

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
POL 490H/2102: Topics in Canadian Politics
(Canadian Environmental Politics)
St. George Campus Fall 2009

Course Time: Tues., 10 a.m. to noon

Place: Sidney Smith 2101

Instructor: Professor David Pond

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COURSE OVERVIEW:

This course is designed for students of Canadian politics who may have little familiarity with environmental issues. I do not presume any specialized expertise on your part. The subject-matter of the course ranges across the federal-provincial-municipal divide.

The course introduces the advanced political science student to some of the basic problems and issues in environmental public policy. Why do some people and groups persist in engaging in activities which are clearly damaging to the environment? Why do politicians fail to take effective action to reduce pollution and clean up the environment, even when the polls indicate this is what the public wants? What kind of environmental policies are likely to be successful, and what kind are likely to fail? Why do many environmental policies adopted by governments appear to be second-best solutions? These are the questions we will attempt to address.

There is no textbook you are required to purchase. Instead, the readings for this course are accessible through the Blackboard site.

What Is Required Of You

This is a two-hour weekly seminar. 400-level courses such as this one are not lecture courses, where the professor stands at the front of the class and lectures to a passive audience. In a seminar, students are expected to come to class prepared to engage actively in the class discussions of the assigned topics. Important components of this course are the game simulations designed to demonstrate graphically many of the core concepts. In order for these exercises to succeed, students must take them seriously and participate in them enthusiastically.

It follows that attendance, preparation and participation are crucial if you aspire to success in this course.

The following is a rough guide to how students' in-class participation will be marked:

GRADE	CLASS PARTICIPATION	THE READINGS
A	Comments show a strong understanding of the readings; asks insightful questions of guest speakers; does not interrupt other speakers or require undue attention	Shows a strong understanding of the readings, their relevance, and demonstrates an ability to offer reasoned critique
B	Shows a good understanding of the readings; professor may need to clarify some points s/he makes in class	Does all the readings and understands them with some sophistication; may have some gaps in understanding
C	Makes comments that offer a basic contribution to discussion, but sometimes not as thoughtful or sophisticated as those above	Does the readings and understands them at a basic level; may have notable gaps in understanding
D	Makes occasional comments that may sometimes be off-topic or demonstrate lack of familiarity with the readings	Does some reading and shows knowledge of some aspects of the material, but has significant gaps in understanding
F	Says very little; restates what the readings say; lacks familiarity with basic themes	Shows little familiarity with the readings; misunderstands basic aspects of the reading material

The Blackboard Site

This course employs a Blackboard website, where you will find the course outline, course readings, and supplementary material. To access the Pol 490H website, go to <http://portal.utoronto.ca> and log in using your UTORid and password. If you need information on how to activate your UTORid and set your password for the first time, please go to www.utorid.utoronto.ca. Once you have logged in to the portal, look for the My Courses box, where you will find the link to the Pol 490H website.

E-mail

I welcome e-mail queries and comments. It is the students' responsibility to maintain their e-mail addresses in good working order and to ensure that the e-mail address known to the university (and listed on Blackboard) is accurate. Failure to receive important class announcements & messages because of a faulty e-mail account (for example, an account which screens out professors' e-mails as junk mail; bounced messages because of overloaded caches) are NOT legitimate excuses.

All UofT students are required to have a valid UTORmail e-mail address. You are responsible for ensuring that your UofT email address is properly entered in the ROSI system.

Forwarding your utoronto.ca email to a Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo or other type of email account is not advisable. In some cases, messages from utoronto.ca addresses sent to Hotmail, Gmail or Yahoo accounts are filtered as junk mail, which means that e-mails from your course instructor may end up in your spam or junk mail folder.

The Essays

The penalty for late essays is 2% per day including week-ends. Extensions will be granted for the two essays only in cases of documented medical problems or of documented family emergencies. Students requesting extensions should do so as soon as possible; requests for extensions long after assignment due dates are unlikely to be granted.

Students are strongly advised to keep their essay drafts and notes until marked essays are returned. It is also prudent to back up the electronic version of your essays. Computer malfunctions are not a legitimate excuse for handing in an essay late.

At the same time as you hand in a paper copy of your essay directly, you are required to upload your essay to TurnItIn.com (see below). The program automatically records the date you do this. Therefore, if for some reason you are unable to hand in your essay directly on the due date, uploading it to TurnItIn on the due date protects you from a late penalty.

Remember, the version of your essay you mount on TurnItIn.com and the paper version you hand in directly must be exactly the same. If you created your essay in separate files on your computer, make sure you merge them into a single file before uploading your essay to TurnItIn.com. Upload your essay in 'doc' format, not 'txt.'

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious academic offence and will be dealt with accordingly. For further clarification and information, please see the University of Toronto's policy on plagiarism at <http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/plagsep.html>.

TurnItIn.com

Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.

Accessibility Needs

The University is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations for a disability, or have any accessibility concerns about this course, the classroom or course materials, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible, at the e-mail address of: disability.services@utoronto.ca, or at the website: <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility>.

GRADING:

15% participation (including 5% attendance)

15% first in-class test on Oct 20 (Week 6)

15% short essay due Oct 27 (Week 7)

35% major essay due Nov 24 (Week 11)

20% second in-class test Dec 1 (Week 12)

Drop Date: Nov 3

Note: penalty for late essays is 2% per day including week-ends

CLASS SCHEDULE:

Week One, Sept. 15: Introduction to Course

Read: start in on background readings (see below)

Week Two, Sept. 22: Game Simulation & Discussion of the Tragedy of the Commons (TOC)

Week Three, Sept. 29: Case-Study #1: Destruction of the Cod Fishery

Read: background readings for this week (see below)

Week Four, Oct. 6: Game Simulation & Discussion of the Free Rider & Collective Action Problems

Week Five, Oct. 13: Case-Study #2: Class Discussion of Climate Change

Read: background readings for this week (see below)

Week Six, Oct. 20: In-class test

Week Seven, Oct. 27: Game Simulation & Discussion of Externalities

First Essay due Oct. 27

Week Eight, Nov. 3: Case-Study #3: Class Discussion of Waste Disposal (a.k.a Garbage) & Consumption as a Policy Issue

Read: background readings for this week (see below)

Drop Date: Nov. 3

Week Nine, Nov. 10: Case-Study #4: The Cosmetic Pesticides Ban

Read: background readings for this week (see below)

Week Ten, Nov. 17: Case-Study #5: Protecting Greenspace & Farmland from Urban Sprawl

Read: background readings for this week (see below)

Week Eleven, Nov. 24: Case-Study #6: Green Consumerism

Read: background readings for this week (see below)

Second Essay due Nov. 24

Week Twelve, Dec. 1: In-class Test

END OF TERM

WEEKLY READINGS:

Week One (Sept. 15):

Getting Started:

- Todd Sandler, *Economic Concepts for the Social Sciences*, chaps. 1 & 2 (excerpts)
- Daniel H. Cole, *Pollution and Property: Comparing Ownership Institutions for Environmental Protection*, chaps. 1 & 2 (excerpts)
- Rose Anne Devlin & R. Quentin Grafton, eds., *Economic Rights and Environmental Wrongs: Property Rights for the Common Good*, chaps. 2 & 4
- Ahmed Hussein, *Principles of Environmental Economics: Economics, Ecology and Public Policy*, pp. 95-100
- *A Guide for the Perplexed* (useful URLs)

Week Two (Sept. 22):

Understanding the Tragedy of the Commons (TOC):

- Garret Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons," *Science*, vol. 162 (13 Dec. 1968), pp. 1243-1248
- Matt Ridley & Bobbi Low, "Can Selfishness Save the Planet?," *Atlantic Monthly*, vol. 272:3 (Sept. 1993), pp. 76-86
- Virginia Hughes, "The (Continuing) Tragedy of the Commons," *SEED Magazine* (4 Dec. 2006)

Supplementary:

- Thomas Dietz, Elinor Ostrom & Paul Stern, "The Struggle to Govern the Commons," *Science*, vol. 302 (12 December 2003), pp. 1907-1912
- Elinor Ostrom et al., "Revisiting the Commons: Local Lessons, Global Challenges," *Science*, vol. 284 (9 April 1999), pp. 278-282
- Elinor Ostrom, "Institutions and the Environment," *Economic Affairs* (September 2008), pp. 24-31
- Joanna Burger, "The Tragedy of the Commons: 30 Years Later," *Environment*, vol. 40:10 (Dec.1998), pp. 4-13, 26-27
- David Feeny et al., "The Tragedy of the Commons: Twenty-Two Years Later," *Human Ecology*, vol. 18:1 (1990), pp. 1-19
- Robert Costanza, "Social Traps and Environmental Policy," *BioScience*, vol. 37:6 (June 1987), pp. 407-412

TOC Case-Studies (Optional)

Urban Trees:

- Robert E. Loeb, "The Tragedy of the Commons: Can Urban Foresters Save City Parks?," *Journal of Urban Forestry*, vol. 85:4 (April 1987), pp. 29-33
- David K. Randall, "Maybe Only God Can Make a Tree, but Only People Can Put a Price on It," *NY Times*, 18 April 2007
- Brian C. Steed & Burnell C. Fischer, "Street Trees – Are They a Misunderstood Common Pool Resource?" (2007)

Niagara Falls:

- Robert G. Healy, "The Commons Problem and Canada's Niagara Falls," *Annals of Tourism Research*, vol. 33:2 (2006), pp. 525-544

Global Warming:

- Paul G. Harris, "Collective Action on Climate Change: The Logic of Regime Failure," *Natural Resources Journal*, vol. 47 (2007), pp. 195-224
- Frederick A.B. Meyerson, "Population, Development and Global Warming: Averting the Tragedy of the Climate Commons," *Population and Environment*, vol. 19:5 (May 1998), pp. 443-462
- Lynda M. Warren, "Protecting the Global Commons," *Forum for Applied Research and Public Policy*, vol. 16:3 (Fall 2001), pp. 6-13
- Stephen M. Gardiner, "The Global Warming Tragedy and the Dangerous Illusion of the Kyoto Protocol," *Ethics & International Affairs*, vol. 18:1 (Winter 2004), pp. 23-39

Whale-Watching:

- Katja Neves-Graça, "Revisiting the Tragedy of the Commons: Ecological Dilemmas of Whale Watching in the Azores," *Human Organization*, vol. 63:3 (2004), pp. 289-300

Free Parking:

- Donald Shoup, "The High Cost of Free Parking," *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, vol. 17 (1997), pp. 3-20
- Jeff Gray, "What's a parking space worth?," *Globe & Mail*, 26 Dec. 2005, p. A20

Africa:

- Lydia Polgreen, "In Niger, Trees and Crops Turn Back the Desert," *NY Times*, 11 February 2007
- Amol Rajan & Mike McCarthy, "He's black, and he's back! Private enterprise saves southern Africa's rhino from extinction," *The Independent*, 17 June 2008

Week Three (Sept. 29):

Destruction of the Atlantic Cod Fishery

The tragedy of the commons (TOC) is highly influential in the diagnosis of modern Canada's greatest environmental disaster, the destruction of the Atlantic cod fishery. Why did the Atlantic cod fishery collapse in the early 1990s? Could this disaster have been avoided? What does the TOC framework tell us about the management of renewable, common-pool resources such as the oceans fishery?

Background on the Atlantic Cod Fishery:

- Greenpeace, "Canadian Atlantic Fisheries Collapse" (<http://archive.greenpeace.org/comms/cbio/canccod.html>)
- Robert Kunzig, "Twilight of the Cod," *Discover*, vol. 16:4 (April 1995)
- Canadian Geographic, "The Rise and Fall of Atlantic Cod" (1997) (<http://www.canadiangeographic.ca/specialfeatures/atlanticcod/codhome.asp>)
- Industry Canada, "The History of the Northern Canada Cod Fishery" (1996) (<http://www.cdli.ca/cod/home1.htm>)

Analysis:

- Bonnie McKay & Alan Christopher Finlayson, "The Political Ecology of Crisis and Institutional Change: The Case of the Northern Cod" (Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Nov. 1995)

- David Ralph Matthews, “Commons versus open access: the collapse of Canada’s East Coast Fishery,” *The Ecologist*, vol. 25: 2-3 (March 1995), pp. 86-97

Market-based Analysis:

- Elizabeth Brubaker, “Unnatural Disaster: How Politics Destroyed Canada’s Atlantic Groundfisheries,” chapter 5 in Terry Anderson, ed., *Political Environmentalism* (Hoover Institution, 2000)
- Donald Leal, *Fencing the Fishery: A Primer on Ending the Race for Fish* (Atlantic Institute for Market Studies, Sept. 2005)

Week Five (Oct. 13):

Climate Change

Climate change (or global warming) can be defined as the environmental issue of our time. The study of climate change from the social science perspective engages many of the concepts familiar to us in this course, such as tragedy of the commons, externalities, and the free rider problem.

Don’t Know Anything about Climate Change? Read:

- IPCC, *Frequently Asked Questions* (2007)
- United Nations Environment Programme: <http://unfccc.int/resource/convkp.html> (easy-to-read introduction to climate change & the Kyoto Protocol)
- U.S. Natural Resources Defence Council (<http://www.nrdc.org/globalwarming/default.asp>)
- *The Economist*, “The Heat Is On” (7 Sept. 2006)

Kyoto & Canada:

- CBC Backgrounder on Kyoto: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/background/kyoto/index.html>
- Douglas Macdonald & Debora VanNijnatten, “Sustainable Development and Kyoto Implementation in Canada: The Road Not Taken,” *Policy Options* (July-August 2005), pp. 13-19
- Chris Green, “Climate Change: Actions, Not Targets,” *Policy Options* (Dec. 2007), pp. 58-62
- Mark Jaccard et al., “Destined for failure? Assessing Canada’s current climate policy,” *Inroads* (Winter 2009), pp. 55-59
- Gwyn Prins & Steve Rayner, “Time to Ditch Kyoto,” *Nature* (25 Oct. 2007), pp. 973-975
- Selected press coverage

AND

Read articles listed under heading for Global Warming as a TOC case-study above

Week Eight (Nov. 3):

Taking Out the Garbage

In this seminar we look at a characteristic feature of Western societies, which many environmentalists identify as the root cause of our problems: our high-consumption lifestyles. It is often argued that public policy fails to compel consumers to think about the negative environmental externalities of their lifestyles. Garbage is a good example of a negative environmental externality. When the market economy fails to incorporate “feedback” mechanisms, consumers can avoid being confronted with the consequences of their lifestyles.

Analysis:

- Jennifer Clapp, “Distancing of Waste: Overconsumption in a Global Economy” (Trent International Political Economy Centre, 2001)

- Juliet Schor, “The New Politics of Consumption,” *Boston Review* (Summer 1999)
- Mark Sagoff, “Do We Consume Too Much?,” *Atlantic Monthly* (June 1997), pp. 80-83, 86-96

Recycling:

- Anne Scheinberg, “The Proof of the Pudding: Urban Recycling in North America as a Process of Ecological Modernisation,” *Environmental Politics* (Winter 2003), vol. 12:4, pp. 49-75

Taking Out the Garbage in Ontario:

- Government of Ontario, *Ontario’s 60% Waste Diversion Goal – A Discussion Paper* (June 2004) (<http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/programs/4651e.pdf>)
- Government of Ontario, Ministry of the Environment (<http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/land/wastedisposal/index.php>)

Week Nine (Nov.10):

Pesticides and the Family Lawn

Environmental externalities abound in the real world but only some become the subject of political regulation. This is a case-study in how a negative environmental externality became politically controversial. The anti-cosmetic pesticides campaign has proved to be a real success for the environmental movement.

The suburban lawn – flat, green, monochromatic and weedless – was the preferred “aesthetic” in post-World War Two suburbia across North America. Why have environmentalists enjoyed some success in challenging the suburban aesthetic? They have been able to tap into the mainstream discourse about public health as it has evolved in recent years. Focusing on North Americans’ anxiety about their personal health was a sophisticated political tactic.

Finally, consider the strategies employed by municipalities such as Toronto, as they seek to regulate the externality of pesticide poison. In its campaign to phase out cosmetic spraying, why has the City relied on the soft policy instruments of marketing and public relations campaigns, instead of just intervening immediately with tough mandatory restrictions?

Background:

- Robert Fulford, “The Lawn: North America's magnificent obsession,” *Azure* (July-August, 1998)
- Gord Perks, “Your lawn, our health,” *Alternatives*, vol. 28:4 (Fall 2002), p 13
- Michael Housely, “The grass is not always greener,” *Medical Post*, vol. 37:16 (24 April 2001)

Try to Read:

- Paul Robbins & Julie Sharp, “The Lawn-Chemical Economy and Its Discontents,” *Antipode*, vol.35:5 (Nov. 2003), pp. 955-979
- L. Anders Sandberg & Jennifer Foster, “Challenging Lawn and Order: Environmental Discourse and Lawn Care Reform in Canada,” *Environmental Politics*, vol. 14:4 (August 2005), pp. 478-494
- Sarah Pralle, “The ‘Mouse That Roared’: Agenda Setting in Canadian Pesticides Politics,” *Policy Studies Journal*, vol. 34:2 (May 2006), pp. 171-194
- Paul Robbins & Julie Sharp, “Producing and Consuming Chemicals: The Moral Economy of the American Lawn,” *Economic Geography*, vol. 79:4 (2003), pp. 425-451

- Clarine Lee-Macaraig & L. Anders Sandberg, “Assessing Municipal Lawn Care Reform: The Case of a Lawn Pesticide By-Law in the Town of Caledon, Ontario, Canada,” *Electronic Green Journal*, Issue #25 (2007)

Toronto’s Pesticides By-Law:

- City of Toronto, Public Health Department, “Pesticides By-Law” (<http://www.city.toronto.on.ca/health/pesticides/index.htm>)

Supporters of the By-Law - Example:

- World Wild Life Fund Canada, “Supreme Court Upholds Municipal Pesticides Restrictions” (<http://wwf.ca/newsroom/?1126>)

Opponents (Industry group):

- CropLife Canada: <http://www.croplife.ca/web/english/index>

Week Ten (Nov. 17):

Protecting Greenspace from Urban Sprawl

So far in this course we have discussed negative environmental externalities. This week we consider *positive* externalities. The campaign to protect open green space and farmland from urban sprawl has a number of policy objectives, such as protecting valuable farmland and forcing governments to check low-density urban development by planning for more densely populated cities. Other goals include protecting the positive environmental externalities open land offers, such as green landscapes, carbon sinks, biodiversity, natural capital and potable groundwater. Farmers in Ontario provide these “environmental services” as the by-product of the business of farming.

It is often argued that just as the market economy oversupplies negative externalities (unless corrected by policy), it also may undersupply positive externalities. Why?

Ontario’s Greenbelt has already earned an international reputation. Question: is the Greenbelt the right policy instrument for ensuring a continuing supply of positive environmental externalities?

Farmland Loss:

- Statistics Canada, “The Loss of Dependable Agricultural Land in Canada,” *Rural and Small Town Canada Analysis Bulletin*, vol. 6:1 (Jan. 2005), pp. 1-13
- Farmland Preservation Research Project, *Farmland in Ontario – Are We Losing a Valuable Resource?* (Ontario Farmland Trust, University of Guelph, Aug. 2004)

Ontario’s Greenbelt:

- Government of Ontario, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, *The Greenbelt* (<http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page187.aspx>)
- Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation (<http://www.greenbelt.ca/possibility-grows-here>)
- CIELAP, *Ontario’s Greenbelt in an International Context* (April 2008)

Sprawl:

- David Gurin, *Understanding Sprawl: A Citizen’s Guide* (David Suzuki Foundation, 2003)
- Raphael Fischler, “The Problem, or Not, of Urban Sprawl,” *Policy Options* (Feb. 2004), pp. 45-48

Analysis:

- Richard Brisbin & Susan Hunter, “The Transformation of Canadian Property Rights?,” *Canadian Journal of Law and Society*, vol. 21:1 (2006), pp. 135-159

- Michael Bunce, “Thirty years of farmland preservation in North America: discourses and ideologies of a movement,” *Journal of Rural Studies*, vol. 14 (1998), pp. 233-247

Week Eleven (Nov. 24):

Shopping and Saving the Planet

Green consumers have been heralded as a sign of the greening of the market economy and as an exercise in ecological citizenship. On the other hand, the phenomenon has also been criticized as a superficial gesture diverting attention from a more fundamental critique of the market economy. Nevertheless, promoting green consumerism has become an important activity for many ENGOs in Western societies.

Analysis:

- Lisa Mastny, “Purchasing for People and the Planet,” in *Worldwatch: The State of the World 2004*, pp. 122-142
- Gill Seyfang, “Shopping for Sustainability: Can Sustainable Consumption Promote Ecological Citizenship?,” *Environmental Politics*, vol. 14:2 (April 2005), pp. 290-306
- Annie Muldon, “Where the Green is: Examining the Paradox of Environmentally Conscious Consumption,” *Electronic Green Journal*, Issue #23 (Spring 2006)
- Michael F. Maniates, “Individualization: Plant a Tree, Buy a Bike, Save the World?,” *Global Environmental Politics*, vol. 1:3 (August 2001), pp. 31-52

ENGO Websites:

- Forest Stewardship Council: <http://www.fscanada.org>
- TransFair Canada Canada: <http://www.transfair.ca>
- Greenpeace Shopper’s Guide: <http://gmoguide.greenpeace.ca>
- York U coffee plantation: <http://www.yorku.ca/lasnubes/index.htm>