



## COLLEGE OF LAW

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September 8, 2021

Pete Obermueller, President  
Petroleum Association of Wyoming  
2435 King Blvd., STE 140  
Casper, WY 82604

Travis Deti, Executive Director  
Wyoming Mining Association  
1401 Airport Pkwy, STE 230  
Cheyenne, WY 82001

**RE: University of Wyoming College of Law EENR Practicum Course**

Dear Mr. Obermueller & Mr. Deti:

Thank you for your recent letter of September 1, 2021. As Dean of the College of Law, I am very proud of the history this College has had in the area of natural resources and energy law. It has been a point of both distinction and excellence over the 100 years of the College of Law. Additionally, as an attorney who represented coal and natural gas industries in Kentucky and Tennessee for years before moving to Wyoming, I appreciate the concerns you have expressed in your letter about the EENR “practicum” course at the College and would like to share some significant information with you in an effort to resolve any misunderstanding about the course.

First, I have enclosed the actual detailed syllabus for the EENR practicum course being offered this fall for your reference. The syllabus provides a more thorough and updated picture of the course. It is being funded privately by the Dean’s Law Enrichment Fund. This fund was created by small annual gifts to enable the Dean to operate the law school where faculty, staff and student needs arise. As you will note from the syllabus, the course is taught by a temporary adjunct professor and consists of only five students. Previous information found online about the course, including a proposed summary course description, does not reflect the actual information contained within the attached syllabus. In response to concerns recently expressed, and in recognition of the long tradition of highlighting the importance of Wyoming’s natural resources, we have invited additional recognized leaders and industry experts to present to this practicum.

Second, I want to address any confusion about the use of the terms “legal clinic” and “practicum” in the law school curriculum. A “legal clinic” involves the legal representation of “indigent” clients only (those who fall below a certain poverty-income threshold), whereas a “practicum” is a method of teaching litigation skills to law students in the classroom through

simulations and hypothetical exercises. Because the EENR course is currently a practicum and not a clinic, we cannot represent clients in any litigation involving the energy and natural resources industries. The course we offer is a one-semester, upper-level “practicum” course which consists of five students and is taught by a temporary adjunct professor. The students participate in simulated exercises. They do not participate in actual cases.

We used to offer an EENR “clinic” in partnership with the State of Wyoming Attorney-General’s (AG) Office from 2014 to 2018. This course was cancelled following the departures of Temple Stoellinger, the former law professor who supervised our course at the law school, and the previous Attorney General, Pete Michael, who worked diligently with us to offer an “internship-type” legal experience for our law students. We referred to the course as the EENR “clinic” during those years, but it was not a “legal clinic” as defined above. It was referred to as a “clinic” because the students had opportunities to actively participate in the AG’s legal process. Following Pete’s and Temple’s departures, we offered the course in the fall of 2019 under the faculty supervision of Rob Mathes, an attorney with Occidental Petroleum Corporation, who worked closely with the AG’s office to provide students with the opportunity to work on energy and natural resource regulatory matters in Wyoming. Thereafter, Covid-19 intervened and we were not able to offer the live experiential course in 2020. I, and members of the Dean’s Advisory Board, intend to visit with Attorney General Bridget Hill and her staff in the near future about transitioning this course back into a “clinic” internship-type experience with the active participation of the AG’s office.

Since the 2020-2021 pandemic began, I have been working to find a solution to restore the EENR experiential learning course for our students. Due to the “indigency” requirement under Wyoming Bar rules, we can only offer the course as a “practicum” unless we partner with a government agency or company that will provide meaningful internship-type legal work for our students.

In the spring of 2021, Sharon Buccino, a spouse of one our full-time law professors (both of whom recently moved to Laramie from Washington, DC) offered to restart the practicum course for us this fall so that our students could have at least a classroom experiential learning opportunity again. I agreed to let her teach it as long as she taught the course as all law school courses are taught – to teach the law and to prepare students for a career where they will have to represent clients as a plaintiff or defendant from all sides of a potential dispute; and not as an advocate of any political angle.

The current course is in its third week and as you can see from the syllabus, several guest speakers have been invited throughout the semester to provide a variety of viewpoints and perspectives about the challenges facing the energy and natural resources industry in Wyoming. The list of guest speakers currently includes former Governors Mike Sullivan, Dave Freudenthal and Matt Mead who will address the entire College of Law as a panel on the issues and challenges of the continued developed of natural resources in our State on September 28, 2021. In addition, Brad McKim (formerly BP’s General Counsel in London), Kris Koski (Director of the Landman Program, School of Energy Resources), Paul Hickey (Hickey & Evans), Joe Evers (Occidental Petroleum Corp.), Jim Magana (Executive Vice President, Wyoming Stock Growers Association),

and Alex Obrecht (BakerHostetler), among others who will address a variety of issues in the area of natural resources and energy law.

I hope this letter answers any questions you may have about the EENR practicum course at the College of Law. Earlier information about the course found online does not accurately reflect the content of the actual syllabus for the course. I would be happy to answer any additional questions you may have as well. I have also attached a one-page flyer describing some of the highlights of our EENR Center and programs we have begun under my watch as Dean during the past six years. Thanks for your letter and I look forward to our continuing discussion of these important issues.

Sincerely,



Klint W. Alexander, Dean

cc: Governor Mark Gordon  
United States Senator John Barrasso  
United States Senator Cynthia Lummis  
United States Representative Liz Cheney  
Dan Dockstader, President, Wyoming Senate  
Eric Barlow, Speaker of the House, Wyoming House of Representatives  
Drew Perkins, Chairman of the Wyoming Senate Appropriations Committee  
Bob Nicholas, Chairman of the Wyoming House Appropriations Committee  
Jim Anderson, Chairman of the Wyoming Senate Minerals Committee  
Mike Greear, Chairman of the Wyoming House Minerals Committee  
Tara Nethercott, Chairwoman of the Wyoming Senate Judiciary Committee  
Jared Olson, Chairman of the Wyoming House Judiciary Committee  
Dr. Edward Seidel, President, University of Wyoming  
Mike Sullivan, former Governor of Wyoming  
Dave Freudenthal, former Governor of Wyoming  
Matt Mead, former Governor of Wyoming  
Paul Hickey, Chairman, College of Law Advisory Board  
Jack Speight, Vice Chairman, College of Law Advisory Board



## **Energy, Environment & Natural Resources Practicum - Syllabus**

Course Number: 6933

Professor: Adjunct (Sharon Buccino; BA, Yale; JD, Stanford Law School)

Credit Hours & Type of Credit: 3

Semester Offered: Fall 2021

Required: No (an elective upper-level course)

Prerequisites: N/A

Office hours: By appointment

Classroom: Annex facility (across Grand Avenue in basement of Old Farm Bureau Building)

Class Time: Tuesdays, 3:00-4:20

**Course Overview:** This practicum course will provide students an experiential learning opportunity in the field of energy, environmental and natural resources law and policy. The class will meet once a week for 1 hour and 20 minutes in a seminar setting. Discussion during class time will include key issues regarding implementation of federal statutes and cases governing natural resource and energy law. Class time will also be used to discuss research and writing tips related to practicum projects. During the course, students will draw on pertinent and practical legislative and administrative materials. While the focus will be on federal law, students will have the opportunity to explore the important roles state and local governments play in natural resource and energy law issues.

Guest speakers of various types will offer a diverse perspective on the practice of energy, environmental and natural resource law. Selected readings will provide a framework for discussing and solving energy, environmental and natural resource issues. Past faculty who have taught the course include Temple Stoellinger (Univ. of Wyoming) and Robert Mathes (Occidental Petroleum Corporation).

**EENR Excellence Luncheon Series:** During the fall semester, students in the course are invited to participate in the EENR Excellence Luncheon Series. The topic this year is “Challenges to the Energy and Natural Resource Industry in Wyoming. A List of Guest speakers is provided below.

***Students in the practicum course do not engage in legal representation of clients.*** The practicum projects are simulations of real world issues impacting local, state and federal decision-makers tackling pressing legal and policy issues.

**Learning Objectives:** Students successfully completing this course will:

1. Gain exposure and hands on experience with different aspects of practicing energy, environmental and natural resource law.
2. Acquire detailed knowledge of particular areas of energy, environmental and natural resource law.
3. Improve written and oral advocacy skills.

### **Course Requirements and Grading:**

Students will receive 3 credits for completing the class. Successful completion requires

submission of weekly timesheets totaling 150 hours for the semester. Time spent in class counts as part of the 150 hours.

The grade for the course will be determined as follows:

25% -- Class participation (including work on initial group project)

25% -- One individual short assignment related to current events. The assignment will consist of 1-2 single spaced briefing paper and a 10-minute oral presentation followed by discussion of the issue involved. Each short assignment will be designed to reflect a task that a lawyer with expertise in energy and natural resource law might be called upon to do with a quick turn-around.

Each student will sign up for a particular week to submit the short assignment. The student will receive their assignment in class on the Tuesday before the date upon which she/he has signed up. She/he will submit the written briefing paper to the class members and professor via email by 5pm on the day before the date upon which she/he has signed up to present.

The assignments may involve preparation for a meeting with Congressional staff; a state or federal agency official; or a reporter or editorial board. Alternatively, the assignment might involve preparation of remarks for a public meeting involving an action by a federal agency affecting energy or natural resources. The remarks might be prepared for an oil and gas company, a local outdoor shop, the Wyoming Business Council or a local fishing group.

50% -- Student written work for joint practicum project. The written work consists of three pieces: (1) initial issue summary and work plan; (2) draft work product; and (3) final work product. Each student will be graded individually on the contribution he/she makes to the written work product. Students will receive a numeric grade (1-100) four times over the course of the semester as indicated in syllabus reflecting professor's evaluation of the individual contribution of each student.

**Class Attendance:** In accordance with the College of Law Attendance Requirement and American Bar Association requirement of regular and punctual attendance, you must attend at least 75% of the class meetings. Instructors will take attendance and enforce this requirement. As part of the course, students also are invited to participate in the 2021 Landscape Discussion on Energy Law & Policy in the Rockies and the College's EENR Excellence Luncheon Series with invited speakers providing a variety of viewpoints on topical subjects. This year's topic is "Challenges to the Energy and Natural Resource Industry in Wyoming."

**Disability Support:** The University of Wyoming is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. If you have a physical, learning, sensory or psychological disability and require accommodations, please let me and the Associate or Assistant Dean know as soon as possible. You will need to register with and provide documentation of your disability

to University Disability Support Services (UDSS) in SEO, Room 330 Knight Hall. For more, go to <http://www.uwyo.edu/udss/> and <http://www.uwyo.edu/udss/accommodations-and-services/>.

**Academic Honesty:** The College of Law Honor Code applies at all times. The University of Wyoming College of Law is built upon a strong foundation of integrity, respect, and trust. All members of the University community have a responsibility to be honest and the right to expect honesty from others. Any form of academic dishonesty is unacceptable to our community and will not be tolerated. The College of Law Honor Code can be found at: <http://www.uwyo.edu/law/files/docs/academics/law-honorcode-final.pdf>. See also University Regulation 6-802 “Procedures and Authorized University Actions in Cases of Student Academic Dishonesty,” <http://www.uwyo.edu/generalcounsel/files/docs/uw-reg-6-802.pdf>.

**Additional items incorporated by reference:** Information on topics such as diversity, duty to report, and student and campus resources can be found in the class shell on WyoCourses under the tabs “Classroom Climate & Conduct” and “Learning Tools.”

**Course Mission Statement:**

*The University is a marketplace of ideas committed to expanding the spectrum of knowledge in all subjects and providing an atmosphere for debate and scholarly inquiry. No University can function unless both students and faculty enjoy an environment conducive to speculation, experiment and creation and free from the pall of orthodoxy over the classroom. Scholarship cannot flourish in an atmosphere of suspicion and distrust. Teachers and students must always remain free to inquire, to study and to evaluate, to gain new maturity and understanding; otherwise, our civilization will stagnate and die.*

Chief Justice Earl Warren, *Sweezy v. State of New Hampshire*, 354 U.S. 234 (1957)

**SCHEDULE OF CLASSES AND MEETINGS**

August 24	Introduction to the course, course overview (syllabus/class mechanics) Sign Up for Individual Assignments
August 31	Group Project 1: assessing applicable law to protect property owner’s rights to groundwater; outline for memo and assignments for drafting memo
September 7	Group Project 1 (con’t): discuss work on draft memo; schedule individual team meeting
September 14	<i>Individual Presentation 1;</i> <i>Practicum projects: check-in</i>
September 21	Group Project 1 (con’t): review draft memo; DUE: PROJECT ISSUE SUMMARY AND WORK PLAN (Group Projects 2 and 3)

- September 28      Group Project 1 (*con't*): FINAL MEMO DUE  
 Invited Guest Speaker: Governor Dave Freudenthal  
 EENR Luncheon Series Speaker: Wyoming Governors Dave Freudenthal,  
 Mike Sullivan, and Matt Mead  
 “Challenges to the Energy and Natural Resources Industry in Wyoming”:  
 A Governor’s Perspective”
- October 5            *Individual Presentation 2; Practicum projects: check-in*
- October 7            EENR Luncheon Series Speaker: Alex Obrecht, BakerHostetler  
 “Challenges to the Energy and Natural Resources Industry in Wyoming: A  
 Regulatory Lawyer’s Perspective”
- October 8            Annual Landscape Discussion on Energy Law & Policy in the Rockies  
 [Tentative Conference Agenda attached]
- The University of Wyoming College of Law’s Center for Law & Energy Resources in the Rockies and the UW School of Energy Resources are once again excited to bring together stakeholders with collaborative interests to engage in a thought provoking discussion on key energy topics currently at play in Wyoming, the region and the nation. This one-day symposium has an exciting line-up of speakers sure to facilitate robust discussion on issues warranting attention for securing a sustainable natural resource future.
- October 12          Group Project 2: Wildlife Migration Corridors  
 Group Project 3: Outdoor Recreation  
*INDIVIDUAL PRESENTATION 3*
- October 19          Group Projects 2, 3 (*con't*): discuss initial research  
 Invited Guest Speaker: Kris Koski  
 EENR Luncheon Series Speaker: Kris Koski  
 “Applicable laws and current regulatory and legal hurdles in pore space  
 development in Wyoming”
- October 26          Group Projects 2, 3 (*con't*): check in  
*INDIVIDUAL PRESENTATION 4*
- November 2          Group Project 3: Tribal Environmental Codes  
*Practicum projects: check-in*  
 Invited Guest Speaker: Paul Hickey, Hickey & Evans, LLP  
 EENR Luncheon Series: Paul Hickey  
 “Challenges to the Energy and Natural Resources Industry in Wyoming: A  
 Regulatory Attorney’s Perspective”
- November 9          *INDIVIDUAL PRESENTATION 5*  
*Practicum projects: check-in*
- November 16        *INDIVIDUAL PRESENTATION 6*

*Group Project 3 (con't)*  
*Practicum projects: check-in*

November 23 Invited Guest Speaker: Brad McKim, former General Counsel, BP Global  
*Practicum projects: check-in*  
EENR Luncheon Series Speaker: Brad McKim  
“Challenges to the Energy and Natural Resources Industry in Wyoming”: A  
General Counsel’s Perspective”

November 30 Last Day of Class: Review/Reflections  
DUE: FINAL PROJECT WORK PRODUCT

**List of Invited Guest Speakers:**

Dave Freudenthal, former Governor of Wyoming, JD, Univ. of Wyoming College of Law  
Mike Sullivan, former Governor of Wyoming, JD, Univ. of Wyoming College of Law  
Matt Mead, former Governor of Wyoming, JD, Univ. of Wyoming College of Law  
Chris Koski, Director, Professional Land Management Program, Univ of Wyoming School of  
Energy Resources  
Brad McKim, former General Counsel, BP Global; JD, Univ. of Wyoming College of Law  
Jim Magana Executive Vice President, Wyoming Stock Growers Association  
Paul Hickey, Partner, Hickey & Evans, LLP, JD, University of Wyoming College of Law  
Alex Obrecht, Partner, BakerHostetler, JD, University of Wyoming College of Law  
Joe Evers, Senior Landman, Occidental Petroleum Corp.; JD, Univ. of Wyoming College of Law  
Additional speakers to be determined

*Note: In-person speaking arrangements may be impacted by the COVID-19 situation, and are therefore subject to change.*

**Practicum Project Descriptions:**

**1. Wildlife Mitigation Corridors – Accessing Federal Funds to Deliver Results**

*Background*

Wildlife such as mule deer, pronghorn and elk shape the identity of the American West. In Wyoming, these animals fill an essential part of life – whether for watching or hunting them or simply knowing they roam the land around us. Science has shown the importance of specific lands across which these animals migrate with the seasons. By enacting measures to keep existing migratory corridors functioning and restore some that have been severed, policymakers at the state and federal levels can help keep the nation’s vast natural spaces connected, make highways safer, and ensure that the iconic big-game species of the American West have room to roam.

*Students meet with county/city planners to identify ways to assist counties with the challenges of migration corridors*

*Initial set of resources for the student*

<https://www.doi.gov/pressreleases/us-departments-interior-agriculture-and-state-wyoming-commit-enhancing-wildlife>

Governor Mark Gordon, Executive Order, Wyoming Mule Deer and Antelope Migration Corridor Protection (2020-1)(February 13, 2020),

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1TLuj1UGcRTjOvBklmP4qwjehSVmGjch8/view>

Advisory groups: Platte Valley, Baggs, Sublette

University of Wyoming, Wyoming Migration Initiative, <https://migrationinitiative.org/>

Wyoming Wildlife Federation, <https://wyomingwildlife.org/migration-conservation/>

Alumni/ae contacts: Bailey Brennan, Natural Resource Attorney, Wyoming Association of County Commissioners

## **2. Outdoor Recreation – Enhancing Visitor Experience for All**

### *Background*

Increasing demands are being placed on our national parks and other public lands. We want to provide access to them – including to those who have not previously used them – but need to manage increased interest and use in a way that protects our public lands and waters for others to enjoy. The 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the creation of the world’s first national park – Yellowstone – offers the opportunity to examine what we need from our national parks today and mechanisms of governance to meet these needs.

### *Questions:*

1. What are the different ways in which people engage with federal public lands?
2. What are different tools that have been used to balance these different demands and satisfy as many as possible?

### *Initial set of resources for students*

Robert B. Keiter, *The Emerging Law of Outdoor Recreation on the Public Lands*, 51 *Envtl. L.* 89, 91 (2021).

[https://www.wyomingnews.com/rocketminer/news/state/visits-swell-at-national-parks-tourism-increases-as-pandemic-subsides/article\\_accbf5a6-8dbd-5277-b3fa-cac0a792f92d.html](https://www.wyomingnews.com/rocketminer/news/state/visits-swell-at-national-parks-tourism-increases-as-pandemic-subsides/article_accbf5a6-8dbd-5277-b3fa-cac0a792f92d.html)

<https://www.nps.gov/yell/learn/management/visitor-use-management.htm>

*Written Product for the Project:*

1. Literature review – changing uses of public lands;
2. Toolkit of best practices/list of references for designing effective public outreach and engagement

Alumni contacts: Connor Nicklas, Budd-Falen Law Offices

### **3. Tribal Environmental Codes – Promoting Protection of Natural Resources**

*Background*

Tribal nations are looking for increased leverage to protect the environment both on and off reservation. The Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe has explored putting in place a comprehensive environmental code. A draft code has been developed. The tribe's Attorney General is now considering how to move forward with some or all of the code.

*Research Questions*

1. What issues is the tribe facing regarding environmental protection and natural resources?
2. What additional regulations might the tribe want to adopt? What kind of staffing might the tribe want to invest in?

*Initial set of resources for students*

Draft Environmental Code for Cheyenne River Tribe  
<https://www.cheyenneriversiouxtribe.org/>

Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
<http://www.crstepd.org/>  
David Nelson, DENR Director [dnelson@crstepd.org](mailto:dnelson@crstepd.org)

Tracey Zephier, Tribal Attorney General, [crstag1868@gmail.com](mailto:crstag1868@gmail.com)  
[https://narf.org/nill/tribes/cheyenne\\_river\\_sioux.html](https://narf.org/nill/tribes/cheyenne_river_sioux.html)

*Written Product for the Project*

1. List of economic development resources – outreach to tribal colleges
2. Implementation plan

Alumni/ae contacts: Brandon Reynolds, former Director, Office of Tribal Engineer, Wind River Reservation



# ENERGY, ENVIRONMENT, & NATURAL RESOURCES CENTER

## Research & Scholarship

The University of Wyoming has a rich history of offering students an exceptional place to study energy, environmental, and natural resources (EENR) law. The Center for Law and Energy Resources in the Rockies (CLERR) provides a focal point for the many energy and natural resources activities at the UW College of Law and serves as a vehicle for outreach from the College of Law to the public.

## Externships

Students have the opportunity to earn credit toward their degree by doing an externship with a number of EENR agencies and nonprofit organizations. These externships provide students education, skill training, and real life legal practice experience.

- U.S. Department of Interior, Office of Solicitor, Rocky Mountain Region, Lakewood
- U.S. Department of Justice, Environmental Enforcement & Defense Section, Denver
- Rocky Mountain Mineral Law Foundation

## Certificate Program

Students can obtain an EENR certificate by completing fifteen (15) total credits of coursework in the EENR law area. They must also undertake an EENR law-related writing project that satisfies the College of Law's advanced writing requirement.

## Joint Degree in EENR

The University of Wyoming's J.D./M.A. joint degree in Environment and Natural Resources allows students to earn two degrees in just three years. Coursework and thesis research provide exposure to interdisciplinary content, analytical tools, and problem-solving skills used to address complex energy and natural resource issues.

## Competitions

**Davis & Cannon, LLP Natural Resources Law Moot Court Competition:** Students pursuing EENR law can participate in the National Energy Moot Court Competition. Students compete in an intra-school competition sponsored by the Wyoming law firm of Davis & Cannon, LLP, and have the opportunity to advance to the national competition.

## National Environmental Law Moot Court

**Competition:** UW College of Law students compete in the National Environmental Moot Court competition sponsored by Pace University School of Law, arguing cases for or against the government/regulator, regulated industries, and citizen public interest groups.

**Energy Law Negotiations Competition:** This competition, hosted by the South Texas College of Law, provides an opportunity for law students to develop their negotiation skills in the field of energy law.

## Events

**Landscapes Discussion on Energy Law & Policy in the Rockies:** With many renowned keynote speakers, this annual event engages students and the legal community in thought-provoking discussion on key energy topics affecting Wyoming, the region, and the nation.

## Salt Creek Energy Excellence Scholarship

Established in 2015 by the University of Wyoming alumni and benefactors practicing in the area of oil & gas and energy law, the Salt Creek Energy Excellence Scholarship is awarded to students demonstrating academic achievement and the commitment to the study and practice of energy law. Salt Creek scholars are recognized at the annual Landscapes Discussion on Energy Law and Policy conference and introduced to potential employers through the Salt Creek Scholars donor network.

