

Water Politics

790:395:09736

Fall 2023

Monday– 10:20 – 1:20pm

Hickman Hall - 118

Instructor

Douglas Cantor

Department of Political Science

Office hours: Monday/Tuesday – 2pm to 4pm (in-person only)

Office Location: Hickman Hall, 416

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Disclaimer: Please review all parts of this syllabus prior to emailing me questions on the course. In all likelihood, answers to most of your questions can be found here or in the course FAQ.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Water is at a crossroads politically and legally. In the U.S., for example, there are no shortages of American water crises in recent years. From unprecedented drought in the West to the Austin, Texas and Jackson, Mississippi water crises of 2021, water has come front and center into the world of American political contestation. This course analyzes the policies, processes, issues, and politics of water issues and disputes within and between countries. The course takes place in four stages: First, we will establish an overall framework to understand the subject of water politics. Next, we will take a closer look on several political dimensions of water, such as, but not limited to, water and poverty, water privatization, environmental issues, gender and water, and water law. Our third section of the course will turn to topics of water justice and the human right to water. We will conclude the course by applying all of our previous work to a major issue facing the United States, lead pipes.

Along the way, we will explore the interaction between local, state, and federal governments on issues of water economics and law, transnational issues of water, and perhaps dive into reimagining community water politics for the rest of the 21st century. While the course will contain traditional academic readings, we will also be utilizing a regular blend of multimedia and lively classroom activities.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Understand historical and current issues of water politics.
- Analyze modern political and legal debates on water rights.
- Evaluate current national and international issues of water politics by debating the purpose and

meaning of water allocation.

-Create strategies for facilitating and leading their own goals with respect to water politics and justice.

REQUIRED TEXTS

You are required to purchase only one low-cost book (Feldman). Other books will be required but they will be provided by the library at no additional charge or by myself. You are free to purchase print editions with your own resources through publishers or Amazon. Instructions for library access are provided under each text, and I will also give a live demonstration during class.

Despite my active effort to provide online access to most of the readings below, I strongly encourage you to print out the readings each week, work with a physical copy, and have that physical copy on hand with you during class each week.

Feldman, David: *Water Politics: Governing Our Most Precious Resource*. Polity Publishing, 2017. ***This book must be purchased***

*****Do not purchase the below books. Also, don't panic at the volume of texts! We will only be reading select chapters from the below list and the full volumes are all available through the Rutgers library*****

Boelens, R., Perreault, T., & Vos, J. (Eds.). (2018). *Water Justice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Conca, Ken and Erika Weinthal (eds). *The Oxford Handbook of Water Politics and Policy*. Oxford University Press. 2016.

Cullet, Philippe, *Water Law, Poverty, and Development: Water Sector Reforms in India* (Oxford, 2009; online edn, Oxford Academic, 1 Sept. 2009),

Danver, Steven L., and Burch, John R., eds. 2011. *Encyclopedia of Water Politics and Policy in the United States*. Washington: CQ Press, a Division of SAGE. Accessed July 25, 2023.

Langford, M., & Russell, A. (Eds.). (2017). *The Human Right to Water: Theory, Practice and Prospects*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Larson, Rhett B., *Just Add Water: Solving the World's Problems Using its Most Precious Resource* (New York, 2020; online edn, Oxford Academic, 23 Apr. 2020),

Pauli, Benjamin J. *Flint Fights Back: Environmental Justice and Democracy in the Flint Water Crisis*. MIT Press. 2019.

Sultana, Farhana, and Loftus, Alex, eds. 2019. *Water Politics : Governance, Justice and the Right to Water*. Milton: Taylor & Francis Group. Accessed July 25, 2023. ProQuest Ebook Central.

Werner Troesken. 2006. *The Great Lead Water Pipe Disaster*. Cambridge, Mass: The MIT Press.

(Un)grading

This course is designed to provide you with several opportunities to think and analyze through writing and dialogue. There are no exams, and the grading system is designed to encourage you to think and grow as a student.

The grading system for this course may be something you have never experienced before. Because all courses require some sort of quantitative summation to end the semester, we are always faced with the difficult question of “grades.” This course takes a different approach to grading than most other courses, as we will engage in what is often referred to as *ungrading*.

Rather than assign a score or grade to your individual assignments, I will be offering feedback, asking pointed questions, and making comments that engage your work, your thinking, and your presence. I will not give you a “grade” for any particular assignment. But I will be clear if you are meeting expectations, and if not, we will work to get you there. My goal is to put the focus on learning, rather than grades.

While I do have to give you a final grade (because the university requires it!), you will consider your work for this class in a holistic way to determine that final grade. You will assign yourself your final grade for the course, and will achieve this goal over the course of three self-reflection essays throughout the semester, playing an active role in your final grades for the course.

The first essay will be an Achievement essay, which will state your goals for the course and what grade you hope, need, (or don’t need) to achieve. The second essay will be a mid-term assessment essay. The final self-reflection will be a total assessment, where you weight your own work based on my feedback and submit what you think your final grade is to me.

My threshold for how you assess yourself is *reason*. So long as I feel you are being *reasonable* towards your work (and the quality of said work), and time put into the course, I will honor whatever grade you submit to me. If I feel you are being too generous or too harsh with yourself, I reserve the right to challenge your final grade, and will do so in the form of a request for a personal meeting, where we can sit down and discuss your self-assessment. Each reflection will entail a different series of self-assessments on your goals, progress, and activity in the course, and you will be provided with a template to complete your assessment. Most importantly, all will place a heavy emphasis on failure.

Why?

One of the greatest hindrances to a student’s active learning can be a fear of failure: fear of looking silly or inadequate in front of a classmate or faculty member, or fear of not getting a good grade on a project. Students have sometimes been taught that they need to be perfect, or as close to perfect as possible, to be rewarded. This is especially true for many that went to schools in testing-intensive K-12 environments; who have been taught, explicitly or implicitly, that their identity and intellectual worth is tied up in their test scores and GPAs.

However, as a professor, I think that there are things more important than perfection and finding ways to quantitatively measure such a thing: curiosity, risk taking, persistence, integrity, and self-awareness. College courses ideally are places where students learn the value of experimentation with ideas, techniques, and even failure itself.

You will play an active role in your assessments throughout the semester. I want all of you to confront your fears of failure head-on and embrace them, treating fear, in the words of the great boxing trainer Cus D'Amato, like fire: "Fear Is the greatest obstacle to learning, but fear is your best friend. Fear is like fire, if you learn to control it, you let it work for you. If you don't learn to control it, it'll destroy you and everything around you." I want all of you to engage your curiosity and to pursue intellectual audacity in this course, letting your mind envision a world of unlimited and unrealized possibilities: and knowing, without any exception, that you cannot accomplish such feats without failing along the way.

For this reason, a portion of your assessments will be based on not how much you fail, but how you handle failure. Have you been willing to challenge yourself to take risks that might result in failure? Have you been aware of when you have failed, refusing to give up in the face of failure? Have you found ways to use your failure to create something new and interesting? Have you grown from your failures? I hope this aspect of assessing yourselves will give you the freedom to try new things, and even to fail at them, and to come back having learned something from the experience.

The percentages given below here should not be thought of as "points" but rather serve as a guide to the relative importance of the different parts of the course, to help you think about how to spend your time in study.

Relative Weights of Course Expectations

Synthesis 1 – 15%

Synthesis 2 – 15%

Synthesis 3 – 20%

Team Lead Days – 10%

Solutions Paper – 25%

Self-reflections – 15%

While this is an open grading system, there are several checks on the class: 1. Failure to attend class regularly will result in a failing grade for the class. 2. Students that regularly submit their work late are expected to account for that in their self-assessments. 3. Students may not assign themselves temporary grades. And 4: I reserve the right to challenge any grade which I feel is too harsh or generous to the student based on my observations of their work. So, please be honest with yourself and me.

Textual Syntheses

You will submit one writing assignment for each of the first three parts of the class. This course intentionally avoids the use of the word "essay" for your writing assignments. Quite often the word essay gets associated with the word summary. While summarizing the arguments that we will read is part of the work, it is not the goal.

You will be required to discuss the readings of every text within each Section assigned for each synthesis.

The goals of your syntheses in this class are to:

Examine the main points of every journal article and book within each module you read in an effort to deconstruct arguments, question their methods and findings, and explain how each reading speaks to the rest of the module. You will also facilitate a discussion between the authors, explaining to the reader what that discussion is, how the authors agree or disagree or agree with each other, and commentate on why those agreements or disagreements may exist. I will provide a more detailed template for your syntheses on our course website.

Team Lead Days

Several of our sessions this semester will be student-driven sessions, with discussions and activities led by the students. You will be put into groups of 4-5 and you will design a series of questions to lead class discussion and one activity to facilitate collaboration and learning. Each team lead day is expected run for 90 minutes, or half of our class period. Professor Cantor will lead the remaining 90 minutes of our team lead days.

Rules for team lead days are as follows: You may not use more than three Powerpoint slides **total** and you may not lecture for more than 30 minutes total. The purpose of team lead days is for all of you to get experience in facilitating classroom learning. While I appreciate any efforts made, you will better your experiences the more you focus on collaboration, discussion, and activity over lengthy Powerpoint presentations. Do not, repeat, **do not**, make your team lead days lecture heavy or 90 minutes of YouTube videos. Applied collaboration is the goal here. Feel free to get creative!

Solutions Project: As we read the texts on lead pipes during our final month, and throughout the semester, you will be continuously asked to consider policy ideas and solutions for problems we will observe in water politics. Your final assignment this semester will be to research, design, and present a policy solution on a water politics/policy topic of your choice. Details will be discussed later on in the semester and posted on the course website.

This assignment is negotiable. I am willing to amend the project if the class would like to do something else. We will discuss this prospect as the semester progresses.

RULES FOR ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSIONS

Unless specified otherwise, due times are:

Papers and Assignments: 9:00 am EST on the date specified on the syllabus

All submissions must be done through our course platform and are due at the assigned due time on the assigned due date. I do not accept email submissions unless there is a dire technical emergency. A dire technical emergency is defined as an unavoidable crash in hardware or software that could not have been avoided in any other circumstances. Thus, for example: "I waited until the last second to submit the assignment, and then my Wi-Fi kicked out and/or the website simply wouldn't take the assignment," does not constitute a dire technical emergency.

If you have a dire technical emergency, please email your assignment after exhausting all measures. Your e-mail must include 1. A copy of the assignment. 2. A screenshot and 3. An explanation of the technical problem. You will still be required to submit your work through our website after the fact, your email will simply hold the submission time.

To be as clear as possible: Any issues you run into on the day of a due date that might interfere with you completing the submission before the submission time ends, be they personal or technical, must be communicated to me before the submission time expires.

If you regularly encounter tech problems due to your resources, submit your work prior to the due date and/or time.

Late Penalties: Please deduct the equivalent of ½ a letter grade per day that an assignment or paper is late from that assignment.

All deadlines are negotiable so long as they are negotiated well in advance.

CIVILITY

Being rude, insulting, disrespectful, or cynical to fellow classmates is expressly forbidden in this course. Professionalism and respect for your cohort is required and any student that violates this will be contacted directly, possibly be assigned a zero for the current module, and in extreme circumstances may be reported to higher levels within the university.

CLASSROOM INCLUSION

My name is Professor Douglas Cantor, I use he/him pronouns, and my classroom is a Safe Zone. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate/preferred name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

LANGUAGE DISCLAIMER

Political Science is the study of power; who gets what, where, and when. Often times, studying the field requires examination of historical facts and figures that, by modern standards, may have written or spoken in terms that are unacceptable by the standards of today. We may read historical quotes from, for example, a piece of legislation or a court ruling. We may, in other instances, discuss the polling effects from a gaffe by a politician that may be considered offensive or insensitive. Please note that any language used verbatim from historical and empirical sources may not reflect my own personal lexicon. If any of the language used in our units makes you feel uncomfortable or can be considered triggering, please feel free to contact me for accommodations.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Current Academic Integrity Policy:

Summary:

<http://nbacademicintegrity.rutgers.edu/home-2/academic-integrity-policy/>

Resources for Students:

<https://nbprovost.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-students>

▪ Honor pledge:

- Inform students that they will need to sign the Rutgers Honor Pledge on every major exam or assignment as follows:
- The Rutgers honor pledge will be included on all (major) assessments for you to sign: *On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this examination (assignment).*

Recommended by the Office of Student Conduct to promote a culture of academic integrity: Rutgers University takes academic dishonesty very seriously. By enrolling in this course, you assume responsibility for familiarizing yourself with the Academic Integrity Policy and the possible penalties (including suspension and expulsion) for violating the policy. As per the policy, all suspected violations will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct. Academic dishonesty includes (but is not limited to):

- Cheating
- Plagiarism
- Aiding others in committing a violation or allowing others to use your work
- Failure to cite sources correctly
- Fabrication
- Using another person's ideas or words without attribution—re-using a previous assignment
- Unauthorized collaboration
- Sabotaging another student's work

If in doubt, please consult the instructor. Please review the [Academic Integrity Policy](#).

I expect that all of the work you hand in to me is work that you have produced on your own and that any information you obtain from other sources will be properly cited. While I encourage

students to study together, when you submit work for this class, it must be wholly your own. If you have any questions or concerns about plagiarism, please see the university policy on academic integrity at the URL above or see me. Plagiarizing someone else's work (including cheating on exams) will result in a failing grade and suspected violations of academic integrity will be referred to the appropriate Dean for investigation. If you have any questions or concerns about my expectations, please do not hesitate to ask me.

Student-Wellness Services

Report a Bias Incident If you experience or witness an act of bias or hate, report it to someone in authority. You may file a report online and you will be contacted within 24 hours. The bias reporting page is [here](#).

[Click here to report a bias incident](#)

Bias is defined by the University as an act, verbal, written, physical, psychological, that threatens, or harms a person or group on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, ancestry, disability, marital status, civil union status, domestic partnership status, atypical heredity or cellular blood trait, military service or veteran status.

Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS)

**(848) 932-7884 / 17 Senior Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901/
<http://health.rutgers.edu/medical-counseling-services/counseling/>**

CAPS is a University mental health support service that includes counseling, alcohol and other drug assistance, and psychiatric services staffed by a team of professionals within Rutgers Health services to support students' efforts to succeed at Rutgers University. CAPS offers a variety of services that include: individual therapy, group therapy and workshops, crisis intervention, referral to specialists in the community, and consultation and collaboration with campus partners.

Crisis Intervention : <http://health.rutgers.edu/medical-counseling-services/counseling/crisis-intervention/>

Report a Concern: <http://health.rutgers.edu/do-something-to-help/>

Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance (VPVA)

(848) 932-1181 / 3 Bartlett Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 / www.vpva.rutgers.edu/

The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance provides confidential crisis intervention, counseling and advocacy for victims of sexual and relationship violence and stalking to students, staff and faculty. To reach staff during office hours when the university is open or to reach an advocate after hours, call 848-932-1181.

Disability Services

(848) 445-6800 / Lucy Stone Hall, Suite A145, Livingston Campus, 54 Joyce Kilmer Avenue, Piscataway, NJ 08854 / <https://ods.rutgers.edu/>

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Part I – The Nature of Water Politics

Week 1

No class since we meet on Mondays and the semester begins on Tuesday! Please read the syllabus, purchase Feldman, and read the first 3 chapters for next week!

Week 2

Read: Feldman – Chapters 1-3

Sept 11 – Course Intro and discussion of Feldman

Week 3

Read: – Feldman – Chapters 4-6

Sept 18 – Lecture and Activity

Self-Reflection #1 Due

Week 4

Read: - – Feldman Chapters 7-10

Sept 25 – Team Lead Day 1

Sept 30 – Synthesis #1 Due

Part II – Selected Dimensions and Dynamics of Water Policy and Law

Week 5 – Water Law

Read – Larson, Chapter 2

- Cullet, Chapter 1

Oct 2 – Water Law – Lecture and Team Lead Day 2

Week 6 – Privatization

Read: – Private Metropolis - Cantor and Dannin – Whetting Their Appetites

- Human Right to Water - Chapter 13 – Langford – Privatization and the Right to Water

Oct 9 – Privatization – Lecture and Activity

Week 7 – Poverty and Equity

Read: - Oxford Handbook - Cullet – Innovation and Trends in Water Law

- Oxford Handbook - Bakker – The Business of Water

Oct 16 – Team Lead Day 3

Week 8 – The Regionalization of Water Policy and Law in the United States

Read: Encyclopedia of Water Politics and Policy – Part I

Oct 23 – Lecture and activity

Oct 28 – Synthesis #2 Due

Part III – Justice and Water Politics

Week 9 – Gender and Water

Read: Larson – Chapter 5

Oxford Handbook - Van Koppen – Gender and Water

Human Right to Water - Chapter 9 – Hellum - Engendering the Right to Water and Sanitation

Oct 30 – Team Lead Day 4

Nov 4 – Self-Reflection #2 Due

Week 10 – Sanitation

Read: - Sultana and Loftus – Chapter 14

Water Justice Chapter 11 - Rusca, M., Alda-Vidal, C., & Kooy, M. (2018). Sanitation Justice?: The Multiple Dimensions of Urban Sanitation Inequalities.

Langford, M., Bartram, J., & Roaf, V. (2017). The Human Right to Sanitation. In M. Langford & A. Russell (Eds.)

Nov 6 – Team Lead Day 5

Week 11 – Indigenous Peoples and Water

Read: Water Justice - Chapter 10 - Bakker, K., Simms, R., Joe, N., & Harris, L. (2018).

Indigenous Peoples and Water Governance in Canada: Regulatory Injustice and Prospects for Reform.

Human Right to Water - Chapter 3 - Lovera Parmo, D. (2017). Indigenous Peoples and the Sale of Water Rights: The Case of Chile. In M. Langford & A. Russell (Eds.),

Nov 13 – Lecture and activity

Part IV – The Dangers of Water Politics – Water and Lead in the U.S.

Week 12

Read: - Pauli – Introduction, Chapters 1-3

Troesken – Chapters 1 and 2

Nov 20 – Lecture and Activity

Week 13

Read: - Pauli - Chapters 4-6

- Troesken – Chapters 6 and 7

Nov 27 – Lecture and Activity

Week 14

Read: Pauli – 7-8, Conclusion

Dec 4 – Team Lead Day 6 (If needed)

Dec 8 – **Synthesis #3 Due**

Week 15

Dec 11 – Final day! Wrapping things up.

Dec 18 – Solutions Paper Due

Dec 20 – Final Self-Reflection Due