**Course Purpose:** This course provides an explicitly political perspective on issues concerning the environment—however there is a fair amount of economic reasoning and some discussion of underlying scientific issues as well. The result should be a substantive understanding of environmental politics specifically and of public policy generally. The course is principally intended for committed, upper-level, undergraduate students.

**Patience Required:** I hope that students will be patient if some of the material covered is remedial (i.e., they know it) as this class routinely attracts a diverse set of participants. Some may know nothing of political science or economics, while others may be ignorant of relevant scientific issues. It is my job to make things understandable for everyone.

**Office Hours:** Formal office hours are on Tuesday and Thursday from 11:00 to 12:00 a.m. in Harkness 108. I will be available at most other times. My phone is x34903 and my e-mail is lrot@mail.rochester.edu; feel free to use either as a means of contact. Note that my office is in the Wallis Institute suite, so if you want to drop by you will have to ring a bell and/or otherwise get my attention. Also, I will be assisted by Svanhildur Thorvalsdottir (sthorval@ur.rochester.edu), who will hold office hours on Monday from 10 to 12 in Harkness 338. We can also both be contacted for an appointment at a different time.

**Requirements and Grading:** Students will be graded on a midterm exam (25 percent), a research project, which includes a 15-20 page paper and a presentation (35 percent), and a final exam (40 percent).

**Readings:** The following books are required (note—I have not ordered these books because my experience is students prefer to get texts by their own means nowadays):


Additional reading materials will be available through links on the syllabus on the course page. Except if defined as optional, all readings are **required** and should be read before class to enhance the value of both the lectures and the discussion. Please note that dates on which materials are covered are subject to change.

Notes will **not** be put on the web but certain materials for the course will be available.

**Course Structure:** To reiterate, dates are tentative—particularly because this is a seminar where students are encouraged to participate, it is possible that some topics will take more or less time.

**I. PUBLIC POLICY**

**I. Introduction and Grounds for Political Intervention** (1/14-1/19)

Readings:


Klyza and Sousa, Ch. 1.

II. Policy Determinants and Solutions (1/21-1/26)

Readings:


Vig and Kraft, Ch. 10.


Optional:


III. Past and Present Demand for Environmental Protection (1/28-2/2)

Readings:


Klyza and Sousa, Ch. 2.

Vig and Kraft, Ch. 1.

Aaron M. McCright. (2014). “Political Polarization on Support for Government Spending on Environmental Protection in the USA, 1974-2012,” *Social Science Research*.

Optional:


IV. Contemporary Environmental Politics and Policy (2/4-2/9)

Readings:


Vig and Kraft, Ch. 7.


V. Environmental Rulemaking—Where the Action Is (2/11-2/16)

Readings:


VI. Enforcement: Adversarial or Consensual? (2/18)

Readings:


Klyza and Sousa, Ch. 6.

Vig and Kraft, Ch.11.


PART II. INSTITUTIONAL ACTORS

VII. Mobilization of Interests (2/23 – 2/25) [NO CLASS 2/23]

Readings:


Vig and Kraft, Ch. 3.


ONE PARAGRAPH ON PAPER TOPIC DUE 2/25

MIDTERM 3/1

VIII. Congress, Distributive Politics, and Polarization (3/3)

Readings:


Klyza and Sousa. Ch. 3.

Vig and Kraft, Ch. 5.
IX. *The President and the General Interest* (3/15 – 3/17)

Readings:

Vig and Kraft, Ch. 4.


X. *The Courts as Arbitrator* (3/22 - 3/24)

Readings:


Klyza and Sousa, Ch. 5.

Vig and Kraft, Ch. 6.


XI. The Agencies and the Interaction of Institutions (3/29)

Readings:


Klyza and Sousa, Ch. 4.

Vig and Kraft, Ch. 7.


XII. States and Localities-The Sins and Virtues of Federalism (3/31)

Readings:

Klyza and Sousa, Ch. 7.

Vig and Kraft, Ch. 2.


Optional:


XIII. Climate Change: Regulating a Global Public Good Nationally (4/5 – 4/12; “W” STUDENTS DRAFT DUE 4/6, NO CLASS 4/7)

Readings:

Vig and Kraft, Ch. 13.


Reading(s) on Paris Accord.

XIII. Student Presentations (4/14, 4/19, 4/21, and mega makeup class [tbd])

XIV. Conclusions: Is the System Sustainable? (4/26; PAPERS DUE 4/27)

Reading:


Klyza and Sousa, Ch. 8.

Vig and Kraft, Ch. 16.