Introduction

The American people began to reexamine their relationship to the environment in a powerful way in the late 1970s. Economic prosperity, increased leisure time, and a host of other factors encouraged Americans to reflect on environmental problems in a way not seen in the previous fifty years. Simultaneously, American industry, development and urban planning patterns abused the environment in the name of economic gain, a nice house in the suburbs, and modern convenience for the American family. This course examines the complex emergence of the American environmental ethos as a response to environmental problems and policy responses. Students will actively and critically examine in depth environmental problems and corresponding policy solutions. By examining the origins, maturation and future development of policies intended to protect the environment and human health, broader patterns of material circumstances, politics, worldview, and power reveal complicated issues resulting from differing perceptions of a healthy environment.

By subjecting these policies to historical and political analysis, students are also exposed to larger trends in American life that have unavoidable implications to environmental policy: the rise of the US as a world power, the development of huge tracts of western land, industrialization, astonishing population growth and urbanization, and the emergence of unprecedented environmental problems, including exhaustion of natural resources, the controversial health effects of industrial pollution and deterioration of quality of life in American cities.

Readings, lectures, and discussions will consider the following topics: land use, park policy, species protection, climate change, as well as larger questions related to democracy. Environmentalism and environmental policies in the United States also have aroused criticism from various interests and segments of society. These voices and ideas will also be critically assessed.

Academic Integrity

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Office hours
Monday, 1 - 2:30 p.m.
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As stated in the Honor Code of Guilford College, all students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. This class will maintain and support these standards, specifically the section of the Guilford College Honor Code quoted below:

Academic honesty and integrity represent central elements of the liberal arts education at Guilford College. As scholars pursuing knowledge and truth, informed by the Quaker testimony on integrity, we seek a community where each member acts responsibly and honorably in all activities and at all times. Acts of dishonesty represent a serious offense at Guilford College. Guilford College defines plagiarism broadly as presenting the interpretations, wording, images, or original conceptions of others as one's own without appropriate acknowledgement. Individual faculty members determine what constitutes appropriate acknowledgement within the context of their courses, either by specifically stating requirements or by acknowledging the standard practice within a given discipline.

Paraphrasing another author is something I expect you to do frequently to support your analysis. Because you are using your own words, paraphrasing does not require quotation marks, but you must still use a complete Chicago Manual footnote immediately following the paraphrased material.

You will also use direct quotations in this course. For the purpose of this course, a direct quotation is any use of four or more words (e.g., the White House asked for a "renewal of crushing sanctions") or a specific term that is not your own (e.g., "adversarial legalism") that may be shorter than four words. Unlike a paraphrase, you must put all words of a direct quotation in quotation marks and follow the ending quotation mark with a complete Chicago Manual footnote citation to the original source material.

Appropriate acknowledgment for the purposes of this course requires giving credit where credit is due to the work of others described above. All sources used for completing assignments for this class must appear in the bibliography of a paper; not doing so constitutes plagiarism and violates appropriate acknowledgement according to the standard practice within political science. Any use of the work of others requires acknowledgment by citing the original author with a complete Chicago Manual footnote citation.

While learning from others represents an essential component of academic and intellectual inquiry, failure to give proper attribution to words, concepts, and evidence borrowed from others constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious academic offense. Any requirement for this course containing plagiarized material will, at minimum, receive a grade of F. Repeated or flagrant use of plagiarized material, even in a single assignment, may lead to the grade of F in the course, at the discretion of the professor. All honor code violations other than plagiarism will also be addressed in this manner.

In order to avoid unintentional errors, follow the guidelines on avoiding plagiarism in Chapter 33 of Simon and Schuster Handbook for Writers. While not required to purchase for the class, please consider obtaining Simon and Schuster Handbook for Writers. Using this or another reputable writing guide will help you avoid plagiarism. If you have questions about avoiding plagiarism, also please do not hesitate to contact me.
Learning Objectives

This course seeks to achieve two complimentary but distinct objectives. First, this course will provide students with the tools, perspectives and disciplinary methods of analyzing and understanding advanced environmental problems, issues and solutions. Throughout the course this will involve exploring possible meanings of justice and responsibility in relation to environmental issues raised as well as studying institutions and power relationships that degrade and sustain the environment. However, merely providing and training students in the skills and knowledge of policy surrounding environmental issues would be insufficient given the mission of the College. Rather this course also seeks to encourage students to engage in problem-solving related to environmental policy disputes in ways consistent with some of the broader values of the College. This course will achieve this objective through the use of the Five Principles of Guilford college, a common set of values the College upholds.

Innovative, student-centered learning. The learning of each student in this course is the first objective and represents the central core objective of this course. Students that successfully complete this course will demonstrate advanced understanding of environmental policy disputes and their corresponding proposed solutions. This objective is also, and perhaps more importantly, accomplished by challenging students to produce and improve as individuals. Students are required to participate frequently in discussions in class attend extracurricular activities related to environmental issues, and develop a personal perspective and analysis on an environmental policy problem. While class meetings and activities will be focused on collective experiences, measures of success will be focused on the level of each individual student.

Challenge to engage in creative and critical thinking. A central challenge for students of this course is to develop and explore the ideas and perspectives of the authors, fellow students and instructors from a critical and creative perspective. Critical thinking requires analyzing, summarizing, interpreting, synthesizing and critiquing the ideas of others as well as being receptive to the critical thoughts of others. Creative thinking, another valuable tool for this course, is absolutely necessary given that many aspects of American and international environmental problems today defy simple and conventional policy solutions.

Cultural and global perspectives. Differing cultural, religious and world views inform a person’s ideas about the environment and political involvement to further environmental goals. During the course, we will recall that differing communities and people, both domestically and globally, may bring different interpretations, values and objectives to a debate or discussion. Engaging this diversity honestly and respectfully is essential. Furthermore, given the emphasis in the course on communication and development of environmental values, understanding the context of such values allows for a richer understanding.

Values and the ethical dimension of knowledge. Because the environment cannot speak for itself, the role of advocate or protector of the environment is one that will always generate questions related to the larger ethical and value-related obligations of knowledge and action. The cases examined here provide opportunity to engage in critical discussion and analysis of the ethics and values motivating environmental action.
Focus on practical application: vocation and service to the larger community. Because this course contains real-world case studies of environmental problems, policies and political actors, the connection of the course material to practical application and vocation is not difficult. By asking students to role-play, assess, critique and debate issues from a number of perspectives, students are asked to place themselves in roles and professions that are available to them upon graduation. Such preparation is key if true experiential learning is achieved.

A second objective for the course is to develop a useful and necessary skill set that will assist students in academic success at Guilford College. Assignments, class activities, simulations, and work with a group outside of the classroom will all foster and enable the development of library and research skills, computer literacy and competence, as well as public speaking and listening.

**Course Books**

The following books will be read for this course:


Other required readings will be available from the professor. In addition, it is highly recommended that all students purchase the *Simon and Schuster Handbook for Writers* as this is used in this course and is an excellent resource for all serious writers.

**Grading, Course Policies & Detailed Requirements**

Grading for the course will be consistent with the guidelines of the College. To that end, as discussed in the Faculty Handbook:

The grade of A is awarded for original insight, sound reasoning and the ability to evaluate the scope of the materials studied.

The grade of B reflects interpretive skill on the part of the student and a clear understanding of the meaning and interrelatedness of the course materials.

A grade of C indicates thorough familiarity with the basic facts and concepts considered in the course, even though underlying principles may not have been grasped.

Although D is labeled a passing grade, it reflects a lack of fundamental knowledge of the subject. The grade of F is assigned for failing work.

In addition to the above criteria from the Faculty Handbook, mechanical, grammatical and stylistic skills in written assignments are also considered in determining grades.

Furthermore, it is extremely important for each student to affirm his/her commitment to the course and the work necessary to achieve the learning objectives outlined here. While there are numerous ways of recognizing student effort, the common standard at Guilford is to assign academic credit using the ratio of one credit unit per semester for each three hours of consistent effort per week. This course affirms this practice and this level of commitment is required to attain the learning
objectives outlined here. This means that students should be prepared to spend 2.5 hours in class each week and at least 9.5 hours each week preparing for class. Please practice good time management to sustain the effort required to meet the level of success to which you’ve committed yourself.

Finally, students should recall that all practices in this course are consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students that disclose a documented need and make timely requests for appropriate accommodations will receive the support necessary. Please review the policy of the College and consult with the professor for more information.

**Course Requirements**

The course requirements include class participation (attendance and discussion), reading quizzes, an eco-documentary film and a reflective paper. Please note that no late work will be accepted. You must complete all requirements in order to pass the course. Failure to complete one or more of the course requirements will lead to a failing grade in the course except in extraordinary circumstances.

Final grades are based on 400 points and are calculated by this formula:

- 60 points (15%) Participation
- 60 points (15%) Short paper
- 80 points (20%) Reading quizzes (5)
- 200 points (50%) Eco-documentary film

A grade of C indicates thorough familiarity with the learning objectives. A grade of B indicates a good understanding of the learning objectives; the student's work in this course is adequate but can be improved. An A indicates exceptional work; this student has not only mastered the course material and objectives, but also demonstrates skills in independent thinking and analysis. A grade of A+ indicates even better work.

**Class Participation & Discussion**

This element of the course includes class attendance, the ability to answer questions regarding readings in class, and participation in class discussions. Because we will use much of the class time to discuss the readings, I expect you to have done the day’s readings carefully before coming to class and to be an active participant in class discussions. I expect every class member to bring the reading to class and to have notes and ideas ready to inform our discussion.

Attendance is recorded in each Political Science course at Guilford. In support of Guilford’s core values of integrity and community, it is the responsibility of each student to be present and on time for each class meeting. Arriving late or being absent from class meetings stands contrary to these values. Excused absences are rare. Students seeking an excused absence should be prepared to provide the instructor with certifiable documentation and justification for the absence to be excused (e.g. doctor's note). Each unexcused absence beyond the first one will result in a 1% deduction from a student's final grade in the course. Further, in support of the college-wide policy on attendance as noted in the Student Handbook, any student missing 20% of class meetings in a semester (e.g. six absences from a twice-a-week course) may be administratively withdrawn from the course by the Academic Dean’s office. Students with concerns about attendance should speak directly with the faculty member. Students with perfect attendance will also receive a 20-point bonus to their final grades.

Finally, while I expect each student to participate fully in class discussions and activities, participation should be respectful and always with an eye toward valuing the larger whole of our community of learners in the class. Rudeness, excessive side conversations and such run counter to community. Two additional reminders will also greatly help build a sense of community in our class.
You will be required to write one paper over the course of the semester. While you are only required to write one paper, there are two opportunities to write this paper. This paper will require students to compare and contrast the values, problems, and solutions presented in the readings and films associated with the two case studies at the heart of this course.

Papers should be no longer than five pages. All papers should be properly annotated using footnotes in Chicago Manual of Style; see the Simon and Schuster Handbook. Papers will be graded using an grading rubric that will be discussed in class early in the semester. Each paper should be submitted as a Google Document and posted before the deadline of the assignment. I will post comments on these Google Documents and you will be able to review them right away. Papers not properly posted by the deadline specified on the assignment or modified after the deadline will not be graded and receive a zero. Similarly, I only accept assignments for a grade that comply with the instructions and requirements of the assignment.

Reading Quizzes

Approximately seven quizzes will be given in class over the course of the term. The quizzes will test your comprehension of the readings. All quizzes will be given at the beginning of a class. All quizzes will be “pop” quizzes, given without prior notice. Because these quizzes cover material discussed in class the day they are given, these quizzes cannot be "made up" at a later date. The quizzes will test basic comprehension of the readings assigned for class that day. They also reinforce developing good study and time management skills. While there are seven quizzes, only your top five grades will be used to calculate your overall quiz grade. As good note taking represents an essential element in successful learning, notes taken by the student (apart from physical copies of the readings) can be used in taking reading quizzes. In fact, success on the reading quizzes depends on comprehensive, easily accessible, and organized notes.

Eco-documentary Film

All students in our course will create a eco-documentary film that seeks to define and explain a complex, value-driven environmental problem and corresponding solution. Some of these films will be shown on Tuesday, April 26 at the Sixth Annual Guilford College Environmental Forum for the larger campus community. Students will develop, direct, edit and polish these films in groups of three or four students. Similar to producing advanced research papers for an upper-level course, producing a documentary film will allow each student team to communicate and demonstrate not only mastery...
You will be required to write one paper over the course of the semester. While you are only required to complete one paper, there are two opportunities to write this paper. This paper will require students to learn a wide range of key concepts and values of American environmental thought, but also demonstrate competence of technical and practical skills such as defining goals, idea development, time management, logical development, and cooperative learning. Creating films not only challenges student teams to confront the difficulty of translating complicated legal, policy or ethical issues into a form the average person can understand, but also to engage in thinking and analysis that is interdisciplinary, creative, and critical. Part of the essential elements for success in this project will be successfully meeting a series of interim deadlines below.

All films will debut in class during the final week of class (see schedule below) and the best films will be shown to the larger campus community at the Guilford College Environmental Forum.

**Course Calendar**

Below is a general outline of how the course will proceed. As the course progresses, it is possible that specific reading assignments for each class will be changed to reflect our progress. As always, it is important to stay aware of any changes in the calendar and updates on specific reading assignments. Presentation slides from class, when used, will be available and updated regularly.

**Origins: Environmental Values and Policy Emerge.**

M 9 January
Introduction, enabling environmental values to solve environmental problems

W 11 January
Layzer, chapter 1
McPhee, *Encounters with the Archdruid*, part I

M 16 January
No class; Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday

W 18 January
Working lab to meet with groups for eco-documentary films

M 23 January
Guber, *The Grassroots of a Green Revolution*, chapters 1 & 2

W 25 January
iMovie workshop (tentative)

M 30 January

W 1 February
Case Study #1: Endangered Species

M 6 February
Mann & Plummer, Noah's Choice, chapters 1-3

W 8 February
Mann & Plummer, Noah's Choice, chapters 4-6

M 13 February
Mann & Plummer, Noah's Choice, chapters 7-8

W 15 February
Layzer, chapters 7 & 8.

M 20 February
“The Cove” showing (in-class showing)

W 22 February
“The Cove” discussion

M 27 February
Working lab, eco-documentary film groups

W 29 February
Working lab, discussion of eco-documentary films from previous semesters

M 5 March
No class, Spring Break

W 7 March
No class, Spring Break

Case Study #2: National Parks and Land Use

M 12 March
Sax, Mountains Without Handrails, chapters 1, 2 & 3

W 14 March
Sax, Mountains Without Handrails, chapters 4, 5 & 6

M 19 March
Sax, Mountains Without Handrails, chapters 7 & 8
You will be required to write one paper over the course of the semester. While you are only required to write one paper, there are two opportunities to write this paper. This paper will require students to role play different perspectives and positions on environmental issues and policies. It is important to remember that these roles are not fixed positions, but rather opportunities to explore and engage with the complexities of environmental issues and policy making. Students will have the opportunity to develop and explore the ideas and perspectives of the authors, fellow students and instructors through this assignment.

Paper #2 due by 6:00 pm on 3/25
Download the assignment prompt here.

Download a printable copy of the syllabus here (updated 1/9/2012)