

**Course Outline for  
ENVS 4800-003,  
Environmental Leadership**

**Fall 2001**

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Office hours: Friday 10-11AM or by appointment.  
(I will be unavailable on Friday 8/31 and 9/14)

Class hours            Tuesdays and Thursdays  
                                 9:30-10:45AM  
                                 Ketchum 301

## **Course Objectives**

This class will train students in the methods of actually influencing environmental policy. We will learn about a variety of strategies for change that citizen groups on all sides of environmental controversies have employed. Guest lecturers will allow students to meet individuals whose work has had a profound impact on the outcome of local and national environmental issues. There will be a number of speakers who are former CU students who have gone on to leadership roles in the environmental community, who will share their stories.

Students will pick "clients" from the nonprofit sector or public sector, and will work on a project that will allow them to grapple with a real world policy issue. Small groups of 4 to 6 students will have to integrate their backgrounds in environmental science and policy in order to successfully work together to participate in these real world debates.

Students will learn techniques including developing campaign strategies, communicating with policy makers, communicating with the media, raising funds for community groups, database research and the use of public records. There are three open sessions scheduled, to allow the class to explore additional skills that you are interested in.

The skills and strategies we examine will be useful to any student who is interested in working with an advocacy organization or participating as an individual citizen in local or national environmental policy debates.

I would like to acknowledge the work of Amy Livingston, from the Center for Environmental Citizenship, who has helped with the planning of this class, and of Neva Hassanein, from the University of Montana Environmental Studies Program, who generously shared her syllabus and course description, which I have borrowed portions from.

## **Course Mechanics**

### **Citizen Involvement Project**

The heart of this class (and the bulk of your grade -75% )will be based upon the citizen involvement project. This project is an opportunity to work with a community organization or government agency on a real world environmental policy project. The citizen involvement project are the heart of this class, so it is important that these are a good fit for your skills and your passion.

The projects will be group projects, in order to simulate the real world of citizen advocacy, which almost always involves working with groups. The project should be suitable for 4-6 students to work on for about 10 weeks, and should involve work with some nonprofit or advocacy organization, from any point of the political spectrum, that can provide supervision and feedback.

Project Proposals: This typewritten report will outline your group project in 2 or 3 pages. The proposal should describe the project you plan to do, why you think it is significant, a proposed schedule for completion of steps, and what written product you will produce. This should be produced after you have formed a group and had at least one meeting with the sponsoring organization. Proposals are due on September 27.

Progress Reports/Action Plans: These two short reports will tell me what you have done on your project since the last report and what you plan to do in the next few weeks. The progress report is a good place for you to reflect on your experiences (successes and/or frustrations) and to ask questions so that I can give you feedback. The more information you provide, the better I can direct you to additional resources and contacts that will help you along. These are due on October 18 and November 20.

Group Work Days: there are 3 classes scheduled as group work days. These are opportunities for each project group to present their work briefly to the class, and get feedback or ideas on how to overcome challenges the project is facing.

Oral Project Summary: This oral report will be made to the class and will assess the techniques used, work done, and success of the project. The total summary will not be more than 20 minutes for projects, and each group member shall present a section of the talk. There will be 10-15 minutes for question and answer. These oral presentations will take place December 6, 11 and 13.

Grading: The grade will be based upon your self assessment of your work on the project, an assessment of your work by each of your team-mates, and my assessment. I will make my assessment based upon both my observations, your oral summary, and feedback from the sponsoring organization.

**Class Participation:** Many of the classes will be structured as interactive workshops. Active participation will important for you to get the most out of the class. Class participation will account for 15% of the grade.

**Letter to the Editor:** Each student will write and submit at least one letter to the editor during the semester. I will review the letter, which will count for 5% of your grade.

**Public Speaking:** Each student will speak at one public hearing during the semester. This will count for 5% of your grade, and will be based on your own self assessment of your performance.

**The News:** We can learn a lot about environmental politics by following the news.

Each student is required to read a local daily paper, (the *Daily Camera*, the *Denver Post*, the *Rocky Mountain News*, or the *Colorado Daily*)so that each Thursday you can bring to class at least one article or editorial related to current environmental issues. Please be prepared to provide commentary in class on the article(s). We will discuss some of the articles in light of how the issue is being portrayed in the media and what

environmentalists, policy makers, and others are saying and doing. I suggest you simply subscribe to the paper (if you do not already), and take a few minutes to read it each morning (it won't take long!). You might want to access it via the web, and that is fine too. Either way, please be sure to bring a hard copy of your selected articles to class. We will not have time to do this every week, but will try to take a few minutes at the beginning of class on most Thursdays.

## **The Books**

### **There are 3 required texts:**

*Organize! Organizing For Social Change*, by Kim Bobo, Jackie Kendall, and Steve Max  
This is probably the most comprehensive guide there is for social change organizers. While much of their experience comes from the worlds of labor and community organizing, rather than environmental groups per se, the same principles apply.

*The Activist's Handbook: A Primer*, by Randy Shaw  
This is an organizing manual which gives many case studies of real campaigns – some successful, some not. There is a much stronger narrative voice in this book than in *Organize!*, and it has a very strong point of view, coming from Randy Shaw's experience in advocacy for the homeless in San Francisco.

*Getting the Word Out in the Fight to Save the Earth*, by Richard Beamish  
This is a manual for effective communications by grassroots environmental organizations. The author worked for many years for the Audubon Society, and draws on his experience to give very practical advice on how environmental organizations can reach their members and the general public.

### **On reserve:**

There are a number of books which will be on reserve in the Environmental Center Library in UMC 331. These may be useful to you as you work on your projects.

*Grassroots Grants: an Activist's Guide to Proposal Writing*, by Andy Robinson

*Media and the Environment*, edited by Craig LaMay and Everette Dennis

*Inside the Environmental Movement: Meeting the Leadership Challenge*, by Donald Snow

*Environmental values in American Culture*, by Willet Kempton, James Boster, and Jennifer Hartley

*How to Save Your Neighborhood, City, or Town: the Sierra Club Guide to Community Organizing*, by Maritza Pick

*Public Opinion Polling: a Handbook for Public Interest and Citizen Advocacy Groups*, by Celinda Lake and Pat Harper

*Summer Training Academy: Political Skills to Protect the Environment*, by the Center for Environmental Citizenship

*Becoming a Better Media Resource*, by the Wilderness Society

*Organizer's Manual*, by the Environmental Information Center

*Environmental Action 96: Winning in November*

*Social and Environmental Change: A Manual for Advocacy and Organizing*, by Bunyan Bryant

*Losing Ground: American Environmentalism at the Close of the Twentieth Century*, by Mark Dowie

### **Syllabus:**

**August 28: Class Introduction:** I will introduce myself and my background, and class members will have an opportunity to briefly introduce themselves and give some insight into what you want out of this class. We will also review the syllabus and the grading policies. If we have time, we will begin discussing what groups influence environmental policy. What are the different pieces to the movement and what groups are out there? What different types of groups (501c(3), PAC, NGO, thinktanks)?

Homework: 1) Write a brief biography. Why are you taking this class? How does this class support your academic or career plans after graduation? What do you hope to get out of the class? Please turn this in at the next class. 2) Please review the syllabus and provide suggestions for topics for the open sessions. 3) Check out the world of environmental organizations at <http://spot.colorado.edu/~jobem/env/org.htm>

**August 30:** The intent of the next two classes is to introduce the citizen involvement projects that you will be choosing among. Please review the website for the organization in advance, and come prepared with questions that will help you choose what project you want to work on. The citizen involvement projects are the heart of this class, so it is important that these are a good fit for your skills and your passion. You do have the option of proposing another project if you have a burning desire to do so. The project should be suitable for 4-6 students to work on for about 10 weeks, and should involve work with some nonprofit or advocacy organization that can provide supervision and feedback.

Speaker: Community Group Presentations

### **September 4:**

Speaker: Community Group Presentations

**September 6:** This class will introduce you to a former CU student who left school and entered the world of environmental politics. Adam directed the Colorado office of the League of Conservation Voters, and now works for the Trust for Public Lands, helping local governments and citizen groups pass ballot issues to protect open space and other public lands. Please review the websites of the League of Conservation Voters and the Trust for Public Lands before the class.

Speaker: Adam Eichberg, Campaign Director, Trust For Public Land

Topic: How I Became a Community Leader

**September 11:** Amy Livingston is another recent CU graduate, who is now the Western regional director for the Center for Environmental Citizenship. CEC works to develop environmental leadership skills in youth communities, and runs several national training institutes in topics such as environmental organizing, environmental justice, and environmental journalism.

Trainer: Amy Livingston, Center for Environmental Citizenship

Topic: What is organizing? What are the skills you need in order to become an effective organizer and environmental leader?

Reading: Introduction and Chapter 1, pp 1-46 , *The Activist's Handbook*  
Introduction and Chapters 1-6, pp 1-69, *Organize*

**September 13:** Adrienne Anderson is the former Western field organizer for the National Toxics Campaign, and currently teaches at CU. She will discuss basic techniques for citizen investigations, including searching government databases, and the uses of open records.

Speaker: Adrienne Anderson , Environmental Studies Program

Topic: Environmental Investigations—what resources are out there?

Reading: Chapter 20, Tactical Investigations, pp 232-274, *Organize*

\* I will be out of town speaking at a conference from September 13-16, so will miss this class .

**September 18:** Students will Choose Their Projects / Group Work Day

Homework: each group will meet with their community group, and will write a 2-3 page project outline, due on September 27.

**September 20: Class meets in Norlin Library E303**

Trainer: Peggy Jobe, CU Library Government Publications

Topic: How to Use the Internet for Environmental Research

You will learn how to find state, county, city, and regional government sites. She will also demo the EPA's Envirofacts and the SEC's EDGAR database---both important "public" records. If time permits, we will search out campaign finance records on a congressional representative, and will search out information on a public lands issue.

**September 25:** The internet is an increasingly important tool for citizen organizing. Many groups now use the internet to generate large numbers of individually tailored faxes to government representatives, to recruit new members, and to accept donations. Amy will provide an information packet for advance reading.

Trainer: Amy Livingston, Center for Environmental Citizenship

Topic: Online Organizing

**September 27:** How do those rallies, conferences and fundraising parties come off so smoothly...or so disastrously? At some point in the life of everyone involved in affecting environmental policy you will probably need to organize an event. Marianne Moulton is a recent CU graduate who served as assistant director of the Southern Rockies Ecosystem Project and now is assistant director of the CU Environmental Center. She has years of experience organizing environmental events from small ones to thousand person fundraisers.

Trainer: Marianne Moulton, assistant director,  
University of Colorado Environmental Center

Topic: Event Organizing

**October 2:** The next two weeks will focus on communication. The best laid strategy won't work unless your organization is able to communicate – with members, decision

makers, and the general public. We will discuss how to get your message out in the media, and in situations which require public speaking. Today's class will give you an opportunity to hear from two veteran newspeople – one a reporter and one an editorial page editor – how they cover environmental issues.

Speakers: Barry Hartman (Daily Camera) and Bernie Morson (Rocky Mountain News)

Topic: How to Get Your Issues Covered by the Media

Reading: Chapter 14, pp 156-171, *Organize*  
Chapter 5, pp 150-184, *The Activist's Handbook*

#### **October 4: Fall Break**

**October 9:** Jon Caldara is a longtime Boulder resident who catapulted into the public eye 6 years ago when he was elected to the board of the Regional Transportation District. When a majority of the board voted to place the “Guide the Ride” issue on the 1997 ballot, to raise taxes for light rail, Jon became the major opposition spokesperson, and is widely credited with the defeat of the issue. He also led the opposition to Referendum B, which would have used state tax surplus funds for transportation and education, using the slogan “Vote no, it’s your dough”. He is now a talk show host on KOA radio, hosts a public television show, and is director of the Independence Institute, a Colorado based libertarian thinktank. Jon will discuss his story, and how he is able to devise very effective, pithy messages which have real impact on public opinion.

Speaker: Jon Caldara, Director, Independence Institute  
<http://www.i2i.org>

Topic: How to be an Effective Public Speaker

Homework: Research an Issue / Prepare a 3 minute speech to be taped on 10/16

#### **October 11:**

Topic: Media Skills—How to Get the Word Out

Homework: Write a letter to the editor and submit it for publication. I will need a copy of the letter and what paper(s) you mail it to. This will be due 10/18.

Reading: Chapter 3, “How to Publicize Your Cause”, pp 87-146, *Getting the Word Out*

#### **October 16:**

Trainer: Will Toor

Topic: How to Convey Your Message to Different Communities  
Tape 3 minute speeches

Homework: Speak at a public hearing sometime before the end of the semester. This can either be part of your project, or can be on another issue that you choose. You will need to submit to me the topic, the forum you spoke at, the date you spoke, the text of your remarks, and your personal assessment of how effective you were.

Reading: Chapter 13, pp140-155, *Organize*

#### **October 18: Group Work Day**

Homework: the first project progress report from each group will be due today.

**October 23:** One of the most important roles at any citizen group is raising money. No matter how important your message may be, it is hard to get it out without a budget! And, there is no better way of making yourself employable in the world of nonprofits than developing a reputation as good fundraiser. The next two classes will provide an introduction to the world of grassroots fundraising. Brenda is currently raising funds for the Colorado Symphony; in her last job she was raising money for Global Response. Brenda will focus on the techniques for raising money from individuals, and how to plan effective fundraising events.

Trainer: Brenda Fraser, Colorado Symphony

Topic: Grassroots Fundraising

Reading: Chapter 4, "Successful Fundraising", pp 147-174, in *Getting the Word Out*  
Chapter 21, "Grassroots Fundraising", pp 276-286, in *Organize!*

**October 25:**

Trainer: Brenda Fraser, Colorado Symphony

Topic: Grassroots Fundraising continued

**October 30:** Successful campaigns almost always require building support from many quarters - and often involve unlikely bedfellows. Organizing a coalition can be one of the most difficult and frustrating tasks around - but can have very powerful results. The Transit Alliance has pulled together environmental organizations, local governments, and business organizations to work together to build out the rail and bus transit system in the Denver metro area. The alliance's member organizations include many groups that, in other contexts, are on the opposite sides of issues. For example, some of the members were bitterly divided over the amendment 24 growth ballot issue, but are working cooperatively on transit funding. Here the story from the organizer who put this coalition together.

Trainer: Lauren Martens, Director, Transit Alliance

Topic: How to Build an Effective Coalition

Reading: Chapter 9, pp 100-109, *Organize*  
Chapter 3, pp 81-114, *The Activist's Handbook*

**November 1:** Mark Udall served one term in the state house of representatives, from 1996-1998, and in 1998 was elected to the US House of Representatives. He has made environmental issues a centerpiece of his election platform. In congress he has introduced legislation to keep Rocky Flats undeveloped, to designate additional wilderness areas in Colorado, and to increase funding for renewable energy. Mark will discuss what is it like advocating for environmental protection as an elected official, and what forces come in play that allow an elected leader to be effective. He will also tell how he made the transition from outdoor education (he used to work for Colorado Outward Bound) to the congress.

Speaker: Representative Mark Udall

Topic: The role of elected leaders in preserving the environment

Note: If congress decides to remain in session, there is a chance that Mark will not be able to leave Washington, DC this week. If this happens, we will substitute a state or local official.

**November 6:** How do citizen groups organize to affect candidate elections and ballot issues? This is an issue to which environmental organizations devote surprisingly little time and resources. Only a handful of the major organizations are legally structured to allow them to participate in candidate campaigns.

Trainer: Andy Schultheiss, League of Conservation Voter's Education Fund  
and Adam Eichberg, Trust for Public Land

Topic: Electoral Organizing

**November 8:** Once they are in office, how do citizen groups influence elected officials? Elise Jones has experience with both federal officials and the Colorado legislature in the fine art of lobbying

Trainer: Elise Jones , Executive Director, Colorado Environmental Coalition

Topic: Lobbying Your Elected Officials—Who to Target and How to Lobby Successfully

Reading: Chapter 2, Elected Officials, pp 45-80, *The Activist's Handbook*

### **November 9-10: Environmental Leadership Summit**

This is a statewide student leadership summit organized by the Center for Environmental Citizenship. This is an optional extracurricular training opportunity.

### **November 13: Case Study: Amendment 24 Campaign**

This will be an opportunity for the class to review the unsuccessful campaign by Colorado based environmental organizations to pass a ballot issue in 2000 for the purpose of opposing urban sprawl. Early polls showed support at near 70%, but the final vote was 70% opposed. What were the strategies used by supporters and opponents that led to this outcome? Based on what you have learned in class, what would you have done differently?

### **November 15: Case Study: Roadless Protection Initiative**

We will be able to meet with a key organizer of the national campaign that led to President Clinton's designation of 54 million acres of roadless national forest lands as off limits to logging and road building. The policy is currently under review by the Bush administration, and may be revised. What were the strategies used by supporters and opponents that led to this outcome? Based on what you have learned in class, what would you have done differently?

### **November 20: Group Work Day**

Homework: the second project progress report from each group will be due today

**November 27 and 29; December 4 :** I am holding these 3 class periods open to cover topics which the class suggests.

**December 6:** Group Presentations

**December 11:** Group Presentations

**December 13:** Group Presentations ; Class Wrap Up and Evaluations