

# ***CAPSTONE IN HUMAN ECOLOGY***

11:374:499

**[Instructor]**

[Semester]

[Day & Time]

{Location}

**Office:** Department of Human Ecology, Room XXX Cook Office Building

**Telephone:** 848.932.XXXX

**E-mail:**

**Office Hours:** Day & Time and by arrangement

## **Course Description**

This class will provide students with an integrative experience at the end of their Environmental Policy, Institutions and Behavior (EPIB) major by:

- Improving your **resumes, biosketches, and personal statements**
- Reflecting on what you have learned about theory, methods and skills in preparation for future careers
- Creating a **Capstone Project** that builds on an area of expertise and passion about EPIB topics and sharing it with the class

This seminar provides a forum for seniors to reflect on the learning goals of EPIB. Students will draw on knowledge from our interdisciplinary program of study to demonstrate their ability to make meaningful contributions to crucial debates and solving major problems related to the major issues discussed in EPIB.

According to the student's individual interests and needs, each student will develop an individual **Capstone Project**, which may take several forms: research paper; project proposal; proposal directed at a particular funding opportunity; policy report or white paper; informative website; or creative piece such as a video or mural. The Capstone Project can build on a previous course or research project. During the Capstone Seminar, students will engage in research, writing, peer review, editing drafts, presenting ideas, and developing a final project that will be shared with the Human Ecology community.

### **EPIB Learning Goals:**

1. Students graduating from the major will understand and analyze the varied perspectives offered by the social and natural sciences regarding the causes and consequences of social, ecological, and environmental change.
2. Students will acquire the skills to use appropriate conceptual and methodological tools to structure inquiries about human-environment interactions.

### **Capstone Learning Goals:** Students will be able to:

1. Use multiple sources and perspectives to demonstrate competency with interdisciplinary approaches to research and problem solving
2. Review, describe and apply key theoretical concepts in EPIB
3. Expand and refine critical thinking skills through engagement with the scholarly debates within EPIB
4. Design and execute a **Capstone Project**
5. Reflect on how your experiences in EPIB and at Rutgers have prepared you for the next step in your career/personal development.

**Reserve:** All articles and chapters will be available electronically on the Sakai site for the course. There is no required textbook.

### **Course Requirements**

Weekly Assignments & Discussion	30%
Capstone Project	70% [30% presentation; 40% final project]

## COURSE SCHEDULE

### Organizational Meeting & Resumes/Biosketches/ Personal Statements/Cover Letters

**In class:** Overview of the goals and approaches of the Capstone course. Sign up for an individual meeting during the next two weeks to discuss possible topics for your Capstone Project. During the second half of the class, we will discuss resumes, biosketches and personal statements.

**Assignment due 9/24:** Collect and bring to class on XX/XX copies of your updated resumes, biosketches and personal narratives [also post them in the Dropbox by XX/XX]. Write a personal narrative/cover letter (1-2 pgs.) directed at a job or graduate school and how the courses you have taken have prepared you for that next step.

### Individual Meetings

We will have **individual meetings** (see sheet of times) so we can get to know each other, discuss course projects and topics, and find a theory you are interested in learning more about and presenting to the class. We will meet using Rutgers Zoom.

### Reflections on Resumes, Biosketches & Personal Narratives/Cover Letters

**In class:** Revisit resumes/biosketches/personal narratives. Class discussion and peer editing.

**Readings:** Materials from Rutgers Career Services on CV/Resume Writing;  
Selection of sample essays from Asher, Graduate Admissions Essays (Sakai)

**Assignment due following week:** List of courses you have taken and a statement of how you would characterize your own interdisciplinarity. Reflection on how your approach to interdisciplinarity influenced your choice of research topic. [Post to Dropbox by XX/XX]

### Reflections on Interdisciplinarity

**In class:** Review of what interdisciplinarity means; how it is practiced in EPIB.

**Readings:** Selections from special issue of *Nature* on 'Interdisciplinarity' (Sakai)

**Assignment due following week:** Read articles on the "vaccine controversy" about the links between vaccines and autism. Write a brief reflection [no more than 1 page] on the quality of the evidence for this link and how it became so convincing. **Topic for your Capstone Project (1 page) should be uploaded to Sakai.** [Post both assignments to Dropbox by XX/XX]

## Reflections on Evidence and Claims

**In class:** Discussions of how to marshal evidence to make an argument using material from the Anti-Vaccination Movement.

**Reading:** Articles on the link between vaccination and autism on Sakai; Koomey, Part III: Assess their Analysis; Hughes, Critical Thinking, Chaps 1, 16;

**Assignment due following week:** Prepare presentations on theories in EPIB.

## Reflections on Theory

**In class:** Presentations on selected theories from previous EPIB courses. We will use the Forums section of Sakai for you to share your theories.

**Reading:** Theory readings to be determined by student interests

**Assignment due following week:** **Outlines and Bibliographies are due on XX/XX in the Dropbox on Sakai. Also upload your revised resumes/biosketches/personal statements to the Dropbox on Sakai by XX/XX.**

## Individual Meetings

We will have individual meetings (see sheet of times) to discuss progress on your Capstone Projects and prepare for presentations. Meet remotely using Rutgers Zoom.

## Presentations of Capstone Projects

Oral presentations of your Capstone Projects. We will all rate each other's presentations. After the oral presentations, we will use the Forums feature in Sakai to post your presentations and have discussions about them.

## Presentations of Capstone Projects/ Final Evaluation of Course

## Capstone Project

According to the student's individual interests and needs, you will develop an individual **Capstone Project**, which may take several forms:

- research paper
- project proposal
- proposal directed at a particular funding opportunity
- policy report or white paper
- informative website/info-graphic
- creative piece, such as a video or mural

The topic for the project will be decided on in consultation with Prof. Guarnaccia. This Capstone Project may build on a previous course project. You will expand and develop your ideas further to create a product that will be useful in the next stages of your careers. The Capstone Project will serve as a demonstration of what you are capable of doing for employers and/or graduate schools. You will be encouraged to contact other professors in Human Ecology or elsewhere for specific guidance on content for Capstone projects.

You should begin to select the project in consultation with me during individual meetings on **XX/XX & XX**.

The specific steps in carrying out the project are outlined below:

- a. Topic of Project:** No more than **1 page** describing what your project will be about and how it fits into your future plans. **(Due XX/XX)**
- b. Working Outline/Bibliography:** The outline should include the major sections of the paper and some detail on the issues to be covered in each section. The bibliography should include the materials you will use for your project **(Due XX/XX to the Dropbox)**.
- c. Oral Presentation of Your Project in class:** **XX/XX, XX, XX or XX**
- d. Final Presentation of Your Project** (7-10 pgs. double-spaced, typed in Word for written project; other projects depending on format): Your final Capstone Project will follow on your oral presentation and incorporate any suggestions or additions from it. **[Due XX/XX to Dropbox]**

## **Capstone Project Rubric**

**Student Name:**

**Project Title:**

1. Introduce what the project is about (maximum 1 page: 10 points)	
2. Literature Review in which you discuss at least 5 sources to frame your arguments regarding the issue (1-2 pages: 20 points)	
3. Provide at least 2 case studies or examples related to your project (2-3 pages: 40 points)	
4. Identify at least 2 solutions (policies, programs, ideas) to the issue (maximum 1 page: 20 points)	
5. Writing style: balance, organization & development, clarity, and sentence structure & mechanics. (5 points)	
6. References/citation (properly cited, correct format, used properly). (5 points)	
<b>Total (100 points)</b>	

## RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS

### ACCOMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Please follow the procedures outlined at <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

Full policies and procedures are at <https://ods.rutgers.edu/>

### ABSENCE POLICY

Students are expected to attend all classes; if you expect to miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me.

### ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The university's policy on Academic Integrity is available at <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy>

The principles of academic integrity require that a student:

- Properly acknowledges and cites all ideas, results, or words of others.
- Properly acknowledges all contributors to a given piece of work.
- Makes sure that all work submitted as your own in a course or other academic activity is produced without the aid of impermissible materials or impermissible collaboration.
- Obtains all data or results by ethical means and reports them accurately without suppressing any results inconsistent with his or her interpretation or conclusions.
- Treats all other students in an ethical manner, respecting their integrity and right to pursue their educational goals without interference. This requires that a student neither facilitate academic dishonesty by others nor obstruct their academic progress.
- Uphold the canons of the ethical or professional code of the profession for which he or she is preparing.

Adherence to these principles is necessary in order to ensure that

- Everyone is given proper credit for his or her ideas, words, results, and other scholarly accomplishments.
- All student work is fairly evaluated and no student has an inappropriate advantage over others.
- The academic and ethical development of all students is fostered.
- The reputation of the University for Integrity in its teaching, research, and scholarship is maintained and enhanced.

Failure to uphold these principles of academic integrity threatens both the reputation of the University and the value of the degrees awarded to its students. Every member of the University community therefore bears a responsibility for ensuring that the highest standards of academic integrity are upheld.

## STUDENT WELLNESS SERVICES

### **Just In Case Web App** <http://codu.co/cee05e>

Access helpful mental health information and resources for yourself or a friend in a mental health crisis on your smartphone or tablet and easily contact CAPS or RUPD.

### **Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS)**

(848) 932-7884 / 17 Senior Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 / [www.rhscaps.rutgers.edu/](http://www.rhscaps.rutgers.edu/)

CAPS is a University mental health support service that includes counseling, alcohol and other drug assistance, and psychiatric services staffed by a team of professional within Rutgers Health services to support students' efforts to succeed at Rutgers University. CAPS offers a variety of services that include individual therapy, group therapy and workshops, crisis intervention, referral to specialists in the community and consultation and collaboration with campus partners.

### **Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance (VPVA)**

(848) 932-1181 / 3 Bartlett Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 / [www.vpva.rutgers.edu/](http://www.vpva.rutgers.edu/)

The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance provides confidential crisis intervention, counseling and advocacy for victims of sexual and relationship violence and stalking to students, staff and faculty. To reach staff during office hours when the university is open or to reach an advocate after hours, call 848-932-1181.

### **Disability Services**

(848) 445-6800 / Lucy Stone Hall, Suite A145, Livingston Campus, 54 Joyce Kilmer Avenue, Piscataway, NJ 08854 / <https://ods.rutgers.edu/>

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them early in your courses.

### **Scarlet Listeners**

(732) 247-5555 / <http://www.scarletlisteners.com/>

Free and confidential peer counseling and referral hotline, providing a comforting and supportive safe space.