

# General Education Course Proposal

Proposed Course: PL SI 071 Introducion to Environmental Politics Units 3.0  
Prefix No. Title

Department: Political Science School: Social Sciences

**GE Category (Indicate one category only):**

Foundation: A1 \_\_\_; A2 \_\_\_; A3 \_\_\_; B4 \_\_\_  
Breadth: B1 \_\_\_; B2 \_\_\_; C1 \_\_\_; C2 \_\_\_; D3X \_\_\_; E \_\_\_  
Integration: B \_\_\_; C \_\_\_; D \_\_\_; International/Multicultural \_\_\_

Existing Course \_\_\_; Revised Course \_\_\_; New Course X

Course Included in Current GE Program \_\_\_

New courses require the Undergraduate Course Proposal form in addition to this form.

Revised courses require the Undergraduate Course Change Request in addition to this form.

**Proposed catalog description:** Limit course description to 40 words using succinct phrases. Include prerequisites, limitations, lecture/lab hours. Indicate former course number, e.g., (Former Biol 105)

Introduction to the study of environmental politics and policy making in the United States; a brief history of environmentalism; basic principles in environmental policy making including interest groups, legislatures, and levels of government; selection of current topics in environmental issues.

Enrollment limit per section: 30

Expected number of sections per semester – Year 1 1; Year 3 1

**Attachments:**

1. A statement presenting the ways in which this course meets the Specifications provided in the appropriate section of the General Education Policy as well as in the Policies for Inclusion and Evaluation of General Education Courses.
2. A statement of elements common to all sections of this course, identifying content, objectives, required student activities, grading policy, representative texts, and an approximate schedule for the course. Required student activities include such things as papers, research projects, homework, laboratory and/or studio performance, recitations, participation, attendance, and exams.
3. A typical syllabus for a particular offering of the course.
4. Any special cost factors associated with this course.

**Approval for Inclusion in General Education**

Russell Mardon 10-5-99  
Department Chair Date

John Puzos 4/3/00  
School Curriculum Committee Date

J. Schwen 4/14/2000  
School Dean Date

Paul Arnold 5/5/00  
General Education Subcommittee Date

Brandt Kehoe 5/5/00  
Associate Provost Date

Forward Original and **TWELVE** copies to:  
Associate Provost for Academic Affairs, M/S 54

September 28, 1999  
Department of Political Science

Attachment #2: Elements Common to All Sections

Proposed Course: PL SI 071 Introduction to Environmental Politics

Course Content and Objectives: See Previous Section

Required Student Activities:

1. Examinations: usually three, including two mid-terms and the final, to be specified in the course syllabus along with the grading requirements.
2. Quizzes: at the professional discretion of the instructor
3. Written work: a minimum writing assignment of 2,000 words, 8 to 10 pages, to be met through various assignments at the professional discretion of the instructor, including a term paper, essay examination questions, or other short writing assignments.

Elements Common to All Sections of This Course:

The instructors assigned to teach Introduction to Environmental Politics would be expected to have a specialization in environmental politics and policy making. Areas of special interest ought to include environmental interest groups, the history and philosophy of environmentalism, environmental policy making, and contemporary issues in environmental politics. Also, special emphasis on California water politics and policy would be required. The amount of course time given to any particular component of the course, such as on each of the above mentioned areas, would normally be approximately two weeks. Environmental events and crises around the world, however, may dictate some deviation from this time frame.

Individual instructors, depending upon their expertise and professional judgment, would likely vary their approach to the course, e.g., certain environmental issue areas could be selected for more detailed study and the amount of course time given to a particular component of the course, e.g., the issues selected for more detailed study. This may also be influenced by the particular text chosen by the instructor. While chosen at the professional discretion of the instructor, it is expected that the text cover the major areas listed below. Other assigned readings, including primary source material as noted in the previous statement, will also be made. The study of environmentalism and specific environmental issues is, however, a major part of this course and ought to be covered by separate text.

1. Environmental and Ecological Principles, including the Gaia Hypothesis and its attendant emphasis on particular areas of ecological importance, such as wetlands, coastal zones, and the tropics.
2. Theoretical and Philosophical Approaches to the Environment, including human allegories and interpretations.
3. The History of the Environmental Movement
4. The Environment and Economics, including free-market environmentalism and sustainable growth.
5. Politics and Environmentalism, including environmental justice, democracy, pluralism and interest groups, communication, and levels of government.
6. The Human Beginnings of Global Ecological Webs, including the Columbian Exchange, the Dispossessed, and Ecological Flight.
7. Environmental Policy Making, including institutional venues, policy implementation, and solutions in specific issue areas.

Additional Funding Required: None

Additional Instructional Equipment Required: None

#### COURSE SYLLABUS:

The attached course syllabus is one developed for Introduction to Environmental Politics.

Introduction to Environmental Politics; PL SI 071  
Professor Mark Somma, 278-5413  
Room: SS 126 Office Hours:

#### Course Description:

Political Science 071 is a General Education course that concentrates on environmental politics and policymaking. A special emphasis is placed on California water politics and policy, and the San Joaquin River. The course textbooks include readings that span the field of environmental politics and policymaking, including politics and policymaking in local political venues like municipalities and special district governments. The course also introduces students to the methodologies and analytical concepts necessary to evaluate society today (using examples from environmental politics and policy). Key methodological and analytic concepts including such issues as the role of environmental interest groups, environmental justice, the economic conflict over environmental regulation, and the history of environmental politics and policy in the United States.

This course is a component of the San Joaquin River Parkway Learning Community. To reinforce course content, and introduce service and civic responsibility, learning community students will carry out service-learning projects. These projects will give students the opportunity to apply conceptual information from PL SI 071.

#### Examinations and Assignments:

The final written assignment is a 8-10 page essay that discusses the application of fundamental ethical or economic beliefs to contemporary California water politics. The final written assignment is due on December 7th. I will discuss the final written assignment at greater length in class. Three examinations will be required. Assignment of grades is based on points with the final written assignment worth 100 points, and each of the three examinations worth 100 points. So a total of 400 points is available.

#### Additional Considerations:

Attendance is strongly encouraged, as is class participation.

Any student who, because of a disabling condition, may require some special arrangements in order to meet course requirements should contact the instructor as soon as possible so that the necessary accommodations can be made.

All drops, other than for "serious and compelling reason" that are normally medical in nature, must be accomplished in the first two weeks. Requests for incompletes must meet the following criteria: 1) at least two thirds of the course must have been completed, and 2) a passing grade must have been obtained on the work to date.

Strict adherence to university policy on cheating and plagiarism will be maintained. Any violation of university policy on cheating and plagiarism will be reported to the appropriate university officials.

#### Required textbooks:

The Environmental Ethics and Policy Book: Philosophy, Ecology, and Economics  
Donald Van DeVeer, et al. (DD)

Rivers of Gold: Designing Markets to Allocate Water in California  
Brent M. Haddad (BH)

The Great Thirst: The History of California Water Politics, 1700s-1990s  
Norris Hundley (NH)

Reading, Assignment, and Examination Schedule:

Aug 24 Introduction

Environmental Policy, including Local Policy

Fundamentals of Environmental Policy:

Aug 26 Paradigms in Policymaking (DD) 1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5

Aug 28 Intergovernmental Policymaking (DD) 2, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5

Aug 31 Financing Environmental Policy (DD) 2.6, 2.7, 2.8, 2.9

Diversity and Environmental Policy:

Sept 2 Environmental Justice (DD) 3, 4, 5

Sept 4 Environmental Equality (DD) 6, 7, 8

Sept 7 Labor Day--No class scheduled

Policymaking in Practice:

Sept 9 Negotiation (DD) 9, 10, 11

Sept 11 Implementation (DD) 12, 13, 14

Sept 14 Analysis (DD) 15, 16, 17

Local Policymaking:

Sept 16 Cities (DD) 18, 19, 20

Sept 18 Counties (DD) 21, 22, 23

Sept 21 1<sup>st</sup> examination

Environmental Regulation, including Local Regulation

Fundamentals of Regulatory Policy:

Sept 23 Right to Regulate **(DD)** 24, 25, 26

Sept 25 Regulatory Taxes **(DD)** 27, 28

Sept 28 Environmental Criminality **(DD)** 29, 30, 31, 32, 33

Sept 30 Regulatory Analysis **(DD)** 34, 35, 36

Specific Regulatory Arenas:

Oct 2 Oceans **(DD)** 37, 38, 39

Oct 5 Atmosphere **(DD)** 40, 41, 42

Oct 7 Soil Conservation **(DD)** 43, 44, 45

Oct 9 Wildlife **(DD)** 46, 47, 48, 49

Water Regulation Policy:

Oct 12 Underground Aquifers **(DD)** 50, 51, 52, 53

Oct 14 Lakes **(DD)** 54, 55, 56, 57

Oct 16 Rivers and Streams **(DD)** 58, 59, 60

Local Regulatory Policy:

Oct 19 Land Zoning **(DD)** 61, 62, 63, 64

Oct 21 Non-point Pollution **(DD)** 65, 66, 67, 68, 69

Oct 23 Sewage Treatment **(DD)** 70, 71, 73, 75

Oct 26 Green Spaces **(DD)** 76, 80, 81

Oct 28 2<sup>nd</sup> examination

Environmental Interest Groups, including Local Interest Groups

Oct 30 History of Environmentalism I **(DD)** 83, 84, 85

Nov 2 History of Environmentalism II **(DD)** 86, 87,

Nov 4 Iron Triangles and Environmental Interest Groups **(DD)** 89, 90, 91

Nov 6 Conservative Environmental Interest Groups **(DD)** 92, 93, 94

History of California Water Politics, including Local Water Politics

Nov 9 History of California Water I (NH) Section 1

Nov 11 History of California Water II (NH) Section 2

Nov 13 History of California Water III (NH) Section 3

Environmental Economic Policy, including Local Economic Policy

Fundamentals of Environmental-Economic Policy:

Nov 16 Microeconomics and Environmental Policy (BH) Chapter 1

Nov 18 International Economic Policy and The Environment (BH) Chapter 2

Local Environmental-Economic Policy:

Nov 20 Development Economics I (BH) Chapter 3

Nov 23 Development Economics II (BH) Chapter 4

Nov 25 Thanksgiving Holiday

Nov 27 Thanksgiving Holiday

Environmental-Economic Policy in California Water:

Nov 30 The Colorado River (BH) Chapter 5

Dec 2 The Sacramento Delta (BH) Chapter 6

Dec 4 The Central Valley Project (BH) Chapter 7

Dec 7 The San Joaquin River (BH) Chapter 8

Dec 9 Conclusions

Final Examination Date:

Introduction to Environmental Politics  
Political Science 071

TERM PAPER DISCUSSION

As this is a General Education course, there will be a writing requirement of approximately 8-10 pages on a current event or issue of interest to you that has been approved by the instructor. The paper will have the value of one examination (100 points).

In choosing a topic, several things should be kept in mind.

- The topic you select should have generated sufficient discussion and analysis so that sources are readily available. It can be very frustrating to select a topic for which there few sources can be found.
- The topic you select should be neither too broadly nor narrowly defined, but one capable of being handled in 8-10 pages.
- The topic should relate contemporary environmental politics or policymaking with fundamental human beliefs and values. For instance, likely topic areas include justice, democracy, capitalism, religion, or philosophy.
- You may select specific issue area(s) to discuss or keep a more general tone.

Remember: Topics evolve as you begin to gain more knowledge and understanding of the issue you are exploring in your research. If you want to change your topic, you may do so; just inform the instructor.

Remember: Pay close attention to the "Term Paper" handout as the first page details the important points on which your term paper will be graded.

Remember: A one page discussion of your paper topic is to be submitted to the instructor on or before October 15<sup>th</sup>. Provide the following information:

- (1) a paragraph describing fundamental human values or beliefs under review;
- (2) a paragraph describing the environmental issue(s) under review; and
- (3) list three sources that could be used for the paper.

Remember:

- The paper will be due on December 7<sup>th</sup> in class.
- Late papers will receive a 10% penalty.
- It is your responsibility to keep a copy of your paper.



MINUTES OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
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Fresno, California 93740-8023

Office of the Academic Senate  
Ext. 8-2743

Fax: 278-5745

May 5 2000

Members Present: P. Amaral, S. Badr, B. Benedict, B. Kehoe,  
R. LaJeunesse, R. Merrill, F. Nader, P. Simis,  
B. Tribbey, A. Valencia.

Members Absent: T. Anderson (excused), B. Thornton (excused).

Visitor: M. Botwin, W. Fasse, L. Harding, P. Hart, J. Kus.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Amaral at 12:10 p.m. in the  
University Center, Room #203.

PL SI 071 - is recommended, the course will be brought back to the  
Committee in the Fall for further reconsideration since it is  
linked to ongoing grants.