

**Faculty of Environmental Studies
York University**

Course Description – Preliminary and Subject to Change

ENVS 5178.03 Canadian Environmental Policy: Institutions, Ideas and Interests

Term: Fall Term 2024

Calendar Description: This course examines the development and implementation of public policies related to the environment and sustainability in a Canadian context. The course will focus on the interaction of institutions, societal forces and ideas in the Canadian environmental policy experience.

Prerequisite: None

Course Director: Professor Mark Winfield
Room 261A HNES

Course Consultation Hours: (Thursdays 2:30-4PM)

Time and Location: Thursdays 9:30AM-12:30PM ROOM HNES 141

Purpose and Objectives of the Course:

Students taking this course will build an understanding of how environmental policy is developed and implemented in Canada and the implications of these processes for environmental sustainability. The focus of the course is on the interaction of ideas, societal forces and institutions in the environmental policy process.

The course begins with an overview of major theoretical approaches to the study of public policy, and environmental policy in particular. The course moves on to provide an overview of the evolution of the ideas around the environment, economic development and sustainability that have informed Canadian environmental policy debates.

The roles of the federal, provincial and local governments in environmental policy formulation and implementation, as well as the impacts of federalism and aboriginal and treaty rights, and international agreements and obligations, will be examined. The influence of societal forces, such as public opinion, the media, political parties and interest groups on environmental policy is also explored. The interaction of these factors is investigated through case studies of a number of current environmental policy issues in Canada, including federal climate change policy.

The specific objectives of the course are to:

1. Give students an overview of the key ideas, institutions and interests that inform Canadian environmental policy.
2. Introduce students to different approaches to the study of public policy in general and environmental policy in particular.
3. Examine the interaction of ideas, actors and institution in the formulation of environmental policy in Canada through a number of case studies.
4. Strengthen students' ability to communicate complex concepts and materials in a concise and effective manner.
5. Provide students with the knowledge and understanding needed to investigate and analyse specific environment policy issues in greater depth and detail and to contribute to the formulation and implementation of future environmental policies.

The course involves formal lectures by the instructor, invited guest speakers and seminar discussions.

Evaluation

1) Participation in mock hearings/panels and submission:	20%
2) Term paper Proposal	10%
3) Term paper	40%
4) Reading Commentaries:	10%
4) General participation in class discussions:	20%

For the **reading commentaries** each source readings are to be summarized concisely in three parts; a description of the main point the student took from the reading; the student's response to the reading and a class discussion question based on the reading. Each contribution need not exceed 250 words. A minimum of ten logs on readings chosen from the course reading list must be completed by each students. Commentaries should be handed in at the beginning of class. Websites for review included in the required readings can be the subject of commentaries.

A **Term Paper** of approximately 20 double spaced typed pages is required. The paper, based on secondary literature and some primary research, providing critical analysis of the factors which contributed to a specific Canadian environmental policy decision examined in the course will be required. The topic for the Term Paper will be identified by the student, described in a two page proposal to the instructor, and approved by the instructor. **Term paper proposals are due October 24, 2024.** Students are

encouraged to submit their proposals prior to this date, for early approval. A specific assignment sheet and marking criteria will be provided in class.

The deadline for submission of the Term Paper is the last class of the course (November 28, 2024). The Paper must be submitted in hardcopy. No electronic submissions are permitted.

Most weeks, the course will include a mock **parliamentary hearing** on current issues in Canadian environmental policy. In these sessions the discussion will open with panels of 4-5 students presenting different stakeholder (e.g. industry, academic, government, environmental NGO, public, aboriginal) perspectives and recommendations on the topic under study. Stakeholder roles will be assigned on a random basis. Following 10 minute opening statements from each witness, class members, acting as members of a parliamentary committee, will question the witnesses. The question and answer session will be followed by a vote on a mock parliamentary resolution about the issue. Each panel member will be required to provide a 4-6 page **submission** on outlining the position and recommendations of their constituency on the issue under discussion. All students are required to participate in a panel. Students will have an opportunity to identify 1st and 2nd choices for the panel sessions they would like to participate in. The total number of panel sessions will depend on final course enrolment. Evaluation of participation in the panel sessions will be based 50% on presentation and responses to questions and 50% on the contents of the brief submitted. Students will be evaluated individually on the panel participation.

Your **Participation Grade** will be based on your attendance and contributions to class and tutorial discussions, and demonstration of awareness of issues addressed in the required readings. Your participation grade will be assigned by the course instructor through a subjective assessment of these factors.

Letter and Numeric Grades

Students will have the option of having a numeric and letter grade as well as their pass/fail result included in their course evaluation. Please indicate if you would not like to have a numeric and letter grade included in your evaluation by the 3rd week of class.

Assignment Submissions, and Lateness Penalties

Proper academic performance depends on students doing their work not only well, but on time. Accordingly, **the assignments for ENVS courses must be received by the Instructor on the due date specified for the assignment.** Assignments must be handed in *in hard copy to the course instructor at the beginning of class on the day they are due.* Note that assignments should not be deposited in the Instructor's mailbox.

Lateness Penalty:

Assignments received later than the due date will be penalized 5% of the value of the assignment *per day* that the assignments are late. For example, if an assignment worth 20% of the total course grade is a day late, 1 point out of 20 (or 5% per day) will be deducted. Exceptions to the lateness penalty for valid reasons such as illness, compassionate grounds, etc. will be entertained by the Course Director **only** when supported by written documentation (e.g., a doctor's letter).

Required Reading

Course Readings Consist of the following:

Texts:

Required Texts Required Readings

The following books will be used through the course:

P.Muldoon, J.Williams, A.Lucas, R.B.Gibson and P.Pickfield *An Introduction to Environmental Law and Policy in Canada 3rd Edition – Custom e-edition through York University Bookstore* (Toronto: Emond-Montgomery Publishers, 2020) Selected Chapters – available directly as e-book via university library
<https://www.vitalsource.com/en-ca/products/an-introduction-to-environmental-law-and-policy-various-v9781772550177>.

M. Hessing, M. Howlett and T. Summerville, *Canadian Natural Resource and Environmental Policy: Political Economy and Public Policy* (UBC Press 2005) – E-book available through York University Library System

D. Van Nijnatten, ed., *Canadian Environmental Policy and Politics* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2024)

J.Malloy and C.Collier, *The Politics of Ontario 2nd edition* (Toronto: UTP, 2024) E-book available through York University library

D.Savoie, *Democracy in Canada: The Disintegration of Our Institutions* (Kingston and Montreal: Queen's McGill Press, 2019) E-book available through the University Library

M.Winfield, S.Hill and J.Gaede, *Sustainable Energy Transitions in Canada* (UBC Press 2023) – open access edition - <https://www.ubcpres.ca/sustainable-energy-transitions-in-canada-oa>

Course Website

The course website may be accessed via e-class

Schedule of Weekly Topics (Preliminary and Subject to Change)

All readings for each week will be available on course e-class site.

Week	Topic
1. (Sept 5)	Course Introduction Climate Change Case study and approaches to the study of public policy (Ideas, Institutions, Interests and landscapes)
2. (Sept 12)	The policy process and theories of policy change
3. (Sept 19)	Ideas about resources, environment, development and sustainability in Canada
4. (Sept 26)	Institutional Context: Overview:, Cabinet and Parliament.
5. (Oct 3)	Federalism; Federal and Provincial Roles; Courts and Rule of Law.
6. (Oct 10)	Indigenous Peoples and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights
7 (Oct 17)	Reading Week
8. (Oct 24)	Term Paper Proposals Due Term paper proposal presentations.
9. (Oct 31)	The International Dimension
10. (Nov 7)	The Local Dimension; Institutional Summary
11. (Nov 14)	Societal Forces I: Interest Groups and Non-State Actors
12. (Nov 21)	Societal Forces in Canadian Environmental Policy II: Public Opinion, media and political parties
13. (Nov 28)	Term Papers Due Term paper presentations

Academic Honesty

All York students are subject to policies regarding academic honesty as set out by the Senate of York University and by the Faculty of Environmental Studies (FES). Students are strongly encouraged to read the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty, a copy of which can be found on the York University web-site (<http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/legislation/senate/acadhone.htm>). FES is committed to maintaining the highest standards of academic integrity. Please be advised that conduct that violates the ethical or legal standards of the University community may result in serious consequences. For more information, please contact the Director, Student and Academic Services and/or the FES Writing Program Coordinator.

Research Ethics

Students who conduct a research study using human participants must submit the following for approval prior to the conduct of research:

1. three copies of a proposal outlining the purpose of the research and the methodology to be used
2. three copies of the Faculty of Environmental Studies Human Participants Research Protocol Form, and
3. three copies of the Written Informed Consent form or a script of Verbal Informed Consent (Verbal Informed consent is permissible only in extenuating circumstances, where written communication is not feasible).

This material will be reviewed by a Sub-committee of the Research and Awards Committee. Reviews will take up to 2 weeks from the date of submission. If the research is not approved prior to the conduct of the research, then the research will not have received research ethics clearance and will be deemed unacceptable for submission as a component of this course.

Information regarding the use of human participants in research studies may be found on the Faculty of Graduate Studies webpage <http://www.yorku.ca/grads/polc/ethics.htm>.

Students are advised that all human participants in the research must have either signed a written consent form or have provided oral consent for their participation in the research. Students also are advised that the consent forms must be retained by the Principal Investigator for two years following the completion of the research.

PLEASE NOTE:

Students who feel that there are extenuating circumstances that may interfere with the successful completion of the course requirements are encouraged to discuss the matter with the Course Director as soon as possible. Students with physical, learning or other disabilities who require reasonable accommodations in teaching style or evaluation

methods should discuss this with the Course Director early in the term so that appropriate arrangements can be made

