

**ERS 375 - Environmental Decision-making
Course Outline**

Course instructor:

Ian Rowlands (EV2-2026; ext. 32574; irowlands@uwaterloo.ca).

Office hours: Tuesdays 9:30-11:00am (NOT 5 March); Tuesdays 3:30-4:30pm (NOT 5 March and 26 March)

Meetings:

Thursdays from 10:30pm-12:20pm in EV2-2006

Course website:

Course information will be delivered through the UW-LEARN system. Students will submit assigned work through this website, and receive feedback on the same through it as well.

Pre-requisite:

The pre-requisite for the course is at least 2B standing.

Course purpose and learning objectives:

The purpose of this course is to investigate and to understand better how decisions on environmental issues are made at various 'levels' in various 'organisations' – from the individual up through to the international. The course explicitly adopts multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches (looking for contributions to our understanding from various traditional disciplines as well as interdisciplinary efforts). The course pursues both conceptual and empirical material. More specifically, coming out of this course, students should have developed capabilities in the following areas:

- an appreciation of the range of contemporary discussions and debates related to the practice and theory of environmental decision-making;
- an in-depth understanding of a selected contemporary discussion and/or debate related to a particular practice and/or theory of environmental decision-making;
- an ability to summarise and to critique selected perspectives on environmental decision-making; and
- an ability to present, both verbally and in written form, a critical study of some aspect of environmental decision-making.

Please recognise that this is the first time that this course is being offered; it is being 'pitched' as something 'between' a 'conventional course' (with a full suite of lectures/tutorials) and a 'reading course' (with occasional meetings to discuss common readings). This course will be run in an interactive manner, and many of the sessions (particularly the first seven) will involve the following: the course instructor 'talking to' a series of slides, group discussion of common readings and students' introductions of relevant journal articles they have found. Elements of course assessment (below) give a further indication of the emphases placed upon different parts of the course.

Course assessment:

The course will be assessed by four elements. Full details regarding expectations for each are provided in individual 'rubrics', available on the course website.

- 1) Participation – 15%
- 2) Article introduction – 15%
 - due before 11:59pm on either 15 January, 22 January, 29 January, 5 February, 12 February or 26 February.
- 3) Project – 60%
 - a. Research paper outline – due before 11:59pm on Friday, 15 February – 5%
 - b. Research paper presentation – on either 14, 21 or 28 March – 10%
 - c. Research paper popular output – due before 11:59pm on Wednesday, 3 April – 10%
 - d. Research paper – due before 11:59pm on Monday, 8 April – 35%
- 4) Peer critique – due before 11:59pm on either 18 March, 25 March or 1 April – 10%

Notes on electronic submissions:

- 1) Before you will be permitted to submit any document through any of the drop-boxes, you will have to complete the 'assignment checklist' which is presented to you in the form of a 'quiz' in LEARN. Though labeled a 'quiz', this will not be marked in any way, but must be completed before the drop-box for the particular assignment is open to you. The questions (which concern issues of 'academic integrity') refer, of course, to the particular assignment.
- 2) Please make your submissions in doc or rtf formats (NOT pdf).

Note on late submissions:

Late submissions will be penalised 5 per cent (of the 100 per cent available for that particular assignment) for each day (or part thereof) late. Please note that the LEARN system 'time-stamps' submissions, and 'late' will be considered anything after the deadline time. (For the record, 'one minute late' will be considered late.) Additionally, submissions will not be accepted after seven days (beyond the due date) have lapsed. Alternative arrangements may be made in exceptional circumstances (usually related to medical emergencies supported by documentation). As soon as students realise that their assignment may be submitted late for reasons that might potential be considered 'exceptional circumstances', they are encouraged to contact the course instructor.

Appropriate student behaviour and other notes:

Consequences of academic offences:

A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offenses, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offense, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offenses (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about "rules" for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm>

Within ENV, those committing academic offences (e.g. cheating, plagiarism) will be placed on disciplinary probation and will be subject to penalties which may include a grade of 0 on affected course elements, 0 on the course, suspension, and expulsion.

Students who believe that they have been wrongfully or unjustly penalized have the right to grieve; refer to Policy #70, Student Grievance, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm>

Students are strongly encouraged to review the material provided by the university's Academic Integrity office (see: <http://uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/Students/index.html>).

Research ethics: Please also note that the 'University of Waterloo requires all research conducted by its students, staff, and faculty which involves humans as participants to undergo prior ethics review and clearance through the Director, Office of Human Research and Animal Care (Office). The ethics review and clearance processes are intended to ensure that projects comply with the Office's Guidelines for Research with Human Participants (Guidelines) as well as those of provincial and federal agencies, and that the safety, rights and welfare of participants are adequately protected. The Guidelines inform researchers about ethical issues and procedures which are of concern when conducting research with humans (e.g. confidentiality, risks and benefits, informed consent process, etc.).' If your research involves humans as participants, then please contact the course instructor for guidance and see <http://iris.uwaterloo.ca/ethics/>.

Note for students with disabilities: The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the OPD at the beginning of each academic term.

Religious observances: As appropriate, students need to inform the course instructor at the beginning of term if special accommodation needs to be made for religious observances that are not otherwise accounted for in the scheduling of classes and assignments.

Course readings:

All readings are available electronically, either through UW course reserve (CR) or at a particular website (WEB).

Course schedule:

| Date | Topic | Sample issues to be explored | Required readings |
|--------|--|---|--|
| 10 Jan | Introduction and 'decision-making theory', generally | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - what is decision-making? - theories of decision-making - what do various disciplines contribute? - research questions associated with decision-making - decision-making at distinct scales - rational decision-making and post-normal science challenges - structure/agency | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) 'Chapter 2: Decision-making Concepts', in Knut Lehre Seip and Fred Wenstep, <i>A Primer on Environmental Decision-Making</i> (New York: Springer, 2006), pp. 7-20 – CR. 2) Bruce Tonn, Mary English and Cheryl Travis, 'A Framework for Understanding and Improving Environmental Decision Making', <i>Journal of Environmental Planning and Management</i> (Vol. 43, No. 2, 2000), pp. 163-183 – CR. 3) S. Funtowicz and J. Ravetz, 'Post-Normal Science: Environmental Policy under Conditions of Complexity', -- WEB (http://www.nusap.net/sections.php?op=viewarticle&artid=13) |
| 17 Jan | Individual and household decision-making | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - models of individual decision-making - kinds of households - power, values, norms in households - case-study of waste | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) 'Environmentally Significant Individual Behavior', in National Research Council, <i>Decision Making for the Environment: Social and Behavioral Science Research Priorities</i> (Washington, DC: National Academies Press, 2005), pp. 69-84 – CR. 2) Stewart Barr, 'Environmental Action in the Home: Investigating the "Value-Action" Gap', <i>Geography</i> (Vol. 91, No. 1, 2006), pp. 43-54 – CR. |
| 24 Jan | Community (municipality decision-making) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - councils and mayors; other players; other influences - case-study of water | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Steve Selin and Deborah Chavez, 'Developing a Collaborative Model for Environmental Planning and Management', <i>Environmental Management</i> (Vol. 19, No. 2, 1995), pp. 189-195 – CR. 2) Shirley Smiley, Rob de Loë and Reid Kreutzwiser, 'Appropriate Public Involvement in Local Environmental Governance: A Framework and Case Study', <i>Society and Natural Resources</i> (Vol. 23, No. 11, 2010), pp. 1043-1059 – CR. |
| 31 Jan | Organisational decision-making | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - nongovernmental organisations - case-study of business | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Magali A. Delmas and Michael W. Toffel, 'Institutional Pressures and Organizational Characteristics: Implications for Environmental Strategy', in Pratima Bansal and Andrew J. Hoffman (eds), <i>The Oxford Handbook of Business and the Natural Environment</i> (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 229-247 – CR. 2) Eric J. McNulty and Rupert Davis, 'Should the C-Suite Have a "Green" Suite?', <i>Harvard Business Review</i> (December 2010), pp. 133-137 – CR. |

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| 7 Feb | Provincial decision-making in Ontario | - relevant Ontario ministries; bureaucratic politics - case-study of energy | 1) <i>How an Ontario Bill Becomes Law</i> (Toronto, ON: Legislative Research Service, Legislative Assembly of Ontario, August 2011) – WEB (http://www.ontla.on.ca/lao/en/media/laointernet/pdf/bills-and-lawmaking-background-documents/how-bills-become-law-en.pdf). 2) Ian H. Rowlands, ‘The Development of Renewable Electricity Policy in the Province of Ontario: The Influence of Ideas and Timing’, <i>Review of Policy Research</i> (Vol. 24, No. 3, 2007), pp. 185-207 – CR. |
| 14 Feb | National decision-making in Canada | - the Canadian Constitution’s division of power - case-study of biodiversity | 1) Michael Howlett and Sima Joshi-Koop, ‘Canadian Environmental Politics and Policy’, in John C. Courtney and David E. Smith (eds), <i>The Oxford Handbook of Canadian Politics</i> (Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press, 2010) – CR. 2) Stewart Elgie, ‘The Politics of Extinction: The Birth of Canada’s Species at Risk Act’, in Debora L. VanNijnatten and Robert Boardman (eds), <i>Canadian Environmental Policy and Politics: Prospects for Leadership and Innovation, Third Edition</i> (Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 197-215 – CR. |
| 21 Feb | No class – READING WEEK | | |
| 28 Feb | International decision-making | - ‘anarchy’ in the international system - case-study of climate change | 1) Liliana B. Andonova and Ronald B. Mitchell, ‘The Rescaling of Global Environmental Politics’, <i>Annual Review of Environment and Resources</i> (Vol. 35, 2010), pp. 255–82 – CR. 2) Douglas Macdonald and Debora L. VanNijnatten, ‘Canadian Climate Policy and the North American Influence’, in Monica Gattinger and Geoffrey Hale (eds), <i>Borders and Bridges: Canada’s Policy Relations in North America</i> (Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 177-193 – CR. |
| 7 Mar | Session will be treated as an optional ‘office hour’ – discussions in ‘open’ with any interested student(s). | | |
| 14 Mar | Student presentations | | |
| 21 Mar | Student presentations | | |
| 28 Mar | Student presentations | | |
| 4 Apr | Future prospects | - student reports on the ‘popular output’ emerging from their project - course summary - prospects: empirical and conceptual - course evaluation | None. |

Ian Rowlands, January 2013