CLIMATE & ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY
PADP 7200

Spring 2021
Thursday 3:55-6:45p
307 Baldwin Hall

Department of Public Administration and Policy
University of Georgia

Instructor: Dr. Cory Struthers
Email: cory.struthers@uga.edu
Office hours: Thursday 10:00a-1:00p (reservation) or by appointment
Office: Baldwin Hall 414

COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES

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 & COVID-19

The state of the pandemic continues to be difficult and evolving. Please be patient with me and with one another as we navigate this situation collectively. Course delivery, per USG’s rules, is in-person without social distancing. I am not permitted to take any part of the course online without the provost’s permission. If we need to pivot to virtual learning on Zoom at some point during the semester, rest assured that this class is well-designed to make that change.

Vaccinations are strongly encouraged. Evidence suggests that vaccinations prevent serious death and illness and are effective against the new more contagious delta variant. If you are not vaccinated, please get vaccinated as soon as possible to protect yourself, your loved ones, and your classmates.

Likewise, masks are strongly encouraged. Until transmission rates drop considerably, I will be teaching this course masked. Masks effectively prevent transmission of COVID-19 and will help to protect both vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals, and those that are high risk. I understand that masking for three hours is difficult and tiring – I too looked forward to being unmasked indoors this semester. However, I also understand that we must adapt to this unprecedented situation. As scholars and practitioners of public management, let’s use this opportunity to demonstrate how well adaptive management can be done! We will take a 15m break during class to allow everyone to unmask and breathe fresh air outside and eat as needed. Students are welcome to take their own personal breaks anytime as well. If and where possible, social distancing is also encouraged.

If you become sick with COVID – whether you are vaccinated or not – you need to isolate. Accommodations will be made for anyone who tests positive. Moreover, please do not come to class if feel symptomatic or know you have been exposed and have not yet received a negative COVID-19 test result. Just notify me and we will arrange ways for you to stay up to speed.

The UHC is providing testing and vaccinations. (For what it’s worth, I was vaccinated at UHC and it was an exceedingly easy, professional, and supportive experience. I am happy to talk about my decision to get vaccinated or other related issues if that is helpful to you.)

Office hours: I will hold office hours at the time specified at the top of the syllabus. I find it more effective to meet on Zoom (screen sharing, ease of meeting, and so on); if you prefer an in-person meeting, please let me know and we can arrange one. To ensure that everyone has an opportunity to meet with me, please reserve your spot at We Join (https://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/villc). 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 an appointment if you are unavailable during weekly office hours. Please note scheduled office hours will only be available through October 14. Thereafter, you will need to book an appointment with me directly and I may be less available. Guest lecturers have agreed to be available during their week for short appointments; please email them directly if this is of interest to you.

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 – I ask that you 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:** You will also need access to eLC and the remote library service; please email me right away if you access issues. Otherwise, there are no technology requirements. Laptops and portable devices are welcome in class but must only be opened and used to take notes or review course materials. Please do not have your phone visible and put it on silent (not vibrate). Students who disrupt class will be asked to leave.

**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 class is expected (and evaluated) 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 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 August 31st.
Late policy: I have a flexible late policy. 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 five 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.

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.

Preferred names and pronouns: Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student’s legal name. I am eager to address you by your preferred name and/or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

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>Case proposal (MPA – Aug. 30 @ 11:59p)</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response papers (2) (MPA – Mon. @ 11:59p)</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research paper (PhD – Dec. 10 @ 11:59p)</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Class contributions (During class)</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Policy presentation (Thurs. @ noon)</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Discussion lead (Wed. @ 4:00p)</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td></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 little of it. Full credit for “class contributions” means showing up to class and making contributions to discussion, demonstrating you have completed and considered the assigned materials, participating in activities, and bringing specific, thoughtful discussion questions based on the assigned material. Discussions may involve sharing in pairs or small groups, writing before speaking, and communicating directly to class. On case study days, we will gather in groups to apply themes from readings to cases, identify key issues in the case, and make policy recommendations. Please note that how we carry out discussions will likely depend on the evolving pandemic situation.
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. Good note taking is a useful skill, will help prepare for class and responses papers, and also prevents boredom! Plus, you can use your good notes as a reference later (I do this all the time). Each week, we will discuss and define concepts we come across in the assigned material. 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 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. Presentations are due to me by Thursday at noon.

The second component is discussion leadership. Every week, 2-3 students will identify key concepts for the class to define together, develop 3-5 discussion questions to address during class, and identify articles’ key themes. On days where we engage case studies, discussion questions will center around the case we’re considering and analyzing. 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 Wednesday at 4:00p.

In addition to participation, three written assignments will be evaluated. All assignments will concern the same policy case, or scenario. The policy case should be a single policy decision (law, regulation, ordinance, project, or plan – NOT a court case) that has already been adopted, was not adopted, or is in development that seeks to solve a climate change or environmental problem. You may choose a national, state, or local case and are welcome to study a policy case in another country as long as that country is a democracy. The policy case (and related policy process) should be well-documented. You should start thinking about options for cases…now!

The first assignment, case proposal, is a simple paragraph summary of a policy case you wish to study due very early in the semester. As long as you hit on the basics (which I will provide), you will receive full credit for this assignment. If I do not approve of your scenario choice, we will work together to select another option. The second and third writing assignments are concise 1-2 page (single-spaced) response papers, which are due Mondays at 11:59pm after the prior class. In these response papers, you will apply the material from your chosen week to your policy case using multidisciplinary supporting evidence. The goal of these response papers is to (a) demonstrate you understand the material from that week and (b) conduct research that will help you understand the policy process that led to the policy decision you chose. In the first week of class, you will select the two weeks in which to submit your response papers (there is a cap on the number of students in any
given week). You are required to select one week that I will give feedback and a second week where a guest lecturer will give feedback. I strongly recommend starting your response paper early (i.e., do not wait until after the class has occurred to begin writing).

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 to read. 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. Please email me within the first week for article selection.

All written assignments should be in Times New Roman, 12pt font, 1-inch margins and submitted 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>Range</th>
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<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-100</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93.99</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>74-76.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89.99</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-73.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86.99</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-69.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82.99</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>60 or below</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

REQUIRED READINGS

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.

COURSE PLAN

Week 1 (August 19) – Introduction and class overview


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 (August 26) – Conceptualizing climate & environmental policy**

Policy scenario due Monday, August 30th @ 6:00pm


Additional PhD readings:

Review a few of Inger Mewburn’s blog posts: [https://thesiswhisperer.com/best-of-the-blog/]


**Week 3 (September 2) – Science in policy**

**Case study: TBD**


Skim: Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Released August 2021. “Sixth assessment report: The biophysical science basis summary for policymakers”.

Review: https://interactive-atlas.ipcc.ch/ (watch video on homepage)

Additional PhD readings:


Week 4 (September 9) – Climate and environmental justice


Additional PhD readings


Week 5 (September 16) – Rulemaking & regulation


Additional PhD readings:


Week 6 (September 23) – Legislative behavior


Additional PhD readings:


Week 7 (September 30) – Policy diffusion


**Additional PhD readings:**


**Week 8 (October 7) – Public opinion**

**Case study: TBD**


**Additional PhD readings:**


**Week 9 (October 14) – Industry interest groups, *possibly Dr. Leah Stokes recorded lecture***


Watch: Schneider-Mayerson, Matthew. “Climate change, capitalism, and what’s next”. TEDx. October 5, 2013. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iRJMN5GNbVU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iRJMN5GNbVU) (17 minutes)

**Additional PhD readings:**


**Week 10 (October 21) – Social activism & environmental organizations, Dr. Matt Auer**


**Additional PhD readings:**


Week 11 (October 28) – Street-level bureaucracy, Dr. Jesse Abrams


Additional PhD readings:


Week 12 (November 4) – Collaborative governance, Dr. Eric Zeemering

**Case day: TBD


Additional PhD readings:


Week 13 (November 11) – Socioecological networks, Dr. Forrest Fleischman (virtual)


Additional PhD readings:


Week 14 (November 18) – Risk management & public finance, Dr. Katherine Willoughby


Additional PhD readings:


Week 15 (November 25) – Thanksgiving break, no class

Week 16 (December 2) – The courts and course wrap-up


No additional PhD readings this week

Week 17 – Finals week