ENV 350H Energy Policy and Environment
Fall 2019 Course Syllabus
University of Toronto, School of the Environment

Time: Monday, 6-8 p.m.
Location: MP 103
Office Hours: Mondays, 5-6 p.m. in ES 2104
Instructor: Keith Stewart <climatekeith@gmail.com>
T.A.: Joaquin Bardallo Bandera <joaquin.bardallobandera@mail.utoronto.ca>
Ryan Nash <ryan.nash@mail.utoronto.ca>

Pre-requisite: (ENV221H1, ENV222H1) or permission of Academic Associate Director

Description

This course explores the connections between energy and environment policy and politics, including the connections with climate change.

The patterns of energy use of individual countries and of the global system as a whole reflect the accumulation of policy choices and have significant impacts on the environment, locally and globally. Not the least of these impacts is the potential to disrupt the global climate system. Decisions about energy technologies are strongly influenced by social organization, economics and politics.

The first part of the course provides a historical context for the physical, environmental, technological, economic and political aspects of energy systems and energy transitions before exploring the principal policy tools available to decision-makers. This includes both a more traditional academic approach to energy and environmental policy-making found in the textbook written by Andrea Olive, as well as a more radical critique found in Naomi Klein’s This Changes Everything.

These theoretical approaches are then applied to two contemporary case studies: the politics of pipelines and the development of a national climate plan.

The objective of this course is that students should be able to apply the theoretical concepts learned in the course to current policy-making processes. Therefore students should follow the public and media debates on the case studies in addition to the required readings.

Assignments

All assignments must be submitted via Quercus. Additional detail on each of the assignments will be provided in class.

Blog entry (20%): Students are expected to write a blog post (800 – 1000 words) as a commentary on a news story related to energy and environmental policy. The post should incorporate concepts from the course materials (i.e. you must reference at least one of the required readings) in a way that demonstrates your grasp of the concept and ability to apply it to current events and debates. You should advance a point of view backed by evidence (i.e. it is not simply your opinion) while maintaining a thoughtful and respectful tone.

This assignment is due October 14.
Analysis of federal election platforms (30%): Use the concepts and historical material from this course to compare and contrast the energy and environment policy proposals of two of the four major political parties (Conservatives, Liberals, NDP or Green). Explain which you believe to be the better policy package and why. This assignment is due November 11.

Essay (50%): For the major paper, you will address one of the following topics:

1. Compare and contrast “supply-side” and “demand-side” approaches to energy and environmental policies and explain how they are represented in contemporary Canadian political and policy debates. Which approach do you think will be more effective and why?

2. Energy transitions are periods of technological, social and political disruption. What are the most significant trends affecting Canadian energy and environmental policy and how should governments respond?

Note that there is no single ‘correct’ answer and that you will be assessed based on the strength of the argument that you make. You will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the concepts studied in the course, an ability to apply them to your chosen topic, and the capacity to situate the more abstract policy questions within contemporary Canadian political debates.

You should submit an outline by November 18. The outline will not be graded to encourage you to discuss where you are have questions or challenges and get feedback on your overall approach.

The final essay is due on December 4.

Evaluation criteria:

The primary criteria used in evaluating written work are the following:

1) **Mechanics**: Your work must be completely free of grammatical errors, spelling errors or major factual errors. References can be in any style but the same format must be used consistently and they must be accurate.

2) **Writing style**: Your papers should be written in a clear and unambiguous style which assists, rather than impedes, communication with the reader.

3) **Structure**: Your written work should have a clear focus, provided by the research question, and a structure which logically flows from that focus.

4) **Precision and accuracy**: Precision means saying exactly and specifically what you mean, avoiding ambiguity and vague generalities. Accuracy refers to absence of major factual errors.

5) **Analysis**: Your analysis should display understanding of the topic and, based on that understanding, originality of thought.

Late assignments

Late assignments will be penalized at a rate of 2.5%/day (i.e. an assignment 10 days late will lose 25% off of the assigned grade, so a grade of 7.5/10 would become 5/10). If you wish to be granted an extension, you must provide a note from a doctor or your college.
**Required readings**

The two textbooks (*The Canadian Environment in Political Context* and *This Changes Everything*) are available at the bookstore. All of the other required readings are available electronically via Quercus or via the links in the course syllabus.

Students are expected to follow the public and media debates on the case studies in addition to the readings identified below. The course instructor (@climatekeith on twitter) will also share relevant news stories and analyses via Quercus. Students are welcome to tweet using the #env350 hashtag as well.

**September 9: Introduction to Environmental Policy and Politics**

*No required readings*

*Recommended Reading:*


**September 16: Energy Transitions**

*Required:*


*Recommended:*


**September 23: Politics and Institutions**

*Required:*


*Recommended:*


September 30: Policy-making

Required:


Kathryn Harrison (July 8, 2019). "The fleeting Canadian harmony over carbon pricing". *Policy Options*.


Recommended:


Provincial case studies from “The evolution of carbon pricing in the provinces” in *Policy Options*.

October 7: Policy Options - Carbon Prices

Required:


Recommended

Remainder of EcoFiscal Commission report.

October 14: No Class due to Thanksgiving

October 21: Policy Options – Demand-side Regulations


October 28: Policy Options – Supply-side regulations


Recommended:


**November 4: Reading week so no class**

**November 11: Policy Options – Change the system, not the climate?**


The Pact for a Green New Deal. URL: [https://act.greennewdealcanada.ca/the-text/](https://act.greennewdealcanada.ca/the-text/)

**November 18: Indigenous People, Environment and Energy**


**November 25: Pipelines Politics**


**December 2: Policy analysis and advocacy in an era of climate disruption**


Recommended:


**Accessibility Needs:**

The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations for a disability, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom or course materials, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible: accessibility.services@utoronto.ca or [https://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as](https://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as)
Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is fundamental to learning and scholarship at the University of Toronto. Participating honestly, respectfu\n
lly, responsibly, and fairly in this academic community ensures that the U of T degree that you earn will be valued as a true indication of your individual academic achievement, and will continue to receive the respect and recognition it deserves.

Familiarize yourself with the University of Toronto’s Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm). It is the rule book for academic behaviour at the U of T, and you are expected to know the rules. Potential offences include, but are not limited to:

In papers and assignments:

- Using someone else’s ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement.
- Copying material word-for-word from a source (including lecture and study group notes) and not placing the words within quotation marks.
- Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor.
- Making up sources or facts.
- Including references to sources that you did not use.
- Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment including
  - working in groups on assignments that are supposed to be individual work,
  - having someone rewrite or add material to your work while “editing”.
- Lending your work to a classmate who submits it as his/her own without your permission.

On tests and exams:

- Using or possessing any unauthorized aid, including a cell phone.
- Looking at someone else’s answers
- Letting someone else look at your answers.
- Misrepresenting your identity.
- Submitting an altered test for re-grading.

Misrepresentation:

- Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including doctor’s notes.
- Falsifying institutional documents or grades.

You can get further guidance on academic integrity at:

www.artsci.utoronto.ca/osai/students

Cases of suspected plagiarism will be addressed in accordance with the procedure established by the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters.