**Seminar Description**

- Provides a thematic approach to the investigation of the way that societies deal with environmental issues
- Raises questions about the way societies develop and use policy at the national and international level
- Enhances research and communication skills to be able to debate, analyze critically, and respect diverse opinions about the environment and the ways that societies have chosen to respond to environmental challenges
- Involves the study of a series of problems (six to eight), and interactive discussion among participants
- Continuous feedback is given at the end of each session

**Example Case**

**Case Description**

This case examines whether or not an international treaty on persistent organic pollutants (POPs) should be signed in Canada. The case explores how the Inuit in northern Canada are extremely affected by POPs as the Arctic acts as a sink for contaminants. The case also considers how POPs such as DDT can help save many lives, especially in Africa, where Malaria is a prevailing issue.

**Learning Issues**

- Scientists view on POPs
- Environmentalists view on POPs
- Role of Minister(y) of Environment
- International Treaties on POPs
- DDT and how it affects humans
- DDT and how it affects insects
- Malaria
- Inuit connection

**Conclusion**

The Stockholm Convention is the International Treaty governing the restricted use of POPs. It provides an exception for the use of DDT to combat malaria. The Inuit of Canada supported this exception as they refused to support a ban on DDT that would threaten the health of others.

**What we gained**

The Ability to...
- Process information based on its importance
- Effectively do research on a variety of issues
- Use multiple methods of research
- Distinguish between reliable and unreliable sources and identify bias
- Present our research findings to a group
- Work as a team to identify and distinguish learning issues
- Effectively criticize and support group members through group processing
- Identify weaknesses in others, and suggest ways to improve
- Properly cite the sources we use
- Think critically and analytically

**Where we went**

A first year seminar consists of a diverse group of students in a wide range of majors. Our Politics, Science and Environment class consisted of 8 students and 2 facilitators. As we worked from case to case our group skills improved immensely. We went from a group of shy first year students to a group that can collaborate well together on any task presented to us.