WASHINGTON INTERNSHIP INSTITUTE

ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND POLICY STUDIES – SPRING 2014

COURSE OVERVIEW

This class will examine both the history of American environmental politics and governance and several current major environmental issues such as energy, oceans, and water. The first part of the class will explore many of the movements and policies that have shaped the current state of environmental law and policy in the United States. These topics include Progressivism, Conservation, and the modern environmental movement, which led to many of the environmental laws in use today such as the *Clean Water Act*, the *National Environmental Policy Act*, and the *Endangered Species Act*. Interactions between local, state, federal, and international bodies and regulations will also be investigated.

As so many environmental issues are global in scope, this course will also refer to key players and documents in the international environmental arena such as the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the UNEP Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans, and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

Major environmental issues such as sustainable cities, energy sustainability, fisheries management, plastic marine litter, and water management will be studied in detail during the latter half of the course. Domestic and global players and policies will be identified within each of these topic areas. Current and proposed solutions will also be discussed and analyzed.

Finally, class exercises and environmental negotiation simulations will provide students with practical experience to refine skills needed to navigate in the field of environmental law and policy. Students will write Op-Eds on current environmental topics such as hydraulic fracturing (fracking), deliver three minute testimonies such as would be presented during public hearings, and create a blog. Additional exercises during class will use real environmental data and existing regulations to practice skills such as performing cost-benefit analyses or distributing pollutant allocations under the Clean Water Act.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Richard N.L. Andrews, 2006. *Managing the Environment, Managing Ourselves, a History of American Environmental Policy*, New Haven: Yale University Press.

Marc Reisner, 1993. *Cadillac Desert*, New York: Viking.

Fred Pearce, 2006. *When the Rivers Run Dry*, Boston: Beacon Press.

A complete list of links to additional required readings available online will be provided in class.

GRADING:

Course grades are determined by completing short assignments (25%), creating a blog and posting entries (15%), composing a short paper and attending either a federal or city-level government meeting (20%), writing a final research paper (20%), delivering a presentation on the final paper (10%), and class participation (10%). The short assignments include Op-Eds, testimonies, and reading guides. Late assignments will be awarded 85% credit if turned in by 10:00 AM the next morning, and 75% if turned in the following day by 5:00 PM. If you have special circumstances that prevent you from turning in an assignment on time, please contact the instructor as soon as possible.

Extra Credit: 5% extra credit can be received by obtaining a Library of Congress researcher card and including citations in research paper from references available at the Library of Congress (Please include photocopy of researcher card at the end of research paper.)

ASSIGNMENT TIMELINE:

Week 4 – Create blog and post first entry by midnight on February 12.

Week 5 – Turn in one paragraph description of topic for final research paper.

Week 6 – Printed copy of Op-Ed due in class.

Week 7 – Post blog entry by midnight on March 5.

Week 8 – Bring in final research paper outline to discuss during class.

Week 9 – Printed copy of short paper on public hearings due in class.

Week 10 – Post blog entry by midnight on March 26.

Week 11 – Deliver 3 minute testimony during class.

Week 13 –Post blog entry by midnight on April 16.

Week 14 – Printed copy of final paper due in class. Student research presentations.

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Short Assignments: Write an Op-Ed (7.5%), deliver a testimony (7.5%), and complete Reading Guides (10%)

Blog: 1) Create personal blog and post entry (By Week 4) (5%) 2) post blog entries discussing readings or current environmental issues in weeks 7, 10, and 13 (10%).

Short paper: Attend IN-PERSON 1) a Congressional briefing, and / or 2) a city-level meeting (e.g. city council or commission) or a public agency hearing. If possible to attend both types, attend meetings on similar topics to provide insight into the relationships between different levels of government. Briefings or meetings must deal with an environmental issue for at least part of the published agenda. Write a 5-6 page paper on the hearing. Describe hearings, kinds of environmental issues discussed, regulatory constraints, and decisions taken, if any. If no decisions are taken, describe what you think may be the factors delaying the process. How do the topics discussed or actions taken in the hearing tie into course themes? (20%)

Research Paper: 10-12 pages (20%)
Research Presentation: (10%)
More information will be provided on the research paper and presentation in class.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

Week 1, Jan 22: Environmental Politics and Governance Overview. How to Develop and Present Testimonies and Write Op-Eds.

Week 2, Jan 29: Historical Antecedents and the Constitutional Framework for Environmental Politics

Week 3, Feb 5: The Rise of Interstate Regulations, Progressivism, Urban Sanitary Reform, and the Conservation Movement

Week 4, Feb 12: The Era of Large Water Projects (e.g., Hoover Dam).

Week 5, Feb 19: The Rise of the Modern Environmental Movement. Federal Regulations such as NEPA, ESA, CWA, CAA.

Week 6, Feb 26: The Pendulum of Environmental Politics: Reform or Reaction?

Week 7, Mar 5: Overview of International Environmental Law and Policies.

Week 8, Mar 12: Approaches to Regulation: Command and Control, Performance Standards, Voluntary Standards and Markets, Economic Tools.

Week 9, Mar 19: Sustainable Cities and Green Infrastructure.

Week 10, Mar 26: International and Domestic Water Management Issues.

Week 11, Apr 2: Energy Needs and Impacts on Water Management and Quality.

Week 12, Apr 9: Impacts and Management of Plastic Litter in the Marine Environment.

Week 13, Apr 16: Fisheries Management and Aquaculture.

Week 14, Apr 23: Course wrap-up, student final research presentations.