Master Syllabus

Administrative Unit: History and Social Sciences Department

Course Prefix and Number: POSC 312

Course Title: Environmental Politics

Number of: Credit Hours: 3 Lecture Hours: 3 Laboratory Hours: 0

Catalog Description: Study of environmental issues and policies from both a national and global perspective. Crosslisted as ENVS 312. Prerequisite: POSC 111. Offered odd Fall.

Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): POSC 111.

Text(s): Most current editions of the following:


Any appropriate text for a course in Environmental Politics.

Course Objectives:

• To explain how environmental policies are made within the United States and in the international arena.
• To assess the roles played by national political institutions, interest groups and social movements, as well as international governmental and nongovernmental organizations in the making of environmental policy.
• To explore a number of contemporary environmental issues.

Measurable Learning Outcomes:

• Describe and contrast major eras in the development of environmentalism in the United
States, including the origins of conservationism and preservationism and the rise of the ecology movement.

- Identify and explain the features of ecology as an ideology.
- Recognize the role of the President, Congress, the bureaucracy, the Courts, states, interest groups, and public opinion in the making of environmental politics in the United States.
- Explain and assess the functioning of the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Explain and assess how officials use scientific evidence in the making of policy, including risk assessment procedures.
- Explain the development, implementation, and impact of selected environmental policies.
- Describe environmental politics in selected industrialized countries, in particular the role of Green parties and social movements.
- Identify the major international actors involved in making international policy.
- Explain the processes of creating and implementing international environmental regimes.
- Identify the factors leading to successful regime formation and implementation.
- Describe the differences between northern and southern states on environmental issues.
- Evaluate environmentalist criticisms of free trade regimes.

Topical Outline (major areas of coverage):
- History of Environmentalism
- Ecology as an Ideology
- The Role of Science in Environmental Politics
- Domestic Environmental Policy-Making Institutions
- Environmental Policy Issues in the U.S.
- Environmental Politics in other Industrialized Societies (Western Europe, Russia)
- International Environmental Politics
  - Actors
  - Regimes
  - North-South Dimensions
  - Trade and the Environment

Recommended maximum class size for this course: 25

Library Resources: Online databases are available at http://www.ccis.edu/offices/library/resources.asp. You may access them from off-campus using your eServices login and password when prompted.
NOTE: The intention of the master syllabus is to provide an outline of the contents of this course, as specified by the faculty of Columbia College, regardless of who teaches the course, when it is taught or where it is taught. Faculty members teaching this course for Columbia College are expected to facilitate learning pursuant to the course objectives and cover the subjects listed in the topical outline. However, instructors are also encouraged to cover additional topics of interest so long as those topics are relevant to the course's subject. The master syllabus is, therefore, prescriptive in nature but also allows for a diversity of individual approaches to course material.

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