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Office: PLC 319, 346-5554 Hours: 1:00 - 2:30 MW and by appt.

Course Description:

As the culmination of the first-year sequence, this course assists ENVS masters students in finalizing their thesis or project research plans. The content of the course is selected by the students, who take primary responsibility for designing and leading the class sessions. Each student is responsible for two 80-minute class sessions on a theme related to her or his thesis/project research, providing appropriate readings and assignments to facilitate group discussion and elicit constructive criticism of the research plan. The course culminates in the completion of two products: presentation of a poster at the Joint Campus Conference (held at Portland State University on May 24th), and a final draft of the thesis prospectus or project plan.

Course Goals:

- to deepen your understanding of the diverse disciplinary perspectives that contribute to environmental studies, including their research methods, vocabularies, and core concepts
- to develop pedagogical and presentation skills relevant to leading seminars and presenting research in a professional setting
- to refine the thesis or project research plan through peer and faculty feedback

Course Requirements

1. participation	10%
2. planning and leading course sessions	40%
3. preparing and presenting poster at JCC	20%
4. thesis prospectus / project proposal	30%

◦ **Participation:** You are expected to participate actively in this class, which includes attending all classes, reading all assigned material prior to class, and engaging productively in class discussion. Missing more than a single class meeting will negatively affect your grade.

◦ **Planning and leading course sessions:** Each student will prepare and facilitate two 80-minute course sessions during the term, including selecting and making available all readings and assignments for these sessions. The first session should focus on background relevant to the student's thesis or project, e.g., prior research in the field, core themes and concepts, research methods and techniques, etc. The second class should focus on issues related to the student's specific research proposal. These classes should be designed with two goals in mind: first, to expand your classmates' understanding of the key questions, concepts, and methods of your field of research; and, secondly, to elicit critical feedback that can assist with your research planning.

◦ **Presenting at the Joint Campus Conference:** Each spring our program collaborates with Portland State and Oregon State to hold a "Joint Campus Conference" on Environmental Studies. The main function of this event is to foster communication and interaction between the graduate programs at the three schools. The schools take turns hosting the event, and this spring it will be held at Portland State on May 29th. All of our first-year graduate students are expected to participate formally in this event, usually by presenting a poster at the poster session based on your proposed thesis research (although giving an oral presentation is also encouraged). This year, we plan to carpool to Portland for the conference in a state van. More details about the trip and your poster preparation will be forthcoming.

◦ **Thesis Prospectus/Project Proposal:** In lieu of a final examination, your culminating project in this course will be the final draft of your thesis prospectus or project plan. Ideally, this prospectus should be approved by your adviser and the members of your committee by the end of Spring term.

A standard thesis prospectus in a natural or social science area should be 6-10 double-spaced pages (excluding references and appendices) and include the following components:

1. **overview:** summarizes the question, its significance, the method by which this will be addressed, and how you will analyze the data
2. **literature review:** summarizes the relevant research that has already been conducted, explaining how this shapes your question and what you are adding that builds on current knowledge
3. **methodology:** describes the specific research you will undertake to address your question: interview techniques, sampling, descriptions of lab techniques, how qualitative data will be coded, how quantitative data will be analyzed, etc.

4. **timeline:** a reasonable plan indicating when each step of the process will occur and the anticipated time of completion
5. **references:** bibliography of the literature that you cite
6. **appendices:** interview questions, copies of human subjects approval, etc.

In the humanities and humanistic social sciences, this model is often modified by excluding the methods section and separate literature review, replacing these with a detailed chapter-by-chapter breakdown of the argument to be made, specifying texts and sub-questions, etc. These proposals are often longer, although concision is always preferred.

Exceptions to the length limitations or other variations on the standard format for the prospectus should involve consultation between you, your thesis adviser, the members of your thesis committee, and the Chair of the ENVS Graduate Studies Committee (currently, Scott Bridgham).

Project proposals do not have a standard model but are designed on a case-by-case basis in consultation with your adviser, the members of your committee, and the Chair of Graduate Studies. Project proposals must demonstrate the academic merits of the proposed project.

◦ **First-Year Progress Evaluation:** Although not part of the grading of this course, your first-year progress evaluation will be scheduled at the end of the spring term. This evaluation, which will become part of your **PERMANENT RECORD**, gauges your progress on the following five criteria:

1. Completion of course plan and satisfactory course progress
2. Selection of director and committee for thesis/project
3. Completion and quality of poster/oral presentation and literature review/annotated bibliography
4. Quality of thesis/project proposal
5. Reasonable plan for completion of thesis/project

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1 March 30	Introduction to course (discuss theses & projects, prospectuses & proposals, human subjects approval, directors and committees, course plans, defenses, posters, Joint Campus Conference, etc.) Informal report from each student on current status of thesis/project planning
Week 2 April 6	Session 1: Amanda Peacher International Wilderness Session 2: Sue Dockstader Marxist Political Economy of Agrofuels
Week 3 April 13th	Session 3: Thomas Mason Topic: TBA Session 4: Kevin Horan The Western Climate Initiative's Impact on Electricity Generation in the Pacific Northwest
Week 4 April 20	Session 5: Chris Stratton Promoting Sustainability through Urban Density Session 6: Kevin Belanger Direct Farm Marketing and Agricultural Land Use Planning
Week 5 April 27	Session 7: Dana Maher Topic: Encouraging Economically Disadvantaged Communities to Think Green When Utilizing Energy Performance Contracting Poster planning session with veteran grad students

<p>Week 6 May 4</p>	<p>Session 8: Amanda Peacher International Wilderness</p> <p>Session 9: Sue Dockstader Topic: Feminist Political Economy of Agrofuels</p>
<p>Week 7 May 11</p>	<p>Session 10: Kevin Horan The Western Climate Initiative's Impact on Electricity Generation in the Pacific Northwest</p> <p>Session 11: Thomas Mason Topic: TBA</p>
<p>Week 8 May 18</p>	<p>Session 12: Chris Stratton Contingent Valuation Visual Preference Surveys</p> <p>Class presentation and critique of JCC posters</p>
<p>Week 9 May 25</p>	<p>Monday class cancelled for Memorial Day.</p> <p>Friday, 5/29: Carpool to Portland for JCC (approximately 7:30 am - 6:30 pm)</p>
<p>Week 10 June 1</p>	<p>Session 13: Kevin Belanger Direct Farm Marketing and Agricultural Land Use Planning</p> <p>Session 14: Dana Maher Topic: Encouraging Economically Disadvantaged Communities to Think Green When Utilizing Energy Performance Contracting</p>
<p>Monday June 8</p>	<p>Final Thesis Prospectus/Project Proposal due in ENVS office by 5 pm.</p>