

## **POLS 3280 Environmental Political Theory**

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**Professor:** Marcus E. Green

**Office:** Towers 216

**Office Hours:** TR 11:00-11:50 · W 5:15-5:45  
or by appointment

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**Quarter:** Spring 2012 | Jan 30 - May 17

**Section #:** 01

**Schedule #:** 21268

**Class Time:** W 6:00–9:30

**Location:** Towers 115

**Website:** access through Blackboard

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### **Course Description and Objectives**

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This course examines key perspectives and contemporary currents in environmental political theory. The course will consider the issues of political practice and the underlying theoretical questions concerning environmental and ecological politics. The course will analyze the actors, spaces, and power relations of environmental politics in relation to the different ways to think about the natural environment and the major themes of politics and political theory, such as law, policy, social movements, political economy, subjectivity, justice, citizenship, and democracy.

#### **Learning Objectives**

1. To introduce students to some of the major themes, issues, and problems in environmental political theory.
  2. To engage students in an examination of whether or how the values of justice, democracy, and ecological sustainability can be mutually compatible. Competing visions of "the good life," strategies for political change, and conceptions of "nature," are examined in light of contemporary environmental crises.
  3. To assist students in developing their critical readings skills and skills of textual analysis and interpretation.
  4. To assist students in the development of their analytical, critical thinking, writing, and communicative skills.
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### **Assignments & the Determination of Final Grade**

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#### **a. Two Essays (20% each)**

Students are expected to write two 8-10 page essays for this course, each worth 20% of the final grade. There are no exams. Each essay is intended to address particular readings, issues, and concepts covered in a particular period. The essay assignments are designed for you to demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of the theoretical arguments under review and to provide a critical analysis of them. "Critical analysis" does *not* mean a dismissal of particular ideas or concepts. Rather, it entails a critical investigation of a set of ideas in order to reveal the limits, flaws, and/or problems related to them. Students are expected to engage with the primary texts for each essay. I will provide a list of recommended questions and topics for each essay assignment at least two weeks prior to the due date.

#### **b. Seminar Presentations (20%)**

Students are required to conduct two in-class seminar presentations during the term. The two presentations will be worth 20% of the final grade. Each presentation will be graded on the 4-

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point scale, and the grades from the two presentations will be averaged at the end of the term. Students will be asked to sign up for particular readings to present.

### **Seminar Presentation Instructions**

- The in-class oral presentations should be between 6 and 12 minutes.
- Students are required to submit a one page outline of their presentation, due on the day of the presentation. The outlines should be typed (single-space, 12 point font) and should be one page.
- The outline of the presentation should follow the format below.

#### **Introduction**

1. Provide your own argument or theme to encompass presentation.
2. State the author's argument.
3. Provide social, political, and/ intellectual context to frame the author's argument.

#### **Summary Section**

4. Summarize the author's evidence to support his/her argument,
5. Identify the most important concept(s)/point(s) in the text.
6. Cite brief passages that demonstrate your points

#### **Concluding Section**

7. Introduce your views of the text. Possible topics to discuss:
  - a. The strengths and weaknesses of the author's work
  - b. Discuss the issues that you find interesting
  - c. Discuss the issues that require further elaboration/detail
8. How does the material compare and contrast with other readings that we have already studied in the course?
9. Pose questions for discussion and address students' and professor's questions.

### **c. Class Participation (20%)**

Because this is a seminar course, students are expected to engage in class discussions throughout the semester, and students are expected to lead portions of the class sessions. Students are not graded on attendance, but they are graded on participation. In addition to the formal essay requirements, successful achievement of course objectives requires active class participation, which is an important and valuable aspect of the learning experience. Therefore, 20% of the final course grade is determined by class participation. This means that I expect students to contribute and participate in class discussions. You will only receive an acceptable grade for class participation if you attend class and participate in discussion. You should come to class prepared to discuss particular issues, topics, and readings.

Your participation grade will be determined by the quality and quantity of your participation performance. Student participation grades will be based on substantive and constructive (i.e. respectful) participation in class discussions. Substantive and constructive participation entails a combination of both speaking out and listening. The four components of your participation grade are:

- quantity of contributions to class discussions (ideally: speaking out regularly, but not dominating the discussion)
- quality of contributions to class discussions (meaning substantive contributions that address the course readings and directly-related topics).
- raising new points or questions for discussion
- responding effectively to points or questions raised by others

### Participation Grade Breakdown

Participation Points	Grade
12	4.0
11	3.8
10	3.7
9	3.3
8	3.0
7	2.7
6	2.3
5	2.0
4	1.7
3	1.3
2	1.0
1	0.7
0	0.0

Participation grades will be determined by the quality and quantity of student performance. For each discussion question a student successfully answers, the student will receive one point. At the end of the semester, students' participation grades will be calculated based upon their total raw participation points following the scale to the left. For instance, a student with 11 participation points, will receive a grade of 3.8 for participation.

### d. Reading journal (20%)

For each class, except the introductory classes of week 1, write a journal entry that discusses the assigned readings for that class. The journal should discuss all of the readings for that class, although it need not devote equal space to each of them. No more than one-half of the journal should summarize the readings; the remainder should be a critical engagement with the ideas raised in the reading(s) – critique, contextualization, analysis of argument, reasoning, evidence, etc. The journal must conclude with one or two questions for class discussion.

The journal entries should be short (350-500 words) and will be graded on a pass/fail basis. In order to receive full credit, journal entries must fulfill all of the following requirements:

1. 350-500 words, in full-sentence, paragraph form (not point form), typed in single space;
2. mentions all readings for that class session;
3. provides a description of the main argument for each reading;
4. at least one-half of your written entry is devoted to critical engagement with (not a summary of) the readings;
5. contains at least one question for class discussion;
6. must be handed in (by the author) at the beginning of class in which those readings are discussed.

### Reading Journal Grade Breakdown

Journal Entries	Grade
14	4.00
13	3.70
12	3.40
11	3.10
10	2.80
9	2.50
8	2.20
7	1.90
6	1.60
5	1.30
4	1.00
3	0.70
2	0.40
1	0.10

There are 15 days of course readings. To receive full credit, you must submit 14 reading journal entries.

Late journal entries will not be accepted.

## Determination of Final Grade

Assignments	Date	Points	Grades
Essay 1 (8 – 10 pages)	March 21	4	
Essay 2 (8 - 10 pages)		4	
2 Class Presentations (1 page each)	Varies	4	
Participation	n/a	4	
Reading Journal	n/a	4	
<b>Total Possible Points</b>		<b>20</b>	
<b>Average</b>		<b>4</b>	

Due during finals week.  
Average of the two presentations

Final Grade = average of assignments & participation  
- deductions for absences

## Calculation of Final Grade

The calculation of the final grade for the course is determined by the average of the two essay grades, the 3 presentations, the class participation grade, and the reading journal grade. The final grade recorded for the course follows the grade scale below. The final grade average must meet the minimum threshold of the grade scale for each corresponding grade. For example, to receive an A- in the course, a student's final grade average must be 3.7 or above. In the case of a marginal final grade within .05 of a point, I will round up. For instance, if a student's final grade average is 3.66, I will record the final grade as an A-, but a final grade average of 3.60 will be recorded as a B+.

## Grade Scale for Final Grade

The grading system for this course follows Otterbein University's four-point grade scale found in the University Catalog: [http://catalog.otterbein.acalog.com/content.php?catoid=11&navoid=700&returnto=search#Grade\\_Symbols](http://catalog.otterbein.acalog.com/content.php?catoid=11&navoid=700&returnto=search#Grade_Symbols)

Grade Scale	Letter Grade	Grade Points	Description
3.85 – 4.00	A	4.0	Exceptional
3.7 – 3.84	A-	3.7	Excellent
3.3 – 3.69	B+	3.3	Above Average
3.0 – 3.29	B	3.0	Above Average
2.7 – 2.99	B-	2.7	Above Average
2.3 – 2.69	C+	2.3	Average
2.0 – 2.29	C	2.0	Average
1.7 – 1.99	C-	1.7	Below Average
1.3 – 1.69	D+	1.3	Below Average
1.0 – 1.29	D	1.0	Below Average
0.0– 0.99	F	0.0	Failure

Grades for all assignments and the final grade will follow the Grade Scale in first column. This Grade Scale will be used to determine the final Letter Grade.

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## Course Policies

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### Course Seminar Format

The course is organized as a seminar. The success of a seminar course depends crucially on the seminar participants' capacity and willingness to engage in class discussion. I will do very little (if any) lecturing. Class sessions will be divided between student presentations and discussions, which will be based upon readings from the required texts. The discussions shall provide students with a forum in which they can examine and discuss the key concepts of the texts under review with their classmates and the professor. Students are responsible for knowing the material covered in the assigned readings, student presentations, and the material covered in discussions. Therefore, students are encouraged to attend class, read before class, participate in class discussions, and to take notes.

## **Lectures and Readings**

Students are responsible for knowing the material covered in the assigned readings and the material covered in discussions. Therefore, students are encouraged to attend class and to take notes.

## **Attendance**

Attendance is required but you are not graded for it. You are permitted up to 2 unexcused absences without penalty. After your second unexcused absence, I will deduct .1 of a point from your final grade average for each additional absence. For example, 3 absences = -0.1 point; 4 absences = -0.2 point, etc. If you need to miss more than three classes for university approved reasons, please see me to make arrangements. Sickness short of hospitalization or incapacitation does not constitute grounds for an excused absence. I may make exceptions for truly unusual and unanticipated events, but such arrangements must be discussed with me. Colds, flus, hangovers, doctor appointments, changes in work schedules, etc. do not count as either unusual or unanticipated. You are permitted three unexcused absences to deal with such events.

## **Tardiness**

If you are regularly late to class, I reserve the right to reduce your final grade average by .1 point for each instance of tardiness.

## **Classroom Environment**

This course is designed to challenge your written and verbal communicative skills, which are, in my view, not only necessary to the learning process but vital to the development of democratic culture and citizenship. Just like writing, the public exchange of ideas requires skill. It requires a level of confidence to speak in front of others and a level of maturity and respect to listen to others. It can be said that this course is Socratic in the sense that our discussions are similar to workshops in which we workout different thoughts and ideas in coordination with one another. Because of this, I will work to make the classroom environment respectful and comfortable for all, and I expect you to do the same.

## **Blackboard**

I will distribute course information and materials on Blackboard. Therefore, it is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with Blackboard and to login periodically for course updates.

## **Submitting Essays**

I require students to submit a hard copy of each paper and to submit an electronic copy through Blackboard. Make a copy of each paper before you turn it in. It is the responsibility of students to keep duplicate copies of their papers.

## **Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty**

Otterbein policies regarding academic integrity will be strictly enforced. All submitted work must be your own – *including presentations* – and it is the responsibility of all students to understand the methods of proper citation and to apply those methods in all written assignments. I will investigate indications of copied or plagiarized work, and I reserve the right to administer an oral exam and to question the student, if I suspect a student has submitted work that may be plagiarized.

According to the Otterbein Campus Life Handbook, “any use of the words or ideas of someone else as though they were the student’s own words, constitutes plagiarism. This definition applies

to the use of both printed and unprinted sources, including the work of other students or faculty.” (See: <http://www.otterbein.edu/public/CampusLife/HealthAndSafety/StudentConduct/JudicialPolicies.aspx> ). In other words, plagiarism is the intentional or unintentional use of someone else’s words or ideas presented as your own.

Plagiarism occurs when a writer reproduces the words of another author without acknowledgment or when a writer paraphrases the ideas or arguments of another author in such away as to lead the reader to believe that the ideas or arguments originated with the writer. Plagiarism can be intentional or unintentional. According to Andrea A. Lunsford in *The Everyday Writer* (4<sup>th</sup> ed): “If your paraphrase is too close to the wording or sentence structure of a source (even if you identify the source); if you do not identify the source of a quotation (even if you include the quotation marks); or if you fail to indicate clearly the source of an idea that you obviously did not come up with on your own, you may be accused of plagiarism even if your intent was not to plagiarize” (p. 191).

I will report violations of academic dishonesty to the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. According to Otterbein policy, students who violate standards of academic integrity are subject to disciplinary sanctions, which include the “failure on the given assignment or a failing grade for the course.”

### **Disability Accommodation**

If you need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability, you should contact me to arrange an appointment as soon as possible. At the appointment we can discuss the course format, anticipate your needs and explore potential accommodations. I rely on the Disability Services Coordinator for assistance in verifying the need for accommodations and developing strategies. If you have not previously contacted the Disability Services Coordinator (x1618 or [LMonaghan@otterbein.edu](mailto:LMonaghan@otterbein.edu)), I encourage you to do so.

### **Email**

Outside of my office hours, I can be reached via email, and I will usually respond within 24 hours. Note: In the subject, include the course number (POLS 3280), and in the body of the message, please include your first and last name.

### **Electronic Devices**

**Recording Lectures:** In accordance with federal regulations, students may not make audio recordings of class lectures without the prior written consent of the instructor. Students who have registered and documented disabilities may make audio recordings with the consent of the instructor.

**Cell Phones & iPods:** Please turn off cell phone ringers during class, no texting, and no iPod listening in class. If I see a student texting in class, I will automatically subtract one point from the student’s participation points.

### **Drop Dates & Withdrawal Policy**

Students who wish to drop the course may do so using the regular procedures. It is not the responsibility of the professor to drop students from the course.

- Last day to drop classes with no grade recorded on transcript: March 2, 2012
- Last day to drop with “W” on transcript: March 30, 2012

## Required Texts

1. Peter F. Cannavò, *The Working Landscape: Founding, Preservation, and the Politics of Place*. MIT Press. ISBN: 9780262532921
2. Andrew Dobson, *Citizenship and the Environment*, Oxford University Press, ISBN: 9780199258444. Ebook available through Otterbein Library

## Class Schedule and Readings (This is a tentative schedule and may change with notice)

Week	Date	Reading & Topics	Presentations
Week 1	Wed Feb 1	<b>Introduction to Course</b>	
Week 2	Wed Feb 8	<b>Environmental Political Theory: What and Why</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Ruth Grant, "Political Theory, Political Science, and Politics" <i>Political Theory</i> 30, 4 (August 2002)</li> <li>· Robyn Eckersley, "Characterizing Green Political Thought," in Dale Jamieson ed., <i>A Companion to Environmental Philosophy</i>, Blackwell, 2001.</li> <li>· Paul Wapner, "The Importance of Critical Environmental Studies in the New Environmentalism" <i>Global Environmental Politics</i> 8, 1 (2008)</li> <li>· Joel Kassiola, "Afterword: The Surprising Value of Despair and the Aftermath of September 11" in Kassiola (ed), <i>Explorations in Environmental Political Theory</i> (M. E. Sharpe, 2003)</li> </ul>	
Week 3	Wed Feb 15	<b>Foundations of Environmental Thought</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Henry Thoreau, <i>Walden Pond</i> (1854), chapters: 1 (para. 1-15), 2, 5, 9 (para 1-4), 11, 18 online at <a href="http://thoreau.eserver.org/walden00.html">http://thoreau.eserver.org/walden00.html</a></li> <li>· Aldo Leopold, "The Land Ethic," from <i>Sand County Almanac</i> (1949) online at <a href="http://home.btconnect.com/tipiglen/landethic.html">http://home.btconnect.com/tipiglen/landethic.html</a></li> </ul>	
Week 4	Wed Feb 22	<b>Critical Theory: Nature, Science, and Technology</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Andrew Biro, "Introduction: The Paradoxes of Contemporary Environmental Crises and the Redemption of the Hopes of the Past" in <i>Critical Ecologies: The Frankfurt School and Contemporary Environmental Crises</i> (2011).</li> <li>· Christoph Görg, "Societal Relationships with Nature: A Dialectical Approach to Environmental Politics," in Biro ed., <i>Critical Ecologies: The Frankfurt School and Contemporary Environmental Crises</i> (2011).</li> <li>· William Leiss, "Modern Science, Enlightenment, and the Domination of Nature: No Exit?" <i>Fast Capitalism</i> 2, 2 (2007)</li> <li>· Arturo Escobar, "Whose Knowledge, Whose Nature? Biodiversity, Conservation, and the Political Ecology of Social Movements" <i>Journal of Political Ecology</i> 5 (1998)</li> </ul>	· No presentation
Week 5	Wed Feb 29	<b>Undermining Foundations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· William Cronon, "The Trouble with Wilderness; or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature" in Cronon ed., <i>Uncommon Ground</i> (W. W. Norton, 1995)</li> <li>· Anthony Weston, "Is It Too Late?" in Weston ed., <i>Invitation to Environmental Philosophy</i> (Oxford UP, 1999)</li> <li>· Teena Gabrielson, "The End of New Beginnings: Nature and the American Dream in The Sopranos, Weeds, and Lost" <i>Theory &amp; Event</i> 12, 2 (2009)</li> </ul>	
Week 6	Wed Mar 7	<b>Environmentalism Without "Nature"?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Donald Worster, "Disturbing Nature" in Worster, <i>Nature's Economy</i> (Cambridge UP, 1994)</li> <li>· Steven Vogel, "Environmental Philosophy After the End of Nature" <i>Environmental Ethics</i> 24 (2002)</li> <li>· Catriona Sandilands, "The Good-natured feminist: Ecofeminism and democracy" in R. Keil et al eds., <i>Political Ecology</i> (Routledge, 1998)</li> </ul>	
Week 7	Mar 10 - 18	<b>Spring Break March 10-18. No Class</b>	<b>No Class</b>
Week 8	Wed Mar 21	To Be Announced - <b>[Essay 1 Due]</b>	<b>Essay 1 Due</b>
Week 9	Wed Mar 28	<b>Environmental/ Ecological Citizenship</b> Andrew Dobson, <i>Citizenship and the Environment</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Introduction</li> </ul>	· No presentation

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· 1. Towards Post-Cosmopolitanism</li> <li>· 2. Three Types of Citizenship</li> <li>· 3. Ecological Citizenship</li> <li>· 4. Environmental Sustainability in Liberal Societies</li> <li>· 5. Citizenship, Education, and the Environment</li> <li>· Conclusion - (no presentation)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>·</li> <li>·</li> <li>·</li> <li>·</li> <li>·</li> <li>· No presentation</li> </ul>
Week 10	Wed Apr 4	<b>The Working Landscape: Founding, Preservation, &amp; the Politics of Place (I)</b> Peter Cannavò, <i>The Working Landscape</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Introduction: The Phantom Roads of Utah - (no presentation)</li> <li>· Ch. 1 Place: Founding and Preservation</li> <li>· Ch. 2 The Northwest Timber War</li> <li>· Ch. 3 Sprawl</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· No presentation</li> <li>·</li> <li>·</li> <li>·</li> </ul>
Week 11	Wed Apr 11	<b>The Working Landscape: Founding, Preservation, &amp; the Politics of Place (II)</b> Peter Cannavò, <i>The Working Landscape</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Ch. 4 Rebuilding Ground Zero</li> <li>· Ch. 5 The Crisis of Place</li> <li>· Ch. 6 The Working Landscape</li> <li>· Ch. 7 A Policy Agenda</li> <li>· Postscript: Place and the Lessons of Katrina - (no presentation)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>·</li> <li>·</li> <li>·</li> <li>·</li> <li>· No presentation</li> </ul>
Week 12	Wed Apr 18	<b>Climate Change, Justice, and Political Theory</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Paul Baer et al, "Greenhouse Development Rights: A Proposal for a Fair Global Climate Treaty" <i>Ethics Place &amp; Environment</i> 12, 3 (2009)</li> <li>· Martin J. Adamian, "Environmental (In)justice in Climate Change," in Vanderheiden ed., <i>Political Theory and Global Climate Change</i> (MIT Press 2008)</li> <li>· Timothy W. Luke, "Climatologies as Social Critique: The Social Construction/Creation of Global Warming, Global Dimming, and Global Cooling," in Vanderheiden ed., <i>Political Theory and Global Climate Change</i> (MIT Press 2008)</li> <li>· George A. Gonzalez, "Urban Sprawl, Climate Change, Oil Depletion, and Eco-Marxism," in Vanderheiden ed., <i>Political Theory and Global Climate Change</i> (MIT Press 2008)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>·</li> <li>·</li> <li>·</li> <li>·</li> </ul>
Week 13	Wed Apr 25	<b>Consumption and Its Discontents</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Kate Soper, "Rethinking the Good Life: The Consumer as Citizen" <i>Capitalism Nature Socialism</i> 15, 3 (2004)</li> <li>· James Carrier, "Protecting the Environment the Natural Way: Ethical Consumption and Commodity Fetishism" <i>Antipode</i> 42, 3 (2010)</li> <li>· Maurie J. Cohen, "The International Political Economy of (Un)sustainable Consumption and the Global Financial Collapse" <i>Environmental Politics</i> 19, 1 (2010)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>·</li> <li>·</li> <li>·</li> <li>·</li> </ul>
Week 14	Wed May 2	<b>Rethinking "Environmentalism"</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Douglas Torgerson, "Farewell to the Green Movement? Political Action and the Green Public Sphere" <i>Environmental Politics</i> 9, 4 (2000)</li> <li>· Michael Maniates, "Individualization: Plant a Tree, Buy a Bike, Save the World?" in T. Princen et al eds., <i>Confronting Consumption</i> (MIT Press, 2002)</li> <li>· Ingolfur Bluhdorn, "Sustaining the Unsustainable: Symbolic Politics and the Politics of Simulation" <i>Environmental Politics</i>, 16, 2 (2007)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>·</li> <li>·</li> <li>·</li> <li>·</li> </ul>
Week 15	Wed May 9	<b>Where to from here?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· John Barry "Towards a Concrete Utopian Model of Green Political Economy: From Economic Growth and Ecological Modernisation to Economic Security" <i>Post-Autistics Economics Review</i> 36, 4 (2006)</li> <li>· Giovanna Di Chiro "Living Environmentalisms: Coalition Politics, Social Reproduction, and Environmental Justice" <i>Environmental Politics</i> 17, 2 (2008)</li> <li>· Allen Thompson, "Radical Hope for Living Well in a Warmer World." <i>Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics</i> 23, 1-2 (2010)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>·</li> <li>·</li> <li>·</li> </ul>
Week 16		<b>Finals Week. Second Essay Due</b>	<b>Essay 2 Due</b>