

**Environmental Politics**  
Politics 220  
University of Dubuque - Summer 2001

**COURSE OUTLINE**

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Course Director:	Mike Zmolek	Class Time:	MWR 1-4:30 PM
Office:	303 Van Vliet Hall	Class Location:	Couchman Seminar Room (Libr 102)
Phone:	589-3507	Office Hours:	Tues. 1-4 PM
E-mail:	MZmolek@dbq.edu		(or by appointment)

Since the emergence of an environmental movement in the 1960's and 1970's, environmental issues have become heatedly contested issues at both theoretical and political levels. The movement itself has gone through numerous transformations. Since the early 1980's, a powerful "backlash" struck out at the environmental movement to attempt to discredit it. Heavily subsidized by business interests, a new set of pro-free market lobbyists emerged, setting the stage for a showdown with environmental groups. As we read about and discuss this conflict, we will attempt to examine it by placing it in a larger context, seeking the socio-economic origins of environmental crisis and the obstacles to resolving that crisis. Since there is no "one" environmental crisis, we will also discuss a range of separate environmental issues. Toward the end of the course, we look at more theoretical critiques and proposed solutions to the environmental crisis.

Format: The course will be taught in a seminar format. You will be expected to complete the readings before class and be prepared to discuss them in class. You will be asked to summarize at least four separate chapters or essays for the class. You will also write an essay on a topic of your choice. Class discussion will be supplemented by films on relevant topics.

Evaluation:	Classroom Attendance and Participation	10%
	Presentations	20%
	Essay	20%
	Mid Term Exam	25%
	Final Exam	25%

Required Textbooks: Switzer, Jacqueline Vaughn (1997) *Green Backlash - The History and Politics of Environmental Opposition in the U.S.*, Lynne Reinner Publishers.

*Opposing Viewpoints* (1998) Global Resources, Greenhaven Press.

*Course Reader Kit* - (to be made available).

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**ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING**

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**Grading Policy:** Grades in this class are based upon a point system. You will be given both letter grades and point scores for each assignment. Your final grade will be derived from your performance in all the areas of the class, and based on your composite scores. The grading scale is 90-100 for an A, 80-89 for a B, 70-79 for a C, 60-69 for a D, and 59 or below for an F. Short quizzes will be given on most Thursdays. A review will be held before each exam.

**Attendance and Participation (10%)** - Attendance will be taken daily, and will count towards half of your Attendance and Participation score. The other half will be a letter mark given to you based upon your performance in class. Performance means coming to class having read the assignments and being an active participant in the discussion, including asking questions.

**Presentations (25%)** - During the course, you will be asked to select four reading assignments which you will present on. You will read the article or chapter and prepare up to 10 minutes' worth of summary of the key points which you will present at the beginning of class. You are especially encouraged to conclude each presentation with a number of questions for discussion about the reading. In addition, you will do one web-based assignment where you explore the website of a particular organization. In class, you will give a critical summary of the organization, its mission, its projects, and perhaps what its critics say about it.

**Book Report Option** - If you prefer not to present up to 3 times, you have the option of presenting only once, and also doing a 4-5 page book report on a book that is relevant to the course. You must get my approval of the title that you choose. If you are having a hard time locating a title, please see me for suggestions. Due: May 30.

**Quizzes (9%)** - There will be three pop quizzes during the course, with 5-10 questions each.

**Web Assignment (6%)** - You will do an internet search to locate the website of one of the organizations discussed in the book *Green Backlash*. You will write a two pages summary discussing the organization and its site (how it presents itself, etc.). This assignment will not be graded and it will not be handed back to you. Your work will help build future websites for this course, and your name will be credited appropriately.

**Essay (20%)** - You are required to write one essay on a topic relevant to the course and the reading material. The topic you select should focus on a contentious environmental issue. You will be sure to summarize at least two different points of view on the issues before providing your own analysis. An 'A' essay will be at least 10 pages in length, will cite at least three sources not included in the course materials, will be typed, double-spaced on plain white 8 1/2" x 11" paper. Times 12 point font is preferable. I strongly encourage you to discuss your chosen essay topic with me. You are required to turn in a brief outline of your proposed essay showing what you will be covering and the sources you are working with. Outline Due: May 24. Final essay Due: May 30.

**NOTE:** Please be familiar with the University of Dubuque's policy on Academic Dishonesty. Read the "Values Violations" section of your Student Handbook. Know this policy.

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**SYLLABUS & SEMINAR SCHEDULE (subject to revision)**

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May 14 (Mon):

1pm: Introduction to the Course  
Handout Course Syllabus  
Film: TBA

Part I: Global Environmental Resource Issues

May 16 (Wed):

1-2 pm: The Debate about Oil Reserves and Resources  
Assignment: Global Resources: Introduction & Chapter 1, pages 1-31

2:15-3:15 pm: The Debate about the Scarcity of Food Supplies  
Assignment: Global Resources: Chapter 2, pages 25-46

3:30-4:30 The Debate about Rain Forest Destruction  
Assignment: Global Resources: Chapter 2, pages 47-60

May 17 (Thu):

1-2 pm: Energy Debates: Nuclear Power and Oil  
Assignment: Global Resources: Chapter 3, pp. 115-122  
Film: TBA

2:15-3:15 pm: Solar, Wind and Human Energy  
Assignment: Global Resources: Chapter 3, pages 99-114

3:30-4:30 Bicycles, Automobiles & Oil  
Assignment: Global Resources: Chapter 3, pages 128-144  
Quiz

Part II: The Future of Farming

May 21 (Mon): \*DUE: Essay Outlines

1-2 pm: Debates on Organic Farming and Livestock Agriculture  
Assignment: Global Resources: Chapter 2, pages 63-79

2:15-3:15 pm: Genetically Engineered Foods  
Assignment: Global Resources: Chapter 2, pages 75-83

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3:30-4:30 Biodiversity and the future of Farming  
Assignment: Kit: Readings 1 and 2

### Part III: The Green Backlash and the Environmental Movement

May 23 (Wed):

1-2 pm: The Green Backlash  
Assignment: Green Backlash: Chs. 2-3, pages 49-102

2:15-3:15 pm: The Business Backlash  
Assignment: Green Backlash: Chs. 4-6, pages 103-170

3:30-4:30 The Sagebrush Rebellion  
Assignment: Assignment: Green Backlash: Ch. 7, pages 171-190

May 24 (Thu):

1-2 pm: The Wise Use Movement  
Assignment: Green Backlash: Ch. 8, pages 191-226

2:15-3:15 pm: County Supremacy  
Assignment: Green Backlash: Ch. 9, pages 227-246

3:30-4:30 Property Rights and the Complexity of the Green Backlash  
Assignment: Green Backlash: Ch. 10 & Conclusion, pages 247-298

May 28 (Mon) Labor Day: No Classes

May 30 (Wed): \*DUE: Essays

1-2 pm: From Conservationism to Preservationism: the Emergence of the  
Environmental Movement  
Assignment: Green Backlash: Introduction & Chapter 1, pages 1-48

2:15-3:15 pm: The Politics of Regulatory Discontent  
Assignment: Kit: Reading 3

3:30-4:30 The Environmental Movement Emerges  
Assignment: Kit: Readings 4, 5, 6 and 7

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Part IV: Climate Change and Environmental Justice

May 31 (Thu):

1-2 pm: Global Climate Change  
Assignment: Kit: Readings 8, 9 and 10

2:15-3:15 pm Issues of Environmental Justice  
Assignment: Kit: Readings 11 through 16

3:30-4:30 Review of the Course and Key Terms  
Evaluations

June 4 (Mon):

4:30 pm DUE: Final Exam (Bring to Room 303 Van Vliet; if no one is in,  
put your final exam under the door).1