9-2014

ENST 535.01: Local Climate Solutions

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Recommended Citation
Saha, Robin, "ENST 535.01: Local Climate Solutions" (2014). Syllabi. 1357.
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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. 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 be explicitly informed by 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 employed.
• Developed the ability to analyze obstacles to the effective implementation of local climate action initiatives.
• Developed the ability to identify strategies to overcome barriers to implementation of climate change initiatives and in doing so utilize theories and concepts of advocacy coalitions, social capital, capacity building, social learning 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. I also 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 available and accommodating in working with other members of your team.

If you have any concerns about the above expectations or encounter difficulties meeting or working with your team, please feel free to discuss your concerns with me, 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 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. Likewise the course assumes a basic understanding of the scientific consensus on current causes and consequences of global climate change. If you think you would benefit from reading a short primer or “refresher” on American government or climate change science, 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 small teams 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); or (3) state or tribal. A number of possible issues in each category will be introduced by the instructor and guest speakers. This year, the course is not designed to strongly support state and tribal level projects. However, adjustments can be made to do so depending on student interest.

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, video and social media to communicate carefully crafted messages to your target audience(s). Finally, projects may involve a fund-raising component if necessary and desired. Department funding may be available to support projects if requests are made early.

Projects will be developed with 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.

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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.
ASSIGNMENTS

In addition to reading reaction papers (see below), there are eight assignment related to team projects: (1) an issue background/draft project goals/team norms; (2) a project proposal; (3) a revised proposal; (4) a written progress report and mid-project presentation; (5) a final project report; (6) a final presentation; and (7) a reflection essay; and (8) peer evaluations. Assignments 1-6 will be done by project groups or teams, and 7 and 8 will be done individually. Detailed guidelines for these assignments will be handed out and discussed in class.

Reaction Papers. A total of six assigned reading reaction papers are required by Oct. 8, including three by Sept. 10. Reaction papers should be no more than three double-spaced pages and should be submitted before class or in class the same day the readings are assigned. Reaction papers should respond to all readings assigned for a specific day. In your reaction papers, you are asked to: (1) identify what you found to be the most important, interesting or valuable points of each assigned reading, and explain why; and (2) offer your critique and/or comments on each reading. In doing so, you could identify the strengths and weaknesses of each reading, compare and contrast them to each other, explain how you see them relating to the topic for the day, previous topics and key themes and learning outcomes of the course. In addition, you are encouraged to offer thoughtful and thought-provoking questions that the readings raise for you and that you can also bring up in class to help stimulate class discussion.

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 (10%)
- Reaction papers (10%)
- A Project proposal (10%)
- A Revised proposal (10%)
- A Progress Report/Media-Outreach Plan (10%)
• Project Progress Reports (written and oral) (10%)
• A Final Report (30%)
• A Final presentation (10%)

Your participation grade will take into account factors such as: your class attendance; punctuality; 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 no required text books, though we will be reading several chapters from the following book:


You can purchases it on your own if you would like to, or it can be accessed as an e-book through the Mansfield Library Online Catalog at http://catalog.lib.umt.edu/vwebv/searchBasic. A copy of the book also will be placed “On Reserve” for the class at the Mansfield Library circulation desk and can be checked out for 4 hours at a time.

All other assigned readings will be made accessible electronically as announced in class.

Other recommended resources, some of which are news services that can be subscribed to, include:

The Daily Climate: http://www.dailyclimate.org/
Grist Climate Change: http://grist.org/climate-change/
Grist Climate and Energy: http://grist.org/climate-energy/
ClimateWire: http://www.eenews.net/cw
EnergyWire2: http://www.eenews.net/ew
Climate Access: http://www.climateaccess.org/
350.org: http://350.org/
Missoula Community Climate Summit: http://missoulacommunityclimate.org/
Missoula Climate Collaborative: www.conservemontana.org/content/adapt-missoulas-climate-collaborative/

Please let me know if you know of other useful resources to share with the class.

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2 Accessing ClimateWire and EnergyWire requires being logged into your student account with the Mansfield Library. To access either source, go to the Library’s “Research Tools” webpage http://www.lib.umt.edu/research and search or browse under journals.
COURSE SCHEDULE
(subject to changes needed to meet the needs of class)

Assignment Due Dates

Project Assignment 1 (Issue Background/Team Norms /Draft Goal(s)) Mon., Sept. 29
Project Assignment 2 (Proposal) Fri., Oct. 17
Project Assignment 3 (Revised Proposal) Wed., Oct. 29
Project Assignment 4 (Progress Report/Media- Outreach Plan) Mon., Nov. 17
Final Presentation Wed., Dec. 3 and Mon., Dec. 8
Project Reports Wed., Dec. 10;
Reflection Essay Fri., Dec. 12
Peer Evaluation Fri., Dec. 12

WEEK 1
Mon 8/25 – Course Introduction / Individual & Household Action / Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies

Jensen, Derrick. 2009. “Forget Shorter Showers.” Orion (July/August)
http://www.orionmagazine.org/index.php/articles/article/4801/


http://www.ssireview.org/blog/entry/climate_risks_linking_narratives_to_action#

Wed 8/27 – The Case for “Local” Solutions


LAST NAME A-L, READ:


LAST NAME M-Z, READ:


WEEK 2

Mon 9/1 – Labor Day – No Class

Wed 9/3 – Campus Climate Action, Part 1

Guest: Chris Olsen, ASUM Sustainability Coordinator


WEEK 3

Mon 9/8 – Local Climate Action Organizations/Organizing – Focus on Coal Exports

Guest: Nick Engelfried, Founder and Leader of Blue Skies


Western Organization of Resource Councils. 2014. Heavy Traffic Still Ahead. Billings, MT: Author. [Read Introduction, Executive Summary and Conclusion; skim the rest]


Moore, Hilary and Joshua Kahn Russell. 2011. Organizing Cools the Planet: Tools and Reflections to Navigate the Climate Crisis. Oakland, CA: PM Press. [Read p. 4-17, 24-47]

Wed 9/10 – Climate Action for the Community of Missoula

Guests: Chase Jones, City of Missoula Energy Conservation Coordinator and Amy Cilimburg, Missoula Adapt (Missoula Climate Collaborative) and Montana Audubon


WEEK 4

Mon 9/15 – Organizing for Action, Part 1


Wed 9/17 – Campus Climate Action, Part 2

**Guest: Eva Rocke, UM Sustainability Coordinator**

Rappaport, Ann, Sarah Hammond Creighton. 2007. The Campus Inventory and Climate Goals. In *Degrees That Matter* (pp. 33-50).


**WEEK 5**

Mon 9/22 – Organizing for Action, Part 2

Moore, Hilary and Joshua Kahn Russell. 2011. *Organizing Cools the Planet*. [Read pp. 48-59]


Wed 9/24 – Project Planning Day


**WEEK 6**

Mon 9/29 – Group Project Presentations

Wed 10/1 – Campaign Recruitment


**WEEK 7**

Mon 10/6 – Policy Analysis – Enhancing Policy Design, Implementation and Capacity


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

Wed 10/8 – Building and Leveraging Social Capital and Promoting Social Learning


**WEEK 8**

Mon 10/13 – In-Class Project Planning Day

Wed 10/15 – Climate Communications, Framing and Messaging


**WEEK 9**

Mon 10/20 – Project Management Skills


Also see:


Wed 10/22 – In-Class Project Work Day
**WEEK 10**

Mon 10/27 – Local Climate Action Opponents


Wed 10/29 – Lobbying Workshop


**WEEK 11**

Mon 11/3 – Community Engagement and Media Outreach


Wed 11/5 – Communications/Messaging Workshop

Readings to be assigned

**WEEK 12**

Mon 11/10 – Project Work Day

Wed 11/12 – Project Progress Reports

**WEEK 13**

Mon 11/17 – Open Day – Topic TBA

Wed 11/19 – Leadership / Leadership Styles

“Leadership Styles” (read all types)

[http://changingminds.org/disciplines/leadership/styles/leadership_styles.htm](http://changingminds.org/disciplines/leadership/styles/leadership Styles.htm)
**WEEK 14**

Mon 11/24 – Project Work Day

Wed 11/26 – Thanksgiving Travel Day – No Class

**WEEK 15**

Mon 12/1 – Project Work Day

Wed 12/3 – PROJECT PRESENTATIONS

**FINALS WEEK**

Mon 12/8 – PROJECT PRESENTATIONS (1:10 to 3:10 PM)

**HANDY SCHEDULE OF KEY DATES**

- 3 Reaction Papers Submitted .............. By Wednesday, Sept. 10
- Project Assignment 1 Due ....................... Monday, Sept. 29
- 6 Reaction Papers Submitted .............. By Wednesday, Oct. 10
- Project Assignment 2 Due ....................... Friday, Oct. 17
- Project Assignment 3 Due ....................... Wednesday, Oct. 29
- Progress Reports (oral) ...................... Wednesday, Nov. 12
- Progress Reports (written) .................... Monday, Nov. 17
- Final Presentations ......................... Wednesday, Dec. 3; and Monday, Dec. 8
- Final Project Reports Due .................... Wednesday, Dec. 10
- Reflection Essays Due ...................... Friday, Dec. 12
- Peer Evaluations Due ....................... Friday, Dec. 12