Green Germany: World Leader in Environmental Policy

German 364S / History 250S / Environmental Science and Policy 366S
Course designations: CZ, SS, CCI, EI, STS
MW 4:40 – 5:55
Instructor: Dr. Stephen Milder

Overview

Within months of the 2011 Fukushima Daiichi reactor accident, the German government determined to shut down all of the country’s nuclear plants by 2022. This decision burnished Germany’s reputation as a world leader in environmental policy. Yet, the course for Germany’s Energiewende or transition to renewable energy had already been set by the country’s Renewable Energy Sources Act of 2000, and environmental issues have been politically significant in Germany for much longer.

This course will begin by introducing students to the history of German environmental politics in the twentieth century and to Germans’ conceptions of nature and the environment. The heart of the course will comprise a series of case studies focusing on contemporary German environmental policies and debates. Throughout the course, we will study Germany in European and global perspective. This transnational approach will allow us to see how Germany’s policies compare to those of other countries but also to better understand Germany’s role in the international community and its image as a world leader in environmental policy.

Grading

Participation 20
Four Reading Responses 10 (2.5 each)
Project Bibliography & Prospectus 10
Project Draft 10
Final Project 30
Project Presentation 20

Participation

This is a seminar-style course, and students will be expected to participate actively in discussions of the topics we study. I will strive throughout the semester to create a collegial environment and to make sure each student feels comfortable contributing to our discussions. Nevertheless, I know that it can be difficult to speak up in class. If you feel intimidated, or if you are having trouble contributing to our discussions for any reason, please come to my office hours early in the semester. We will work on strategies to help you feel more comfortable in the class and to become actively involved in our discussions.

Readings and Reading Responses
Students are expected to read all assigned texts by the date they are listed on the syllabus, and to bring copies of the readings and/or their notes on the readings with them to each class. All readings for this course will be available on Sakai.

Over the course of the semester, you will write short, one page responses to four of the assigned readings. **Reading responses that are longer than one page, or that are not submitted by the beginning of class on the day we are discussing the work to which they are responding, cannot be accepted.** Reading responses should not just be a stream of consciousness response to the text we've read, but rather a critical engagement with the text and its significance for the themes we are covering in class. I will send out questions on the assigned readings by email to which you may choose to respond, but you may also write on another aspect of the reading that is of interest to you.

Reading responses will be graded on a scale of check plus, check, check minus, zero. Checks will count for 2.25 out of 2.5 possible points for the response, check plusses for 2.5, check minuses for 1.75, and zeroes for... you guessed it, 0.

**Research Project**

Students will work in teams on a research project that compares a specific German environmental policy or debate to that of another country. The projects will be framed as research reports for a government agency or NGO. Thus, the course will familiarize students with the unique aspects of German environmental policy at the same as it creates opportunities for them to apply that understanding to other cases and to work comparatively. Librarians will introduce relevant Duke resources early in the semester, and we will discuss the projects in class and also during team meetings and discussions with the instructor over the course of the semester. Teams will be responsible for both a written paper and also a presentation of its research at the end of class. Throughout the course of the semester, shorter assignments (a project bibliography & prospectus, and a first draft of the final paper) will help students to work through the project one step at a time.

**Potential research topics include (but are by no means limited to):**

- **Responses to environmental disasters**
  - The Chernobyl Meltdown and Fukushima Daiichi or Three Mile Island,
  - The 2002 Elbe floods and flooding after Hurricane Katrina or the 2006 Pacific Tsunami

- **Industry and environmental protection**
  - The automobile industry in German and Japan, “Green” industries in Germany and China or Germany and the US, Managing pollution in Germany and China

- **Ideas of Conservation and preservation**
  - National Parks in Germany and the US, forestry practices in Germany and India or China

- **Public engagement in development and permitting**
  - German and French or Japanese nuclear reactor licensing processes, Zoning regulations and licensing policies in Germany and the US

- **Water resource management**
Managing the Rhine between Switzerland, Germany, France, and Holland / Managing the Colorado or the Chattahoochee

**International agencies and environmental regulation**
- The EU and the UN

**Food production and farm policy**
- GMO foods in Europe and the US, local agriculture in Germany and the US, Agricultural practice and subsidies in Germany/the EU and Thailand

**Approaches to climate change**
- Energy subsidies in Germany and the US

**Energy independence**
- Energy strategies in Germany and France, or in Europe and the US

**Foreign policy and environmental policy**
- German and Chinese development aid in Africa, German and American approaches to UN climate negotiations

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**Course Schedule**

This course schedule describes the topics that will be covered throughout the semester and lists readings on each topic. The course schedule is divided into three parts: a brief introduction to German environmental history and environmental policy, a series of case studies on contemporary German environmental policy, and finally an investigation of Germany’s role as an environmental policy leader in Europe and the world. As noted in the schedule, work on research projects is interspersed throughout the thematic sections.

**Introduction**

**Week 1**
Wednesday, January 8. Introduction.

**Week 2**
Monday, January 13. Green Germany today – A narrative of success?

*Reading*
- Davidson, *Clean Break: The Story of Germany’s Energy Transformation and what Americans can learn from it*

**Part 1: Shaping “Green Germany”: A Brief Environmental History**

Wednesday, January 15. Creating the German environment


**Week 3**
Monday, January 20. Martin Luther King Day. NO CLASS.
Wednesday January 22.  The German Rhine

**Week 4. Research Projects: Getting Started**

Monday, January 27. *Initial Meetings with Instructor to discuss research interests and formation of project teams.*

Wednesday, January 29. *Library visit to discuss Duke resources*

**Week 5**

-Lekan, *Imagining the Nation in Nature: Landscape Preservation and Germany Identity, 1885 – 1945* (excerpts)

Wednesday, February 5. *Thinking and Managing nature in Germany and the United States – Special Paths?*
-Bowman, “*The Paradoxes of the Conservation Movement*”
-Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind* (excerpts)

**Week 6**

Monday, February 10: *Blood and Soil: Green Nazism?*
-The Reich Nature Law of 1935
-Brüggemeier et al, *How Green were the Nazis? Nature, Environment, and Nation in the Third Reich* (excerpts)

Wednesday, February 12: *Fascism and Environmentalism in Germany and Italy*
-Binde, “*Nature versus city: landscapes of Italian Fascism.*”

**Week 7. Research Projects: Project Bibliography and Prospectus Due**

Monday, February 17. *Class presentations of proposed research project*

Wednesday, February 19. *Team meetings with the instructor*
-Discussion of project ideas with members of another research team

**Part 2: Case Studies on Contemporary Environmental Policy and Problems**

**Week 8**

Monday, February 24. *Modell Deutschland: Production vs. Pollution During the Economic Miracle*
- Chaney, *Nature of the Miracle Years: Conservation in West Germany, 1945 – 1975* (excerpts)
- Carson, *Silent Spring* (excerpts)

**Wednesday, February 26. Environmentalism and the End of the Boom**
-Uekötter, *The Age of Smoke: Environmental Policy in Germany and the United States, 1880 – 1970* (excerpts)

**Week 9**

**Monday, March 3. Public Engagement in Environmental Policy: Reactor Siting and Nuclear Energy Policy in Japan, Germany, and France**
-Aldrich, *Site Fights: Divisive Facilities and Civil Society in Japan and the West* (excerpts)
-Hecht, *The Radiance of France: Nuclear Power and National Identity After World War Two*

**Wednesday, March 5. Nuclear Energy and the Roots of Green Politics.**
-Nelkin and Pollack, *The Atom Besieged: Extraparliamentary Dissent in France and Germany* (excerpts)

**Monday, March 10 and Wednesday March 12. SPRING BREAK.**

**Week 10**

**Monday, March 17: Environmentalism and Politics in East Germany**

**Wednesday, March 19: From Iron Curtain to Green Belt: German Reunification as an Environmental Event**
-Geidezis and Kreutz, “Green Belt Europe –nature knows no boundaries. From ‘Iron Curtain’ to Europe’s lifeline.’

**Week 11 Research Projects: First draft due**

**Monday, March 24. Class Discussion of Project Concerns.**

**Wednesday, March 26. Instructor meetings and feedback**

**Part 3: The Energiewende and Green Germany in the world today**
Week 12

Monday, March 31. Legislating Germany's Energiewende
-Fell, “Germany's Energy Revolution”

Wednesday, April 2. The Fukushima Daiichi Accident, Germany's first Green Governor, and Merkel's Phase-out
-Maderis and Daseking, “Freiburg, Germany: Germany's Eco-Capital”

Week 13

Monday, April 7. Is the Energiewende working? Competing perspectives.
-“Germany's Impending Power Gap” and “Is Germany Killing the Environment to save it?” from Der Spiegel
-Weidner and Mez, “German Climate Change Policy: A Success Story With Some Flaws”

Wednesday, April 9. Environmental Policy at the EU Level
-Meyer, “Challenging the Atomic Community: The European Environmental Bureau and the Europeanization of Environmental Protest”

Week 14

Monday, April 14. Green Germany in the World: Germany and International Environmental Policy
-Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
-Bodansky, “The Copenhagen Climate Change Conference: A Post-Mortem”

Wednesday, April 16. Germany and China: Two Paths to our Environmental Future?
-Rüdiger and Zhenga, “Implementing international environmental law in Germany and China”

Conclusion

Week 15. Project Final Drafts Due, and Project Presentations

Monday, April 21 and Wednesday, April 23. Student Project Presentations