

SYLLLABUS

PSCI 2116-003: Introduction to Environmental Policy

Fall 2022

TR 2:00 – 3:15 PM
HALE 230

Zoom Classroom: <https://cuboulder.zoom.us/j/92771437652>

Prof. Krister Andersson

Office Hours: M 11AM - noon
or by appointment

Office hours Zoom Room:

<https://cuboulder.zoom.us/j/93232740317>

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals seek to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity for all. Member countries, including the United States, are committed to achieve specific targets for each of the seventeen goals by 2030. In a comment after the UN General Assembly approved the goals, the former Secretary General of the UN, Ban Ki Moon, said that “for the goals to be reached, everyone needs to do their part: governments, the private sector, civil society and people like you”.

Moon’s statement suggests that working towards sustainable development is very much a *political process*: the achievement of sustainable development outcomes requires citizens and their politicians to come together to create policies and allocate public funds in support of these goals. To translate the lofty policy goals about sustainable development into meaningful actions on the ground is easier said than done. Coalitions among diverse political interests need to be built. And even if politicians agree that something needs to get done, hard choices must be made about which programs to fund and implement. In this course, we will learn how politics can both help and hinder efforts to promote sustainable development.

Throughout the course, we will uncover and discuss the multiple ways in which politics and public policies affect people's decisions and actions. We will study a variety of policy responses to sustainability issues, both governmental and non-governmental initiatives. Our exploration of environmental policy will take us well beyond the normal realms of political science. The reason for this departure is simple: if we are truly interested in discovering new, more effective policies to promote sustainable development, we first need to make sure we have a solid understanding of the problems we are trying to fix. By

applying insights from research in environmental sciences, political science, economics, psychology, and engineering, we can improve the accuracy of our “sustainability diagnosis”.

This course explores several major conceptual issues in the study of sustainability: systems thinking; analysis of social-environmental systems; the role of different kinds of knowledge; the challenges of linking knowledge with action for sustainability; and the role of governance systems in enabling sustainability progress. To illustrate the importance of these concepts in very different contexts, the course employs tangible case study examples, panel discussions, as well as in-class-debates.

LEARNING GOALS

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Recognize and articulate the role of politics in efforts to promote sustainability through public policy
2. Characterize the goals of sustainability efforts in terms of inclusive human well-being; understand the factors and assets that determine progress towards well-being; and recognize the potential for interactions, trade-offs and unintended consequences in policy efforts made for sustainability goals.
3. Identify multiple types of knowledge needed to develop sustainable solutions for particular problems.
4. Apply your skills in analyzing social-environmental systems to propose creative and practical solutions to sustainability challenges in our campus and broader Boulder communities

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADES

There are no formal prerequisites for the course. A more important, but informal prerequisite, is your willingness to work hard, show up for class, and participate actively in class activities.

The success of this course depends almost entirely on the extent to which you come prepared to each class session. For almost all sessions, there is at least one required reading assignment. I will rarely lecture in this course. Instead, I will facilitate a discussion about the course material. This format requires more preparation than more traditional, lecture-based courses. Apart from class discussions, expect a multiple-choice or short-answer quiz in all class sessions.

I will evaluate your performance in the class based on your originality, creativity, presentation, and timeliness associated with five different activities of the course, which are as follows:

1. **Exams.** There will be two major exams in this class: (1) Mid-term Exam (**20 percent** of final grade) and (2) Comprehensive Final Exam (**30 percent** of final grade).
2. **Debates and class discussions.** Most weeks we will have debates/discussions about an environmental policy topic. You will be graded on your performance in these discussions, and in particular on your use of original evidence to support your arguments. This is worth **20 percent** of your final course grade.
3. **Quizzes.** Before each class session, you will be assigned a short quiz on CANVAS based on the reading for the week. Your results of these quizzes will constitute **20 percent** of your final course grade.
4. **Student presentation.** During the first week of class, I will assign you a topic and a date for your presentation. You will prepare a case study/example that illustrates a central theme or concept from the readings assigned that week. The presentation should be 2-3 minutes long and needs to be [prerecorded](#) and posted on CANVAS the evening before your presentation date. The presentation counts for **10 percent** of your final grade. Late submissions are accepted with 10-percent penalty (one grade level).

GRADE BREAKDOWN

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Weight</u>
Mid-term, and Final Exams	50%
Debates, Discussions	20%
Quizzes	20%
Student presentation	10%
TOTAL	100%

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

You are required to buy one book for the class (available in the bookstore as well as an eBook on [Amazon](#)):

Matson, P. Clark, W., and Andersson, K. (2016). *Pursuing Sustainability: A Guide to the Science and Practice*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press

I will post all other course readings on Canvas.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Classroom Behavior

Both students and faculty are responsible for maintaining an appropriate learning environment in all instructional settings, whether in person, remote or online. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. For more information, see the [classroom behavior](#) policy, the [Student Code of Conduct](#), and the [Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance](#).

Requirements for COVID-19

As a matter of public health and safety, all members of the CU Boulder community and all visitors to campus must follow university, department and building requirements and all public health orders in place to reduce the risk of spreading infectious disease. CU Boulder currently requires COVID-19 vaccination and boosters for all faculty, staff and students. Students, faculty and staff must upload proof of vaccination and boosters or file for an exemption based on medical, ethical or moral grounds through the MyCUHealth portal.

The CU Boulder campus is currently mask-optional. However, if public health conditions change and masks are again required in classrooms, students who fail to adhere to masking requirements will be asked to leave class, and students who do not leave class when asked or who refuse to comply with these requirements will be referred to Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution. For more information, see the policy on classroom behavior and the Student Code of Conduct. If you require accommodation because a disability prevents you from fulfilling these safety measures, please follow the steps in the “Accommodation for Disabilities” statement on this syllabus.

If you feel ill and think you might have COVID-19, if you have tested positive for COVID-19, or if you are unvaccinated or partially vaccinated and have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19, you should stay home and follow the further guidance of the Public Health Office (contacttracing@colorado.edu). If you are fully vaccinated and have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19, you do not need to stay home; rather, you should self-monitor for symptoms and follow the further guidance of the Public Health Office (contacttracing@colorado.edu).

Accommodation for Disabilities

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit your accommodation letter from Disability Services to your faculty member in a timely manner so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities in the academic environment. Information on requesting accommodations is located on the [Disability Services website](#). Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or dsinfo@colorado.edu for further assistance. If you have a temporary medical condition, see [Temporary Medical Conditions](#) on the Disability Services website.

Preferred Student Names and Pronouns

CU Boulder recognizes that students' legal information doesn't always align with how they identify. Students may update their preferred names and pronouns via the student portal; those

preferred names and pronouns are listed on instructors' class rosters. In the absence of such updates, the name that appears on the class roster is the student's legal name.

Honor Code

All students enrolled in a University of Colorado Boulder course are responsible for knowing and adhering to the [Honor Code](#). Violations of the Honor Code may include, but are not limited to: plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, lying, bribery, threat, unauthorized access to academic materials, clicker fraud, submitting the same or similar work in more than one course without permission from all course instructors involved, and aiding academic dishonesty. All incidents of academic misconduct will be reported to Student Conduct & Conflict Resolution (honor@colorado.edu); 303-492-5550). Students found responsible for violating the [Honor Code](#) will be assigned resolution outcomes from the Student Conduct & Conflict Resolution as well as be subject to academic sanctions from the faculty member. Additional information regarding the Honor Code academic integrity policy can be found on the [Honor Code website](#).

Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, Harassment and/or Related Retaliation

CU Boulder is committed to fostering an inclusive and welcoming learning, working, and living environment. University policy prohibits sexual misconduct (harassment, exploitation, and assault), intimate partner violence (dating or domestic violence), stalking, protected-class discrimination and harassment, and related retaliation by or against members of our community on- and off-campus. These behaviors harm individuals and our community. The Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) addresses these policies, and individuals who believe they have been subjected to misconduct can contact OIEC at 303-492-2127 or email cureport@colorado.edu. Information about university policies, [reporting options](#), and support resources can be found on the [OIEC website](#).

Please know that faculty and graduate instructors have a responsibility to inform OIEC when they are made aware of any issues related to these policies regardless of when or where they occurred to ensure that individuals impacted receive information about their rights, support resources, and resolution options. To learn more about reporting and support options for a variety of concerns, visit [Don't Ignore It](#).

Religious Holidays

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance.

See the [campus policy regarding religious observances](#) for full details.

COURSE CALENDAR

Week 1: What is Sustainable Development?

Introduction to the Course, Syllabus, Assignments, Grades

Discuss: What is our ecological footprint?

Week 2: Learning to Speak Sustainability: Core Concepts and Applications

Read:

Matson, Clark, & Andersson (2016), Chapter 1

Policy Case Discussion: Industrial Palm Oil production: What policy response would you choose?

Week 3: Case Studies in Sustainability

Read:

Matson, Clark, & Andersson (2016), Appendix (all four case studies)

Debate #1: Nuclear energy... [copy verbatim from CANVAS]
TBD

Week 4: A Framework for Analyzing Sustainability

Read:

Matson et al. (2016). Chapter 2

Policy Case Discussion #2: Topic TBD

Week 5: Complexity in Social-Environmental Systems

Read:

Matson et al., 2016. Chapter 3

Policy Discussion:

TBD

Week 6: Addressing the Climate Change Crisis in the United States

Read: TBD

Guest Lecture: Steven Moses, Citizen's Climate Lobby

Policy simulation and Discussion: EN-ROAD

Week 7: Common-Pool Resources, Experiment and Discussion

Read:

Hardin, G. (1968). The tragedy of the commons. *Science*, 162 (3859), 1243-1248.

Ostrom, E. (2008). The challenge of common-pool resources. *Environment: Science and Policy for Sustainable Development*, 50(4), 8-21.

Policy Simulation and Discussion:
CPR Governance Simulation

Week 8: The Governance of Natural Resources

Read:
Matson et al. Chapter 4

Policy Dilemma Discussion:
How to address tropical deforestation in a cost-effective manner?

Week 9: Mid-term review and exam

MIDTERM EXAM (Thursday)

Week 10: How do we make good use of science in the policy process?

Read:
Matson et al, Chapter 5

Watch : [Planet of the Humans](#)

Discuss:
How can science become better at influencing decision making? How can policy-making become more scientific?

Week 11: Water Governance, Colorado Style

Read:

Carswell (2013). Farmers agree to tax those who deplete groundwater. *High Country News*, February 25.

Kenney, D. S. (2005). Prior appropriation and water rights reform in the Western United States. *Lessons for institutional design*, 167.

Policy Simulation and Discussion:
Water in the West: Is federal intervention needed?

Week 12: Clean Water and Clean Air Act

Read:

Rosenbaum, W. A. (2013). *Environmental politics and policy*. CQ Press (Ch 1 and 6)

Debate #2:

Should Colorado encourage the development of fracking in our state?

Week 13: Behavioral approaches to Environmental Policy

Read:

Dietz, T., Gardner, G. T., Gilligan, J., Stern, P. C., & Vandenberg, M. P. (2009). Household actions can provide a behavioral wedge to rapidly reduce US carbon emissions. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 106(44), 18452-18456.

Steg, L., & Vlek, C. (2009). Encouraging pro-environmental behaviour: An integrative review and research agenda. *Journal of environmental psychology*, 29(3), 309-317.

Policy Response Simulation and Discussion:

What is an effective policy response to drastic water shortage?

Week 14: Fall Break

Week 15: Pulling it all together: What can I do to make a difference?

Read:

Matson et al, Chapter 6

Discuss:

What can you do to contribute to the goals of sustainable development? What are the costs and benefits?

Week 16: Final Exam TBA