EST 690, International Environmental Policy Consultancy (3-4 cr*)

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Dept. of Environmental Studies, SUNY-ESF TuTh 8-9:20 am, Baker 141

Fall 2020

An innovative, collaborative, applied course and group practicum in environmental policy consultation at the global level. Linked via information and communication technologies with students in parallel courses at Wageningen University (Netherlands) and Van Lang University (Vietnam), EST 690 students will serve as “externs” for a semester-long consultancy project (‘commission’) with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) & Division for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) (‘client’). Students will learn group consulting skills including issue definition and stakeholder identification; proposal preparation, team building and leadership; data collection, analysis and interpretation; consultancy report writing and presentation. With colleagues in the Netherlands, students will fulfill the client's Terms of Reference, producing and delivering a set of Science-Policy Briefs for international decision makers related to UNCTAD’s Technology and Innovation Report 2020 and the work on new and emerging technologies in the context of the Interagency Task Team on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs. This year’s consultancy will focus on the anticipated effects of emerging technologies on prospects for sustainable development. Of particular interest are those cutting-edge scientific and technical fields that are rapidly changing, have high potential for broad impacts, and which are especially challenging for governmental and intergovernmental agencies and informed publics to understand and regulate for the common good. Examples include artificial intelligence (AI), big data, bitcoin, bioengineering, the internet of things (IoT), nanotechnologies, renewable energy technologies, and satellite and drone technologies. Final report preparation and delivery in collaboration with students from the Netherlands will continue through Friday, December 18. Course grades will be submitted in early January, after receipt of the client's evaluation. Instructor's permission required.

For further information, please contact Prof. David Sonnenfeld at <dsonn@esf.edu>

* 4 cr recommended, through 12/18; 3 cr through regular end of semester.