

COURSE DESCRIPTION: An examination of the role of environmental organizations in the development and implementation of environmental policy through experiential and academic learning. This is a small class that meets once a week. Through assigned readings, discussion and lectures, we will examine how environmental groups are formed, organized, funded and staffed to fulfill various objectives, and how the role/mission they play in developing and implementing environmental policy has evolved. Students will deepen their understanding of these issues through first-hand experience working on "real world" research for a local environmental organization. Each student will be responsible for a final paper examining these issues through the lens of a particular conservation or environmental group, completion of the project for the environmental group partner, and class discussion/participation.

CREDIT HOURS: 4 credit hours. This course follows the College credit hour policy for 4-credit courses. This course meets once weekly for 150 minutes per week. The course also includes weekly independent out of class assignments for 1 hour per week, including preparation to lead or participate in group discussion, assignments (posted on Blackboard), and reflections. Students are expected to spend at least 8 hours per week on community engaged learning project, assigned reading and research and writing the final paper. Length of reading assignments will vary given the complexity of the material assigned.

CLASS DAY/TIME and LOCATION: Tuesdays, 16:50-19:30 (4:50-7:30). Each class will start at 4:50 via zoom with the lecture component. Weather permitting, we will meet outdoors for the discussion component of the class (zoom will be available as well). Location for outdoors discussion is TBD and will be discussed during the zoom lecture portion each class. Generally speaking, meetings with the community engaged partner will be conducted via zoom or in person on campus in accordance with Covid-19 policies (see below). *Please note, all online classes will be recorded.*

COVID-19: Students are expected to wear masks, practice social distancing and comply with the University's UR Covid-19 Community Commitment whether we meet in person in the classroom or, as discussed above, if we meet outside for the discussion portion of our weekly class. These requirements also apply with regard to any in person meeting with the community engaged learning project partner and any group work in class or outside of class. If you feel ill, please do not participate in person.

COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS: The class will include weekly required reading assignments, active participation in weekly seminar class, and a group community engaged learning project. The class will culminate in a final paper.

INTERNET/COMPUTING: This class requires standard on-line access and computing (i.e., laptop and internet access). The University describes this as follows: "In general, for a 'standard' online course, students will need a laptop with a webcam, 8GB of memory and 256GB of local storage. Standard would be defined in this case as requiring the student to use Blackboard, library resources, and the web (to access journals, articles, etc.), to have the

ability to watch Zoom lectures (synchronously and asynchronously), and potentially be available for use with Zoom proctoring.”

OFFICE HOURS & COMMUNICATIONS: I will have office hours on Tuesdays from 11:00-12:00 by zoom or at other days/times by appointment. The best way to contact me is by email: tnoto3@ur.rochester.edu. As needed, I will e-mail you; please be sure to check your e-mail as well as Blackboard. *Any adjustments to the syllabus will be announced in class and on Blackboard.*

TEXTS: Robert Gottlieb, *Forcing the Spring: The Transformation of the American Environmental Movement*, Island Press 1993.

Christopher J. Bosso, *Environment, Inc.: From Grassroots to the Beltway*, University Press of Kansas 2005.

Philip Shabecoff, *A Fierce Green Fire*, Island Press, 2003.

All readings are *required*. You may purchase or used the books on reserve at the library.

GRADING: Class attendance, participation and discussion 10%; assignments and quizzes 5%-10% each (up to 50% total grade); NGO project 20%; final paper 20%.

ASSIGNMENTS: Directions will be provided (and posted on Blackboard) for each assignment. Be sure to comply with all instructions, including *minimum* page limits. ***Academic honesty is important; you must include citations, quotation marks, and works cited. Points will be deducted for late work unless prior permission is given.***

COURSE LEARNING/OUTCOMES: Students will be able to demonstrate a basic foundational understanding of the historical context, purpose, mission, tactics and evolution of conservation and environmental organizations in shaping and implementing U.S. environmental law and policy, and will deepen their understanding through reading assignments, assignments, and active participation in weekly seminar class discussion. Students will gain real world experience working collaboratively on a group community engaged learning project for a local environmental organization providing direct insight and experience in the work of these kinds of organizations. Students will demonstrate the ability to research and write a well-reasoned, well-supported paper analyzing the evolution of an environmental group from its original mission, tactics, staffing, and funding to its present scope/mission, tactics, funding, and staffing or analyzing an assigned case study on how environmental organizations shape environmental policy. Students will have the opportunity to tie together the learning in this class through this examination of these issues through the lens of analyzing a particular environmental group and through their own personal reflections as to the group’s relevance to others and themselves as well as the student’s thoughtful recommendations to improve the performance and effectiveness of the environmental organization.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES: Students are encouraged to utilize academic support services: the Writing Speaking and Argument Program, <https://writing.rochester.edu> ; Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL), www.rochester.edu/college/cetl/

ACADEMIC HONESTY: All assignments and activities associated with this course must be performed in accordance with the University of Rochester's Academic Honesty Policy. More information is available at: www.rochester.edu/college/honesty

DISABILITY RESOURCES: The University of Rochester, this course, and I are committed to inclusion, and welcome students of all backgrounds and abilities. Services and reasonable accommodations are available to students with temporary and permanent disabilities, to students with DACA or undocumented status, to students facing mental health issues, other personal situations, and to students with other kinds of learning needs. Please feel free to let me know if there are circumstances affecting your ability to participate in class or your full participation in this course.

Some resources that might be of use include:

- Office of Disability Resources. (disability@rochester.edu; (585) 276-5075; Taylor Hall)
- Undocumented/DACA Student Support Contacts

<https://www.rochester.edu/college/ccas/undergraduate/daca/index.html>

- University of Rochester CARE Network <https://www.rochester.edu/care/>

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES:

I. Environmentalists, Environmental and Conservation Groups – history, purposes, and constituencies

Sept 1 Introduction: We will review the syllabus, expectations for this class, class structure, community engaged learning projects and discussion leader assignments. Is there such a thing as an environmental movement? What are the goals of environmentalism? Does this include conservation, sustainability, environmental justice? Are you an environmentalist? Are environmentalists viewed favorably in today's society? What is an environmental or conservation NGO? How important (or not) are they?

Reading: Lisa Curtis, "Why I'm not an Environmentalist" (The Huffington Post, April 25, 2012)

Phaedra Ellis-Lamkins, "How I became an environmentalist: A small-town story with global implications (MakingItMagazine, Dec. 9, 2009)

Dr. Elaine Batchlor, “Why I am an Environmentalist” (Los Angeles Sentinel, Jan 17, 2019)

Keith Goetzman, “Not an Environmentalist? You Have Lots of Company” (Utne Reader, June 15, 2011)

Linda Poon, “ ‘Environmentalist’ Doesn’t Just Mean White and Wealthy” (City Lab, Nov. 2, 2018)

Paulina Porizkova, “America Made Me a Feminist” (New York Times, June 10, 2017)

Emma Foehringer Merchant, “How the Environmental Movement Has Changed” (The New Republic, Nov. 29, 2015)

Assignment: Are you an Environmentalist? (on Blackboard)

Sept 8 First wave ~ Conservation: Historic American attitudes towards nature. Wilderness preservation, conservation, agricultural land preservation, rangeland preservation, and land trusts. Who are some of the key groups? Why and how did they come about? What is their mission? How do they do their work? What is their role today? Discussion of the Wilderness Act, Great American Outdoors Act, etc.

Reading: *Forcing the Spring*, chapter 1

A Fierce Green Fire, chapter 3

Van Jones, “Beyond Eco-Apartheid,” ellabakercenter.org, April 30, 2007, <https://ellabakercenter.org/in-the-news/newsop-ed-news-story/beyond-eco-apartheid>

Sheila Barry, et al, “California Rangeland Conservation Coalition: Cooperatively Conserving California’s Rangelands” (www.carangeland.org)

Guest Speaker – Jessica Schley, California Rangeland Trust’s Legacy Council

Paper topics: Discuss Handout (Handout posted on Blackboard)

Sept 15 John Muir, Sierra Club and Race: Sierra Club case study. Consideration of historical context: African Americans, Reconstruction, sharecropping, farming and access to farmland; Native Americans, land management, farming and dispossession; Latinx farmers, farm workers and farm ownership.

Reading: Michael Brune, “Pulling Down Our Monuments,” July 22, 2020

Susanne Rust, Bettina Boxall, Rosanna Xia, "Sierra Club reflects on its racist roots and looks toward a new future," Los Angeles Times, July 23, 2020

Rachel Bauch, "Rewilding Our Natural and Cultural Pathways" ThriveGlobal June 25, 2020

Megan Horst, "How Racism Has Shaped the American Farming Landscape" Eater, Jan 25, 2019

Summer Sewell, "There were nearly a million black farmers in 1920. Why have they disappeared?" The Guardian, April 29, 2019

Leah Douglas, "African Americans have lost untold acres of land over the last century" The Nation, June 26, 2017

Community Engaged Learning Project Worksheet 1

Sierra Club case study assignment

Sept 22 Second wave ~ Environmental NGOs: What are environmental groups? Why did they spring to life in the 1970s? What are their goals and tactics? What roles should environmental NGOs play today?

Reading: *A Fierce Green Fire*, Chapters 4 & 5

Eliza Griswold, "How Silent Spring Ignited the Environmental Movement," New York Times, Sept 12, 2012

"Back to the Land in the Flower Power Era" NPR Living on Earth, May 13, 2016

Kate Daloz, "How the Back to the Land Movement Paved the Way for Bernie Sanders," Rolling Stone, April 19, 2016

Lucia Graves, "Back to the land: are young farmers the new starving artists?," The Guardian, Dec. 17, 2018

Community Engaged Learning Project Worksheet 2

Back to the Land assignment

Sept 29 Environmental justice: What is environmental justice? What groups are working on this? How central is EJ to the mission of mainstream NGOs (staffing, retention, "green ceiling", goal setting, disproportionate impact of environmental hazards, etc).

Reading: Renee Skelton Vernice Miller, "The Environmental Justice Movement" (NRDC, March 17, 2016)

Jedediah Purdy, “Environmentalism was once a social justice movement” (the Atlantic, Dec. 7, 2016)

Linda Villarosa, “The Refinery Next Door” The New York Times Magazine, August 2, 2020

Brentin Mock, “Are There Two Different Versions of Environmentalism, One ‘White,’ One ‘Black’?” (Mother Jones, July 31, 2014)

Dina Gilio-Whitaker, “What Environmental Justice Means in Indian Country” (KCET, Mar. 6, 2017)

Brian Bienkowski, “Contaminated culture: native people struggle with tainted resources, lost identity” (Environmental Health News, Oct. 25, 2012)

YouTube: “The Story of 535: Building an inclusive green economy putting #FrontlinesFirst”

In class, *Dumping in Dixie* case study & Robert Bullard interview

Quiz (Blackboard)

Community Engaged Learning Project Worksheet 3

II. Tools and Tactics of Environmental and Conservation Groups

Oct. 6 Role of Science: What should the relationship between the NGO and science be? Mission? Targeting? Credibility, staffing, role of NGO publishing. Popularizing. “Junk science.” Cost of monitoring, studies, pioneering science. Traditional knowledge. Citizen science. IPCC, climate change, politics, liability and risk.

Reading: Bill Birchard, *Nature’s Keepers: The Remarkable Story of How The Nature Conservancy Became the Largest Environmental Organization in the World* (Jossey-Bass 2005), Ch. 3

David Suzuki, “The Importance of Citizen Scientists” (Ecology Global Network Forum, Nov. 19, 2014)

Brian Clark Howard, “Learning from Indigenous Peoples on Climate Change” (National Geographic, Sept. 4 2015)

Emily Atkin, “It’s Never Been Harder to Be a Climate Scientist” (New Republic, July 27, 2017)

Guest Speakers – Dr. Maria Lemke and Krista Kirkham, The Illinois Chapter of The Nature Conservancy

Science in the Crosshairs (Science Friday, October 14, 2016)

Community Engaged Learning Project Worksheet 4

Oct. 13 Role of Grassroots Activism: What kinds of tactics have grassroots groups traditionally used? E.g., action alerts – letters, petitions, demonstrations, social media, press releases, editorials, publicity, stunts, education campaigns, canvassing, petitions, public hearings/meetings, fly-ins, lifestyle & consumer choices, direct action/monkey wrenching, “naming and shaming”/accountability. Who is the audience (the general public, media, agency decision-makers, legislators, etc.?) What are the pros and cons? Where do people get their information from? Should humor be a tool? Fear based messages or positive messages? What are current grassroots efforts on climate change (e.g., RPCC, 350.org, the Sunrise Movement, the People’s Climate Movement & National Day of Action)? What’s effective? What are the extremes (from WildEarth Guardians, Greenpeace and EarthFirst! to “Greenwashing” and “Astro-turf”)? What are SLAPPs? What impact do they have on grassroots action?

Reading: *Forcing the Spring*, Chapter 5

Douglas Bevington, *The Rebirth of Environmentalism: Grassroots Activism from the Spotted Owl to the Polar Bear* (Island Press, 2009), Ch. 2

Peter Montague, “Why the Environmental Movement is not winning” (Huffington Post Blog, Feb. 29, 2012)

Sharon Beder, “Anti-Environmentalism/Green Backlash,”

“Is There Any Point to Protesting?” (The New Yorker, Aug. 21, 2017)

Guest Speaker – Clayton Cox: citizen science and grassroots activism (invited)

Activist assignment

Community Engaged Learning Project Worksheet 5

Oct. 20 Role of Lobbying and Politics: Congress, federal agencies, White House, state legislatures, state agencies; “insider,” expertise, relationships, leverage, money. Potomac Fever, “inside the Beltway.” Coalitions. Who does the lobbying? What is the role of “fly ins”? Champions. What makes for good lobbying materials? What is the goal of lobbying? What role should lobbying play today given current political divide?

Reading: Michael Wines, “Environmental Groups Focus On Change by Strengthening Their Political Operations” (New York Times, May 31, 2014)

“Fossil Fuel Interests Have Outspent Environmental Advocates 10:1 on Climate Lobbying” (Yale Environment 360, July 19, 2018)

Richard Louv “We Need an NRA for Nature” (Outside Magazine Mar. 9, 2017)

“How Fossil Fuel Lobbyists Used ‘Astroturf’ Front Groups to Confuse the Public” (Union for Concerned Scientists USA, Oct 11, 2017)

Molly Jackman, “ALEC’s Influence Over Lawmaking in State Legislatures” (Brookings Dec. 6, 2013)

Robinson Meyer, “So Has the Green New Deal Won Yet?” (Atlantic Monthly, Nov. 15, 2019)

OpenSecrets.org, “Pro-Environment Groups Outmatched, Outspent in Battle Over Climate Change Legislation”

Guest Speaker – Jennifer Breitinger, Owner Breitinger & Associates

Ohio Environmental Council, “Tips for Effective Lobbying”; *OpenSecrets.org* – Environment Industry profile; City of Portland, “Ten Principles of Lobbying”

Community Engaged Learning Project Worksheet 6

Oct. 27 Environmental Litigation: *Watch at least one of the assigned movies*: “A Civil Action,” “Erin Brockovich,” or “Dark Waters.” What did you learn about environmental litigation, particularly toxic tort litigation from your movie?

Reading: Michael Burger, “The Battle Against Trump’s Assault on Climate is Moving to the Courts” (Yale Environment 360 May 2, 2017)

James Conca, “Children Change the Climate in the US Supreme Court” (Forbes, Aug 3, 2018)

Robinson Meyer, “How the U.S. Protects the Environment, from Nixon to Trump” (The Atlantic, Mar 29, 2017)

Nick Stockton, “The Grizzled, Stubborn Lawyers Protecting the Environment from Trump” (Wired, June 16, 2017)

Depending on your movie, read:

For “Erin Brockovich,” read “Still Toxic After All These Years” Grist, Jan 29, 2019

For “Dark Waters,” read Nathaniel Rich, “The Lawyer Who Became DuPont’s Worst Nightmare” (New York Times Magazine 2016)

For “A Civil Action,” read “A Decade After the Woburn Toxic Waste Case, Chemist Still Ponders Truth, Justice” (Aug. 25, 2000)

<https://www.umass.edu/pubaffs/chronicle/archives/00/08-25/decheke41.html>

Guest Speaker -- Lindsay Kirschner, law student and intern NY State Attorney General’s Office and U.S. EPA Office of Compliance and Enforcement

Environmental litigation assignment

Nov. 3 Role of Money and Third Wave: Think about how environmental groups get and use money and how do we fund/finance addressing big issues, like climate change at scale?

Reading: *Environment Inc.*, Chapter 4

Sarah Hansen, “*Cultivating the Grassroots: A Winning Approach for Environment and Climate Funders*” (2012)

Background material for David Wolfe’s presentation:

<https://www.edf.org/ecosystems/natural-infrastructure-strengthens-our-climate-resilience>

<https://www.edf.org/sites/default/files/content/natural-infrastructure-infographic.pdf>

Guest Speaker -- David Wolfe, EDF

Quiz

III. Future Directions in the Environmental Movement

Nov. 10: Biodiversity Crisis and Community engaged learning project presentations: **Power point presentations on group projects.** Be sure to email me your Power point presentation before class. **Final group projects due.** Discussion of the biodiversity crisis and environmental community action.

Reading: Key findings from May, 2019 IPBES Report on Global Biodiversity, <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/2019/05/nature-decline-unprecedented-report/>

“What is Biodiversity and Why does it Matter to Us?” (the Guardian, March 12, 2018) <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2018/mar/12/what-is-biodiversity-and-why-does-it-matter-to-us>

Nov. 17: Climate change and environmental movement: Think about the challenge of climate change and climate justice. How should environmental groups work on this issue? What kind of messaging should they use? What kinds of coalitions?

Reading: Cary Funk and Brian Kennedy, “How Americans see climate change and the environment in 7 charts” Pew Research Center, April 21, 2020

Sam Ricketts, et al., “States Are Laying a Roadmap for Climate Leadership” Center for American Progress, April 30, 2020

YouTube: “Van Jones Introduces Pledge to Put the [#FrontlinesFirst](#) on Climate”

Jerome C Ringo, “Combating Climate Change: Why All Should be Involved (pp115-125 in *Diversity and the Future of the U.S. Environmental Movement*)

Jeff Goodell, “Why the Climate March Matters in the Era of Trump (Rolling Stone, April 28, 2017)

Arthur Wyns, “How Our Responses to climate change and the coronavirus are linked” World Economic Forum, April 2, 2020

Paper: e-mail me your topic; check-in during class

Quiz

Nov. 24 Sustainability and Environmentalism: What does sustainability mean? What are sustainability groups? Are some environmental groups also sustainability groups?

Reading: “Driving Systems Change in Turbulent Times: The Future of Sustainability 2019” Forum for the Future, 2019

Conor Dougherty, “Build, Build, Build – When the housing crisis slammed into a wealthy suburb, one public servant took a beating for embracing a radically simple doctrine” New York Times, Feb. 16, 2020

“Hunt Country Receives 2020 Sustainability Award,”
<https://www.huntwines.com/blog/Hunt-Country-receives-2020-Sustainability-Award>

Rupert Joy, “How Sustainable is Your Wine?” Decanter, March 17, 2019

Janet C. Broome and Keith Douglass Warner, “Agro-environmental partnerships facilitate sustainable wine-grape production and assessment” Nov-Dec 2008,
<https://webpages.scu.edu/ftp/kwarner/ageco-BroomeWarnerCalAg.pdf>

Guest Speaker: Suzanne Hunt, Hunt Country Vineyards, Director of Sustainability (invited)

Paper: Outline due

Dec. 1: Food, U.S. Agriculture, Climate Change, Supply Chains, and Covid-19: How are environmental groups working on agriculture, food justice and climate change issues? How is the pandemic impacting these issues and how might this impact NGO work?

Reading: Georgina Gustin, “Think Covid-19 disrupted the supply chain? Wait and see what climate change will do” Inside Climate News, July 7, 2020

Michael Pollan, “The Sickness in Our Food Supply” The New York Review of Books, May 12, 2020, <https://michaelpollan.com/articles-archive/the-sickness-in-our-food-supply/>

Sena Christian “Grow Your Own Way” Comstock Magazine, Sept. 12, 2017, <https://www.comstocksmag.com/longreads/grow-your-own-way>

Tom Philpott, “Gardens Have Pulled America Out of Some of Its Darkest Times. We Need a Revival” Mother Jones, May 29, 2020, <https://www.motherjones.com/food/2020/05/gardens-have-pulled-america-out-of-some-of-its-darkest-times-we-need-another-revival/>

Listen to: “Farm to Table: The Coronavirus and America’s Food Supply Chain” On Point – NPR and WBUR, April 15, 2020

Dec. 8th: Next wave of the environmental movement: What are the key elements in what is needed (e.g., environmental justice, biodiversity, sustainable development, climate change, livable cities,...)

Reading: Gus Speth, “Environmental Failure: A Case for a New Green Politics” (Yale Environment 360, Oct. 20, 2008)

Are you an Environmentalist survey II

Paper: due