

# The Graduate School of Political Management

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THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

**M.P.S. in Legislative Affairs**

Spring Semester 2021

February 1 – April 15, 2021

**U.S. Energy & Environmental  
Policy**

LGAF 6264.LH1

3 Credits

Thursday evenings, 6:00-8:00 p.m. Hall  
of the States

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Jeff Lane

Adjunct Professor of Legislative Affairs

[lanej@gwu.edu](mailto:lanej@gwu.edu) or [jeff.lane38@gmail.com](mailto:jeff.lane38@gmail.com);

cell phone: 703-217-1554

Office hours: virtual, by appointment

## **Course Description**

This is a graduate level course in U.S. energy and environmental policy. We will focus on several key topics: (a) an overview of energy and environmental policymaking in the United States; (b) an overview of energy resources worldwide and in the United States; (c) the use of fossil fuels — oil and gasoline, coal, and natural gas; (d) the use of non-fossil sources of energy and renewable energy sources — nuclear power, solar, wind, biomass, hydropower and others; (e) energy, the environment, and climate change; (f) reducing the demand for energy and protecting the environment through conservation and efficiencies; (g) an analysis of recent energy and environmental legislation and regulation; and finally (h) the future of U.S. energy and environmental policymaking.

## **The Learning Objectives for this Course**

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- (a) Demonstrate an understanding of U.S. domestic energy and environmental policy and related scientific, technological and political issues.
- (b) Describe how energy needs are met in critical areas of U.S. life, from transportation through transmission of electricity.
- (c) Explain the major legislative, regulatory and policy initiatives in the area of energy and the environment.
- (d) Convey your understanding of energy and environmental terms, concepts, issues and

*policy in writing and in speech.*

### **Our Virtual Classroom**

Live online class sessions will be conducted on Zoom at our regularly scheduled class time (Thursdays from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m., Eastern Standard Time). You can access the class by using the “Zoom Meetings Link” in the content area of our Blackboard page. These class sessions will be a combination of lecture and discussion (including small breakout groups). It is essential that you have read the assigned material and have a grasp of the week’s significant news related to Congress so that you are engaged and ready to participate actively in class. To facilitate our discussions and interaction, I strongly encourage you to activate your computer video camera during class. You can address any privacy concerns by utilizing Zoom’s “virtual background” feature.

### **Weekly Asynchronous Current Event Activity/Discussion**

In addition to our synchronous (live online) classes, each week there will be an asynchronous “current events” activity to supplement our regular live class sessions. Each week, in addition to your assigned readings, you will identify a current events issue in federal energy and environmental policy. You should be prepared to discuss it with me and your classmates at our next live session. The assignment includes emailing me (before midnight each Wednesday) a short summary of the issue, an explanation of why you think it is significant, and a description of the material you’ve reviewed (e.g., a newspaper or periodical article, a newscast, a podcast) related to it. This is intended to be a short project and you should only devote about an hour of your time each week to it. Examples of a relevant energy or environmental current event include an executive order or proposed regulation issued by President Biden or an executive agency, a congressional committee hearing of one of the many committees of jurisdiction in energy and environmental policy, the introduction of a significant piece of legislation by a member of Congress, an important federal court case, or some action or position taken by private industry or state governments in response to federal government policy.

### **How Your Grade Will be Determined**

***Class Attendance, Participation and Oral Presentation:*** Students are expected to attend class each week and participate actively in class discussions throughout the semester. You’ll be asked on occasion to present your asynchronous current events issue to the full class in addition to breakout groups. Each student will give a 15-minute presentation of his or her research findings and advocacy in breakout groups during our last class session. Together this will count as 20 percent of your final grade.

***Research Paper:*** You will write a 10 to 12-page research paper (2500 to 3000 words, 12 pt font, double-spaced, not counting footnotes, bibliography, charts and figures) on a contemporary energy or environmental policy issue. In this paper, you will (a) summarize the current state of the federal policy in this field; (b) advocate for federal policy changes that you think are desirable in this field; and (c) describe relevant policy actors and institutions in the federal executive and legislative branches who would be most responsible for making such changes, and list and briefly describe the interest groups that would be most likely to support them.

You must submit your research paper topic and short outline to me no later than March 14. The paper will be due April 13 and will constitute 40 percent of your course grade. Unexcused late submission of your paper will result in a reduction of your grade.

**Final Examination:** The final examination will be a take-home, open-book, open-note examination. You will be asked two broad questions (you will pick two from three options) related to energy and environmental policy and your answers will be based on the reading, lectures and discussions that we have done during the semester. This will count as 40 percent of your final grade.

**Following is the grade scale for all GSPM classes:**

<b>Grade*</b>	<b>Grading Standard</b>
A      94-100	Your work is outstanding and ready for submission in a professional environment. Your material, effort, research, and writing demonstrate superior work.

A-	90-93	Represents solid work with minor errors. Overall, excellent work.
B+	87-89	Very good. Represents well-written material, research, and presentation, but needs some minor work.
B	83-86	Satisfactory work, but needs reworking and more effort. Note that although not a failing grade, at the graduate level, anything below a "B" is viewed as unacceptable.
B-	80-82	You've completed the assignment, but you are not meeting all of the requirements.
C+	77-79	Needs improvement in content and in effort. Shows some motivation and concern.
C	73-76	Needs reworking, improved effort, and additional research. Shows minimal motivation and concern.
C-	70-72 (lowest grade to pass)	Poor performance. Major errors, too many misspellings, problems with accuracy, etc.
F	Below 70	Unacceptable performance, or inability to submit the assignment.

\*Please note that you may be penalized for late submission of assignment(s).

#### **Textbooks:**

Daniel Yergin, *The Quest: Energy, Security, and the Remaking of the Modern World* (Penguin, 2012)  
 Walter A. Rosenbaum, *Environmental Politics and Policy*, 11th Ed., (CQ Press/SAGE, 2020)

#### **Suggested Sources and Online Readings:**

The U.S. Energy Information Administration, *Energy Explained, Your Guide to Understanding Energy* <http://www.eia.gov/energyexplained/index.cfm>

Suggested sources for current energy policy news:

RealClear Energy, Politico, The Hill:  
<http://www.realclearenergy.org>  
<http://www.politico.com/energy-and-environment>  
<http://www.politico.com/tipsheets/morning-energy>  
<http://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment>

The Bipartisan Policy Center, *The Executive Branch and National Energy Policy: Time for Renewal* (November 2012) [https://bipartisanpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/BPC\\_Governance\\_Report\\_0.pdf](https://bipartisanpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/BPC_Governance_Report_0.pdf)

Michael Ratner, *21<sup>st</sup> Century U.S. Energy Sources: A Primer*, Congressional Research Service (2018) <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R44854.pdf>

International Energy Agency, *World Energy Outlook - Overview* (2020)

<https://www.iea.org/reports/world-energy-outlook-2020#h>

The Aspen Institute Energy and Environment Program, *Energy in a Time of Innovation and Volatility*, Anne Pramoggiore & Clint Vince, Co-Chairs, 2016 Energy Policy Forum

<https://www.aspeninstitute.org/publications/2016-energy-policy-forum-report/>

The Aspen Institute Energy & Environment Program, *Disruptive Forces and The Energy System's Response to Change*, Ernest Moniz & Anne Pramoggiore, Co-Chairs, 2017 Energy Policy Forum  
<https://assets.aspeninstitute.org/content/uploads/2017/11/2017EnergyPolicy.pdf>

### **Blackboard Site**

A Blackboard course site has been set up for this course. Each student is expected to check the site throughout the semester, as Blackboard will be the primary venue for outside classroom communications between the instructors and the students. Students can access the course site at <https://blackboard.gwu.edu>. Support for Blackboard is available at 202-994-4948 or [helpdesk@gwu.edu](mailto:helpdesk@gwu.edu).

### **Academic Integrity:**

All members of the university community are expected to exhibit honesty and competence in their academic work. Students have a special responsibility to acquaint themselves with, and make use of, all proper procedures for doing research, writing papers, and taking exams.

Members of the community will be presumed to be familiar with the proper academic procedures and will be held responsible for applying them. Deliberate failure to act in accordance with such procedures will be considered academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty is defined as “cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one’s own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information.” Acts of academic dishonesty are a legal, moral, and intellectual offense against the community and will be prosecuted through the proper university channels. The University Code of Academic Integrity can be found at <http://studentconduct.gwu.edu/code-academic-integrity>.

In the Legislative Affairs program, we enforce a *zero tolerance* policy for plagiarism. If there is evidence that you plagiarized your research assignment, you will be given an “F” for the assignment and an “F” for the course. That also means you’ll probably be kicked out of our master’s program. To guard against plagiarism, we use SafeAssign, a feature found in Blackboard. All papers must be submitted to this site. More on this when we get closer to our research assignment.

### **Copyright Statement:**

Unless explicitly allowed by the instructor, course materials, class discussions, and examinations are created for and expected to be used by class participants only. The recording and rebroadcasting of such material, by any means, is forbidden.

The Copyright Act (17 U.S.C. § 10) governs the rights attributed to owners of copyrighted work. Under certain circumstances, educational institutions may provide copies of copyrighted works to students. The copies may not be copied nor used for any other purpose besides private study, scholarship, or research. Users should not provide electronic copies of any materials provided on this course's Blackboard site to unauthorized users. If a user fails to comply with Fair Use restrictions, he/she may be held liable for copyright infringement. No further transmission or electronic distribution is permitted.

#### **Use of Electronic Course Materials and Class Recordings:**

Students are encouraged to use electronic course materials, including recorded class sessions, for private personal use in connection with their academic program of study. Electronic course materials and recorded class sessions should not be shared or used for non-course related purposes unless express permission has been granted by the instructor. Students who impermissibly share any electronic course materials are subject to discipline under the Student Code of Conduct. Please contact the instructor if you have questions regarding what constitutes permissible or impermissible use of electronic course materials and/or recorded class sessions. Please contact [Disability Support Services](#) if you need additional accommodations for accessing electronic course materials.

#### **Support for Students with Disabilities:**

GW's Disability Support Services (DSS) provides and coordinates accommodations and other services for students with a wide variety of disabilities, as well as those temporarily disabled by injury or illness. Accommodations are available through DSS to facilitate academic access for students with disabilities. Please notify your instructor if you require accommodations. Additional information is available at <http://disabilitysupport.gwu.edu/>.

#### **In the Event of an Emergency or Crisis during Class**

If we experience some an emergency during class time, we will try to stay at this location until we hear that we can move about safely. If we have to leave here, we will meet at **[fill in proximate location]** in order to account for everyone and to make certain that everyone is safe. Please refer to Campus Advisories for the latest information on the University's operating status:  
<http://www.campusadvisories.gwu.edu/>.

#### **Out of Class/Independent Learning Expectation**

Over the course of the semester, students will spend at least 2 hours (100 minutes) per week in class. Required reading for the class meetings and written response papers or projects are expected to take up, on average, 7 hours (350 minutes) per week. Over the course of the semester, students will spend 25 hours instructional time and 87.5 hours preparing for class.

## **Course Evaluation**

At the end of the semester, students will be given the opportunity to evaluate the course through GW's online course evaluation system. It is very important that you take the time to complete an evaluation. Students are also encouraged to provide feedback throughout the course of the semester by contacting any/all of the following:

Dr. Casey Burgat  
Director, Legislative Affairs  
Program [cburgat@email.gwu.edu](mailto:cburgat@email.gwu.edu)

202-994-1149

Associate Dean for Learning and Faculty Development  
College of Professional Studies  
[jackp@gwu.edu](mailto:jackp@gwu.edu) | 202-994-3592

Suzanne Farrand  
Director of Academic Administration, GSPM  
[sfarrand@gwu.edu](mailto:sfarrand@gwu.edu) | 202-994-9309

## **COURSE CALENDAR**

**(The instructor reserves the right to alter course content and/or adjust the pace to accommodate class progress. Students are responsible for keeping up with all adjustments to the course calendar.)**

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### **February 4**

#### **Week 1: Introduction and Energy & Environmental Basics**

Class Overview  
Discuss Syllabus and Class Requirements and Expectations  
Personal Introductions  
Energy and Environmental Basics – lecture and discussion

#### *Readings:*

Yergin, *The Quest*, Introduction and Prologue  
Rosenbaum, Chap. 1, "After Earth Day", pp. 1-13  
Remarks by President Biden announcing energy and environmental executive actions (1/27/21) ([link](#))

## **February 11**

### Week 2: An Overview of U.S. Energy & Environmental Policymaking Institutions

Executive Branch: Key Cabinet Agencies and Independent Regulatory Agencies, White House and OMB  
Congress: Committees of jurisdiction and key members  
Role of the courts  
Role of states and local governments

*Readings:*

- Bipartisan Policy Center, *The Executive Branch and National Energy Policy: Time for Renewal* (2012) ([link](#))
- Rosenbaum, Chap. 3, “Making Policy: Governmental Institutions and Politics”
- Opening Statement of Energy Secretary Nominee Jennifer Granholm, Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee (1/27/21) ([link](#))

*Asynchronous Current Event Issue (due Feb. 10)*

## **February 18**

### Week 3: Overview, Policy Context and Outlook

World and U.S. energy resources – basics, trends and outlook  
Energy and Environmental Policy Context – From Scarcity to Abundance, Volatility in the Marketplace, Comparing Presidencies

*Readings:*

- IEA *World Energy Outlook - Overview* (2020)
- The Aspen Institute, *Energy in a Time of Innovation & Volatility*, pp. 1-10, pp. 16-25 ([link](#))
- CRS, *21<sup>st</sup> Century U.S. Energy Sources: A Primer* (2017) (Summary and Introduction – through p. 3) ([link](#))

*Asynchronous Current Event Issue (due Feb. 17)*

## **February 25**

### Week 4: Fossil Fuels: Oil, Coal & Natural Gas

Basics, trends and outlook  
Unconventional methods impact on oil production  
Geopolitics  
“Fracking” and other environmental issues

U.S. policy affecting fossil fuels

*Readings:*

Yergin, *The Quest*, chapters 11-14

Rosenbaum, Chap. 8, pp. 230 - 247

*Asynchronous Current Event Issue (due Feb. 24)*

Guest Speaker: Chris Smith, former Assistant Secretary for Fossil Energy at the Department of Energy

## **March 4**

### Week 5: Nuclear Power

Basics, History

Nuclear power generation in United States

Issues: Safety, Environmental, and Proliferation

Nuclear Waste Policy

*Readings:*

Yergin, *The Quest*, chapter 18 and chapter 20 (pp. 407-418)

Rosenbaum, Chap. 8, pp. 247-255

Aspen Institute, *The Future of Nuclear Energy in the United States* (2017), pp. 3-9  
(Executive Summary and Status of Existing Nuclear Power Plants) [link](#)

*Asynchronous Current Event Issue (due March 3)*

Guest Speaker: Chris Hanson, Commissioner of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, former Senior Advisor in DOE's Office of Nuclear Energy, Senate Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee staffer

## **March 11**

### Week 6: Solar, Wind, and other Renewables

Basics, Trends and Outlook

Economics of renewables

Federal and state incentives and regulation

*Readings:*

Yergin, *The Quest*, chapters 27-30

Rosenbaum, Chap. 8, pp. 255-260

*Asynchronous Current Event Issue (due March 10)*

***Research Paper Outline Due March 14***

**March 18 – Spring Break**

**March 25**

**Week 7: Electricity Generation and the Utility Industry**

The modern electric grid  
Challenges for electric utilities; distributed generation  
Grid resiliency and cyber security  
Environmental regulation of the utility industry

*Readings:*

Yergin, *The Quest*, chapters 17, 19, 20  
*Asynchronous Current Event Issue (due March 24)*  
Guest Speaker: Tom Craig, Director of Federal Government Affairs, Duke Energy, and former majority clerk for Senate Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee

**April 1**

**Week 8: Energy, the Environment and Climate Change**

US Policy Issues  
Paris Climate Agreement

*Readings:*

Yergin, *The Quest*, chapters 23-26  
Rosenbaum, Chap. 10, “The Politics and Policy of Global Climate Change”  
*Asynchronous Current Event Issue (due March 31)*

**April 8**

**Week 9: The Future of Energy & Environmental Policy**

The Biden Administration and energy and environmental policy  
Pending and Potential Court Cases  
International Issues

*Readings:*

Yergin, *The Quest*, chaps. 33-35 & Conclusion  
Other Readings TBD  
*Asynchronous Current Event Issue (due April 7)*

**April 15**

## Week 10: Review, Research Paper Presentations

### ***Research Papers Due April 13***

Oral presentations of Research Papers and discussions in Breakout

Groups

Exam Review

**Final Exam Take Home Given Out**

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