

University of Montana

ScholarWorks at University of Montana

University of Montana Course Syllabi

Open Educational Resources (OER)

Fall 9-1-2021

ENST 367.01: Environmental Politics and Policies

Robin K. Saha

University of Montana, Missoula, robin.saha@umontana.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/syllabi>

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Recommended Citation

Saha, Robin K., "ENST 367.01: Environmental Politics and Policies" (2021). *University of Montana Course Syllabi*. 12321.

<https://scholarworks.umt.edu/syllabi/12321>

This Syllabus is brought to you for free and open access by the Open Educational Resources (OER) at ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in University of Montana Course Syllabi by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact scholarworks@mso.umt.edu.

ENST 367 Environmental Politics and Policies

Tu/Th 9:30 am – 10:50 pm

Jeannette Rankin Hall 203

Instructor

Dr. Robin Saha

Office Hours: [Tues. 2:00 – 3:00 pm](#), [Wed. 10:00 am – Noon](#), and by appt.¹

Email: robin.saha@umontana.edu

Phone: 406-243-6285

Teaching Assistant

Lucy Portman

Office: Jeannette Rankin Hall, M4

Office Hours: Tues. 11:00 am – 12:30 pm, Wed. 2:00 – 3:30 pm, and by appt.

Email: lucia.portman@umontana.edu

Course Description

In this Advanced College Writing course, students learn to research, analyze, and communicate environmental and natural resource policy issues. The goal is for students to develop an understanding of the complex dynamics of public policymaking and skills needed for active, engaged citizenship and policy-related careers. The focus is on current domestic environmental policy issues at the federal level. Students learn about the workings of governmental policymaking institutions, political processes by which governmental decisions are made, and ways that various policy actors attempt to influence those decisions.

The course begins with an overview of the history of public lands policy and an introduction to the Policy Process Framework, which describes how environmental problems are recognized and get on the governmental agenda and how policies are formulated, adopted, implemented, evaluated, and may be changed or terminated.

Next, we will learn about the Government Politics Model and ways it can be used to analyze and understand current environmental policy issues and strategically inform policy actors. Models are tools that allow us to examine various components and workings of complex systems – in our case the political system. The Government Politics Model helps us explain current policy debates, predict outcomes and identify ways that various policy actors can influence outcomes in their favor.

In learning to apply the Government Politics Model, students will conduct current issue investigations, beginning by identifying key stakeholders and decision makers. Students also examine relevant decision-making processes of governmental institutions, which we refer to as the Rules of the Game, such as those used by Congress, federal agencies, and the courts. Next, students identify the political interests and stakes of the policy actors, the actors' underlying values, and their ability to influence the decision makers at different stages of the decision-making process. In evaluating the relative power of these actors, we consider their access to decision makers and other policy actors, political resources, and tactics or strategies.

¹ You can “drop by” in-person during the hours listed or click on one of the links above for Tuesday or Wednesday to Zoom. If those times don't work for you, see me after class or email me to set up an appointment at another time.

In light of the growing prominence of racial and social justice issues, we will also examine environmental policy processes through a race, class, and gender lens.

Learning Outcomes

- Understand the basic organization and interrelationships between federal and state governments and the role of local government in environmental and natural resource policy.
- Understand and apply the Policy Process Framework to describe decision-making processes of governmental institutions, including legislative and administrative (executive branch) bodies, and the courts.
- Understand and appreciate the influence of interest groups, political organizations, think tanks, scientists, money, the media and public opinion in governmental decision making related to natural resource and environmental policy.
- Research and analyze current policy debates, predict outcomes, and strategically advise policy actors using the Government Politics Model.
- Develop skills and confidence in policy research, policy analysis, analytic writing, civic discourse, and public speaking.

Advanced College Writing Course Learning Outcomes

- Identify and pursue more sophisticated questions for academic inquiry.
- Find, evaluate, analyze, and synthesize information effectively from diverse sources.
- Consider multiple perspectives in analyzing current environmental issues.
- Recognize the purposes and needs of discipline-specific audiences and adopt the academic voice for the field of public policy analysis.
- Use multiple drafts, revision, and editing in conducting inquiry and preparing written work.
- Follow the conventions of citation, documentation, and formal presentation appropriate to public policy and policy studies.
- Develop competence in information technology and digital literacy.

Class Structure (subject to change due to developments with the COVID-19 pandemic)

Although it is possible that we may need to switch to an online format, this class will be taught in person until further notice. Unless you have a legitimate medical reason or receive a disability accommodation, you are expected to attend class in person in the seat you pick out on the first day of class (see below). The class is highly interactive and will include a combination of lectures, videos, guest speakers, small group discussions, writing and research workshops, student presentations, and other activities. Active participation during class is expected and that requires being prepared for class activities.

COVID-19 Precautions (may be updated)

UM recommends that students get the COVID-19 vaccine. Please direct questions or concerns about vaccines to Curry Health Center. Mask use is required within the classroom. Seating arrangements (sitting in the same spot each class period) and daily class attendance will be used to support contact tracing efforts if needed. Drinking liquids and eating food is discouraged within the classroom. If you feel sick and/or are exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms, please don't come to class and contact the Curry Health

Center at (406) 243-4330. If you are required to isolate or quarantine, you will receive support in the class to ensure continued academic progress. For example, I can record lectures for you, and Lucy or I update and assist you by videoconferencing with you individually. However, quarantining students should not expect the class to be changed to a hybrid structure and may be assigned short homeworks to serve the place of classroom activities. If you need a COVID-related accommodation in order to safely attend class, please contact the [Office of Disability Equity \(ODE\)](#) (formerly Disability Services for Students) for assistance.

Attendance Policy

Unexcused Absences. Attendance is required. Students who have three, four, or five or more unexcused absences will receive a class participation grade of 50%, 25%, and 0%, respectively.

Excused Absences. A limited number of excused absences may be allowed on a case-by-case basis. Students requesting an excused absence should notify the instructor in advance of a class that they will miss and have an acceptable reason such as illness, injury, or death in the family. To receive an excused absence for a cultural, religious or ceremonial event, you must submit a formal written request to the instructor. This must include a brief description (with inclusive dates) of the cultural event or ceremony and why your participation is important. Students with excused absences also may be asked to turn in a “make-up” assignment.

Lateness to class. Repeated lateness (and leaving class early) is disruptive to the learning and is factored into the class participation grade.

Missed Class. Students who miss class are responsible for finding out from a fellow classmate, the TA, or the instructor about information covered in class, including announcements, instructions about assignments, changes in the course schedule, etc.

Other Expectations (subject to changes/additions if the class goes to an online or hybrid format)

- Active listening, attentiveness, and participation during class, especially for small group work.
- Keeping electronic devices turned off or muted unless they are being used for class.
- Being prepared to discuss the assigned readings, i.e., respond to assigned questions, share thoughts, critiques, reactions, and questions about the readings.
- A willingness to identify appropriate and informative policy actors or experts to interview and being well-prepared, respectful, ethical and professional in interactions with interviewees.
- If working with others on the same issue investigation, being available to meet outside of class and work cooperatively and constructively with your group. This includes respectful and timely communications, including responding to emails and/or text messages, punctual attendance at group meetings, and follow through

Description of Assignments

1. **Wilderness Policy Assignment** – For this assignment, students write a 4-to-5-page legislative history of the Wilderness Act of 1964 to develop their understanding of issue formation, agenda setting, policy formulation and policy adoption stages of the Policy Process Framework. Due Fri., Sept. 20.
2. **Case Study Exam** – In this 5-page assignment, students apply the Government Politics Model to the case of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to prepare for the Current Issue Investigation. Due Thurs., Oct. 8.

3. **Current Issue Investigation** – The purpose of the assignment is to conduct original research and analysis on a current policy issue that is being actively debated and will soon be decided, for example, an issue being decided by the Biden Administration. This should involve preparing interview questions and interviewing key informants, experts, or policy actors, as well as gathering information through other means on actors' interests in the issue, and the resources and strategies they employ. The primary objectives are to: (1) provide important background on the development of the issue, (2) situate the issue within the stages of the policy process, (3) explain the political processes involved with the issue up to the present time using the Government Politics Model, (4) predict outcomes of the policy debate, and (5) recommend strategies one or more actors can use to influence the issue. A Policy Research Workshop and an Interviewing Workshop will prepare students to do the necessary research to complete this assignment.

There are four separate parts to the Current Issue Investigation:

- A. Current Issue Proposal (2-3 pages). For this assignment, students identify the current issue they propose to investigate, provide brief background on the issue, identify key decision-makers and decision-making bodies and other key actors, and identify and list sources of information on the issue. **Due Tue., Oct. 19. NOTE: issues proposed need to be current and feasible for investigation and must be approved by the instructor. Please consult me or Lucy if in doubt.**
- B. Current Issue Background (approx. 6-8 pages). For this assignment, students research and write about the background of the issue, situate it within the policy process presented in class, identify the key decision-makers and other policy actors, describe their interests and involvement, and attempt to explain development of the issue to date. **Due Tues., Nov. 2.**
- C. Policy Actor Interview Homework. Identify two or more policy actors to interview, find the policy actors' contact information, and prepare draft interview questions that will give you helpful insights for your policy analysis. **Due Tues., Nov. 9.**
- D. Current Issue Investigation Presentation. During the last three weeks of the semester, each student will give a 15-minute class presentation on their current issue investigation that covers the issue background, analysis of the issue, and advice to one or more policy actors. Students with the exact same issue can co-present and will have more presentation time to do so. **As scheduled, Tues., Nov. 30 through Tues., Dec. 14**
- E. Current Issue Investigation Paper (12-page maximum, not including references). This analytic policy research paper will represent the culmination of your current issue investigation, for which you will include a revised issue background, based on feedback from the instructor or TA additional research and analysis conducted, which explains rather than merely describes recent policy developments on the issue. Final papers should also include a well-justified prediction of the outcome of the current policy debate, provide advice to one or more policy actors, and finally, state one's personal views. **Due Fri., Dec. 10.**

For this final paper students are also asked to incorporate course materials (reading and lectures) to analyze the issue. The goal is to illustrate an in-depth understanding of policy developments for the issue.

Grades, Grading Policy, and Policy on Late Assignments

Course grades are based on total of 1000 possible points for the following components:

- Class Participation – 100 points (10%)

- Wilderness Policy Assignment – 100 points (10%)
- ANWR Case Study Exam – 100 points (10%)
- Current Issue Investigation Proposal – 50 points (5%)
- Current Issue Investigation Background – 100 points (10%)
- Policy Actor Interview Homework – 50 point (5%)
- Current Issue Investigation Paper – 400 points (40%)
- Current Issue Investigation Presentation – 100 points (10%)

This course must be taken with a traditional grade mode (not credit/no credit). Course grades will be assigned as follows:

<u>Points</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Grade</u>
925-1000	A	800-824	B-	675-699	D+
900-924	A-	775-799	C+	625-674	D
875-899	B+	725-774	C	0-624	F
825-874	B	700-724	C-		

Requests for reconsideration of the grade you receive on an assignment must be put in writing with the reasons for the request explained. To be considered, such requests should be submitted to the instructor no later than one week after the graded assignment is returned to you.

Late assignments may not be accepted at all or after a certain amount of time past the due date. If accepted, late assignments will receive up to a letter grade reduction for each day and weekend they are late. If unforeseen or special circumstances prevent you from submitting an assignment on time, you should contact the instructor in advance of the due date, request an extension, and offer an explanation. Assignments not successfully uploaded to Moodle will be considered late.

If you are unable to contact the instructor before the due date, it is recommended that you do so as soon as possible afterward. Being sick or stranded out of town and the like are generally not considered acceptable excuses for not emailing or calling to explain your situation before an assignment is due. Failure to contact the instructor in a timely manner about a late assignment will generally result in the assignment not being accepted.

Please do not exceed page number guidelines for assignments. Pithy (i.e., concise and forcefully expressive) communication is an important component of effective writing and will be a consideration in grading. Following page guidelines will also facilitate timely return of graded assignments.

Drop Deadlines and Procedures

You may drop the course on CyberBear and receive a refund until Sept. 20 at 5:00 pm. From Sept. 21 to Nov. 1 at 5:00 pm, dropping requires the instructor's and your advisor's approval using the Course Add/Change/Drop link in CyberBear. If you drop the course after Sept. 20, you will need to pay a \$10 fee, and will get a "W" on your transcript. From Nov. 2 to Dec. 10 at 5:00 pm, you must petition to drop and get your instructor's, advisor's, and Dean's approval, and a "WP" or "WF" will appear on your transcript. You cannot drop the class during final's week. Click here for more info: [Fall 2021 Registration Deadlines](#).

Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious violation of academic integrity. All work and ideas submitted are expected to be your own or must be fully and accurately attributed to verifiable sources.² The *Academic Policies and Procedures in the University Catalog* states:

Students who plagiarize may fail the course and may be remanded to Academic Court for possible suspension or expulsion ... Students must always be very careful to acknowledge any kind of borrowing that is included in their work. This means not only borrowed wording but also ideas. Acknowledgment of whatever is not one's own original work is the proper and honest use of sources. Failure to acknowledge whatever is not one's own original work is plagiarism.

If you have any doubts about plagiarism and citing of others' work or ideas, especially web sources, please consult the instructor or TA.

Campus Resources

Mansfield Library Research Resources. Graduate students and undergraduates researching for terms papers/case studies are encouraged to use the library's [Environmental Studies Research Guide](#) , [Environmental and Natural Resource Databases](#), and [Citation Guide](#).

Disability Services. The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and the Office for Disability Equity (ODE). If you anticipate or experience barriers based on disability, please contact the ODE at: (406) 243-2243, ode@umontana.edu, or visit www.umt.edu/disability for more information. Retroactive accommodation requests will not be honored, so please, do not delay. As your instructor, I will work with you and the ODE to implement an effective accommodation, and you are welcome to contact me privately if you wish.

Curry Health Center Counseling. This service addresses the personal, behavioral, and mental health needs of UM students. Individual appointments are \$25 and your initial consultation is free if you have paid the semester's health fee. To access this service, visit the website at <http://www.umt.edu/curry-health-center/> or call 406-243-2122.

UM Writing and Public Speaking Center. Located in Lommasson 271. Visit their website for helpful handouts on writing effective thesis statements or introductions, and to schedule one-on-one appointments with writing tutors throughout the semester: www.umt.edu/writingcenter. For using the Center, it's best to plan well ahead of assignment due dates.

Information Technology Support. If you are experiencing technical difficulties navigating UM's information technology service and platforms you can call the UM IT Help Desk at 406-243-4357. You can also self-refer to the [UM Solutions Center](#).

The UM Food Pantry. Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in school, is urged to notify a trusted staff or faculty member if comfortable doing so. The [UM Food Pantry](#) in the UC is available to any student facing food insecurity.

² Quotes and citations should be used for exact phrases or passages used in work you submit. Likewise, citations should be used for all ideas paraphrased from the writing of others.

Reading Materials

There are no required textbooks. All readings will be available for downloading and printing through the ENST 367 Moodle course webpage. See: <https://moodle.umd.edu/>. It is recommended that you have printouts handy of the assigned readings for the following cases/days to facilitate small group work and related class discussion: Love Canal case (9/2), Wilderness Policy (9/14), and ANWR Case Study (10/5).

Class Schedule (subject to adjustments announced in class and/or on Moodle)

Tues 8/31 Course Introduction

Thurs 9/2 Love Canal Policy Process Case

It is recommended that you have a printout handy of today's reading

Layzer, J.A. & Rinfret S.R. (2020). Love Canal: Hazardous Wastes and the Politics of Fear. In *The Environmental Case: Translating Values into Policy*, 5th Ed. (pp. 65-93). CQ Press.

Tues 9/7 Introduction to Public Lands History, Part 1

Andrews, R.N.L. (2020). Land and Transport: Commercial Development as Environmental Policy. In *Managing the Environment, Managing Ourselves: A History of American Environmental Policy*, 3rd Ed. (p. 63-83). Yale University Press.

Thurs 9/9 Introduction to Public Lands History, Part 2

Andrews, R.N.L. (2020). The Progressive Era. In *Managing the Environment, Managing Ourselves* (pp. 123-141).

Taylor, D.E. (2016). Wealth, Manliness and Exploring the Outdoors: Racial and Gender Dynamics. In *The Rise of the American Conservation Movement: Power, Privilege, and Environmental Protection* (pp. 52-82). Duke University Press. **[Read p. 51-53 and any pages assigned to you]**

Taylor, D.E. (2016). Wealth, Women, and Outdoor Pursuits. In *The Rise of the American Conservation Movement* (pp. 83-108) **[Read p. 83-87 and any pages assigned to you]**

Tues 9/14 Wilderness Policy

Vaughn, J. (2011). Introduction. In *Environmental Politics* (p. 1-5).

Turner, J.M. (2012). Why A Wilderness Act? In *The Promise of Wilderness: American Environmental Politics since 1964* (pp. 17-42). University of Washington Press.

Thurs 9/16 Wilderness Policy Homework Workshop

It is recommended that you have a printout handy of the Turner reading from 9/14

Tues 9/21 The President and the Policy Process

Vig, N.J. (2019). Presidential Powers and Environmental Policy. In N.J. Vig & M.E. Kraft (Eds.), *Environmental Policy: New Directions for the 21st Century (Tenth Ed.)*. (pp. 88-116). CQ Press.

Tobias, J. (2020, May 20). [He Opposed Public Lands and Wildlife Protections. Trump Gave Him a Top Environment Job.](#) *The Guardian*.

Friedman, L. (2021, Mar. 2). Reversing Trump, Interior Department Moves. *New York Times*.

New York Times Editorial Board (2021, July 17). [Joe Biden's Monumental Environmental Gambit.](#) *The New York Times*.

- Thurs 9/23 The Policy Process and the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts
Layzer, J.A. & Rinfret S.R. (2020). The Nation Tackles Air and Water Pollution. In *The Environmental Case* (pp. 35-64).
- Tues 9/28 Non-official Policy Actors – Environmental Interest Group Influence
Guest Speaker: Anne Hedges, Montana Environmental Information Center (MEIC)
Hestres, L.E., & Nisbet, M.C. (2019). Environmental Advocacy at the Dawn of the Trump Era: Assessing Strategies for the Preservation of Progress. In *Environmental Policy: New Directions for the 21st Century, 10th Ed.* (pp. 66-86).
See Moodle for additional readings.
- Thurs 9/30 Alaska National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) Case Study
It is recommended that you have a printout handy of the Layzer/Rinfret reading
Saha, R. (n.d.). The Government Politics Model. Environmental Studies Program, University of Montana, Missoula
See Moodle for additional readings.
- Tues 10/5 ANWR Case Study (cont.)
Layzer, J.A. & Rinfret, S.R. (2020). Oil Versus Wilderness in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. In *The Environmental Case: Translating Values into Policy, 5th Ed.* (pp. 173-206).
- Thurs 10/7 ANWR Case Study Workday
- Tues 10/12 Identifying Current Policy Issues – No Readings
- Thurs 10/14 Congress and the Policy Process
Kraft, M.E. (2019). Environmental Policy in Congress. In *Environmental Policy: New Directions for the 21st Century, 10th Ed.* (pp. 117-144)
- Tues 10/19 The Courts and Environmental Policy
CURRENT ISSUE PROPOSAL DUE
O'Leary, Rosemary. (2019). Environmental Policy in the Courts. In *Environmental Policy: New Directions for the 21st Century, 10th Ed.* (pp. 144-167).
Additional reading TBA

Thurs 10/21 Current Issue Policy Research Workshop

[Environmental Studies Research Guide](#)

Tues 10/26 Non-official Policy Actors – Industry Influence

Read one of the following as assigned in class:

Federman, A. (2020, Aug. 8). [The Man Determined to Deliver Trump's Alaskan Oil Promise](#). *Politico*.

Hiltzik, M. (2017, Aug. 22). [A New Study Shows How Exxon Mobil Downplayed Climate Change When It Knew the Problem Was Real](#). *The Los Angeles Times*.

Lipton, E. and B. Williams (2016, Aug. 2). [How Think Tanks Amplify Corporate America's Influence](#). *New York Times*.

Hand, M. (2017, July 17). [This Is How the Kochs' Anti-renewable Agenda Becomes White House Policy](#). *Think Progress*.

Farell, Justin (2016). [Corporate Funding and Ideological Polarization about Climate Change](#). *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 113(1), 92-97.

Thurs 10/28 Writing Workshop

POLICY ACTOR INTERVIEWING HOMEWORK DUE

Woods, G. 2010. Polishing Your Punctuation. In *Grammar Essentials for Dummies* (pp. 92-116). Indianapolis, IN: Wiley.

Woods, G. 2010. Drawing Parallels (Without the Lines). In *Grammar Essentials for Dummies* (pp. 64-74).

Tues 11/2 Interviewing Workshop (also Election Day – Vote!)

CURRENT ISSUE INVESTIGATION BACKGROUND ASSIGNMENT DUE

Working Group for Community Health and Development. [Conducting Interviews](#) Community Tool Box, Chapter 12. University of Kansas, Lawrence.

Thurs 11/4 Topic and readings to be announced

Tues 11/9 The Media, Environmental Politics and Environmental Policy

POLICY ACTOR INTERVIEWING HOMEWORK DUE

MacDonald, T. (2021, Mar. 10). [How Broadcast TV Networks Covered Climate Change in 2020](#). Media Matters for America.

Thurs 11/11 Veteran's Day (No Class)

Tues 11/16 Money in Environmental Politics

Lau, T. (2019, Dec. 12). [Citizens United Explained](#). Brennan Center for Justice.

Barker, K. (2012, Dec. 2). [In Montana, Dark Money Helped Montana Democrats Hold a Key Senate Seat](#). *ProPublica*.

Yu, Y.S. (2019, Dec. 19). [Environmental Groups Saw Revenue Spike, Spent Heavily Amid EPA Rollbacks](#). Center for Responsive Politics (OpenSecrets.org).

[Dark Money Basics](#). Center for Responsive Politics (OpenSecrets.org).

[Dark Money Process](#). Center for Responsive Politics (OpenSecrets.org).

Thurs 11/18 Campaign Finance Reform

Weiner, M.I. (2020, July 24). [Get a Grip on Money in Politics](#). *Seattle Times*.

DeBonis, M. (2021, Aug. 5). [Senate Democrats Eye New Vote on Voting Rights Before Summer Break as Party Faces Pressure To Act](#). *Washington Post*

Tues 11/23 Student Presentations Preparation Day

Thurs 11/25 Thanksgiving (No Class)

Tues 11/30 Student Presentations

Thurs 12/2 Student Presentations

Tues 12/7 Student Presentations

Thurs 12/9 Student Presentations

Tues 12/14 Finals Week – Final Class Meeting is 10:10 A.M. – 12:10 P.M. (Current Issue Presentations)

Important Dates

Drop Deadline (with a refund)	Mon. Sept. 20
Wilderness Policy Assignment Due	Fri. Sept. 22
ANWR Case Study Homework Due	Fri. Oct. 8
Current Issue Investigation Proposals Due	Thurs. Oct. 19
Policy Research Workshop	Thurs., Oct. 21
Current Issue Investigation Background Papers Due	Tues. Nov. 2
Policy Actor Interviewing Homework Due	Tues. Nov. 9
Veteran's Day – No Class	Thurs. Nov. 11
Current Issue Investigation Presentations	Tu. 11/30, Th. 12/2, Tu. 12/7, Th. 12/9, & Tu. 12/14
Current Issue Investigation Papers Due	Fri. 12/10