**Chatham University**

**Course Syllabus**

**SUS401**

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**Course Title: Policy and Decision Making**

**Course Number: SUS401**

**Semester/Year: Spring 2020**

**Class Meeting Date & Time: MW 4:30 to 5:45 PM**

**Classroom: Coolidge Hall Room 236**

**Instructor: Patricia De Marco**

**Contact Information:** [**PDeMarco@chatham.edu**](mailto:PDeMarco@chatham.edu) **412-708-9277**

**Office Hours: Wednesday 2:00 to 4:00 PM by appointment**

**COURSE INFORMATION**

**Course Description:**

This course examines contrasting rationales supporting environmental values and interests that compete against those values; the enactment and mechanics of regulations and statutes; environmental economics and politics. The ethical, socio-economic, legal and political implications will be scrutinized through case studies of local and/or global environmental and ecological concern.

The topic for the course this year is: **Ethical Considerations for Public Policy to Address Climate Change.**

**Program Outcomes**

This course informs the following program outcomes.

1. Students are able to demonstrate and explain the socio-ecological determinants of complex systems.
2. Students understand the relationship between environmental and human wellbeing, and explain how they change over time.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

At the conclusion of the course, the students will be able to:

1: Understand the public policy process and the forces that shape public policy decisions

2: Identify and determine the influence of stakeholders on public policy decisions

3: Articulate the ethical implications of public policy decisions for environmental justice considerations

4: Understand the intergenerational implications of public policy decisions

**Required Texts and Materials:**

Patricia M. DeMarco. *Pathways to Our Sustainable Future- A Global Perspective from Pittsburgh*.2017. (University of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh) ISBN `3-978-0-8229-6501-5 (available electronically)

**Optional Texts and Materials:**

Joseph R. Des Jardins. *Environmental Ethics- An Introduction to Environmental Philosophy*, third edition. 2001. (Wadsworth Croup, Belmont) ISBN 0-534-51966-0

Articles and additional readings will be posted on Moodle

**Course Requirements:** (tests, assignments, etc.)

Students are required to write analyses and responses based on the readings that will form the basis of class discussions.

* Five writing assignments will be required.
* There are two take home papers due at Midterm and End of term.
* Students will have a group project writing a case study on an environmental ethics issue of their choosing, and present to the class in the form of a recordable podcast.
* Class participation in discussion is required.

**Course Policies:**

* **Attendance and participation:**
* Every student enrolled at Chatham accepts the responsibility to attend all required class meetings. To obtain the fullest benefit from their courses, students must participate fully. This implies attending regularly, engaging in course activity, completing work on time, and making up work missed because of an emergency absence. **It is the student’s responsibility to let the course instructor know within the drop-add period if he or she will have to miss class for religious reasons, athletics, or other.**
* **Grading**

Written homework 100 points (20 each for 5 assignments)

Two Topic Papers 150 points (75 points each)

Case Study 100 points (40 for oral and 50 for written presentation 10 for teamwork)

Class Participation 150 points (5 points x 30 classes including field trips)

**Total: 500 points**

* **Missed Exams/Assignments**

Students may make up missed assignments without penalty ONLY with advance notice to the instructor. Please notify me if you are active military to accommodate your class requirements to your service schedule.

* **Behavior**

Courteous and respectful behavior is expected from all class participants.

**SUS 401 Class Schedule and Assignments**

**Week 1: Jan 6. Introduction**

**Values Exercise: instrumental or extrinsic value; inherent or intrinsic value; Which things have rights? Anthropocentrism.**

[**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KAJsdgTPJpU**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KAJsdgTPJpU)

**Writing assignment #1:** What is your feeling about the effect of the climate change issue on your own life? What are your goals for this class? (Due Jan 8)

**Reading Assignment**:

1. Robert Costanzaet.al. “Twenty Years of Ecosystem Services: How Far Have We Come and How Far Do We Still Need to Go?” *Ecosystem Services*.28(2017) 1-16. <http://www.robertcostanza.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/2017_J_Costanza-et-al.-20yrs.-EcoServices.pdf>
2. *Pathways.* Introduction and Chapter 1.

**Jan 8- Discussion: Climate Values and stakeholders**

**Class Exercise- Stakeholder Mapping:** How would placing value on ecosystem services affect public policy decisions? Select a specific example and explain how the positions of stakeholders would change. Class will work in groups from specific examples.

**Week 2 M- Jan 13. Ethics as a Lens for Evaluating Public Policy**

Ethical frameworks in policy decisions

Biodiversity role in life support system, ecosystem services, endangered species and extinction, habitat preservation and land use

**W- Jan 15 -** Discussion: Are some species more important than others? How do you decide? What is the effect of losing a species to extinction?

**Writing Assignment#2**. Discuss an example of the effect of an energy system on biodiversity. What are the ethical implications involved? (Due Jan 22) Not to exceed two pages. Cite sources.

**Reading Assignment**:

1. *Pathways* Chapter 4- Transforming the Energy System.
2. *Fourth National Climate Assessment*

Overview, <https://nca2018.globalchange.gov/chapter/1/>

Chapter 4. <https://nca2018.globalchange.gov/chapter/4/> and

Chapter 7. <https://nca2018.globalchange.gov/chapter/7/>

**Week 3. M - Jan 20 – No Class- Martin Luther King Holiday**

**W - Jan 22 - Public Policy Tools for addressing Climate Change**

Evolution of National Energy Policy; major forces of change; global perspective; energy as a force for development; renewable energy system potential

**Reading Assignment:**

1. United Nations Climate Report 2019. Chapter 1. <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/assets/pdf/cas_report_11_dec.pdf>

**Week 4. M – Jan 27. Environmental and Social Justice Considerations in Climate Change**

**Guests:** Tina Doose, President Braddock Borough Council & Jarah Doose – discussion of environmental justice issues at local government level. Community actions in transition.

**W - Jan 29.** Discussion of student examples from Writing Assignment #2. What ethical considerations arise from examples presented?

**Writing Assignment #3.** Many controversies in addressing a transition to a sustainable future revolve around jobs vs environment. How do you address this conflict using an ethical argument? Use a specific example. (Due Feb 10)

**Reading Assignment:**

1. Fourth National Climate Assessment, Chapter 11. Urban Infrastructure. <https://nca2018.globalchange.gov/chapter/11/>

2. U.N. Emissions Gap Report- Chapters 1-3 (25 pages) <https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/30798/EGR19ESEN.pdf?sequence=13>

**Week 5. M -Feb 3.** **Impact of NOT acting on climate change- Who profits and who pays**

**W – Feb 5. Guest Participant: Mike Stout, Al Hart** Discussion session: Discuss examples of jobs vs environment. What are the major impediments to addressing climate change policy? What actions can overcome the impediments? Class will work in teams to identify impediments and approaches to solutions.

**Reading Assignment:**

1. UN Climate Report 2019. Chapters 2-3 Pages 4-31

<https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/assets/pdf/cas_report_11_dec.pdf>

1. Fourth National Climate Assessment. Chapter 16 International Interests

<https://nca2018.globalchange.gov/chapter/16/>

**Week 6. M- Feb 10. International justice issues in climate change**

**W – Feb 12** Discussion Session: What are the ethical considerations that arise from disparities in climate impacts on different areas of the world? What are the obligations of more developed nations toward undeveloped nations? Class will work in teams to identify issues.

**Reading Assignment:**

1. Migration and Climate Change. (pdf file on Moodle)

**Week 7. M-Feb 17 Intergenerational Justice Issues**

Active Hope and Empowerment; ethical implications of U.S. Immigration policy

**W- Feb 19. Guest Lecture- Congressman Mike Doyle**

**Mid-Term Exam: Take- Home open book exam. Due Feb 24.**

**Week 8. M - Feb 24. Energy Transition Issues:** Food/Energy/Water Nexus-

complexity in policy process.

* **W-Feb 26. Trends in Environmental Justice- Mustafa Ali** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pXO6ANoAJOs> 32 min Keynote at 2018 P4 Conference. Discussion: Who has responsibility to assure environmental and social justice aspects in making public policy decisions? What are the forces for change? What mechanisms can you employ as agents of change?

**Group Project:** Develop a case study in the ethical considerations of a specific policy for addressing climate change. **Guideline for writing a Case Study** (on Moodle.) To be presented as a 15 - minute presentation (recordable for use as a podcast from this class) and a written document supporting the presentation. Groups of 3, with presentations to be made on April 13 and 15 in class. **Group topic proposal – one page including topic, names of all participants is Due March 9.** (You may interview a guest, interview and record witnesses, or visit a location to illustrate your topic.)

**Reading Assignment:**

1. What Is Emissions Trading? <https://www.epa.gov/emissions-trading-resources/what-emissions-trading>
2. The Political History of Cap and Trade. Smithsonian Magazine <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/the-political-history-of-cap-and-trade-34711212/>
3. California’s Cap and Trade Program. <https://www.edf.org/sites/default/files/californias-cap-and-trade-program-step-by-step.pdf>

**Spring Break March 1-8**

**Week 9. M- March 9. Policy Approaches to Climate Change:** I. Cap and Trade Emissions Control.

**W- March 11. Discussion:** What ethical considerations emerge from a cap and trade emissions system? What factors allowed its adoption in California but prevented enactment in the US Congress in 2009-2010? What are the strengths and weaknesses of this approach?

**Reading Assignment:**

1. The Clean Power Plan <https://archive.epa.gov/epa/cleanpowerplan/fact-sheet-overview-clean-power-plan.html>
2. Affordable Clean energy Plan <https://www.vox.com/2019/6/19/18684054/climate-change-clean-power-plan-repeal-affordable-emissions>

**Week 10. M- March 16. Policy Approaches to Climate Change II.** Clean Power Plan/ Affordable Clean Energy

**W- March 18. Guest Lecture- Pittsburgh Climate Action Plan**

**Reading Assignment:**

1. Carbon Tax and Carbon Pricing. <https://www.carbonpricingleadership.org/news/2019/8/6/what-you-need-to-know-about-a-federal-carbon-tax-in-the-united-states>
2. Carbon Tax Plans- How they Compare and Why Oil Giants support one of them. <https://insideclimatenews.org/news/07032019/carbon-tax-proposals-compare-baker-shultz-exxon-conocophillips-ccl-congress>

**Week 11. M- March 23. Approaches to Climate Change III.** Carbon Tax Proposals.

**W-March 25.** Discussion: What are the strengths and weaknesses of climate action plans addressing carbon pricing? What tools are in use at the federal level? What tools are available? How do stakeholders affect policy actions?

**Reading Assignment:**

1. The Green New Deal Resolution <https://www.congress.gov/116/bills/hres109/BILLS-116hres109ih.pdf>
2. Goals of the Green New Deal <https://www.npr.org/2019/02/07/691997301/rep-alexandria-ocasio-cortez-releases-green-new-deal-outline>

**Week 12. M- March 30. Approaches to Climate Change IV.** The Green New Deal.

**W- April 1.** Discussion of Action on climate change at state and local levels. Role of citizens?

**Exam #2. Open-Book Exam. Due April 8.**

**Week 13. M- April 6. Climate Action at the State Level. Opportunities and Barriers.**

**W- April 8. Climate Action at Local Level- Citizen Actions**

**Week 14. M- April 13. Student Project Presentations Groups 1-4**

**W- April 15. Student Presentations Groups 5-7**