

Political Science 116: Environmental Politics and Sustainability

UW-Oshkosh Political Science Department

Fall 2020

Scheduled Meeting Times: 12:40-1:40 MWF

class will be fully online

Instructor: Dr. Jeffrey Filipiak

Office hours: 11-12, 2-3 MW

Email: filipiaj@uwosh.edu (Best way to contact me. Please include class title and your topic in the subject line of email.)

Course Description: This course examines the political forces and challenges to developing and adopting sustainable environmental policies in the United States. This course provides an overview of the U.S. political system, sustainability as a lens of inquiry, and the policy making process. What values do we want to sustain? Do environmental policies support these values? Specific policy areas examined include air, water, land, energy, waste, plant, and animal life.

This is a Quest I course in the University Studies Program (USP) focusing on sustainability as the signature question. There are no prerequisites for this course.

Online learning and Canvas: This course is taught entirely online. This is a synchronous course, which means it is taught “live” at the scheduled times when students are connected and active. Students are expected to be present for class the same as if this course were taught face-to-face. The primary system I use for instruction is *Canvas*. There are a number of resources to help students get acclimated to Canvas. Here is a course to help students learn the basics. [Canvas Introduction](#).

Textbook and Readings:

Christian R. Weisser (ed). *Sustainability: A Bedford Spotlight Reader*, 2d Edition (Boston: St. Martin's Press, 2019) ISBN: 9781319056612

This textbook is required. Other materials will be available electronically at no additional cost to students.

Learning Outcomes:

Environmental Politics & Sustainability Objectives

1. Distinguish between policy and politics. Students will use this distinction to critically analyze the political challenges to achieving sustainable environmental policies.
2. Use models and definitions of sustainability to evaluate environmental, economic, social, and political values that should be sustained
3. Use sustainability as lens of inquiry to analyze critically the political challenges to sustainable environmental policies in the U.S.
4. Write an essay answering: *How do I understand and create a more sustainable world?*

First-Year Experience Objectives

1. Describe and explain to family, neighbor, or friend the value and purpose of a liberal education and the University Studies Program
2. Describe and explain to a classmate the three UWO Signature questions
3. Discuss with classmate the purpose and procedures of Early Alert grading program
4. Attend two co-curricular activities or events
5. Locate and use academic/campus resources

UWO Essential Learning Outcomes (ELOs)

1. Identify and evaluate theories/assumptions
2. Think critically and creatively
3. Communicate orally and in writing
4. Develop technological/information literacy
5. Knowledge of sustainability and applications

Political Science Department Learning Goals

1. *Understand and apply theory frameworks.* Apply theoretical arguments and to explain or predict political phenomena
2. *Understand and explain contemporary politics.* Connect theory and history to answer “big questions” facing contemporary politics
3. *Analyze and explain political behavior, patterns, & events.* Use evidence in a variety of forms to construct arguments
4. *Communicate effectively.* Express information in ways accessible and appropriate to different audiences

First-Year Experience and the University Studies Program:

This course has components designed to help students adjust to college, and to develop the skills necessary to succeed as a college student. Please reach out to ask me, or the Peer Mentor, if you have questions about college which I can assist you with.

The University Studies Program (USP) is your gateway to a 21st century college education at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh. This Quest I course is the first in a series of courses. The course introduces you to campus and all it has to offer as well as the challenges and opportunities of academic life as you pursue a liberal arts education.

Quest classes are designed to provide a solid foundation for the rest of your education here, no matter which major you choose. Your USP courses also provide opportunities for you to explore and connect in your college education. For further information about the unique general education at UW Oshkosh, visit the USP [website](#).

Signature Questions

The three “Signature Questions” central to a UWO education are: (1) How do people understand and engage in community life? (2) How do people understand and create a more sustainable world? and (3) How do people understand and bridge cultural differences? The signature question for this course focuses on sustainability: “*How do people understand and create a more sustainable world?*” We examine this question in the context of environmental politics.

Learning Communities

UWO is dedicated to helping students be successful by creating smaller learning communities during students’ first semesters. To help you create a learning community, this course is paired with either your writing course (WBIS) or your communication course (COMM 111).

Liberal Education

Liberal education is an approach to learning that empowers individuals and prepares them to deal with complexity, diversity, and change. It provides students with broad knowledge of the wider world (e.g. science, culture, and society) as well as in-depth study in a specific area of interest. A liberal education helps students develop a sense of social responsibility, as well as strong and transferable intellectual and practical skills such as communication, analytical and problem-solving skills, and a demonstrated ability to apply knowledge and skills in real-world settings.

Methodology:

We will mix synchronous online meetings with some discussions of material online on the Discussion Board. Students will also be expected to learn by engaging material on their own, by doing readings and by analyzing issues in order to write about them.

Grade Weights:

Participation	28%
Short Assignments	14%
Final	30%
Essays	28%

(Note: in order to pass the course, you MUST complete the Final, and you must do so within one week of the due date.)

Grading Scale:

	A	100-93	A-	92.9-90	
B+	89.9-87	B	86.9-83	B-	82.9-80
C+	79.9-77	C	76.9-73	C-	72.9-70
D+	69.6-67	D	66.9-63	D-	62.9-60

If your average is below 60, you will fail the course. (Grades will eventually be available on Canvas.)

On your exams and papers, you will be expected to *mix analysis and evidence*. I will ask you to identify the key themes, the points of greatest significance, and to carefully focus on the specific question I asked (not other issues). Then add details that support your answer, demonstrating your awareness of relevant course material.

Peer Mentor:

One of your best resources on this campus is your peers, especially those who have been there, done that. In this class we are fortunate to have someone who is specially trained and willing to help you become familiar with academic life at UW Oshkosh. The peer mentor will attend campus events with the class, answer your questions about the campus, and refer you to various resources. You should not hesitate to get to know our mentor as they are an important part of the Quest I experience. Our mentor is McKenna Strom – you may email McKenna, or post questions on the Discussion Board.

Class Policies

Attendance: It is important that you attend class. In class, I present and explain important material – I expect your papers and other work to reflect your engagement with this material. This course will only be successful with full student engagement and participation.

As a college student, you are an adult who is now responsible for yourself. It is up to you to decide if you are not able to attend class on a particular day – but if you miss too many classes, your grade will suffer because of it. If you miss more than two weeks, your participation grade will drop significantly: and you should talk to me about your attendance problems. If you miss class, it is your responsibility, not mine, to make sure you discover what material, assignments, etc., were discussed while you were absent.

If you miss more than two weeks of class – with only classes beyond week 7 counting towards this total - you will lose one full course grade for each week missed beyond that. (The only exceptions are absences related to participation in university events, or emergencies.) For example, if you have a B- average and miss three weeks, your grade will be dropped to a D-. If you miss more than three weeks, you automatically fail the course. (Note – the minimum you need to do to receive an attendance credit for a week is to attend one class meeting, or write one post on the online Discussion Board.)

Assignments. A penalty of 10% (1 full grade) will be assessed for late submissions, and penalties will increase each day you wait to turn an assignment in. (If you need an extension, you need to ask me *before* the due date.) If you turn in assignments late, you may receive them back late as well.

After one week, papers and exams will NOT be accepted and you will receive ZERO points for the assignment. It is the student's responsibility to contact me about making up an assignment; and to make sure I receive any paper turned at times other than the class hour it is due. (Note: if an extension is granted, once the extension period ends the assignment is due – further delays will result in penalties.)

Academic integrity and misconduct: I want to see your work, ideas written in your voice. The course is designed for you to learn and engage ideas. Don't worry if you are nervous about your writing skills – it is better to build your own writing skills than to show me someone else's ideas. Keep in mind that instructors are experienced in spotting lazy copying of material. If you want to build on someone else's ideas, that's OK – be sure to quote and cite them. But show me that you understand their argument and are using it to develop your own. Plagiarism can be grounds for failing the course. Don't take that risk.

I follow University policies in cases of academic misconduct. According to the UW system rules, “academic misconduct” includes, but is not limited to, “*submitting a paper or assignment as one's own work, when a part or all of the paper or assignment is the work of another.*” If you have further questions please see the UW System rules, Chapter 14. In cases of academic misconduct the instructor recommends the penalty.

Expectations for Academic Honesty: A college education is intended to develop your skills, knowledge, and confidence. Graded assignments are designed to work on these items. Thus, to gain the skills, knowledge, and confidence of a college-educated person all graded work is to be your own. When you are directed to work alone, an assignment or test must be done by you, its primary ideas are to be your own, and any outside materials should be dealt with properly (quoted when using someone's words, and cited when quoting or referencing them in any other way). When your teacher directs you to work in teams, the work is to be done by the team. More information can be found [here](#).

UWO is committed to academic integrity for all students. System guidelines state, "Students are responsible for the honest completion and representation of their work, for the appropriate citation of sources, and for respect of others' academic endeavors." We expect students to review and adhere to procedures related to academic honesty as outlined in Chapter UWS 14, Wisconsin Administrative Code, available on the Dean of Students website [here](#). Students should direct specific questions regarding the code (and institutional procedures approved to implement the code) to the Dean of Students Office.

Behavior in class: While in the classroom, and particularly when participating in discussions, students are expected to conduct themselves in a mature fashion. This means treating the instructor and other students with respect so that an environment that is conducive to learning is created. Participation grades can be lowered if students violate such policies – for instance, behaving rudely, or holding conversations which make it difficult for others to hear course material. (If you need to answer a phone in an emergency situation, leave the room before talking on it.) You are expected to arrive in class before the class period begins. If you arrive late, you need to do all you can to avoid disrupting the class already in progress.

Emergency situations and disabilities: will be handled on an individual basis, but be aware that some evidence will be required. Student athletes, students with disabilities, or students with other situations that might make meeting deadlines or attendance difficult should set up appointments and arrangements with appropriate university officials to develop accommodations – and then let me know, preferably during the first two weeks of class.

Accessibility:

UWO provides reasonable accommodations to students who have disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or meet course requirements. We accommodate *flexibly* and *individually*. Register with *Accessibility Services* or Project Success to get an accommodation recommendation form.

Accessibility Services

125 Dempsey Hall (920)

424-3100

dean1@uwosh.edu

[Accessibility Services Website](#)

Note to Political Science Majors:

Political Science majors should take Political Methodology (245) in either their sophomore or first semester of their junior year. PS245 is a prerequisite for the senior capstone, Political Analysis (401), and cannot be taken concurrently.

Student Consumer Information:

Students should see the following URL for disclosures about essential consumer protection items required by the Students Right to Know Act of 1990 available [here](#).

Grievances:

The Department of Political Science is committed to offering you a high-quality classroom experience, and we take your feedback seriously. If you have concerns about anything related to this course, assignments, or teaching method, you are encouraged to first speak with your instructor directly. If you are not comfortable speaking with the instructor, you are invited to speak with the Chair of the Department of Political Science, Dr. James Krueger. He can be reached at kruegerj@uwosh.edu. Should he be unable to resolve your concerns, he will guide you to appropriate resources within the College of Letters and Science.

Checking email: Please check your email account regularly for updates and last minute information about upcoming class meetings. Also, email is generally the best way to get in contact with me.

Tentative Schedule for Weeks 7-14:

Week 7, Oct 19: Pollution and Role of Government

Week 8, Oct 26: Agriculture, Justice, and Dolores Huerta

Week 9, Nov 2: Adjusting to College

Week 10, Nov 9: TBD

Week 11, Nov 16: Environmental Politics in Transnational Perspective
[Will use readings from original syllabus)

Week 12, Nov 23: TBD

Just meet on one day, Monday.

Week 13, Nov 30: Social Justice

Week 14, Dec 7: Transportation and Sources of Hope

Week 15, Dec 14: Final Thoughts

Final Exam due