

CSUS 464
Environmental and Natural Resource Policy in
Michigan

Spring 2017
Tuesday 6:00 – 7:50PM Tuesday with 1 hour arranged
221 Natural Resources Bldg.

Instructor

Dr. Chuck Nelson, 142 Natural Resources Bldg.
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Office Hours: 10:00 – 11:30PM Wednesday & other times by appointment

Catalog Course Description

State legislative process and its role in environmental and natural resource policy formulation. Influence of lobbying, citizen engagement and political factors.

Pre-requisite: CSUS 200 or EEP 255 or approval of department
Credits: 3 (Lecture/Recitation/Discussion)

Introduction

This course focuses on Michigan environmental and natural resource policy making with special emphasis on the legislative process. We live in a representative democracy that is only effective if stakeholders are actively engaged with elected and appointed officials. Environment and natural resources are taken in the broad sense and touch a wide variety of sustainability concerns including the overarching effects of community (e.g. roads, sewage, etc.) and many key sectors including agriculture, energy, air and water quality, remediation, forestry, outdoor recreation and tourism. The course examines the influences on state policy of the array of actors in the policy process. This includes the executive, legislative and judicial branches of state government, as well as the influences on the state of federal and local units of government. In addition, it highlights the role of the citizenry, the cornerstone of our democratic form of government. Citizens are key actors as they represent corporate, non-profit and individual interests through lobbying, grass roots movements and asserted benefits and costs. As a citizen and educated professional, you will be active in the policy process on an environmental/natural resource issue of your choosing currently before the legislature.

Objectives

By the end of this course students should be able to:

1. Understand and demonstrate a working knowledge of the Michigan legislative process.
2. Demonstrate a working knowledge of executive, judicial and legislative branches of Michigan government and the range of citizen involvement related to environmental and natural resource issues.
3. Understand and demonstrate objective policy analysis expertise regarding Michigan environmental and natural resource issues.

4. Understand and demonstrate policy advocacy expertise regarding Michigan environmental and natural resources issues.
5. Understand and demonstrate a working knowledge of Michigan's natural and environmental resources and the agencies and rules that regulate their use.

Required Text

There is no required text. All required helpful/suggested readings are available free on the web as noted on the class calendar. They lend context to class, speakers and assignments.

Hour Arranged

During the first 3 class periods, the hour arranged will be in 221 NR, so class will run until 8:30PM on 1/10, 1/17, 1/24 and 1/31. For the remaining class periods, the hour arranged will include your attendance at the legislative meeting and advocacy project activities including student presentations.

Absences

Individuals who miss class are expected to make arrangements with fellow students to obtain notes on the material presented. The instructor's lecture notes and other materials will not be duplicated or available. It is crucial to attend class!

Assignments

Speaker Highlights

Speaker highlights are a ½ to 1 page hand written paper turned in during the 15 minutes following each guest speaker presentation. The paper will note the name and title of the speaker, the main points of their presentation and the single most important point to you and the reason for that importance. Each paper is worth up to 3 points. **NO LATE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED.**

Policy Analysis

In a typewritten single space format of 2-3 pages, you will provide an analysis of the policy implications of a current or proposed Michigan environmental policy. This may be a statute, administrative rule, Natural Resources Commission order, DNR, or DEQ director's order, or a policy of the DEQ, DNR or the MDARD. This paper must include the following components:

1. A literature based definition of policy analysis and how it differs from policy advocacy.
2. Summary of the policy in question
3. Discussion of the impact of the policy if implemented:
 - a. Intended and unintended consequences
 - b. Supporters and opponents
 - c. Symbolic impacts

This is cannot to be done on the bill you will be doing for your advocacy project.

Legislative Committee Hearing/Advocacy Group Meeting

In a typewritten report of 1-2 pages single spaced, document your attendance at a Michigan legislative hearing (either House or Senate) related to natural resources, agriculture, outdoor recreation, energy or the environment or attendance at an advocacy group meeting. This can be a professional group, student group, group focused on a specific cause, etc.

If it is a legislative meeting, provide:

1. the committee name, chair, members present other than the chair,

2. day, date, time, location and
3. bills or other agenda items considered.
4. Synopsis of testimony regarding legislation under consideration including who testified and their basic position and committee actions and comments.

If it is an advocacy group, provide:

1. Name of the group
2. Number of members (if available)
3. Number attending the meeting
4. Purpose under which the group is organized
5. Geographic scope of group (local, regional, state, national or international)
6. Discussion of the key topics and actions of the meeting

Policy Advocacy

This is a hands-on experience in citizen input to the Michigan environmental and natural resource policy making process. Choose a bill introduced in the current Michigan legislative session (2015-2016) that concerns environmental, agricultural, energy, outdoor recreation, tourism or natural resources policy. This includes any of those categorized by the legislature as agriculture, energy, environmental protection, land use, natural resources, recreation, water or watercraft on the Michigan legislature website at <http://www.legislature.mi.gov>. You may work on your own or in a team of 2-4. Those who work together will receive the same grade, so choose partner/partners wisely.

In a 4-7page single space paper format with appropriate sub-headings and attachments **clearly** provide all of the following:

1. Give the bill number, title, sponsor(s) and committees to which it is assigned along with the name of the chairpersons of those committees.
 - a. What was the progress of the bill when you started your efforts to influence this legislation?
2. Explain why you/your group chose this bill.
 - a. What is your interest?
 - b. What problem needs to be solved?
3. Provide a 1-2 page policy **analysis** on the bill and label it as such
 - a. Discussion of the impact of the policy if implemented:
 - b. Intended and unintended consequences
 - c. Supporters and opponents
 - d. Symbolic impacts
4. Clearly state your position on the bill and your reasons for **advocating** that position.
 - a. You can support in its present form, support with amendments or oppose.
 - b. Explain what will happen if your views are enacted.
5. Using the information gathered on the bill, present your views **in person** to the office of a legislator that would be influential in helping your views become the prevailing policy. This may be to the legislator or an aide. In the paper:
 - a. Explain why you chose the legislator or aide you chose and why your choice is politically effective.
 - b. Describe your meeting in reasonable detail. As part of your meeting, provide the legislator with a one page **written statement of your views**, the rationale for those views and the action you request (e.g. vote yes, vote no, amend, etc.). Put a copy in your paper.

6. Follow up your visit with a less than one page letter or email to the legislator reiterating your position, rationale, thanking him/her for the opportunity to express your point of view and requesting a letter in response regarding their actions on the proposed legislations. Put a copy in your paper.
7. Present your views about your policy position in a 1 page letter or email to the director of the administrative agency charged with enforcing the proposed law and requesting a response about the position of their agency on the legislation. The agency is likely to be the DEQ, DNR, or MDARD. Put a copy in your paper.
8. Provide a copy of any replies you receive to 7 or 8 and a final update on the status of the bill as of the paper due date.
9. **Do a 6 minute oral/powerpoint presentation for the class** in which you/your group: identify the bill, outline key provisions, state your position and rationale, describe your legislative interactions with policy makers and the current state of the bill. Expect questions.

Grading Procedures

All grading will be on a straight scale with:

90% or more	=	4.0 = $\geq$ 270 pts.
85%-89.94%	=	3.5 = 255-269 pts.
80%-84.94%	=	3.0 = 240-254 pts.
75%-79.94%	=	2.5 = 225-239 pts.
70%-74.94%	=	2.0 = 210-224 pts.
65%-69.94%	=	1.5 = 195-209 pts.
60%-64.94%	=	1.0 = 180-194 pts.
< 60%	=	0.0 = < 180 pts.

Academic Integrity

[Article 2.III.B.2](#) of the Academic Freedom Report states: “The student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards.” In addition, the Department of Community Sustainability adheres to the policies on academic honesty specified in General Student Regulation 1.0, [Protection of Scholarship and Grades](#); the all-University Policy on [Integrity of Scholarship and Grades](#); and [Ordinance 17.00](#), Examinations.

Assignments/Tests Grading

	% of Grade	Points Possible
Leg. Comm./Adv. Grp. Meeting Rpt.	4%	12
Policy Analysis Paper	9%	27
1st Exam	25%	75
2nd Exam	25%	75
Policy Advocacy Paper	25%	75
Policy Advocacy Presentation	4%	12
Speaker Highlights	8%	24
TOTAL	100%	300

Exams

There are two exams. They may include matching, multiple choice, true/false and essay questions. There will be no extra credit opportunities other than those the instructor provides to all students on the 2 exams.

- A. No one will be excused from taking exams at the times scheduled without PRIOR permission of the instructor or a written doctor's excuse. You need to e-mail me or leave me a voice mail if I am not available.

CSUS 464 CLASS CALENDAR Spring 2017

Date	Topic	Helpful Reading/Websites
1/10	Introduction, the Policy Process, Policy Analysis and Advocacy – Class until 8:30PM	http://www.legislature.mi.gov
1/17	Understanding Michigan State Government: Michigan Overview, Budget and Appropriation Process and Fiscal Situation – Class until 8:30 PM - Choose Issue for Policy Analysis	http://www.senate.michigan.gov/sfa/Main/BillAnalysis.html ; http://www.senate.michigan.gov/sfa/Main/FAQs.html
1/24	Case Study of Citizen Advocacy: The Michigan Recreation Passport – Class until 8:30PM	http://house.michigan.gov/hfa/PDF/Alpha/State_Budget_Overview_Nov2014.pdf http://council.legislature.mi.gov/CouncilAdministrator/LSB
1/31	Overview of the Legislative Process - Guest Speaker Bob Wilson, Esq., Senate Majority Policy Office, Michigan Legislature (confirmed) Class until 8:30PM	http://house.mi.gov/committees_how.asp ; http://house.michigan.gov/citizens.asp
2/7	Issue Analysis and Advocacy – James Clift, Policy Director, Michigan Environmental Council (confirmed)	http://www.environmentalcouncil.org/
2/14	Issue Analysis and Advocacy, Doug Roberts Jr. Office of State Governmental Relations, Consumers Energy (confirmed) Policy Analysis Due	http://www.cmsenergy.com/
2/21	Issue Analysis and Advocacy – Amy Trotter, Resource Specialist, Michigan United Conservation Clubs (confirmed)	https://mucc.org/
2/28	EXAM 1	
3/7	Spring Break	
3/14	Senate Perspective – Senator Rebekah Warren (D-Ann Arbor) (confirmed)	http://senatedems.com/warren/
3/21	House of Representatives – Rep. Tom Leonard, Speaker of the House (R-DeWitt) (tentative) Legislative Committee Meeting Report Due	http://gophouse.org/representatives/central/leonard/
3/28	Michigan Department of Environmental Quality – Heidi Grether, Director (confirmed)	http://house.michigan.gov/hfa/EnvironmentalQuality.asp
4/4	Michigan Department of Natural Resources – Keith Creagh, Director (confirmed)	http://house.michigan.gov/hfa/Naturalresources.asp
4/11	Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development – Gordon Wenk, Deputy Director (confirmed)	http://house.michigan.gov/hfa/Agriculture.asp
4/18	Student Policy Advocacy Presentations	
4/25	Student Policy Advocacy Presentations ADVOCACY PAPER DUE in class	
5/2	Exam 2 from 8-10 PM in 221 NR	Have a GREAT SUMMER!

If you are interested in a career in natural resource and environmental policy, please make an appointment to see Dr. Nelson about linking this to your education at Michigan State University including internships and other experiential opportunities. There are also scholarship opportunities available for MSU students through the Guyer Endowed Internship program in public policy (http://nrconservation.msu.edu/nrconservation/guyer_scholarship) and other sources.