

**Human Dimensions of the Environment (EVPP 336-X02)**  
**Special Section on Water Management, Human Rights and Sustainability**

**Syllabus - Summer 2013**

**Credit Hours:** 3

**Meeting Times:** From 10am to 4pm on July 1-3 (Monday to Wednesday) and July 8-12 (Monday to Friday)

**Room:** Innovation Hall Room 215G (Fairfax Campus), except when otherwise noted on [schedule](#) (notably July 2, 11 and 12)

**Class Website:** <http://gpswater.pbworks.com>

**Instructors:**

**"Dr. Dann" Sklarew, Ph.D. (Professor) Ashley Milton, M.S. (Teaching Assistant)**

Office via skype only in Summer 2013:

Office via skype only in Summer 2013:

Office Hours: Mon/Wed. 4-5pm, or via  
skype whenever "available" there.

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## **Course Description**

Our bodies are mostly composed of water. We cannot survive without it. Still civilization developed for millennia without any universal recognition of a human right to water. At the start of the twenty first century, over 1 billion people were still without access to water. Only a decade later did the UN General Assembly finally declare "the right to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation as a human right that is essential for the full enjoyment of life and all human rights" ([GA Res. 64/292](#)). While 122 nations voted in favor of the resolution, none against, 41 abstained - including the USA.

This course uses the universal right and access to safe water as a focal point to examine on the challenges and opportunities of sustaining Earth's natural resources for the perpetual benefit of all humanity. With intercontinental participants and guests, we will explore water scarcity and insecurity around the world, global efforts to provide water for all, and the environmental impacts and constraints in doing so. Along the way, we will also hone in on how we can overcome these challenges to deliver clean freshwater resources for everyone in present and future generations. Specific case studies will be gleaned from the Washington, DC metropolitan region, as well as select international sites associated with the [Global Problem-Solving Consortium](#) of universities (GPSC), of which Mason is a part. This course will co-meet with a new GPSC workshop for advanced student [GPS Fellows](#) from around the world.

Environmental sustainability is at once a global challenge and a global opportunity. Through the GPSC, this international summer program will bring dedicated students from around the world together to examine environmental sustainability at the local, regional, and global level. The course will use humanity's universal need for safe, clean water to focus on sustainable development, management issues, and public policy implications. Participants will gain hands-on experience addressing river and wetland sustainability in the greater Washington, DC, area. *Program graduates will also receive a certificate of completion from Mason's Potomac Environmental Research and Education Center.*

## Course Prerequisites

None, though familiarity with subjects of ecology, environmental science, global affairs, human rights and/or sustainability would be advantageous.

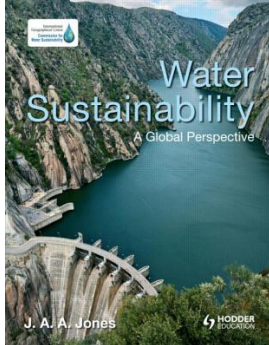
## Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students should demonstrate competence by being able to: <sup>1</sup>

1. ***Examine critical ecological and policy challenges*** related to realizing the universal human right to clean water in our lifetimes.
2. ***Diagnose global root causes*** underlying, and consequences resulting from, illustrative water problems from a set of case studies presented by GPSC fellows (with Mason partners), using the [\*DPSIR\*](#) model as our framework.
3. ***Explore present and potential solutions***, i.e., ways to address these problems and their root causes, at various organizational scales.
4. ***Document case studies***, their context, problems, solutions and future prospects in at least eight 2-5 minute video documentary scripts or storyboards.
5. ***Integrate scripts with GPSC fellows' raw video footage*** to create a set of short videos, for possible integration into a future massively open online course ([\*MOOC\*](#)) focussed on this courses theme of water management and sustainability. (time permitting)

# Materials

For our discussions, we will be using selected materials posted to our on-line [references](#) page, along with this textbook:



## Water Sustainability - A Global Perspective (2010)

by J. A. A. Jones - ISBN-10: 1444104888 / ISBN-13: 9781444104882

The book can be purchased from GMU Bookstore, Amazon or (in a more globally conscious way:) from [Better World Books](#).

There should also be a paperback copy on 2-hour reserve for our course section in the Johnson Center library, as well as [this annotatable electronic copy](#) in our [library e-reserves](#).

## Graded Course Components

To succeed with respect to course learning objectives, students should:

- 1) **Participate actively across eight 6-hour class meetings** (or arrange make-up with instructor(s) for any pre-arranged or doctor-excused sessions missed), including co-leading at least 1 morning or afternoon session during the second week (60 pts.);
- 2) Excel on a **2-hour closed book, open notes final exam** evaluating your ability to demonstrate competence with respect to learning objectives 1-3 (32 pts.).
- 3) Prepare and present your **case study/issue as a video documentary** script (up to 8 pts), with storyboard (up to 9 pts) and/or actual video (up to 10 pts) of 2-5 minutes, demonstrating your ability to communicate what you've learned in a multi-media way (objectives 4-5).

## Grading Scale

98-100 **A+**    88-89.99 **B+**    78-79.99 **C+**    60-69.99 **D**  
92 - 97.99 **A**    82-87.99 **B**    72-77.99 **C**    00-59.99 **F**  
90 - 91.99 **A-**    80-81.99 **B-**    70-71.99 **C-**    (no curves)

## Submission Policy

Updated syllabus, all electronic course materials, announcements, rubrics, etc., will be posted to our course website. Wherever practical, written assignments will also be submitted through this site, in order to reduce paper usage and ensure proper logging of submissions. If you have trouble accessing the site, please contact your instructor.

Assignments are to be submitted **before** the beginning of class on the day due. Late work will be reduced one grade per day. No work will be accepted over one week late without a valid written medical excuse or notice of death in the family.

## Honor Code

When you enrolled in this course you agreed to abide by the university's Honor Code. The Honor Code does not preclude collaborative work, such as informal discussions and studying in communities. Nor does it preclude assigned group work. The Honor Code does require that work you, as an individual, turn in ultimately be the product of your own individual synthesis or integration of ideas, and that the work a group turns in ultimately be the product of the group's collective ideas. If you are uncertain of the line between collaboration and cheating, see an instructor. As always, cite your sources. If you do not, it is plagiarism. Plagiarism means lifting someone else's ideas or words and presenting them as your own without proper attribution of the source. This includes all sources, including those found on the Internet. Use an approved citation method, such as MLA, APA, etc. Much of our class time will be spent working in teams and individually on problem sets. These problem sets form the core of the course. They will encourage you to sharpen your conversation skills

## Accommodation for Students With Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please communicate such to your professor and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703.993.2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

## Sick Policy

If you are too sick to come to class, have high fever, etc., please inform your professor ASAP. Insofar as no assignment is due that day, you will generally be offered attend in via [skype] webinar or provided with one or more optional make-up sessions (see “optional” items on schedule below). Assignments which are not submitted on-time on sick days will still be marked according to “Late Work” criteria above, unless medical excuse provided by your doctor's office.

## Email Policy

GMU faculty and staff may only correspond with students through the students' GMU assigned email accounts. Emails sent from other accounts will not necessarily be answered.