

syllabus

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Education for Ecological Adaptation and Stewardship

EVPP 692 (1.0 credit for MS and ND students) and 991 (Ph.D. students),
FALL 2011 – Wed. 4:30–7:10pm in University Hall Room 1201

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Goals

Without inter-generational attention and sustained action, the current historically unprecedented rate of environmental change poses a serious threat to our society. Effective policy actions depend on governments and citizens appreciating how we benefit from and rely upon ecological services for our well-being, as well as how our collective actions may inadvertently and indirectly impair such services. We must be mindful of our ecological roles on Earth and act accordingly.

This course aims to create a team of environmental scientists, policy-makers and educators that are wise to the needs and means to raise-awareness, understanding and actions to ensure sustainability of humanity and the ecological life support systems upon which we depend. Specific focus will be on how we can use formal and informal education to foster stewardship and promote adaptation to environmental change across generations at personal, local, regional and global scales.

By the end of this course, students should be able:

1. [\[Obj1\]](#): Identify ecosystem services upon which we depend, and ongoing human and environmental threats to those services.
2. [\[Obj2\]](#): Recognize the roles of stewardship and adaptation in overcoming threats to ecological and human welfare.
3. [\[Obj3\]](#): Illustrate and create tools for promoting or realizing stewardship in our communities and societies. Develop effective educational programming to reach a more diverse audience to promote environmental stewardship.
4. [\[Obj4\]](#): Achieve ability to communicate effectively with all communities by learning a variety of strategies. Understand methods of effective communication in relation to the environment.
5. [\[Obj5\]](#): Learn how to maintain an optimistic attitude by utilizing resources we have, i.e., by utilizing our current technology and knowledge to aid in environmental restoration and adaptation.
6. [\[Obj6\]](#): Research and explain techniques on how to help people adapt to change.
7. [\[Obj7\]](#) Research and analyze methods of imparting env. knowledge to influence politicians and the public globally to act in an environmentally sound way.

Approach

Unlike typical graduate seminar courses, this course will be organized by both the professor AND you through a series of collegial seminars and workshop activities. As a result, the syllabus may be augmented and adjusted as student interests and expertise are revealed. To keep on track, please refer to the Session Plans page which will link to session plans and assignments at least 1 week in advance.

Course Web Site(s)

You access link to our activities site here: <http://masonenviroed.pbworks.com>. Updated syllabus, all assignments (including deadlines), submissions and professor's presentations and students notes will be posted to this site.

Course Schedule

SESSION #	DATE	TOPIC / ASSIGNMENTS / READINGS	Presenters	SESSION SUMMARIES
1.	Aug 31	Session 01 . Introduction and Overview	1. Dann Sklarew 2. YOU	Summary 01 by WHOM?
2.	Sep 7	Session 02 . Ecosystem science and its implications for environmental education	1. Martin Ogle, NVRPA 2. EPA App teams	Summary 02 by Michelle
NO CLASS	Sep 14	NO CLASS		
3.	Sep 21	Session 03 . PWCS Bay Watershed Education and Training – Middle School Program (130 min)	1. Dann Sklarew and Rob Johnson	Summary 03 by Allison
4.	Sep 28	Session 04 . What does 'effective communication' mean to you? (Obj4 , 45 min) Quick introduction to speaker for next session, Robert Cox (view ads, video mix on coal) (Obj 4, 10 min) Identification of Ecosystem Threats and Services (Obj1 , 60 min) GK-12 Fellowship (Liz, Obj. 3&4, 20 minutes)	1. Obj4 – Lila, Cassie, Alexis, Karen 2. Obj1 – Allison, Liz, Jonathan	Summary 04 by Lila/(Ross?)
5.	Oct5	Session 05 . Speaker by Skype @ 4:30 p.m.: Robert Cox, PhD. "Urgency and Complexity: Challenges in Communicating about Environmental Concerns" (20–30 min talk followed by 15 min of questions for Cox and discussion) PWCS Bay Watershed Education and Training – High School Program (~45 min)	1. Obj4 – Prof. J. Robert "Robbie" Cox (via Skype) 2. Joy Greene and Dann Sklarew	Summary 05 by Karen
NO CLASS	Oct 12 & 19	NO CLASS		
6.	Oct 26	Session 06 . State-level Environmental Education and Stewardship 1. VA DEQ Water Quality Monitoring Program	1. James Beckley, also VA DEQ 2. Ann Regn,	Summary 06 by Meredith McCone

		<p>partnership with citizen organizations – citizen science in the Commonwealth (web link) with James Beckley, Quality Assurance Coordinator, VA DEQ Citizen Water Quality Monitoring Program</p> <p>2. Perspectives in Environmental Education– Policy, Research, and Program Drivers with Ann Regn, Manger, Office of Environmental Education, VA DEQ (see Virginia Naturally website)</p>	VA DEQ.	
7.	Nov 2	<p>Session 07.</p> <p>Formal and Informal Environmental Education: a collection of presentations and activities (working title). Full class session.</p> <p>(Confirm location and start time for Nov. 16, see NOTE 1 below.)</p>	Objective 3 team	Summary 07 by Liz
NO CLASS	Nov 9	NO CLASS		
		Randy Olson talk and movie unfortunately (!) cancelled. Hopefully on for April.		
8.	Nov 16	<p>Session 08.</p> <p>Kurt Moser from Earthforce and Natalie</p> <p><i>NOTE 1: Shortly after 3pm, COS will be presenting Dann Sklarew with the Environmental Science and Policy Teaching Excellence Award for 2011, most likely at Mason Inn. You are very welcome to attend, after which we'll likely either convene our class at the Inn or mosey back to University Hall.</i></p> <p><i>NOTE 2: For one of our Nov or Dec sessions, Dr. Dann is working to bring in some combo of NOAA Environmental Education officer Bronwen Rice, FCPS outdoor ed specialist Elaine Tholen, Mason's own Laurie Harmon (PRLS lead) and Dan Waxman (AEGreen initiative), others...? (If so, please note in discussion section below.)</i></p>	TBD based on student interests	Summary 08 by Meredith
NO CLASS	Nov 25	NO CLASS		
9.	Nov 30	<p>Session 09.</p> <p>1. Obj3 Outdoor Education for Fairfax County Public Schools / NoVA Outside (length TBD)</p> <p>2. The role of optimism, stewardship and community in the environmental field (Obj2) and (Obj5) Desert Restoration Corps 30–45 mins depending on what people want and how much we have to fit in.</p> <p>4. Obj5 presentation on local conservation techniques, 20 min (Meredith P.)</p> <p>5. Obj 7 -- Karen Akerlof -- National pro-environmental campaigns -- 15–20 minutes</p>	Obj. 3 Elaine Tholen (FCPS) Obj. 2 Leigh Obj. 5 Leigh Obj. 5 Meredith P.	Summary 09 by Lauren Kinne
10.	Dec 7	<p>Session 10.</p> <p>4:30 – 5:30 Dr. Moser</p>	1. Dr. Susanne Moser via Class	Summary 10 by Leigh

		[Karen AKERIOR and Dr. Dann will work with Dr. Moser to determine her session title and background readings.] 1hr. min 3 presentations and Discussion Allison- Effective ways to get environmental information to the developing world Ross- Science Advice to Congress Lila - Environmental Education: Focus on Formal Research Discussion 12 minutes - Watershed Video by Liz (if time permits) Course Evaluations Due!	Skype 2. Obj7 group 3. Liz	
11.	Dec 14	FINAL SESSION		n.a.

Texts and Materials

All texts and materials will either be accessible via our dropbox site,

<https://www.dropbox.com/home/Courses/EVPP692991F11%20Env%20Ed%20for%20Ecol%20Adapt%20and%20Stewardship>

or handed out in class. Students should feel empowered to add to this list as they see fit to convey their discoveries and ideas.

Performance Assessment

Students scores for the course will be based on performance on the following activities:

1. **Masters and Non-Degree Students (1 credit):**
 - i. 20% x the average of scores (0-4) for active participation on 5 (MS and ND students) or more scheduled sessions
 - ii. 20% x the average of scores (0-4) for active participation on 5 on-line forums or journal entries
 - iii. 20% for 1 in-class presentation on your adaptation or stewardship innovation and/or in-class discussion/leadership (0-4 score)
2. **Doctoral Students (2 credits)**
 - i. 10% x the average of scores (0-4) for active participation on 10 or more scheduled sessions
 - ii. 10% x the average of scores (0-4) for active participation on 10 on-line forums or journal entries
 - iii. 10% for in-class presentation on your adaptation or stewardship innovation (0-4 score)
 - iv. 10% for 1 in-class paper reviews and presentation/class discussion leadership (0-4 score for each)

Assignment and Rubric	1	2	3	4
1. Participation	Partially and passively attend	Fully attend, but passive	Attend and participate	A leader in contributing substantively and actively
3. In-Class Leadership	Delivered but irrelevant	Marginally on topic and informative	Informative and professional	Publish this!
2. Journals/e-Fora	Submission off-topic and incomplete	Submission on topic, complete but excluded journal reference OR incomplete but included journal reference.	On-topic, complete with journal reference	Innovative and exceptional contribution + on-topic, complete with journal reference
4. Session Summary	Submitted but irrelevant	Captures what occurred (activities), but does not adequately cover <u>outputs</u> (substance of information created/produced) or <u>impacts</u> (what was learned)	Broadly captures both outputs and impacts.	Fully and specifically captures outputs and impacts.

Participation: Students are expected to participate actively in every session. If you need to miss a session, please inform your professor in advance and

Participation. Students are expected to participate actively in every. If you need to miss a session, please inform your professor in advance and make extra effort to participate on-line that week. Doctoral students who attend less than 10 scheduled sessions and Master's students who attend less than 5 scheduled sessions will be required to make supplemental contribution to the course products in order to receive full participation credit. (See your professor for details.)

Grading Procedure

The final grade is based on your performance out of the possible 100 points:

Grade	Points
A - Exceptional/Passing	90.001 - 100
B - Satisfactory/Passing	80.001 - 90
C - Unsatisfactory/Passing	70.001 - 80
F - Unsatisfactory/Failing	0 - 70

In the past, roughly half of the students in this course have received A's and half B's, however a few have also received a C. The professor is not required, but reserves the right to provide + or - to grades to provide further clarification regarding the quality of students' work.

Disability Accommodation

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see Debbie Wyne and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the DRC.

If you are unable to attend class in person, please make arrangements in advance [if possible], so that the professor can try to make accommodations for your participation via [skype](#).

Honor Code

Adherence to the GMU Honor Code is expected of all students, specifically:

*Members of the George Mason University community pledge
not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.*

In all assignments and communications, plagiarism will not be tolerated. This applies equally to oral and written communications in the context of any evaluated (graded) course assignments. In presenting quotes, paraphrasing statements or logical arguments from others in any medium (on-line, oral or written), students should properly cite their source. Results of team work should only be attributed to those who directly contribute to the final product (even if more than those people were designated as being part of the team). Any or all members of a student team may be held accountable for any Honor Code violations in their shared work. Any public usage of original material from this course (e.g., presentations, images, etc.) without explicit permission of its creator shall be construed as stealing. As stated in the Honor Code, infractions may result in invalidated credit for dishonorable work and lowered grade, including failure from the class, suspension or dismissal. Inquiries for clarification from the professor are welcome. Thank you in advance for your conscious attention to these issues.

Absenteeism

As adults with outside responsibilities, many of you may have to miss a class once during the semester. If you know this is likely to happen, please contact your professor as soon as possible to arrange means to ensure you can still learn the material and/or obtain full credit for any learning activities.

Due to the exceptional threat posed by **pandemic flu** this season, students who promptly inform the professor of their flu symptoms (see [next underlined link](#) hereafter) are then *strongly urged* to **stay at home**, per [CDC direction here](#). **Do not come to class** until 24 hours after any [$\geq 100^{\circ}\text{F}$] fever passed without medication. Insofar as students adhere to the GMU Honor Code when declaring their flu-related need to work from home, they will be eligible to receive reasonable accommodation for their illness, as deemed appropriate by the professor.

About the Instructor

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