

Climate Policy and Action: Policy and Advocacy (Winter 2026)

When: Mondays on Zoom and Wednesdays in-person 6:00-9:00 pm

Instructor: Larry Geri, DPA geril@evergreen.edu and Anthony M Levenda, PhD | anthony.levenda@evergreen.edu

Office hours will be held on Zoom by appointment, just email and we can set up a call.

Week	Monday (Zoom)	Wednesday (In-person)
1	Introduction	Introduction to Policy Studies/Policy Analysis
2	Issue Development and Identification	Politics, Parties and Policy in a Post-Truth World
3	Change Theory	Policy Analysis 1: What is it? What skills are needed? AI and Policy
4	Building Power	Interest Groups, Stakeholders, Policy Networks
5	Research – historical analysis and power mapping	Policy Analysis 2: How to structure a policy argument. Alternative Methods 1: Life Cycle Cost Analysis .
6	Social Action and Social Movements 1	Policy Analysis 3: How to tell a policy “story” successfully; alternative methods 2: cost-benefit analysis
7	Social Action and Social Movements 2	Environmental/Climate Policy and Policy Analysis. Implementation
8	Resistance and Consequences of Resistance	Energy Policy and Policy Analysis
9	Campaign Kickoff	Campaign Kickoff
10	Social Action Showcase	Reflections on policy and change
Eval		

Overview

This program explores different ways to analyze public problems and social change. Our focus is on social action to address social problems related to climate change. We will review climate change mitigation policies, technologies, governance, and actions that Washington state, Evergreen, and cities in North America have adopted, what impact these have had, and how we can create the most effective solutions. We will learn about the policy process, different approaches to policy analysis, and discuss strategies for policy advocacy. Students will analyze different approaches to climate solutions, weigh the costs and benefits of these different approaches, and develop skills in policy analysis and advocacy. We will take a critical approach to policy analysis and research, reviewing different actors' influences on the policy process. Centrally, we will unpack the various dimensions of social life that climate policies can affect, and vice versa. Critical approaches are essential to understand how intersecting systems of power influence policy approaches. We will work together to evaluate existing and proposed public policies for climate impact using different frameworks and ideological bases. Students will draft a policy memo and run a social action campaign to help visualize climate policy implementation.

Social action by students has a long and well documented history in the United States. It has encountered resistance and barriers. Students have also brought about substantial change by working together and by allying with other likeminded agents of change. The course focuses on this possibility of making a difference and how to realize different outcomes. It draws upon many examples of social action and social change to identify the core elements of social action that are critical to bring about change. The critical focus of the course is how to create and launch social action campaigns for change. Drawing upon the Sunrise Movement, we define a campaign in the context of the course as “a set of coherent tactics and activities that aggregate to a strategy with goals, demands, and targets that build power (capacity, resources, actions) to shift policies and public opinion on an issue.” The nature of the issue is open – its choice is up to you and your classmates.

Each class meeting will have a substantial action component for engagement. Participation in the action components for the class – eg., issue identification, application of change theory, building power, research and investigation, group dynamics, strategy and tactic selection, and campaign launch - will account for approximately half of your time and effort for the course. The objective of integrating practical and experiential components in the course is to learn by doing in addition to understanding the conceptual and theoretical underpinnings of social action.

The course has several key components: learning about social action; working and thinking together about the central elements of social action; analyzing the underlying problem(s) and determining what policy options are available to move society toward the outcomes we want; and co-designing a social action campaign and situating it in the context of the larger research on climate action. We will review the experience of the campaigns, learn from the experience, assess what happened and the outcomes, and discuss how the campaign could have been more effective.

There are both on-campus and online resources that you can and should consult for social action. The syllabus contains an initial set of references that are necessarily an incomplete set. We welcome your contributions and suggestions for adding to these resources. We also welcome your feedback on the readings for the course and suggestions for adding to or revising the reading list. We can respond most fully to your suggestions and incorporate changes in the syllabus if you make them in the first two to three weeks of the course.

Learning objectives include:

- Basic knowledge and understanding of climate policy and politics
- Understand the role of science, politics, community, and institutions in the policy process across multiple levels of government
- Identify and evaluate different approaches to policy advocacy
- Describe a social action goal that will advance equitable and just social change and explain/reflect why this social action goal is important to the student
- Learn about theories and examples of social action and climate action
- Gain skills in the analysis of climate change policies and how to research and write a policy memo that will support social action
- Co-Design and implement a social action campaign by identifying issue for social action, researching the issue, building power, creating strategies and tactics for campaign, and running the campaign
- Assess the success of the campaign and analyze reasons for outcomes of the campaign;
- Generalize lessons you have learned through a deeper knowledge of the literature on social action, policy, and advocacy

This is the second of three courses of the **Climate Policy and Action Certificate**. The Fall program focused on the basics of climate change science and policy, focused on the US. This Winter program more broadly covers “climate action” looking at different social actors

who influence policymaking through protest, movement-building, and other forms of influence. The Spring quarter program is focused on an internship or research project experience in which we will apply the knowledge and new skills gained to work on real-world climate action. More information about the certificate program can be found at the website: <https://www.evergreen.edu/certificates/climate-policy-and-action>

Course Text and Readings

We have two primary textbooks for the course, available in the TESC bookstore:

Myers-Lipton, Scott. (2023). *CHANGE! A Student Guide to Social Action*. 2nd edition. Routledge: New York and London.

Bardach, Eugene. (2011). *A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis*. 4th edition [or any edition is fine]. CQ Press.

Other readings will be provided via the course Canvas site.

Canvas

Canvas is our home base! Nearly all the work we do will be launched or accessed on CANVAS. You should be regularly checking in to the CANVAS site to stay updated on work. Each week you will go to the next module in the CANVAS modules page and follow the instructions for the week. Please have a personal account on <http://canvas.evergreen.edu>. You can also access our Canvas page via <http://my.evergreen.edu>

Student work

Student evaluations will be based on quality completion of all elements of the program: attendance and participation, and completion of a series of assignments of various scales. Students are expected to attend and participate in all class sessions. Please note: attending means not only being present but offering full attention to the work at hand. All students must be prepared and ready to contribute to seminar, starting by bringing the reading to every seminar. You must bring your book to seminar, or a printout of any PDF that is available. This is important because you build on your initial reading through discussion and will need to refer to passages in the text. Expect to hear faculty and students read aloud passages (and if you feel comfortable, be prepared to read aloud as

well). Reading out loud underscores significant ideas of the text and increases student comprehension. Students will work with the text in small and large groups.

Full credit can be earned by doing all the following:

- Reading assigned texts in advance of class
- Participating in class activities (participation is defined as active listening, speaking, thinking)
- Attending class (attendance is a precondition of participation)
- Completing all assignments by the date due.
- Writing a narrative self-evaluation for your transcript
- Your evaluation will consist of your seminar leader's written evaluation of your work, your required self-evaluation, and the evaluation meeting. You will be evaluated on your level of comprehension of the material, on your skills (writing, thinking, speaking, listening, research, presentation), and engagement.

Assignments and requirements

1. **Attendance & Participation.** A key part of your evaluation for this program will be participation. We expect everyone to “show up” ON-TIME and participate in all program activities. If a student must be absent due to a valid reason, contact us in advance of the absence so we know what is going on. 2-3 unexcused absences will result in loss of credit.
2. **Seminar/Workshop Preparation and Participation.** You are required to arrive to class (a) having read the entire assigned reading, (b) with your copy of the assigned reading in actual or electronic form, and (c) you should bring to seminar some notes (here are a few ideas):
 - a. 1 key new learning for you from the text about climate science and policy.
 - b. 1 or more key concepts or historical events you learned from the text.
 - c. 2 issues from the text and a page # that you’d like to discuss in seminar that comes from the reading.
3. **Portfolios**
 - a. Check canvas for more info – portfolios are geared towards helping you with campaign and readings
4. **Policy Memo Assignment**
 - a. Scaffolded throughout the quarter and geared towards helping do policy analysis for social action
5. **Final Presentation and Deliverables**

- a. Check canvas for more info – the goal is to review your campaign work, policy memo, and campaign work for your group’s social/climate issue

Week	Assignment	Points	Due Date
1	Read syllabus and come to class prepared having done readings		
2	Portfolio 1	5	1/12
2	Political parties essay	5	1/14
3	Policy memo part 1	5	1/21
4	Portfolio 2	10	1/26
5	Policy memo part 2	5	2/4
6	Portfolio 3	10	2/9
7	Policy memo part 3	5	2/18
8	Portfolio 4	10	2/23
9	Policy memo part 4	5	3/4
10	Portfolio 5, presentation and final deliverables	15	3/9
10	Final memo	15	3/11
all	Participation and class preparation	10	

PROGRAM POLICIES

Respiratory Virus and COVID Policies

Health and Well-Being are central to student success and at Evergreen we are committed to creating and maintaining a learning and working environment that is healthy, accessible, and equitable. Any program/class member who feels ill with headache, excessive fatigue, fever, coughing, congestion, or other symptoms should stay home and notify the faculty.

The college’s current COVID policies are posted here:

<https://www.evergreen.edu/covid19>.

Email Communications

All communication will be sent only to your evergreen.edu address, so if you use another address, you must forward your Evergreen emails to it. Students must check their email accounts regularly, at least once every weekday! Please use only your Evergreen address to communicate with faculty.

Late Assignments

Please submit assignments on time. A pattern of repeated submission of late assignments may be grounds for denial of credit.

Accommodations

Reasonable Accommodations will be provided for any student who qualifies for them through a working relationship with Access Services. To request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact the office of Access Services for Students with Disabilities (867-6348 or 6364). If the student is already working with the office of Access Services, the faculty should have received a letter clearly indicating the student has a disability that requires academic accommodations.

If any student has a health condition or disability that may require accommodations to effectively participate in this class, please do the following: Contact Access Services to receive a letter of accommodation prior to the start of class. Information about a disability or health condition will be regarded as confidential. Please refer to Evergreen's Students with Disabilities Policy.

Conduct and Conflict Resolution

Discuss any problems involving others in the learning community directly with the individuals involved (so long as the concerned party feels safe doing so). Possessing respect for others is fundamental to an open, free, and educational dialogue. All students are expected to support and contribute to a well-functioning classroom and learning community. Behavior that disrupts the learning community may be grounds for disciplinary action. All students will be held accountable for maintaining the highest academic standards.

We will abide by the social contract: WAC 174-121-010 College philosophy. We will abide by the student conduct code (including academic integrity and plagiarism): Chapter 174-123 WAC, Student Conduct Code & Grievance/Appeals Process:

<http://www.evergreen.edu/studentaffairs/student-conduct>.

We will abide by the non-discrimination policies and procedures at TESC.

Artificial Intelligence

You are expected to complete writing assignments for the course by yourself, without directly using verbiage generated by generative AI. After all, the important goals of the course are to help each of you improve your writing, analysis and critical thinking skills. In

addition, academic integrity is critical to the functioning of a cohesive learning community. So, you should be transparent about your use of AI, if you choose to use it for research that informs your assignments. While this is not strictly prohibited, you should consider the important implications of AI for your learning and work. AI tools both miss important concepts and data and have the nasty habit of hallucinating and making up facts. We want to have confidence that we are reading YOUR work not verbiage crafted by AI tools such as ChatGPT or others.

Be aware that the use of AI submissions for written work is considered plagiarism and may be grounds for loss of credit. Please also refer to the College's policy on Academic Dishonesty:

<https://www.evergreen.edu/offices-services/academic-affairs/academic-honesty>.

Community Agreement Guidelines

Behavior and presence in the classroom (whether in-person or online) sets the tone for classroom interactions and discussions. We strive to create an atmosphere of respect in the classroom, including respect toward and between students and the instructor. Respectful participation is a critical component of this class.

Below are a set of guidelines and policies for engaging in respectful dialogue that we will all work toward and adhere to while participating in class-related activities. The expectations for students and the instructor are outlined below. These expectations are a starting point for a collaborative class discussion. During the first week of the course, we will revise / edit / remove / add to these expectations as we see fit. This is meant to be a way to build community and create an environment where we can all learn together and learn from each other.

We will revisit these guidelines throughout the semester in order to guide class conversations and to provide feedback on classroom participation for students and the instructor.