

Student Evaluations of
ENERGY: SCIENCE, POLICY, AND THE
PURSUIT OF SUSTAINABILITY

Course No. L330 Sec. No. 9643
Indiana University Collins Living-Learning Center

Prof. Robert Bent
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Summary of Student Comments

How would you describe the effort you put into this course?

All 13 students said the effort they put into this course was about what they expected for a 3 credit-hour course.

In what ways did this course meet your expectations or disappoint them?

In general, the students liked the wide coverage of topics and the opportunity for discussion, though a few would liked to have had only 3 paper presentations per student and more time for interaction and exchange of ideas. One student expected a little more science but liked the idea of shaping the course around the students' interests, and thought the freedom was a nice change.

In what ways, if any, did participating in this class affect your attitudes or opinions about the topic covered?

Most students commented on the increased awareness and understanding of the world energy problem that they got from the course, and the background the course gave them to back up their arguments on energy related societal issues:

Class participation enhanced my understanding of issues related to energy.

The course leaves me far more informed and knowledgeable about renewable energy options, and I feel I can better argue my points.

I definitely have a lot more concern for our environment. I had a lot before, but much more now.

I feel more knowledgeable on the topics, but the course didn't really change my beliefs all that much.

My overall opinions changed little; however, becoming more informed on issues such as hydrogen fuel cells was very useful in evaluating the feasibility and effects of various energy sources.

The course gave me a different way to look at government policy and current events.

Please list 2 or 3 activities, assignments, readings, etc. from which you feel you learned the most:

The oral presentations were the most valuable part of the course.

I learned the most from the freedom of being allowed to choose topics for study that I was interested in.

The research papers and the writing of weekly news-article summaries helped me the most.

Topics that provoked conversation were best.

I learned a lot from the presented papers and class discussions, and also from the presentations by the visiting professors and Prof. Bent

I learned most from my own papers – the research was fascinating. The weekly one-page clipping reports provided a good overview of current energy issues.

All of my papers were good learning experiences, as were the clipping reports.

Do you have any comments about how this class was taught?

More time for discussion and possibly some assigned readings would have been nice, but the student-run approach was excellent.

The papers that were just read were boring and hard to get into.

I wish the first few weeks had emphasized the course text, which seemed to be a neglected resource.

I wish there had been more professor-led teaching; but the student presentations were for the most part very interesting.

It was an easy going, great learning environment.

I liked the open forum and self-taught system.

What ideas or topics did you pick up in the course that you might want to pursue in the future?

Population growth; hybrid cars; consumption habits; an energy-conserving life style.

Energy use in China; nuclear fusion; energy conservation and efficiency.

A love for passive solar energy; a desire for fuel efficient vehicles; the ideas on consumption, population growth, regional energy issues, renewable energies.

I will certainly pay more attention to the news on the energy crisis.

The ideas concerning conservation will definitely affect my habits in the future, and I'm more interested now in how energy policy affects the Middle East and its culture.

Energy in third-world countries; energy and human rights, nuclear power, increasing efficiency and conservation.

Education, actually. This class pushed my denied interest in that field.

The class lived up to its potential as an open forum.

Overall reaction? Any other suggestions or comments?

I would recommend the course for all students, regardless of their field of study.

An enjoyable course very different from other courses I've taken. I loved the structure of the student presentations.

Occasionally the student papers strayed from the course intentions. More effort should have been made to keep the student papers on track.

A good course – fun, not too difficult, and always interesting and entertaining.

A good class – my favorite this semester. I learned a lot in a stimulating environment.

A very interesting class concept.