

## **CAPSTONE IN HUMAN ECOLOGY**

**11:374:499**

**Blake 131**

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**Office Hours:** By arrangement (email for an appointment)

### **Course Description**

This course is designed to provide students structured opportunities to integrate the knowledge and skills you've learned in the EPIB curriculum and apply and demonstrate your competencies. The three learning goals for the Environmental Policy, Institutions and Behavior (EPIB) major are: 1) to 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) to acquire the skills to use appropriate conceptual and methodological tools to structure inquiries about human-environment interactions and 3) to undertake your work guided by ethical considerations. This seminar provides a forum for seniors to reflect on the learning goals of EPIB and demonstrate their knowledge and skills. 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.

### **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 an analysis of a human-environmental problem or solution including the values and ethics entailed in the issue
5. Communicate aspects of this analysis clearly to different audiences
6. Reflect on how your experiences in EPIB and at Rutgers have prepared you for the next step in your career/personal development.

To help you reflect on what you have learned and provide students with an integrative experience at the end of their Environmental Policy, Institutions and Behavior (EPIB) major – this class will:

- Improving your **resumes, cover letters, biosketches, and personal statements**
- Reflecting on what you have learned about theory, methods and skills in preparation

for future careers

- Create a **Capstone Project** that builds on an area of expertise and passion about EPIB topics and sharing it with the class and outside audiences

Each **Capstone Project** will include 1) a conceptualization and analysis of a problem – can be in the form of a research paper; project proposal; proposal directed at a particular funding opportunity; policy report or white paper; educational website; or creative piece such as a video or mural 2) multiple communications detailing your analysis for different audiences. 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.

**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	40%
Capstone Analysis	30%
Capstone Communications	30%

#### ACCOMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Please follow the procedures outlined at <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-fonn>. 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 just contact fellow student and consult the canvas site for what you missed.

#### COURSE SCHEDULE:

See below.

#### FINAL EXAM/PAPER DATE AND TIME

No Final Exam.

#### 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 acknowledge and cite all use of the ideas, results, or words of others.
- properly acknowledge all contributors to a given piece of work.
- make sure that all work submitted as his or her own in a course or other academic activity is produced without the aid of impermissible materials or impermissible collaboration.

- obtain all data or results by ethical means and report them accurately without suppressing any results inconsistent with his or her interpretation or conclusions.
- treat 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.

#### DIVERSITY EQUITY & INCLUSION COMMITMENT

It is our intention that students of all backgrounds will be well served by this course. We will work to create an environment of inclusion which respects and affirms the inherent dignity, value, and uniqueness of all individuals, communities and perspectives. We are lucky to have a diverse university. Diverse voices and life experiences enhance the learning process and we welcome students to share their personal experiences. We will not tolerate disrespectful language or behavior against any individual or group. If you feel as though you have been disrespected or treated unfairly by the instructors or any other individual please let us know. You may speak with the instructors in person, over email or report anonymously via the Office of Academic Programs. In addition, you may also report bias to the Rutgers Diversity and Inclusion initiative using this link: <http://inclusion.rutgers.edu/report-bias-incident/>.

#### STUDENT WELLNESS SERVICES

The Rutgers University Student Assembly urges that this information be included at the end of C\Ct) syllabus. Edit or delete as you wish:

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: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. 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 as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

#### Scarlet Listeners

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

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

## COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Readings & Activities in Preparation for Class (Before Class Date)	Objectives of Class
Week 1	Read Syllabus  Locate your previous resume, biosketch, narrative	Review Syllabus and Assignments and identify student goals for class  Concociemento exercise
Week 2	1 page single space reflection due:  What have you learned about theories of human-environment interactions? How will knowing these theories influence how you work in the environmental field?	First half: Jigsaw Exercise to review theories  Second half: Brainstorm capstone ideas in interest groups and share – content and form. Who might use your research? How might you communicate it?
Week 3	1 page single space reflection due:  What have you learned about how you assess evidence for a human-environmental claim? How will knowing how you assess for bias, perspective, accuracy, and context for claims and evidence influence how you work in the environmental field?	First half: Teach evaluating evidence and play Crumple and shoot game re: does this evidence meet RCR criteria?  Second half: Interest Group discussion/feedback on research/evidence you will undertake
Week 4	Proposal for analysis - topic and form; Create a timeline of tasks from now until 03/08 of how you will conduct your research and analysis	
Week 4	“Using Participatory Science at EPA: Vision and Principles”  Prepared Lightning talk on your proposed research/analysis capstone	Give lightning talk and get written feedback to help refine research topic and analysis
Week 5	Revised resume due  Conduct one interview with a person who might use your research results to inform your analysis	First half: In class we will develop our “career” elevator pitches and practice <a href="https://careerservices.fas.harvard.edu/blog/2022/10/11/how-to-create-an-elevator-pitch-with-examples/">https://careerservices.fas.harvard.edu/blog/2022/10/11/how-to-create-an-elevator-pitch-with-examples/</a>  Second half: Creative brainstorm around how research topics connect and innovative ways to communicate them
Week 6	Read 8 tips on networking  Create/Update your linkedin site	First half: Lessons in networking  Second half: Checking in on your progress on

		research and analysis timeline; discussing challenges and successes with your group
Week 7	<p>Shwom on Travel to Eastern Sociological Association – Zoom Class</p> <p>Values worksheet posted and uploaded</p> <p>1 page paper reflecting on your personal values and ethics in your environmental life and work? What values do you have related to the environment? What are the other guiding principles in your life and work and how does it relate?</p>	<p>First Half: Dr. Angie Oberg on environmental career paths and the role of values and ethics in her job</p> <p>Second half: Group work assignment on communicating your research (to be turned in online at the end of class)</p>
Week 8	Research analysis draft due	<p>First Half: Peer editing exercise</p> <p>Second half: Class discussion of findings and individually and collectively communicating them to user groups</p>
Week 9	SPRING BREAK	
Week 10	<p>Dr. Shwom in Portugal</p> <p>Final Research Analysis Due</p>	In person guest class lecture on applying for jobs with Kristen Goodrich (10:20-11:30)
Week 11	<p>Science Communication National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 2017. <i>Communicating Science Effectively: A Research Agenda</i>. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.  <a href="https://doi.org/10.17226/23674">https://doi.org/10.17226/23674</a>.</p> <p>1 single page reflection paper on what you've learned in EPIB about communicating about the environment and how you think it will influence what you will do in your career and in personal life?</p>	<p>First half: Developing our recommendations on Communicating Effectively</p> <p>Second half: Developing a communication strategy for your research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Individual scientific – HE Poster session</li> <li>- Individual public/user translation</li> <li>- Collective output</li> </ul>
Week 12	Draft of your public/user findings translation	Group feedback/Peer editing
Week 13	<p>Read Viseu, Ana. "Integration of social science into research is crucial." <i>Nature</i> 525.7569 (2015): 291-291.</p>	First half: Dr. Shwom interviews Dr. Bob Kopp on interdisciplinary research

	<p>Ledford, Heidi. "Team science." <i>Nature</i> 525.7569 (2015): 308.</p> <p>1 page single space reflection due:</p> <p>What have you learned about how to think and do work interdisciplinarily?  How will what you know influence how you analyze different problems?  How will it influence how you work with people in different fields and work in the environmental field?</p>	
Week 14	Making a good poster	<p>First half – Review of poster making principles and data visualization</p> <p>Second half – Collective work party</p>
Week 15	Final Individual Communication due	Celebratory Working Party – putting together the collective communication