

The Intended and Unintended Market Implications of Environmental Regulations

Harris School of Public Policy
University of Chicago
Course number 36935

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Term and Year: Autumn 2024, Tuesdays 3:30pm - 6:20pm

Information about this course

Background and Goals

Environmental policy, like all policy enactments, can lead to unintended market consequences. This course will focus on several iterations of Illinois's energy efficiency policies, examining both the intended and unintended consequences of the enacted laws. We will also explore how federal and local incentives impact the market. The course will be taught from the perspective of a company navigating this marketplace, founded and operated by a Harris alumnus who has grown a business in this space. We will analyze how the marketplace has changed during the enactments of different laws over the years. While most of the market has seen the desired outcomes of the laws, there are also "bad actors" and unintended consequences that develop in various ways. .

How this class will work

- This course will meet in person at the Keller Center on Tuesdays from 3:30 to 6:20pm
- The first two hours of class will be instruction, with the last hour a Harris alumni or other industry professional talking about their real experiences with policy in the environmental space after leaving Harris.
- Final class will be a group presentation on what the current local policy is in your home region, and how you would design it differently if you had the power to influence change.
- There will be one required book, Collapse by Jared Diamond, which only 4 chapters will be required reading but the entire book is encouraged.
- Attendance is required in person each week.

Student assignments

List major assignments, grading weights, due dates, and how students must submit their work. You may also explain how student work will be evaluated. If you have a final exam or final presentation, specifically identify date, time, and location.

Readings, topics, and schedules

OCT 1: Course Introduction and Expectations

- Hour 1: Course Introduction. Assign Small Groups. Cover the final project and how it will be graded. Explain Homework Assignments.
- Hour 2: Introduction to State of Illinois Laws. Timelines, revisions of laws for Energy Efficiency over the years.
- Hour 3: Navigating this law as a business Founder/CEO from 2010 through 2024

OCT 8: Collapse and How We Manage Our Planet. How Does Policy Impact This?

- Hour 1. Collapse by Jared Diamond. Discussion on Chapter 15 - Seafood and Waterway protection
- Hour 2. Continued discussion on forest management.
- Hour 3. Presentation by Speaker Jordan Berman-Cutler (Harris '07) on state policy formation experience with previous Governors, as well as navigating federal policy with Invenergy.

OCT 15: Inflation Reduction Act

- Hour 1. How was the Law passed?
- Hour 2. What is included in the law? Why is it claimed to be the largest environmental policy ever passed? What will be the intended and unintended consequences?
Homework due: Two Page Typed Analysis on One Aspect of the Inflation Reduction Act and Explain Intended Consequences of the Policy
- Hour 3. Presentation by Angie Ziech-Malek (Harris '09). Navigating the Inflation Reduction Act federal policy in Illinois. The intended and unintended consequences of this legislation.

OCT 22: Local Ordinance

- Hour 1. Passing of the first plastic bag ban. How did it happen? What were unintended consequences?
- Hour 2. Passing of the adjusted bag policy, bring your own bag tax.
- Speaker - Jonathan Sack on Chicago policies through his work at NRDC

OCT 29: Electrification Policy in Early Stages

- Hour 1. Electrification Policy in Illinois. Various ways funds flow to support electrification.
- Hour 2. Case Study - Challenges around electrification for the Oak Park Temple VRF Heat Pump Installation
- Hour 3. Presentation by Kate Tomford on Electrification (Harris '07) of the CTA Bus system

NOV 5: How Entity Status Impacts Outcomes

- Hour 1. Chapter 11 of Collapse. Haiti Vs Dominican Republic. **Homework due. Two Page Typed analysis of criticisms about this chapter and whether you agree or disagree with the criticisms.**
- Hour 2. Different types of entities. LLC, Corporation, nonprofit, L3C, Benefit Corporation. What do these entities do, what policies create them, and why?
- Hour 3. Presentation Josh Ellis (Harris '06) on forming a nonprofit in 2022.

NOV 12: Local, State and National Lobby Efforts for Environmental Policy

- Hour 1. Lobbying in Springfield with environmental groups and success/failure of those efforts.

- Hour 2. Interaction with “the watchers” and regulators of the law in Illinois.
- Hour 3. Presentation by Debrah Stone (Harris ‘81) on Cook County Government policy actions and consequences

NOV 19: Bad Actors and Unintended Consequences

- Hour 1. Examples of bad actors and how they work from firsthand experience.
- Hour 2. Differences between the ideal policy as we learn at Harris, and what the actual laws entail.
- Hour 3. Presentation by Jake Edie (Harris ‘10) on the Unintended Consequences of environmental policy in the grid and solar PV markets.

NOV 26: Thanksgiving Week - No Class

DEC 3: Final Group Presentation. Each four person group will cover four sections, with each member to include a 3 page summary of their portion. Grading will be based on your paper.

- Summary of Current Law in your region
- Intended Consequences of the law
- Unintended Consequences of the law
- How you would redesign the law to improve it

Grading policies and procedures

The course will be graded based on attendance (10%), two homework assignments on readings (each 20%), as well as personal written contributions to the final group project (50%).

Instructor Office Hours

Office hours are available on Fridays from 3pm to 5pm. These will be remote zoom meetings, or phone calls and/or emailed questions. Setting up time in advance is highly encouraged.

Teaching assistant(s) and/or graders

TA pending

Teaching and learning in person, dual-modality, and/or remote environments

I expect everyone to make each of the course lessons in person.

General Resources Available to Students

Include any texts and links as desired:

- [Harris Academic Support Programs and Handbook](#)
- [Student Wellness](#)
- [University Learning Resources](#)

Harris School and University of Chicago Policies

Include any text and links as desired to highlight or emphasize issues related to academic integrity, disability accommodations, diversity and inclusion, and video and audio recordings.

- [Harris School Policies](#)
- [University General Policies](#)
- [University Academic Polices](#)

- Policies on audio and video [recordings](#) and [deletion](#).