

UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

GRADUATE PROGRAMS IN ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

Society, Environmental Policy, and Sustainability

HPSC 5500



Session 2 2013

School of Humanities and Languages

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

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The University of New South Wales
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Welcome!

Welcome to the course!

This overview outlines the purpose, timetable, resources, and assessment details for Society, Environmental Policy and Sustainability.

The course is designed as an elective for a range of graduate courses, including the Masters of Environmental Management (MEM), Master of Professional Ethics, Master of Policy Studies, and graduate programs in the Faculty of the Built Environment. It is also suitable for students in more 'technical' postgraduate programs, where those programs open up to the social and political aspects of environmental matters.

As in past years, we expect a diverse group of participants in the course, and this will no doubt make for insightful exchange of information and opinions. We hope you enjoy the course.

If you have any queries or comments at any stage, please feel free to contact the course co-ordinator:

Matthew Kearnes: 9385 1010 m.kearnes@unsw.edu.au

You can get hold of me via email to arrange an appointment.

About the academic staff

This year, the course will be co-ordinated by Dr. Matthew Kearnes.

Matthew co-convenes the Environmental Humanities undergraduate teaching program based in the School of Humanities at UNSW. He holds a BSc(Hons) in Human Geography and a PhD in Human Geography. He specialises in issues concerned with the social aspects of science and technology and in particular has research interests that span nanotechnology, nuclear controversy and genetically modified food. His current research is focused on current debates in environmental politics, particularly concerning climate change.

A series of the early seminars will be delivered by Associate Professor Paul Brown. Paul is an academic and author based in Sydney and affiliated to the IES. He holds a PhD in earth sciences (UNSW), a Masters in Science and Society, and a Bachelor of Applied Science (Hons). His current research takes in social, political and cultural dimensions of environmental policy and management. He specialises in waste and water issues, nuclear controversy and the linkage between arts and environment. He is also a playwright and filmmaker, and uses oral history and community development approaches (including verbatim theatre) within his research projects. Paul is a member of an international 'Waterways' study group comprising academics and community members in Thailand, Bangladesh, India and Australia. In 2013 Paul holds an Asialink fellowship for cultural exchange with India.

Throughout the course there will also be contributions from guest speakers.

About this course

Rationale

The origins of this course lie in developments in environmental policy and management over the last three decades, and in the history of the concept of sustainability as it has been articulated at local, national and international levels.

The most fundamental aim is to take students beyond literacy in environmental matters to understand how to exercise responsibility for making change. Decision makers need to understand the different interpretations of sustainable development which arise from divergent world views, preferences, values and interests of key social actors. At the same time critiques of orthodox approaches to environmental management have become more sophisticated, striking to the heart of the human-nature relationship, and challenging environmental managers to review the fundamental roles of government, markets and citizens.

The course will introduce you to a conceptual tool kit for analysing and making sense of the contemporary policy process – framed around the notion of ‘interpretive policy analysis’. This model will help you to explore the underlying terms that structure policy processes and develop an understanding of the social and economic processes that influence policy change. Developing this model you will explore ways of making policy making more transparent and socially robust.

Our course commences with consideration of the nature of policy processes and decision-making based on principles of Sustainable Development, and builds from this a picture of contemporary debate about sustainability and the resolution of environmental crisis. International rhetoric about sustainable development ‘peaked’ at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, but this followed 30 years of debate inspired by rising ‘green’ consciousness, evident environmental crisis, and policy response across government, markets and communities. The year 2002 saw a further United Nations conference on development and environment take place in Johannesburg, where among other things a rather pessimistic evaluation of progress ten years on from Rio was made. By now international initiatives give intense focus to climate change and related issues.

As such ‘top down’ work continues, every level of government and industry in almost every country sets about making changes in regulations and practices, mostly in a ‘problem solving’ mode. Meanwhile the community sector, including the radical green movement, is reforming its approaches – arguably making a broader front of participatory governance and decision-making. All this takes place while the world grapples with the greatest ethical, social, political and technical issues of our time... how human society will respond to climate change and (necessary) dramatic developments in energy, water and waste systems.

Course Structure

For the Tuesday night class, there are three components as follows:

In the first five weeks of the course, the class will consider broad aspects of policy processes and issues of governance as they relate to environmental decision-making. During these weeks you will give consideration to a case study topic, and also begin a preliminary essay assignment.

Across weeks 3-10, we will hold a series of seminars (which you will help to present), interspersed with independent research and presentations by guest speakers. In these, we will debate key issues in environmental decision-making, and explore how environmental policy cycles operate. You will also advance your final and most important assignment – your case study.

In the final three weeks of the course, we will bring together the ideas developed during the seminars, and consider trends and possibilities in contemporary environmental decision-making. You will give a verbal presentation on your case study, after which you will work towards a final submission of a case study report – which will be due one week after classes end.

Learning outcomes

After your study of this course you should be able to:

1. assess environmental policy and decision making processes (in government, industry, and community sectors)
2. identify and discuss key streams of thought and action in the environmental arena
3. analyse the relevance and application of these 'streams' in decision making processes
4. discuss better undertake policy analysis
5. better undertake critical debate.

First Tasks

There are three tasks you should undertake before classes commence.

First, you should read this document carefully and contact the course co-ordinator if you have any queries about logistics, enrolment, etc.

Second, as this course is supported by Moodle, the UNSW web learning facility, you should find your way to the Moodle site and explore what is available for our course. All the course readings will be uploaded to the course Moodle site prior to each session. Throughout the course it will be essential that you access these readings and read them thoroughly before each class. In addition some of the course assessment and group work will be carried out using the interactive features of the Moodle programme, so please do familiarise yourself with the site.

Finally, you should take some steps to immerse yourself in current environmental matters. For the course assessment you will be expected to be able to apply the conceptual framework we cover to a relevant case study, so it is essential that that you prepare for this by getting a handle on some of the relevant debates.

Timetable

Classes will be held on Tuesday evenings between 6-9pm in room LG2 in the Morven Brown building

- 30 July: Introductory Seminar: Course aims, learning approach, core problems in environmental policy (MK & PB)
- 6 August: Overview Seminar: a history of environmental politics and policy making. (PB)
- 13 August: Seminar: Interpretive Policy Analysis
Student Presentation (group 1) (MK)
- 20 August: Seminar: The politics of expertise in environmental decision making (PB)
Student Presentation (group 2)
Define Case Study Topics.
- 27 August: Seminar: Participation, deliberation and transparency in environmental decision making (PB)
Student Presentation (group 3)
Preliminary Assignment due.
- 3 September: "Industry and community: toxic waste and environmental policy at Botany Bay" (PB)
Student Presentation (group 5)
- 10 September: Seminar: guest seminar
TBC
Student Presentation (group 6)
- 17 September: Seminar: guest seminar
TBC

Student Presentation (group 7)

24 September: Seminar: guest seminar

Student Presentation (group 8)

Submit written Case Study Progress Reports

1 October: **No Classes: Mid-Semester Break**

8 October: No Classes: Study week

15 October: September: Seminar: Bringing it all together: Australian environmental decision making and policy (MK)

22 October: **Case Study Presentations**

29 October: **Case Study Presentations.**

Learning resources

Your learning in this course will be facilitated by the following:

- foundational course readings available via the course Moodle site and a range of recommended readings (see below)
- Material which you gather through your own research
- Information and ideas exchanged with other students and the course teachers
- Other important resources include libraries run by state and local governments or by corporations.

There is no set textbook for this course. A set of key readings will be available throughout the course via the Moodle site. These readings will constitute the core material for the course and will be the subject of our discussions throughout the course.

In addition to the general bibliography provided below, the following texts will be used extensively throughout the course. Whilst these books are available in the library you may want to purchase these books from the bookshop. Each of these texts provides a useful set of introductory readings on contemporary environmental policy making.

These books include:

1. Dovers, S. 2005: *Environment and Sustainability Policy: Creation, Implementation, Evaluation*. Sydney: The Federation Press.
2. Dryzek, J. S., and Schlosberg, D. 2005: *Debating the Earth: The Environmental Politics Reader*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
3. Harding, R., Hendriks, C., and Faruqi, M., eds. 2009: *Environmental Decision-Making Exploring complexity and Context*. Sydney: Federation Press, Sydney.

Internet Information

There are thousands of world wide web sites, discussion groups, mailing lists, newsletters and journals about the environment and sustainable development. Specific references will be given throughout the course.

The Institute of Environmental Studies at UNSW is also an important source of information, and can be accessed via the Internet on <http://ies.web.unsw.edu.au/>. You may also want to visit the UNSW web site: <http://www.unsw.edu.au/>

Journals

Environmental matters have found their way into a great variety of academic journals. There are several devoted entirely to Environmental themes, among these Environment, Journal of Environmental Management, Environmental Policy and Global Environmental Change. The annual Worldwatch Institute reports titled State of the World also constitute a good series of interdisciplinary papers.

You will be given further guidance towards relevant journals throughout the course.

Assessment

The assessment for this course has been designed to measure your achievement of the following learning outcomes.

Details for each type of assessment are attached. The scheme is:

Preliminary Assignment	Due in class in Week 5	20%
Seminar Presentation	Presentations across weeks 3-10	15%
Case Study	Written Progress Report due on 24 th September 2013.	10%
	Verbal report week 11 or 12;	15%
	Final written report due 8 th November 2013.	40%

Assessment Schedule

Preliminary Assignment

20%

The preliminary assignment is designed to ensure that you have made a good start to the course and are getting to grips with the reading and conceptual vocabulary. You will be required to choose from a range of essay topics and complete a 1500 word paper.

The essay topics will be released during the second week of the course.

You will be required to submit your essay in class on **27th August 2013**.

Seminar Presentation

15%

You will be required to present a summary of key themes from the course readings between weeks 3-10. Details of the assessment task will be released in week 2 of the course.

Case Study

The case study component of the course should be regarded as a major piece of work that you will tackle across the whole session, and in which you ultimately bring together your own ideas and conclusions from the whole course.

We are proposing that the case study work should revolve around some aspect of your professional life, and/or your particular interests. If you are an international student, we encourage you to develop a case study of relevance to your own country.

There are three specific aspects of the case study that together will contribute to 65% of your overall grade for the course. These aspects include:

Written Progress Report

10%

A written progress report (500 words) will be due in class on **24th September 2013**.

Once you have a topic closely defined, you should conduct in-depth research, refine the approach, and think about how to structure and present your case study. Keep in mind that during this time, we will be working systematically through the course readings, and this will have implications for your case study work, as you encounter new ideas.

In progress report you should:

- Give your case study a title
- Summarise in about 100 words why your chosen case study is important, and how it relates to your professional situation (if it does)
- Outline in no more than 300 words the approach you are taking, and how you intend to use any particular framework(s) for your analysis. This should include brief notes about what you expect to discover from your analysis.
- Make a list of research tasks which remain, and identify any problems you are encountering

Verbal Report

15%

Students will be required to make a verbal presentation of their case study in the final two weeks of class.

You will present a 15-minute overview of your case study in class in one of these weeks. Although you must be well advanced with your final written

report, you need not prepare anything for the verbal presentation other than, say, writing down five or six key points that convey the important aspects, as an aid to your presentation.

Final Written Report

40%

A final case study report (5000 words) will be due on **8th November 2013**.

High marks will be given for reports which are well structured, which frame up some key questions having regard to theoretical ideas, which demonstrate careful research, which are well expressed, and which draw well-supported conclusions. You should use a critical and analytical approach, and avoid lengthy description. You may want to reflect on the implications for your own professional situation – though this is not essential.

You must provide a bibliography, and be sure that you state your sources using one of the standard approaches. You may want to attach appendices. You should attempt a reasonable level of final production of the document, but **DON'T** present your work in elaborate bindings or plastic covers – a staple in the corner and double sided copying is greatly preferred.

Instructions for the case study will be released in week 4 of the course.

Assignment Submission

For each of the written assignment tasks you will need to submit two copies – 1 paper copy and 1 electronic copy.

Your preliminary assignment and written progress reports will be due in class, and can be submitted during the seminars.

Your final report is due in the week after class and may be delivered directly, or posted, to Dr. Matthew Kearnes, School of Humanities and Languages, University of New South Wales, Sydney, 2052, Australia.

In the case of posted assignments, it is your responsibility to ensure that these arrive on or before the assignment due date.

In addition to submitting a paper copy of your written work you will also be required to submit an electronic copy through **Moodle** on Turnitin by the due date.

Assignment Collection

Assignments should be collected from your lecturer and must be collected by the author of the assignment. A Stamped Self Addressed Envelope must be provided on submission if students require their assignment to be posted back to their home address.

Assignment Extensions

A student may apply to the Lecturer for an extension to the submission date of an assignment. Requests for extension must be made on the appropriate form and before the submission due date, and must demonstrate exceptional circumstances, which warrant the granting of an extension. If medical grounds preclude submission of assignment by due date, contact should be made with subject coordinator as soon as possible. A medical certificate will be required for late submission and must be appropriate for the extension period.

To apply for an extension please log into myUNSW and go to My Student Profile tab > My Student Services channel > Online Services > Special Consideration

Late Submission of Assignments

Assignments submitted after the due or extended date will incur a 5% penalty per day excluding weekends (calculated from the maximum marks available for that assignment). Assignments received more than 10 calendar days after the due or extended date will not be allocated a mark.

Administrative Matters

Expectations of Students: Attendance

Students are expected to attend at least 80% of all lectures and seminars.

ACADEMIC HONESTY AND PLAGIARISM

Students seeking information on plagiarism should visit the following web site:

<http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism/index.html>

Continual Improvement

Periodically, student evaluative feedback on the course is gathered, using among other means, UNSW's Course and Teaching Evaluation and Improvement (CATEI) Process. Student feedback is taken seriously, and continual improvements will be made to the course based in part on such feedback.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

UNSW's Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Policy requires each person to work safely and responsibly, in order to avoid personal injury and to protect the safety of others.

Any OHS concerns should be raised with your immediate supervisor, the School's OHS representative, or the Head of School. The OHS guidelines are available at:

http://www.ohs.unsw.edu.au/ohs_policies/index.html

STUDENT EQUITY AND DIVERSITY

Students who have a disability that requires some adjustment in their learning and teaching environment are encouraged to discuss their study needs with the course convener prior to, or at the commencement of the course. Alternatively, the Student Equity and Diversity Unit can be contacted on 9385 4734. Further information is available at: <http://www.studentequity.unsw.edu.au>

GRIEVANCES

All students should be treated fairly in the course of their studies at UNSW. Students who feel they have not been dealt with fairly should in the first instance attempt to resolve any issues with their tutor or the course convenors. If such an approach fails to resolve the matter, the School of Humanities and Languages has an academic member of staff who acts as a Grievance Officer for the School. This staff member is identified on the notice board in the School of Humanities and Languages. Further information about UNSW grievance procedures is available at:

<https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/atoz/Complaints.html>

OTHER STUDENT INFORMATION

myUNSW is the single online access point for UNSW services and information, integrating online services for applicants, commencing & current students and UNSW staff. To visit myUNSW please visit either of the below links:

<https://my.unsw.edu.au>

<https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/atoz/ABC.html>

General Bibliography

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