

Environmental Studies Spring 2010

Course Descriptions for Topics Courses: Spring 2010

Highlighted course titles still have seats available as of 12/16/09.

ENVS 3001 Sustainable Solutions Consulting, Lisa Barlow, ENVS

Introduces students to green design, industrial ecology, and life cycle analysis. Students use basic techniques of environmental auditing to analyze the CU-Boulder campus. Prereq: any two-semester science sequence. Restricted to junior and senior ENVS majors. Approved for all Track A, except international development.

ENVS 3621-001 Energy, Policy and Society, Paul Komor, ENVS/Energy Initiative

This course will examine how society makes decisions about energy, and how these decisions affect the environment and the economy. The student will use tools from policy analysis, economics, and other disciplines to build an in-depth understanding of energy's role in U. S. contemporary society. Approved for all Track A, except international development.

ENVS 4100 (1-3): Topics in Environmental Policy

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.

ENVS 4100-002 TPC – Carbon Neutral CU, Dave Newport, Environmental Center Director

The students in Carbon Neutral CU will learn the concepts that inform this definition of climate-neutrality, the technical approaches available to the campus that can be employed, develop an analytical framework by which to evaluate these options, and draft a proposed strategic plan that would guide an implementation analysis of available options. The class may attend planning meetings of the various committees charged by the Chancellor to develop UCB's actual plan. Field trips to relevant campus facilities may also occur. Approved for all Track A Specializations. **Course will be offered through Continuing Education.**

ENVS 4800 -3 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.

ENVS 4800-001 CT – Rethinking Hurricane Katrina, Diana Nemergut, Assistant Professor, ENVS/INSTAAR

The impact of Hurricane Katrina on the city of New Orleans was an event unprecedented in America in modern times. The world watched as the local, state and federal government failed to protect and respond to this disaster. This course aims to dissect the environmental issues (e.g. global warming, sediment transport, wetland degradation) that led to and resulted from Katrina. Additionally, we will delve into the role of political, sociological and economic factors in this disaster. We will also cover the history of this ecologically and culturally unique city. As a class, we will examine various aspects of Hurricane Katrina and the city of New Orleans in detail, and produce a comprehensive written review of the role of environmental problems in this disaster. Students will engage in independent research, reading, writing, editing and class presentations. Approved for all Track A Specializations.

http://envs.colorado.edu/undergrad_program/C73/Current%20Courses/

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ENVS 4800-002 CT – Environmental Property and Protest, Ben Hale, Assistant Professor, ENVS

This class will center on private property questions at the heart of the debate around environmental policy, environmental activism, and the wise use movement. Specifically, we will read some of the foundational theories of property rights—Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Proudhon, Marx, Coase—as well as some of the central views on civil disobedience and protest—Thoreau, King, Malcolm X, Ed Abbey, Dave Foreman, John Zerzan, and Rawls. As this is also technically a course on critical thinking, we will spend approximately one third of the course covering material related to informal reasoning. Approved for all Track A specializations.

ENVS 4800-003 CT: Cultural Politics of Climate Change, Max Boykoff, Assistant Professor, CIRES/ENVS

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-national 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'.

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."

ENVS 4800-004 CT: Evaluating Policy Responses to Climate Change, Assistant Professor, ENVS/CSTPR

Policy action for climate change is "heating up" at all levels of government, from international discussions at the G8 summit and climate bills in the U.S. Congress, to Boulder, Colorado's carbon tax to support a variety of energy efficiency measures. This course will look at some of the new and proposed policies to respond to climate change, both on the emissions reduction and adaptation sides of the issue. We will critically examine such questions as: How do we define success for climate policy? Are these criteria being met? What are the barriers to effective climate policy? How are climate policies currently being justified? What are the costs, who pays, and who should pay? How do climate policies interact with other types of policies and public goals? The goal of this course is to learn how to think critically about what makes a successful policy for climate change, and to evaluate how the current approaches measure up. The course will look at examples of policy in the U.S. at a variety of scales, as well as those enacted and being considered for implementation internationally.

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If you have any questions about the class, please contact Lisa Dilling, ldilling@colorado.edu or 303-735-3678.

ENVS 4990-801 – Senior Thesis, Dale Miller, ENVS

Supervised project involving original research. Open only to environmental studies majors with at least a 3.30 GPA. Thesis proposal must be accepted by honors chairman. May be repeated up to 6 total credit hours. RESTRICTED TO SENIOR ENVS MAJORS.

ENVS 3880-001 – The Art of Research, Lisa Dilling, Assistant Professor, ENVS/CSTPR

The essential elements of research in environment studies. Are you interested in learning how to do research in Environmental Studies? Are you stuck trying to figure out how to come up with a research question for an honors thesis? Do you wonder how the process of research works? This is the course for you! This course is designed to introduce students to the practice of doing research, from formulating a researchable question to research design, general introduction to methods, and using arguments and evidence in evaluating data. This course is not a substitute for an in-depth course in methods specific to your area of research, but will provide a general overview of quantitative and qualitative methods that you might encounter in environmental studies research. Open to juniors and seniors, strongly recommended for those wanting to do an honors thesis. GPA of 3.0 needed to enroll in this course or permission of the instructor. If you have any questions about the class, please contact Lisa Dilling, ldilling@colorado.edu or 303-735-3678.