

# ERS 201

## ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY, POLITICS & GOVERNANCE

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**School of Environment, Resources and Sustainability**  
**University of Waterloo**  
**Fall 2019**

**Location:** Thursdays, 2:30 – 4:20 p.m., EV3 1408  
**Instructor:** Prof. Andrea Collins  
**Office:** EV2, Room 2007  
**Office Hours:** Wednesdays, 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. or by appointment  
**Email:** andrea.collins [AT] uwaterloo.ca

**Teaching Assistants:** Norman Kearney, Sophia Sanniti  
**TA Office Hours:** To be determined

### **Tutorial Schedule:**

TUT 101: 4:30 – 5:20 Thurs. HH 259	TUT 104: 11:30 – 12:20 Fri. HH 345
TUT 102: 4:30 – 5:20 Thurs. AL 210	TUT 105: 2:30 – 3:20 Fri. HH 345
TUT 103: 11:30 – 12:20 Fri. HH 124	TUT 106: 2:30 – 3:20 Fri. HH 344

**Calendar Description:** This course provides students with an introduction to processes of environmental policy, politics and governance. The roles of various actors, discourses and institutions involved in environmental policy-making and governance will be examined. These processes will be illustrated through an examination of a range of environmental issues from the local to the global level.

*Prereq: Level at least 2A; Environment, Resources and Sustainability students only*  
*Antireq: ERS 210, ERS 275 001 F15*

### **Detailed Course Description:**

This course introduces students to environmental policy-making, politics and governance in a Canadian context. Throughout the course, the importance of ideas, institutions, interests and power will be emphasized in understanding processes of environmental policy formation, implementation and effectiveness.

The first five weeks of the course examine the features of the Canadian environmental policy landscape, including: domestic political actors and dynamics, including the federal-provincial relationship, environmental policy tools, the significance of natural resource exports to the economy, engagement of Indigenous communities in environmental policy, and Canada's engagement with the North American and global policy contexts.

The next three weeks will focus on specific cases of environmental policy areas of importance to Canada. Following an in-class test in Week 9, the final three weeks of the course focus on an in-depth case study the Alberta tar sands. The course concludes with a final exam that will focus on the Alberta tar sands case.

### **Course Objectives:**

The aim of this course is to provide students with an empirical foundation and conceptual framework for the practical analysis of policy, politics and governance of environmental issues in Canada.

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

- Demonstrate knowledge of key environmental issues facing Canada today.
- Identify the key features that shape the environmental policy context in Canada and understand the ways in which these features affect environmental governance.
- Have a basic understanding of the key types of policy tools that have been employed to address environmental problems in Canada, and evaluate their relative strengths and weaknesses.
- Understand the political dynamics surrounding environmental problems and policies in Canada.

### **Required Course Texts**

(available at the University of Waterloo Bookstore and in the UW Library on Course Reserve):

1. Debora VanNijnatten (ed.), *Canadian Environmental Policy and Politics*. Oxford University Press. 2016.
2. Ian Urquhart, *Costly Fix: Power, Politics and Nature in the Tar Sands*. University of Toronto Press. 2018.
3. Additional articles - available electronically via LEARN.

### **Mark Breakdown:**

Tutorial participation	15%
News media article analysis	20%
Mid-term test	30%
Final Take Home Exam	35%

**Participation:** Your participation will be evaluated based on tutorial attendance and the quality of classroom interventions in tutorials. A mark out of 5 will be given for tutorial attendance (i.e. 5/5 for perfect attendance; and a 0.75 mark reduction for every missed tutorial without a documented reason for missing it approved by your TA). A mark out of 10 will be given for participation in tutorial discussions. For each tutorial meeting, you are expected to have read the assigned readings for that week, and to be prepared to discuss your thoughts and ideas with your classmates in a constructive and respectful manner.

Good participation in class is not simply a matter of speaking up. It involves contributions that demonstrate your engagement and connection with the course materials. This can include making connections between different course materials and between course materials and real-world events, as well as demonstrating that you have carefully weighed the arguments and viewpoints expressed in readings and in class and have incorporated them into your own analysis.

**News Media Article Analysis:** You are to write a short paper (1200-1500 words) that analyzes an environmental policy issue facing Canada today based on a recent news media article about that issue as well as readings from this course. Full details on the parameters of this assignment will be provided on LEARN and discussed in class. This assignment is due on **October 11, 2019 by 11:59pm EST.**

**In-Class Test:** There will be an in-class test during the lecture period on **November 7, 2019.** This test will be based on the material we have covered in class up to that point in time – including material covered in the required readings, lectures and tutorials. Further details on this test will be circulated in class later in the term.

**Final Take Home Exam:** The final take home exam will be completed during the examination period in December. This exam will focus primarily on Ian Urquhart's book *Costly Fix*, which we are reading in the last several weeks of the term. Students will be asked to respond to a set of questions that arise from our reading of the book. In answering these questions, students are asked to reflect on the themes we have covered in this class throughout the whole term as they apply to the case study of Alberta's tar sands.

Students will receive the questions through LEARN on the last day of classes (**Tuesday, Dec. 3 at 12:00 noon**) and will have until **Friday, December 13, 2019 at 11:59 p.m.** to submit the exam on LEARN. Once the questions are released, the instructor and the TAs will only be able to answer clarification questions about the exam, and will not be answering questions about course content. More details about the exam will be available after the Fall Reading Break.

**Late Assignments:** Please submit written assignments to LEARN by 11:59pm EST on the indicated due date. Late assignments will be penalized with a reduction of 5 percentage points (out of 100 points available on the assignment) per day. No assignments will be accepted after 10 days past the due date. Failure to submit a paper before the cut-off date will result in a grade of zero. Extensions on assignment deadlines will only be granted in exceptional circumstances that are supported by medical or other official documentation.

**Academic integrity:** In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. [Check [the Office of Academic Integrity](#) for more information.]

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read [Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4](#). When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department's administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. [Check [the Office of Academic Integrity](#) for more information.] A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about "rules" for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course instructor, academic advisor, or the undergraduate associate dean. For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to [Policy 71, Student Discipline](#). For typical penalties, check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](#).

**Appeals:** A decision made or penalty imposed under [Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances](#) (other than a petition) or [Policy 71, Student Discipline](#) may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to [Policy 72, Student Appeals](#).

**Note for students with disabilities:** [AccessAbility Services](#), 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 [AccessAbility Services](#) at the beginning of each academic term.

**Turnitin.com:** Text matching software (Turnitin®) may be used to screen assignments in this course. Turnitin® is used to verify that all materials and sources in assignments are documented. Students' submissions are stored on a U.S. server, therefore students must be given an alternative (e.g., scaffolded assignment or annotated bibliography), if they are concerned about their privacy and/or security. Students will be given due notice, in the first week of the term and/or at the time assignment details are provided, about arrangements and alternatives for the use of Turnitin® in this course.

It is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor if they, in the first week of term or at the time assignment details are provided, wish to submit the alternate assignment.

### **Mental Health**

The University of Waterloo, the Faculty of Environment and our Departments/Schools consider students' well-being to be extremely important. We recognize that throughout the term

students may face health challenges - physical and / or emotional. Please note that help is available. Mental health is a serious issue for everyone and can affect your ability to do your best work. Counselling Services <http://www.uwaterloo.ca/counselling-services> is an inclusive, non-judgmental, and confidential space for anyone to seek support. They offer confidential counselling for a variety of areas including anxiety, stress management, depression, grief, substance use, sexuality, relationship issues, and much more.

**Religious Observances:**

Students need to inform the 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.

**Unclaimed assignments:**

Unclaimed assignments will be retained for until one month after term grades become official in Quest. After that time, they will be destroyed in compliance with UW's confidential shredding procedures.

**Communications with Instructor and Teaching Assistants:**

All communication with students must be through either the student's University of Waterloo email account or via Learn. If a student emails the instructor or TA from a personal account they will be requested to resend the email using their personal University of Waterloo email account.