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ENST 594.01: Local Solutions to Climate Change

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COURSE OVERVIEW

There is little dispute that global climate change has wide-ranging causes and consequences. It is less clear what can be done to effectively confront the problem. While international agreements and national policies can lead to some progress, various circumstances and forces work against broad consensus and effective implementation. Amid a contentious backdrop at the international and national levels, tremendous grassroots support for local, state and regional approaches to climate change has sprung up. This emerging movement involves citizens, non-profit organizations, government, business and other institutions in solutions that make a difference, and in turn can impact national and international solutions. The success of this movement is essential if climate change, a defining challenge of the 21st century, is to be effectively confronted.

This course seeks to develop students’ understandings and skills for participating in local solutions to climate change that also can support broader conservation, efficiency and sustainability efforts. This will be accomplished by engaging in planning and carrying out projects that further advance existing climate change mitigation or adaptation efforts. Although “local” might apply to the household level in some contexts, in this class “local” will primarily refer to campus, city, county, state and tribal government levels.

To achieve our goals we will examine various local climate change initiatives, policies and programs, and we will interact with key leaders, stakeholders and resource people to identify opportunities to advance or complement existing efforts through planning and carrying out group projects. First, student teams will engage in a strategic planning and consultation process to develop a project proposal. Elements of strategic plans should use one or more theoretical frameworks or conceptual models to be decided on by each team in consultation with the instructor. Several such frameworks, borrowed from the fields of applied social and political science, will be introduced by the instructor with the expectation that students appropriately apply one or more of them in developing their project proposals. Second, teams will carry out their projects. Lastly, they will report on their outcomes and evaluate their efforts.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this course, students will have:

- Strengthened their leadership, collaboration, team-building and entrepreneurial skills.
- Improved project management skills needed to plan, carry out and evaluate team projects.
• Developed knowledge of campus, city, county, and state policies and initiatives and key individuals and groups that respond to climate change, including mitigation and adaptation strategies.
• Developed the ability to analyze obstacles to the effective implementation of local climate action initiatives.
• The ability to identify strategies to overcome barriers to implementation of climate change initiatives and in doing so utilize theories and concepts of social capital, capacity building, as well as the principles and techniques of community organizing, climate communications and/or models of policy implementation.
• Improved understanding and appreciation of approaches to community engagement, policy advocacy, related analytic tools and their use in the design and implementation of effective project-based work.

CLASS PARTICIPATION

The quality of your learning and that of your peers will depend on being present and prepared for class. If you are absent you cannot benefit from listening to the discussion or contribute to group learning.

Class will be held mostly in seminar format, and will consist of a combination of lecture, discussion, guest speakers, videos, and student presentations. The success of the class and your learning depends on your active participation in class. This requires coming to class prepared to discuss assigned readings. Thus, you are encouraged to read the assigned readings carefully, jot down thoughts and questions, and bring those to class, such that our discussions will be engaging, reflect the contributions of everybody and provide a common base of knowledge for your projects. For at least one class session you will be asked to specially prepare an introduction to the readings, present material related to the day’s topic and facilitate class discussion (see Assignments below). I expect that students will treat each other with respect in sharing thoughts and ideas in discussion and responding to the views of others.

Carrying out the class project is likely to require meeting with your project team outside of class. I recognize that coordinating schedules with others is not always easy and ask that you each do your best to be accommodating in working with other members of your team.

If you have any concerns about the above expectations or encounter difficulties meeting with your team, please feel free to discuss your concerns with me as they arise or soon thereafter, and we will address them (note that to the extent that you are able to address such issues collaboratively within your group, you will be fulfilling the leadership goal of this course). If my assistance is needed, I am generally available after class and can also meet during my office hours and by appointment.

A Note on Email Communication: In accordance with privacy laws the University requires me to communicate with students about academic matters through students’ University email (GrizMail and UMConnect) account. Thus, your University account will be preferred for this class.

A Note about Course Content: This course assumes students have a moderate level of understanding of the U.S. political system and governmental institutions. Although many policy terms and concepts will be defined, it is important that we have a reasonably common language and knowledge base. If you
think you would benefit from reading a short primer or “refresher” on American government, please don’t hesitate to ask me.

A Note about Obtaining Assistance: I am available to help if you need assistance outside of class or encounter difficulties of any kind, particularly with preparing to lead class discussion, identifying readings, and/or developing research or project ideas. Please see me after class, email me, come see me during office hours (by signing up on the sheet outside my office), or set up an appointment via email.

CLIMATE ACTION PROJECTS

The class will divide into teams of three or four people based on common areas of interest and will work together throughout the semester on climate action projects. The projects should have clearly-defined, achievable and measurable goals related to a specific topic area or problem chosen by your team and should engage with a campus or government office, public official, non-profit or community-based organization, the business community, other types of community leaders, or some combination of appropriate individuals and entities. Thus, students are encouraged to collaborate with environmental, labor, and social service organizations, as well as with schools, faith-based groups, financial institutions, businesses, and the like. Community engagement should occur in the project planning/design, implementation and evaluation phases. It is expected that your final product will be conveyed and/or presented to a community partner.

It is suggested that each project fall within one of the following categories: (1) campus; (2) community (City of Missoula or nearby); and (3) state or tribal. A number of possible issues in each category will be introduced by the instructor and guest speakers.

Projects may take a variety of forms such as: an issue campaign; public forum/dialogue; mini-conference; workshop(s)/training(s); train the trainer manual; policy analysis; policy proposal; technical report; negotiation; direct action; communications/messaging plan; grant proposal; fund-raiser; educational materials; special event; outreach activity; and so on. Projects should result in a tangible end-product or “deliverable.”

Project teams are encouraged to use a variety of media such as performance, print, internet, mobile device, radio, and video to communicate carefully crafted messages to your target audience(s). Finally, projects may involve a fund-raising component if necessary and desired.

Projects will be developed with the feedback from the class as well as guidance and support from the instructor. Topic ideas must support the course goals and objectives and demonstrate an impact or potential impact by using one or more of the theoretical frameworks and conceptual models presented in the class to inform your team’s strategic planning, and if applicable and available, evidence-based research. In addition, community engagement practice techniques should be used in carrying out projects.

1 The goal of an issue campaign is to achieve at least a partial solution to or significant step in solving a public problem or in some cases gain public recognition of a problem and a proposed solution that is not yet well-defined or understood.
There are five components to the group projects: (1) a preliminary project prospectus; (2) a project proposal (and if necessary a revision); (3) a written progress report and mid-project class presentation; (4) a final written project report; (5) a final presentation; and (6) a reflection essay and peer evaluation.

ASSIGNMENTS

There are eight assignments: (1) leading class discussion; (2) a preliminary team project proposal and preliminary lay of the land; (3) final project proposal/lay of the land; (4) mid-project written report; (5) final project report; (6) final presentation on your project; and (7) individual reflection essay; and (8) peer evaluations. Assignment #1 will be led by small groups of two or three students (not necessarily project teams), #s 2-6 will be done by project groups or teams, and the #7 and #8 will be done individually.

In addition, there will be several smaller homework assignments that will be included as part of your class participation grade, such as the mid-project in-class report.

For leading class discussion, you are asked to briefly summarize and introduce the readings, offer your comments, and identify the strengths and weaknesses of each reading, explain how you see them relating to the topic for the day, previous topics and key themes and questions in the course. In addition, you are asked to offer thoughtful and thought-provoking questions and otherwise prompt and stimulate class discussion. Finally, you are also expected to identify two outside readings to share with the class that relate to the topic for the day. Please plan on using 45-60 minutes of class time unless otherwise arranged.

Ungraded homework assignments are an opportunity to integrate themes and synthesize across topics, solidify your understanding of course materials, offer critiques, and explore and develop your own ideas. These will help in preparation for in-class exercises, activities and workshops related to class projects. A small amount of outside sources, readings or research may be needed to complete one of the assignments.

Additional instructions and guidelines for these assignments will be handed out and discussed in class.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY AND PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is a serious violation of academic integrity. All work and ideas submitted are expected to be your own or must be fully and accurately attributed to verifiable sources. The Academic Policies and Procedures in the 2013-14 University Catalog states: “Students who plagiarize may fail the course and may be remanded to Academic Court for possible suspension or expulsion.” If you have any doubts about plagiarism and citing of others’ work or ideas, especially web sources, please consult the instructor.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you are a student with a disability and wish to discuss reasonable accommodations for this course, contact me privately to discuss the specific modifications you wish to request. Please be advised I may request that you provide a letter from Disability Services for Students verifying your right to reasonable modifications. If you have not yet contacted Disability Services, located in Lommasson Center 154,
please do so in order to verify your disability and to coordinate your reasonable modifications. For more information, please visit the Disability Services website.

**GRADING AND EVALUATION**

Course grades will be based on:

- Class attendance and participation (20%)
- Leading discussion (10%)
- Project proposal (10%)
- Project progress report (10%)
- Final report (40%)
- Final presentation (10%)

Your participation grade will take into account factors such as: your class attendance; preparation; active listening; engagement with your peers, guest speakers and the instructor; your overall contributions to class discussions of readings; your participation in class activities; your final reflection essay and peer evaluations.

Evaluation of written assignments will be based on the appropriateness of sources consulted, quality of the writing, research conducted, documentation, level of analysis, insight, originality, organization, and clarity. Specific guidelines for reports and presentations will be handed out or discussed in class.

**READINGS AND RESOURCES**

There are two required texts:


Boswell et al. (2012) is available at The Bookstore at The University of Montana and is indicated as *Local Climate Action Planning* in the Course Schedule below. Moore and Kahn (2011) can be purchase or downloaded as a pdf for free from: [http://organizingcoolstheplanet.wordpress.com/get-copies-of-ocp/](http://organizingcoolstheplanet.wordpress.com/get-copies-of-ocp/). This source is indicated as *Organizing Cools the Planet* below.

All other readings will be available on E-Reserve at: [http://eres.lib.umt.edu/eres/default.aspx](http://eres.lib.umt.edu/eres/default.aspx). The course password is “ENST594”.

The following two books though not required are highly recommended and various worksheets from the books will be handed out and used in class.


Two other books that are recommended for groups working on campus climate action issues:


These books will be placed “On Reserve” for the class at the Mansfield Library circulation desk and can be checked out for 24 hours at a time.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

(subject to changes needed to meet the needs of class)

**Major Assignment Due Dates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preliminary Project Prospectus</td>
<td>Monday, Sept. 30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Proposal</td>
<td>Monday, Oct. 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progress Report (oral)</td>
<td>Wednesday, Nov. 6 and Nov. 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progress Report (written)</td>
<td>Monday, Nov. 11 and Monday, Nov. 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Presentation</td>
<td>Monday, Dec. 2; Wednesday, Dec. 4; and Tuesday, Dec. 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Report</td>
<td>Wednesday, Dec. 4; Friday, Dec. 6; and Thursday, Dec. 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection Essay</td>
<td>Friday, Dec. 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Evaluation</td>
<td>Friday, Dec. 13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**WEEK 1**

**Mon 8/26** – Course Introduction / Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies


**Wed 8/28** – The Case for Local (and State) Solutions


WEEK 2
Mon 9/2 – Labor Day – No Class

Wed 9/4 – Local Climate Action Planning /Civic Capacity


Local Climate Action Planning Ch. 1-5 (p. 1-152)

WEEK 3
Mon 9/9 – Climate Action Planning for the City of Missoula

Guest: Chase Jones, City of Missoula Energy Conservation Coordinator

Local Climate Action Planning Ch. 7 (p. 183-232)


Wed 9/11 – Climate Adaptation for Missoula County

Guest: Jill Albin, Clark Fork Coalition Outreach Coordinator


Also review threat maps at: http://www.clarkfork.org/missoula-county-threat/environment.html.

WEEK 4
Mon 9/16 – Campus Climate Initiatives, Part 1

Guest: Cherie Peacock, UM Sustainability Coordinator


Wed 9/18 – Campus Climate Initiatives, Part 2

Guest: Nicky Phear, UM Climate Change Studies Program Coordinator / Prescott College Doctoral Student in Sustainability Education


WEEK 5


Guest: Bryan Von Lossberg, Alternative Energy Resource Organization (AREO) Executive Director


Wed 9/25 – Community Organizing, Part 1 (Framework 1)


Organizing Cools the Planet p. 1-47.

WEEK 6

Mon 9/30 – Project Prospectus Presentations

PRELIMINARY PROSPECTUSES DUE

Wed 10/2 – Community Organizing, Part 2

Organizing Cools the Planet p. 48-57.


WEEK 7

Mon 10/7 – Policy Analysis, Part 1 (Strategic Planning Framework 3)


Yaffee, Steven. 2003. Checklist for Political and Institutional Analyses (Sections D, pp. 3-7). School of Natural Resources and Environment, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor


WEEK 8
Mon 10/14 – PROJECT PROPOSALS DUE

Wed 10/16 – Climate Communications, Framing and Messaging


WEEK 9
Mon 10/21 – Campaign Recruitment


Wed 10/23 – Media Outreach


WEEK 10
Mon 10/28 – Local Climate Action Opponents


WEEK 11
Mon 11/4 – Project Work Day
Activities TBA

Wed 11/6 – Project Progress Reports (in class presentations)

WEEK 12
Mon 11/11 – Veteran’s Day – No Class

**WRITTEN PROGRESS REPORTS DUE FOR 11/6 PRESENTERS**

Wed 11/13 – Project Progress Reports

WEEK 13
Mon 11/18 – Open Day – Topic TBA

**WRITTEN PROGRESS REPORTS DUE FOR 11/13 PRESENTERS**

Wed 11/20 – Carbon Offsets


WEEK 14
Mon 11/25 – Project Work Day

Wed 11/27 – Thanksgiving – No Class

WEEK 15
Mon 12/2 – PROJECT PRESENTATIONS

Wed 12/4 – PROJECT PRESENTATIONS

FINALS WEEK
Tues 12/10 – PROJECT PRESENTATIONS (1:10 to 3:10 PM)
Handy Schedule of Key Dates

- Preliminary Project Prospectus ........ Mon., Sept. 30
- Project Proposal ............................. Mon., Oct. 14
- Progress Report (oral) ................ Mon., Nov. 6 and Nov. 13
- Progress Report (written) .......... Mon., Nov. 11 and Mon., Nov. 18
- Final Presentation ........................ Mon., Dec. 2; Wed., Dec. 4; and Tues., Dec. 10
- Project Report ............................... Wed., Dec. 4; Fri., Dec. 6; and Thurs., Dec. 12
- Reflection Essay ............................ Fri., Dec. 13
- Peer Evaluation ............................. Fri., Dec. 13