

Environmental Studies Fall 2009

ENVS Topics Courses Descriptions Fall 2009

ENVS 4100 Topics in Environmental Policy,

9 total credit hours, provided the topics vary.

(Covers a variety of topics not currently offered in the curriculum; offered depending on instructor availability and student demand. May be repeated up to 9 total credit hours, provided the topics vary.)

Section 002 TPC- Energy Policy

Paul Denholm, Senior Energy Analyst, National Renewable Energy Laboratory, instructor. This projects course will apply students' energy knowledge to a particular energy problem or issue. Students will create interdisciplinary teams to analyze a technical and/or policy issue related to energy production and use at the state or local level. The specific issue will be decided by the class. Candidate issues include: renewable energy potential and barriers in Colorado, Boulder's potential for increased energy efficiency, options for alternative transportation to Colorado's resort destinations, the future of Colorado's solar industry. Students will be expected to develop a policy-relevant class final report/plan, and present it to decision-makers. Approved for all Track A except International Development. Recommended prerequisites: PHYS/ENVS 3070 and ENVS 3621.

ENVS 4800 Critical Thinking in Environmental Studies.

Examines a specific environmental topic in depth, synthesizing information from complex and controversial issues. Different course sections present different topics. May be repeated up to 6 total credit hours. Restricted to students with junior or senior status in environmental studies. Approved for arts and sciences core curriculum: critical thinking.

Section-001 CT Biofuels

Dr. Catherine Stewart, Instructor

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This course will use critical thinking to explore the ecological, economic and policy factors of biofuels production; for example, the trade-offs between using agricultural commodities for biofuels feed stock versus feeding poor communities or the positive and negative effects of genetic engineering of biofuel organisms. Approved for all Track A and B specializations. (On course schedule by mid April.)

Section-002 CT Cultural Politics of Climate Change Fall

Max Boykoff, Assistant Professor, CIRES

The objective of this course is to critically analyze how climate science and policy activities find meaning in our daily lives. To address this objective, I will focus particularly on the roles of selected non-nation state actors in addressing global environmental change. By way of various themes addressed in the sessions over the semester, I will connect the more formal spaces of climate science, policy and politics to the spaces of the 'everyday'.

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Collectively, we will attempt to understanding the intricate dynamics between multilevel institutional architectures (rights, rules, norms, decision-making procedures) and the landscape of actors, primarily those outside national governments which are able to influence outcomes (media, cities, companies, NGOs, etc.). As a more specific case-study example, we will focus most closely on how mass media shape understanding and engagement with the issue of climate change.

Throughout, we will examine how the formalized spaces of climate politics and policy, from international to local, permeate the everyday spaces of attitudes, perspectives and behaviors in the public sphere. Through such an approach and through this case study of climate change, I aim for us to all effectively explore the variegated spaces of (dis)engagement with contemporary global environmental challenges.

This course may be applied to Environmental Analysis, Planning/Decision Making and Climate Specializations."