

University of Maryland Federal Semester: Energy and Environmental Policy
Fall 2013
Thursdays, 3:30 to 6:00 p.m.
1117 Plant Sciences

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Course Description

Welcome! The purpose of this class is to explore energy and environmental challenges and the related dynamics of politics, policies, and legal systems. Climate change policy will be an area of focus. We will also consider sustainability and its social, economic and environmental elements. As we do this, we will learn about professional opportunities in the Federal Government and related organizations. We'll get some help from a series of guests, each of whom is accomplished in areas related to federal energy and environmental policy.

All reading materials will be available to you electronically.

Federal Semester Program Description

This seminar is part of the Federal Semester Program bringing students from all disciplines together to learn, discuss, and explore federal policy. This program offers a unique opportunity for students to gain insight into federal policy and have a professional experience in an agency, congressional office, or non-governmental organization related to federal policy. At the center of the program is the fall seminar course, supported by additional courses and the opportunity for students to earn college credit for an internship. Students apply their academic preparation to their internship and see aspects of policy first-hand.

Fall and spring activities will include workshops, field trips to Capitol Hill and the Environmental Policy Agency, and conversations with policy-makers. In the spring, students in this concentration have interned in a wide variety of places, including the EPA, DOE, the British Embassy, Capitol Hill, lobbying firms, think tanks, as well as with other non-governmental organizations involved in energy and environmental policies. Guidance will be provided on securing and participating in internships.

Important Federal Semester Program due dates for 2013-2014

Friday xx September: federalsemester@umd.edu	Polished resume due to
Friday xx October: seminar group	Washington D.C. field trip for your
Friday xx October: federalsemester@umd.edu	Cover letter due by e-mail to
Friday xx December: summary due by email to federalsemester@umd.edu	One-page internship search

Major Assignments and Grading Assessment

Class Participation: 20 Points

Group Presentation on Major Environmental Statute (October 3): 20 Points

Group Project on Climate Change Marketing (October 24): 20 Points

Observations from Built Environment Walkabouts (due November 21): 20 Points

Group Project on UN Climate Treaty Negotiations (December 12): 20 Points

Schedule

Week 1 – September 5: Energy and Environmental No-Regrets Quiz; Federal Semester Orientation

Pre-class assignments: none

Introductions, expectations, review of syllabus, pre-course quiz, discussion of quiz answers.

Special guest Dr. Joan B. Burton will introduce the Federal Semester Program and how it will help connect you to the professional world of the nation's capital.

Week 2 – September 12: Resume Workshop

Pre-class assignment: none (but you may want to get a head start on the reading assignments for Week 3)

Interactive seminar on resumes, cover letters, interview tactics, and where to search for interviews. Get a head start on professional development, and enjoy some team-building with your classmates in the process.

Week 3 – September 19: Climate Change Challenges and Policies

Pre-class reading assignment:

National Academies, Understanding and Responding to Climate Change: Highlights of National Academies Reports, 2008 Edition, (28 pages) Available at: http://dels-old.nas.edu/dels/rpt_briefs/climate_change_2008_final.pdf

Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), How to Solve It: Global Warming Solutions Overview; Step 1: Set limits on global warming pollution Step 2: Invest in green jobs and clean energy; Step 3: Drive smarter cars; Step 4: Create green homes and buildings; Step 5: Build better communities and transportation (approximately 5 pages) Available on separate links via: <http://www.nrdc.org/globalWarming/solutions/default.asp>

U.S. Chamber of Commerce Reality Check: Straight Talk About the Kyoto Protocol; Executive Summary and Introduction to Propositions 1, 2, and 3 (1 page) available at: <http://www.uschamber.com/reports/reality-check-straight-talk-about-kyoto-protocol>

Patrick Michaels, "Global Warming and Climate Change," Chapter 45 of the Cato Handbook for Policymakers, 7th edition. (14 pages) Available at: <http://www.cato.org/pubs/handbook/hb111/hb111-45.pdf>

Discussion of the challenge of climate change, and the dynamics of the legislative and policy process related to energy and climate.

Also in this session: Students form working groups. Each group chooses a major environmental statute they will research and prepare a presentation for the October 3 class.

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Week 4 – September 26: Environmental Legislation and Policy Process

Pre-class reading assignment:

EPA's Plain English Guide to the Clean Air Act, including following each link and the nine links in the Key Elements of the Clean Air Act section.

<http://www.epa.gov/air/caa/peg/>

John Walke blog on ozone standards from NRDC website:

http://switchboard.nrdc.org/blogs/jwalke/the_president_sabotages_clean.html

John Bachmann: Will the Circle Be Unbroken: A History of the U.S. National Ambient Air Quality Standards (attached to the assignment on Blackboard)

EPA materials on environmental statutes and regulation:

<http://www.epa.gov/lawsregs/basics.html>

http://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/Environmental_law (including links to Major Federal Laws and those under the See Also section)

Discussion of the dynamics of policy and legal decisions affecting energy and the natural environment. What is the relationship between legal statutes and regulations?

Guest participant: Drew McConville, White House Council on Environmental Quality

Week 5 – October 3: Group Presentations on Major Environmental Statutes

Pre-class assignment: Student working groups will have researched and developed presentations on a chosen environmental statute.

What social, political, and economic dynamics drove the legislative process? Has the statute succeeded in addressing an environmental or energy challenge? Class discussion and questions.

Group assignments for October 18 climate change marketing project

Guest participant: Kristen Hines, Associate Attorney, Ayres Law Group

Week 6 – October 10: International Challenges - Sustainable Development, Whale Conservation

Pre-class assignments:

Watch *South Park – Whale Whores*. Episode 13, 2009. South Park Studios
Available at: <http://www.southparkstudios.com/full-episodes/s13e11-whale-whores>

Three Readings:

"Status of Whales -- A simple overview of the status of whales by species and ocean basin - Overview, Species and Estimates" International Whaling Commission
<http://iwcoffice.org/conservation/status.htm>

"Whaling- A giant compromise?"

A pragmatic effort to tackle an emotional issue has started making waves" Apr 27th 2010
The Economist online <http://www.economist.com/node/16010422>

"Obama's Whale of a Backslide" Animal Legal Defense Fund
<http://www.aldf.org/article.php?id=1342>

Discussion of whaling. Discussion of international sustainable development efforts and related UN processes and U.S. political considerations.

Guest participant: Rebecca Webber, U.S. Department of State, Bureau of International Organizations

Week 7 – October 17: Climate Change Policy Dynamics

Pre-class reading assignment:

As the World Burns” from The New Yorker magazine October 11, 2010.
http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/10/11/101011fa_fact_lizza

Domestic climate change policies. Discussion of unsuccessful efforts for the passage of comprehensive federal legislation to regulate carbon emissions. Could the legislation have passed under different circumstances? Will such legislation pass during the coming years?

Week 8 – October 24: Presentation of climate change marketing projects.

Groups will have assumed the role of a particular constituency with an interest in potential actions by Congress to comprehensively regulate emissions of greenhouse gases. Having researched the constituency’s position or potential position, students will develop means of conveying how they would attempt to influence the legislative process. This marketing campaign or other such means will be presented by each group, with in-character discussion and questions from other student groups. Examples of constituencies include the National Mining Association, the American Gas Association, or major environmental organizations. Video productions, PowerPoint presentations for decision-makers, and written advertising campaigns are examples of ways that groups can choose to market their positions.

Week 9 – October 31: International climate policy;

Pre-class reading assignments

1) World Carbon Dioxide Emissions by Region, Reference Case 1990-2030
Mongabay.com using 2009 EIA Data (chart, one page):
http://photos.mongabay.com/09/forecast_co2_line.jpg

2) CO2 per capita per country (chart, one page):
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:CO2_per_capita_per_country.png

3) Center for Climate and Energy Solutions, International Negotiations (one page):
<http://www.c2es.org/international/negotiations>

4) Cancun Outcome a Modest Step Forward. Author: Michael A. Levi, David M. Rubenstein Senior Fellow for Energy and the Environment and Director of the Program on Energy Security and Climate Change December 11, 2010 (one page):

<http://www.cfr.org/energyenvironment/cancun-outcome-modest-step-forward/p23617>

5) Why the UN can never stop climate change David G Victor, The Guardian, Monday 4 April 2011 (one page):

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2011/apr/04/un-climate-change>

Consideration and discussion of the complex dynamics of UN climate treaty negotiation process, including its relationship to U.S. domestic positions on climate change and energy.

Group assignments for December 6 mock UN treaty negotiation.

Week 10 – November 7: Energy, Environment and the 2014 Congressional elections

Pre-class assignment: Research energy and environment-related positions of the Republican Party and the Democratic Party. Consider constituencies that impact these positions.

How will the outcome of the 2014 Congressional election impact environmental and energy policy? Discuss similarities and differences in the parties' positions, and how these are responsive to energy and environmental challenges and constituencies.

Team-building exercise, potentially involving pizza.

Guest participant, Khary Cauthen, American Petroleum Institute

Week 11 – November 14: International environmental, financing, and climate challenges.

Pre-class reading assignment: to be announced

Continue discussions of international climate change negotiations. Consider other international environmental challenges and financing-related issues.

Also in this session will be time to meet with groups for final project. You can discuss your research of the UNFCCC process and your country or region's positions, interests, and alliances. Start thinking about your preferred outcomes from the negotiation and developing strategies for achieving those outcomes.

Guest participant: David Tessler, Department of The Treasury

Week 12 – November 21: Sustainable Communities: How the Built Environment Affects Energy Use and Natural Resources

Pre-class reading assignment: to be announced

Due date for Smart Growth Walkabout papers.

Discussion of how compact, walkable communities differ from dispersed, auto-oriented communities. How do laws and policies impact how and where communities are built? How do these patterns of development affect air quality, water quality, and emissions of carbon pollution?

Guest participant: Lilly Shoup, Department of Transportation, and U.S. Partnership for Sustainable Communities coordinator

Thanksgiving – November 28 – no class

Week 13 – December 5: Energy and Hydraulic Fracturing

Pre-class reading assignment: to be announced

Discuss natural gas production with a focus on hydraulic fracturing, including economic and environmental benefits and risks, and federal policy considerations

Guest participant: Salo Zelermyer, Bracewell & Giuliani
<http://www.bracewellgiuliani.com/people/salo-zelermyer>

Week 14 – December 12: Final Group Project: Mock UN Climate Treaty Negotiation

Final assignment; role-play U.N. climate agreement negotiation. Post-negotiation discussion of the likelihood of the nation and the world moving toward sustainability with regard to greenhouse gas emissions.