**PSC 482: Special Topics**
University of Rhode Island, Winter J-Term 2020
Monday-Thursday 1pm-4pm in Washburn 132
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Office Hours: Monday-Thursday 12-1 and by Appointment
Office: Washburn 129

**Course Description**

This course is a special topics course that focuses on past and current controversies that are related to our Mount Hope Bay and the Narragansett Bay.

**General Course Goals**

By the end of this course you should gain an appreciation for how our watershed and the public policy decisions that are related to it are shaped by regional politics. We will focus on several past and contemporary policy controversies, including the conflict over the Brayton Point Power Plant’s discharge of cooling water into the Mount Hope Bay, current policy challenges related to water pollution and management of it, an overview of organizations like Save the Bay and its role in Dam Removal policy, and micro-level policy responses to environmental problems. As part of the curriculum we will physically travel to sites along the Mount Hope Bay and the Narragansett Bay as we are learning about the material.

**Required Text:**

I will be making all readings available to you online.

**Grading:**

This course is part experiential, and part content-based. You will have the opportunity to earn a total of 300 points for this course. I have divided these opportunities into two areas:

1. Participation – 100 points.
2. Journal Entries – 100 points.

**Percentage Grading Scale:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100-93</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>92-90</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89-87</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<tr>
<td>86-83</td>
<td>B</td>
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<td>82-80</td>
<td>B-</td>
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<td>79-77</td>
<td>C+</td>
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<td>76-73</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>72-70</td>
<td>C-</td>
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<tr>
<td>69-67</td>
<td>D+</td>
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<tr>
<td>66-60</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>59 and below</td>
<td>F</td>
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</tbody>
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**Pathways to Success:**

1. Read all assigned readings. Classroom discussion will be more productive and you will do well on your journal entries, participation, and final reflection paper having done them.
2. It is really important for you to make it to the classroom and to make it to the classroom on time because several of our classes will occur in the field, which will require our prompt boarding of transportation to make it to our sites on time. When we are in the field you should try your best to dress warmly and for the elements. I will ask that all students be present on the van because we will be discussing course content on our way to site visits.

3. Turn assignments in on time. Although I do accept late work, it will be reflected in the grade for the assignment (5% taken off if handed in after the time it is due but on the same day; 10% taken off thereafter for each day that the assignment is late with a maximum fifty point reduction). I do not recognize funerals for friends or the illnesses of others as personal tragedies under the university’s attendance policy.

4. I also ask that you be very familiar with the terms of this syllabus. I’ve noticed that when students are not familiar with the policies that we have agreed to in this syllabus that I am the one who comes across as inflexible when, in truth, we both have an obligation to execute this agreement together.

The following student handbook policy applies to deadlines:

8.51.13 When serious illness, accident, personal tragedy, or other serious matters prevent students from attending classes, taking examinations, or meeting deadlines, the instructor(s) shall offer the student an alternative [means of assessment] listed in 8.51.11 [of the student handbook]. [Note: I do not interpret the university’s policy on attendance to allow students to miss exams and/or deadlines for attendance at a friend’s funeral].

Final Paper:

For this project you will be asked to produce a Final Reflection Paper that describes your experience in this course and how it has informed your perspective on the watershed that surrounds us. An assignment description is available in Brightspace.

Journal Entries:

You will be asked to develop three journal entries that describe your reflections on the readings, classroom lectures, guest lectures, and experiential trips. I hope that you use this opportunity to post pictures or videos that you have taken during our experiential trips or during your own independent ventures that occur when we are outside of the classroom. I will be grading each of your journal entries using a rubric that will be provided to you in the Forums tab. As part of the Journal Entry assignment, you will be asked to engage with your peers by generating insights in response to their journal entries.

Participation:

This course is an experiential and a content-based course, which means that we will place a major emphasis on learning experiences in the field, as well as the content that will enhance these experiences. Everyone, therefore, is responsible for carefully reading the material before class so that we can maximize discussion and so that your experience will be most fruitful. Your participation grade will be based on your attendance, active listening skills, contribution to group learning exercises, and the insights that are contributed to classroom discussions.

Accommodations for Special Needs:
Any student with a documented disability is welcome to contact me as early in the semester as possible so that we may arrange reasonable accommodations. As part of this process, please be in touch with Disability Services for Students Office at 330 Memorial Union, 401-874-2098.

**Academic Integrity:**

All submitted work must be your own. If you consult other sources (class readings, articles or books from the library, articles available through internet databases, or websites) these MUST be properly documented, or you will be charged with plagiarism and will receive an F for the paper. In most cases, this may result in a failure of the course as well. In addition, the charge of academic dishonesty will go on your record in the Office of Student Life. If you have any doubt about what constitutes plagiarism, visit the URI Student Handbook, and UNIVERSITY MANUAL sections on Plagiarism and Cheating at [http://www.uri.edu/facsen/8.20-8.27.html - cheating](http://www.uri.edu/facsen/8.20-8.27.html).

Any good writer’s handbook as well as reputable online resources will offer help on matters of plagiarism and instruct you on how to acknowledge source material. If you need more help understanding when to cite something or how to indicate your references I am available to answer these questions.

**Academic Enhancement Center:**

This is a challenging course. Success requires that you keep pace with the work, understand course concepts, and study effectively. The Academic Enhancement Center ([http://www.uri.edu/aec/](http://www.uri.edu/aec/)) is a great place to do this. At the AEC you can work alone or in groups, and tutors and professional learning specialists are available to help you to learn, manage your time and work, and study well. On the Kingston campus, it’s open Monday through Thursday from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Fridays until 1 p.m. All services are free (the coffee is free as well!), and no appointment is needed. You can call for complete information at 874-2367, or just stop by the center on the fourth floor of Roosevelt Hall. In Providence, the Academic Skills Center (ASC) is at 239 Shepard Building, (401) 277-5221. Hours are posted each semester at [http://www.uri.edu/prov/studentresources/help/academicskills.html](http://www.uri.edu/prov/studentresources/help/academicskills.html). In addition, the Saturday Skills for Success program offers workshops and tutoring from 10 am -1pm during fall and spring semesters.

**The Writing Center:**

The Writing Center is for “all writers, all disciplines, at all levels, and all stages of writing.” If an instructor suggests that you go to the Writing Center, it is not a punishment, and does mean that you are a terrible writer. It means the instructor wants you to receive more individualized attention to your writing than s/he is able to provide, given the constraints of the class. It will only improve your grade. If possible, call ahead for an appointment (874-4690). Drop-in tutorials are often available. You may make repeat appointments, requesting the same tutor each time if you wish. See their Web Page: [http://www.uri.edu/artsci/writing/center/index.shtml](http://www.uri.edu/artsci/writing/center/index.shtml) for tips on how to make the best of your Writing Center visit.

**Standards of Behavior:**

Students are responsible for being familiar with and adhering to the published “Community Standards of Behavior: University Policies and Regulations” which can be accessed in the [University Student Handbook](http://www.uri.edu/facsen/8.20-8.27.html). If
you must come in late, please do not disrupt the class. Please turn off all cell phones, pagers, or any electronic devices.

**Religious Holidays:**

It is the policy of the University of Rhode Island to accord students, on an individual basis, the opportunity to observe their traditional religious holidays. Students desiring to observe a holiday of special importance must provide written notification to each instructor.

**Illness Due to Flu:**

The nation is experiencing widespread influenza-like illness. If any of us develop flu-like symptoms, we are being advised to stay home until the fever has subsided for 24 hours. So, if you exhibit such symptoms, please do not come to class. Notify me at ajley@uri.edu of your status, and we will communicate through the medium we have established for the class. We will work together to ensure that course instruction and work is completed for the semester.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have posted simple methods to avoid transmission of illness. These include: covering your mouth and nose with tissue when coughing or sneezing; frequent washing or sanitizing your hands; avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth; and staying home when you are sick. For more information please view [www.cdc.gov/flu](http://www.cdc.gov/flu). URI Health Services web page, [www.health.uri.edu](http://www.health.uri.edu), will carry advice and local updates.

**Syllabus Amendments:**

In a course that examines current political events and controversies, I may need to make changes to this syllabus. Please pay attention to emails for any changes that may be made throughout the semester.

**Course Outline**

**Thur, Jan 2:** Syllabus Overview, Class Introduction, and the Historical Context of Environmental Policymaking.
- Rosenbaum Ch. 2, All
- Costain and Lester Handout, focus on pp. 22-27 (Available via Brightspace)

**Mon, Jan 6:** Wicked Problems and Environmental Policymaking
- Weber, Lach, and Steel Handout (Available via Brightspace)
- Layzer, Ch. 1 (Available via Brightspace)
- Rosenbaum Ch. 3, All (Available via Brightspace)

**Tue, Jan 7:** Contemporary Challenges in the Mount Hope and Narragansett Bay: Stormwater Management
- Guest Speaker: Clean Water Action’s Johnathan Berard
- Parikh, et al. 2005 (Available via Brightspace)
- Green Infrastructure for the Coast Available [Here](http://example.com)

**Journal Entry #1 Due on Sunday 01/07 by 11:55pm**
Wed, Jan 8: Class Trip to Fields Point CSO and Wastewater Treatment Facility

Thur, Jan 9: Site Visit to Clean Ocean Access and Sachuest Point National Wildlife Refuge
Reading Related to Micro-Level Policy Responses to Enviro Issues
Pastore: Prologue and Chapter 3 (Available via Brightspace)
Ocean Special Area Management Plan, pp. 3-45 available Here

Journal Entry #2 Due on Tuesday 01/09 by 11:55pm

Mon, Jan 13: The Brayton Point Power Point Conflict and the Politics of Large-Scale Energy Infrastructure
Ley and DuBois Handout (Available via Brightspace)

Tue, Jan 14: Site Visit to Shady Lee Dam for Discussion with Save the Bay Riverkeeper Kate McPherson
Ortoleva, Ch. 3 (Available via Brightspace)
Article on Dam Removal TBD
Save the Bay Blogs TBD
Riverkeeper Handout (Available via Brightspace)

Journal Entry #3 Due on Sunday 01/14 by 11:55pm

Wed, Jan 15: The Politics of Renewable Wind Policy
Layzer Cape Wind Handout (Available via Brightspace)
Block Island Wind Farm Environmental Report Sec. 1-1 through 1-11 Here

Thur, Jan 16: Tentative Site Visit to Johnston to learn about Resource Recovery
Reading TBD

Final Reflection Paper Due on Friday 01/17 by 11:55pm