ENV 350H Energy Policy and Environment  
Fall 2021 Course Syllabus  
University of Toronto, School of the Environment

Time: Monday, 6-8 p.m.  
Location: SS 2135  
Office Hours: Friday, 10 – 11 a.m. or by appointment  
Instructor: Keith Stewart <climatekeith@gmail.com>  
T.A.: Joaquin Bardallo Bandera <joaquin.bardallobandera@mail.utoronto.ca>  
Ryan Nash <ryan.nash@mail.utoronto.ca>  
Pre-requisite: Completion of 8.0 FCE including ENV221H1/ENV222H1; or permission of the Undergraduate Associate Director

Description

This course explores the connections between energy and environment policy and politics, including the connections with climate change.

The patterns of energy use of individual countries and of the global system as a whole reflect the accumulation of policy choices and have significant impacts on the environment, locally and globally. Not the least of these impacts is the potential to disrupt the global climate system. Decisions about energy technologies are strongly influenced by social organization, economics and politics.

The first part of the course provides a historical context for the physical, environmental, technological, economic and political aspects of energy systems and energy transitions before exploring the principal policy tools available to decision-makers. The second part examines a range of political and policy approaches to understanding and facilitating an energy transition to address the threat posed by climate change.

The objective of this course is that students should be able to understand the social, political, economic and technological context for energy transitions, and be able to apply the theoretical concepts learned in the course to current policy-making processes. Therefore students should follow the public and media debates on the case studies in addition to the required readings.

We will follow public health and university guidelines with respect to the pandemic. The intention is that this will be an in-person class, with online component for the first two weeks, but this may change. Students need to be able to prepare and submit short essays in PDF, word or equivalent format onto Quercus and have the ability to use Zoom.

Assignments

All assignments must be submitted via Quercus. Additional detail on each of the assignments will be provided in class.

Analysis of federal election platforms (30%): Use the concepts and historical material from this course to compare and contrast the energy and environment policy proposals of two of the four major political parties (Conservatives, Liberals, NDP or Green). Explain which you believe to be the better policy package for facilitating an energy transition and why. Your paper’s references should include academic material from the course, primary source material from party platforms
and commentary in the media. This assignment should be no more than 2000 words and is due by midnight on October 20.

**Policy approaches (30%)**: Choose one of the policy approaches from weeks 6 – 10 and address the following questions with respect to their role in political and policy debates on the energy transition. What interests are represented in this approach? What interests are opposed? What ideas do they focus on? What institutions best serve this combination of interests and ideas? This assignment should be no more than 2000 words and is due by midnight on November 17.

**Major paper (40%)**: For the major paper, you will take on the role of an academic consultant hired to advise a high-level decision-maker from a corporation, industry association, government ministry, government agency or non-profit organization. Feel free to choose someone from the sector you focused on in the previous assignment.

Your task is to brief them on policy issues related to the energy transition, and more specifically Canada’s target of reaching net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. You must identify the specific person and company/ministry/group you are providing advice to (and they should be a real person). Your advice should be tailored to their organization. This doesn’t mean that you should simply tell them what you think they want to hear, but in making the case you should ensure that your advice is relevant to their situation and role within the policy community (e.g. the CEO of an oil company can’t pass legislation but can advocate for certain policies).

It can be written either in essay format or as a briefing note and should be no more than 3000 words. You will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the concepts studied in the course and an ability to apply them to this topic, as well as an ability to identify and include other relevant research.

The TAs and professor will have extra office hours in the weeks of November 22nd to discuss essay outlines.

The final essay is due on December 8 (i.e. two days after the last class).

**Evaluation criteria:**

**The primary criteria used in evaluating written work are the following:**

1. **Mechanics**: Your work must be completely free of grammatical errors, spelling errors or major factual errors. References can be in any style but the same format must be used consistently and they must be accurate.
2. **Writing style**: Your papers should be written in a clear and unambiguous style which assists, rather than impedes, communication with the reader.
3. **Structure**: Your written work should have a clear focus, provided by the research question, and a structure which logically flows from that focus.
4. **Precision and accuracy**: Precision means saying exactly and specifically what you mean, avoiding ambiguity and vague generalities. Accuracy refers to absence of major factual errors.
5. **Analysis**: Your analysis should display understanding of the topic and, based on that understanding, originality of thought.

**Late assignments**

Late assignments will be penalized at a rate of 2.5%/day (i.e. an assignment 10 days late will lose 25% off of the assigned grade, so a grade of 7.5/10 would become 5/10). If you wish to be granted an extension, please contact the course instructor in advance of the deadline.
**Required readings**

The two textbooks are available at the bookstore. All of the other required readings are available electronically via Quercus or via the links in the course syllabus. The required text books are:


Students are also expected to follow the public and media debates on energy and environmental politics and policy in addition to the readings identified below. The course instructor will share relevant news stories and analyses via Quercus.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lecture topic</th>
<th>Required reading</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 1:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Sept. 13</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 2:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Sept. 20</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 3:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Sept. 27</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Week 4:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Oct. 4</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>The importance of institutions: How does federalism shape the politics and policy of the energy transition in Canada?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>No class</strong></td>
<td>Thanksgiving holiday</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 5:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Oct. 18</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Week 6:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Oct. 25</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 1</td>
<td>No class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 22</td>
<td>No class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 10:</td>
<td>The future of energy and environmental policy</td>
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<td>Nov. 29</td>
<td>No class</td>
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<td>Week 11:</td>
<td>No class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec. 6</td>
<td>No class</td>
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**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Academic integrity is essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship in a university, and to ensuring that a degree from the University of Toronto is a strong signal of each student’s individual academic achievement. As a result, the University treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. The University of Toronto’s *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* outlines the behaviours that constitute academic dishonesty and the processes for addressing academic offences. Potential offences include, but are not limited to:

In papers and assignments:
1. Using someone else’s ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement.
2. Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor.
3. Making up sources or facts.
4. Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment.

On tests and exams:
1. Using or possessing unauthorized aids.
2. Looking at someone else’s answers during an exam or test.
3. Misrepresenting your identity.

In academic work:
1. Falsifying institutional documents or grades.
2. Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University.

All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following procedures outlined in the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, you are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from your instructor or from other institutional resources (see https://www.academicintegrity.utoronto.ca/).

USE OF PLAGIARISM DETECTION TOOL
Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to the University’s plagiarism detection tool for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the tool’s reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University’s use of this tool are described on the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation web site (https://uoft.me/pdt-faq).

ACCESSIBILITY NEEDS
Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility: if you require accommodations for a disability, or have any other accessibility concerns about the course, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible.

ADDITIONAL SERVICES and SUPPORT
The following are some important links to help you with academic and/or technical service and support

- General student services and resources at Student Life
- Full library service through University of Toronto Libraries
- Resources on conducting online research through University Libraries Research