. Please do not bother coming to class if you have not read, watched, and/or listened to it. Skimming the material is fine (learning to consume material quickly is a valuable skill), but please give yourselves adequate time to truly engage it before class. Take good notes as you consume the material in preparation. Each week, we will discuss and define concepts we come across in the assigned material. Be prepared to ask and answer questions about it. Except for the first week, I will provide broad questions each week that you think about as you read/watch/listen, which should help you construct contributions for class, before class. Because this is a topical course, you are encouraged to bring concepts, ideas, and practices you’ve learned in other courses into our discussion. Please remember that in this class, we all are teachers and innovators.

There are two in-class assignments that are also components of participation, described below. Both assignments will be evaluated by me and through a peer-review process.

The first component is a policy presentation. Each week is structured around a theme in climate and environmental policy issues, but I want you to also walk away from class with a decent sense of what constitutes U.S. policy in these areas. To that end, in nearly every week of the class, one group of 2-3 students will give a 10-15m presentation on one of the U.S. policies we have identified. There will be 10-15m of Q&A following the presentation. I will describe how we’ll organize these presentations and what’s required in the presentations during our first week of class.

The second component is discussion leadership. Every week, 2-3 students will give an overview of the leading themes in the readings, identify key concepts for the class to define together, and develop 3-5 discussion questions to address during class. I will provide specific details about this exercise in the first week of class and will help to facilitate discussion. Discussion preparations from the presenters will be due to me by Monday at 4:00p.

In addition to participation, three written assignments will be evaluated. All assignments will concern the same policy scenario. The policy scenario can concern a law, regulation, ordinance, or plan that has already been adopted, was not adopted, or is in development to solve a climate change or environmental problem. You may choose a national, state, or local case and are welcome to study a policy scenario in another country as long as it is a democracy.

The first assignment, scenario proposal, is a simple paragraph summary of your policy scenario. As long as you hit on the basics (which I will provide), you will receive full credit. If I do not approve of your scenario choice, we will work together to select another option. The second assignment is a concise 2 page (single-spaced) interests brief. Climate and environmental policy decisions tend to invoke many opinions and types of expertise; sometimes interests align in expected ways and other times they comprise of strange bedfellows. This assignment will involve researching and concisely describing the key policy actors and interests that shaped your policy scenario. The third assignment is a concise 2 page (single-spaced) policy memo, which will analyze the problem in your policy scenario and provide recommendations using concepts we learn in class and multidisciplinary inputs.

PhD students will not complete these written assignments and will instead develop a research paper that will comprise 50% of their grade. Please see me within the first three weeks to discuss your paper plan. PhD students will typically be assigned two more research papers each week and are required to attend an additional discussion with me via Zoom once per month cover research
methods and design. Finally, PhD students are expected to present (10m) two research articles to the class during the semester. I will choose one of the research articles and the student will choose the other. I will send an email in the first week to organize our meetings and the article presentations.

All written assignments should be in Times New Roman, 12pt font, 1-inch margins and submitted in as Word documents via the electronic drop-box at the course eLC website.

**FINAL GRADES**

Final grades are assigned at the end of the semester based on each student’s performance on the course requirements using the following scale. Please do not ask me to “round up”—I won’t.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Score Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74-76.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-73.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-69.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>60 or below</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**REQUIRED READINGS & TECHNOLOGY**

All readings will be provided through eLC. Readings are organized by week. There are several e-books that I’ve secured and will post; these are great supplementary readings. MPA students are encouraged to read the PhD readings if interested but they are certainly not required.

A laptop or desktop computer with an Internet connection is required. You will also need access to eLC, Zoom, and the remote library service; please email me right away if you access issues.

**COURSE PLAN**

**Week 1 (January 19) – Introduction and class overview**


Review: “Environmental topics”. *Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)*.  
https://www.epa.gov/environmental-topics

Read article and glance through the comments: “Your guide to understanding public lands”. REI.  
https://www.rei.com/blog/hike/your-guide-to-understanding-public-lands


Watch: “Honor native land – A guide to and call to acknowledgement”. *U.S. Department of Arts and Culture*.  
https://usdac.us/nativeland (4 minutes)
Watch: “Bill Nye explains climate change”. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KYp8dYJKP2s

No additional PhD readings this week, on PhD meeting

Week 2 (January 26) – Conceptualizing climate and environmental policy


Additional PhD readings:


Week 3 (February 2) – Science and technical challenges


Additional PhD readings:


**Week 4 (February 8) – Climate and environmental justice**


**Additional PhD readings**


**Week 5 (February 16) – Public opinion 1**

Policy scenario proposal due by Friday, February 19 at 5:00p


Additional PhD readings:


Week 6 (February 23) – Public opinion 2


Additional PhD readings:


Week 7 (March 2) – The economy and industry interest groups


Additional PhD readings:


Week 8 (March 9) – Social activism and environmental organizations

Sanz, Scott and Soule, Sarah A. “Greening the Congressional record: environmental social movements and expertise-based access to the policy process.” Environmental Politics 28(4): 1-22.


Additional PhD readings:


Week 9 (March 16) – Legislative behavior


Additional PhD readings:


**Week 10 (March 23) – Rulemaking and executive powers**

**Interests analysis due by Friday, March 26 by 5:00p**


**Additional PhD readings:**


**Week 11 (March 30) – Street-level bureaucrats**


Watch: “The wild horses of the devil’s garden”. *US Forest Service*. August 29, 2018. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Y>LoremTcQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Y>LoremTcQ) (5 minutes)

**Additional PhD readings:**


**Week 12 (April 6) – Collaborative governance and policy learning**


**Additional PhD readings:**


**Week 13 (April 13) – Policy and socio-ecological networks**


Watch: Florence Metz, winner of Science Magazine’s “Dance your way to your PhD” 2015 contest. [https://florencemetz.com/science-communication/](https://florencemetz.com/science-communication/) (9 minutes, no need to watch credits)

**Review the tabs on this page (OLUs specifically):** [https://www.sfei.org/adaptationatlas](https://www.sfei.org/adaptationatlas)

And then watch: Beagle, Julie. “Resilient by design science briefing”. *Exploratorium*. November 14, 2017. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z9sNmXHhUP8&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z9sNmXHhUP8&feature=youtu.be) (22 minutes)

**Additional PhD readings:**


**Week 14 (April 20) – Policy diffusion and financing**


**Additional PhD readings:**


**Week 15 (April 27) – The courts and course wrap-up**


No additional PhD readings this week

**Week 16 – Finals week**

Policy memo (MPA) or research paper (PhD) due by Monday, May 3 by 5:00p