

Working Outline

EST 690, Section 01, #17053 (3-4 cr)

INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY CONSULTANCY

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Dept. of Environmental Studies, SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry, USA

with Astrid Hendriksen & Jillian Student

Environmental Policy Group, Wageningen University, the Netherlands

and Ho Thi Than Hien

Faculty of Technology, Van Lang University, Vietnam

Fall 2021, TuTh 8-9:20am, Baker 141

DESCRIPTION

Overview

An innovative, collaborative, applied graduate course and group practicum in environmental policy consultation at the global level. Linked 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 Division on Technology and Logistics, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD); and Division for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) ('client'). Students 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 and Vietnam, students fulfill the client's Terms of Reference, producing and delivering a set of Science-Policy Briefs for international policy makers related to the work of the United Nations Interagency Task Team on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs on *science, technology, and innovation for sustainable urban development in a post-COVID world*. Successful completion of the course fulfils the capstone project requirement for the MPS in Environmental Studies degree. *Maximum enrollment: 15 students. Instructor's permission required.*

Mode, Platform, Access

It is our expectation that EST 690 will meet in person this semester. For internal and external communication and collaboration throughout the semester, including with colleagues at

Wageningen and Van Lang Universities, and with our UN clients, we will use *Microsoft Teams*, a multi-faceted, cloud-based platform and learning management system.

MS Teams is available to all ESF faculty, staff, and students, as part of the MS Office 365 suite of applications, or downloaded separately. Please download MS Teams onto your devices, via <<https://portal.office.com>>; you will need to use your ESFiD (see below) and password to sign in.

All EST 690 students will need to obtain and utilize an ESF network ID (ESFiD), plus the Duo Mobile smartphone app, for MS Teams access. For assistance with obtaining an ESFiD, please contact ESF's Computing and Network Services HelpDesk <helpdesk@esf.edu>, Baker Laboratory, 3rd floor, tel. 315.470.6861. For assistance setting up the Duo Mobile app, see: <<https://it.esf.edu/Account-Info/DUOsecurity-at-ESF>>.

ESFiDs also will be used to enter registered students as EST 690 team members on MS Teams.

Duration

To enable collaboration with colleagues in the Netherlands and Vietnam, through the preparation, presentation, and submission of the final consultancy report, this course will continue to meet through finals week, until December 17. Final exams/ papers in other courses will be accommodated. Registration for the full 4 credit hours is highly encouraged.*

Requirements

As an applied, team-oriented graduate course, students are expected to be actively engaged through the semester and take initiative as individuals and members of work teams, including:

- Regularly attending course sessions and participating in local and international work team sessions;
- Completing background readings, writing literature reviews, and carrying out research activities;
- Communicating and working effectively with participants across and between sites; with client contacts, as appropriate; and with subject experts;
- Energetically engaging with and carrying out individual, local and international work team assignments; and
- Contributing to team, course, and inter-site project deliverables, as specified in the course syllabus & the client's detailed Terms of Reference.

Texts

REQUIRED

Students will read extensively from peer-reviewed, scientific literature and policy analyses on select topics related to *science, technology, and innovation for sustainable urban development in a post-COVID world*.

RECOMMENDED

Thomas, Mark. 2003. *High-Performance Consulting Skills: The Internal Consultants Guide to Value-Added Performance*. London: Thorogood Publishing. ISBN 1-854182-58-7 [available as an e-book via ESF's Moon Library]

* All credit hours must be signed up for at the time of registration.

Fasulo, Linda. 2015. *An Insider's Guide to the UN*, 3rd ed. New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press. ISBN 978-0-300-20365-3 [available as an e-book via ESF's Moon Library]

Kamau, Marcharia, Pamela Chasek, and David O'Connor. 2018. *Transforming Multilateral Diplomacy: The Inside Story of the Sustainable Development Goals*. London and New York: Routledge. ISBN 978-0-8133-5086-8

Course Deliverables

Primary deliverables for this studio course are specified in the client's Terms of Reference (ToR). Several intermediate deliverables are specified below. In addition, students write two reflective essays articulating personal goals and expectations for the course, and reflecting on experience in the course, respectively.

Intermediate Assignments

- #1: Complete preliminary proposal for client review (Tues., 10/12)
- #2: Presentation of preliminary proposal to client (Thurs., 10/14)
- #3: Essay on goals for this course (Thurs., 10/21)
- #4: Complete revised proposal for client review (Thurs., 11/4)
- #5: Completion of draft report (Tues., 12/7)
- #6: Presentation of preliminary results to client (Thurs., 12/9)
- #7: Reflective essay on experience in the course (Fri., 12/17)

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, each student should be able to:

- Collaboratively plan, develop, and coordinate complex, multi-sited projects;
- Communicate effectively and professionally with external clients and scientific experts;
- Analyze environmental problems and policy options, including: issue definition and stakeholder identification, including with reference to gendered dimensions;
- Collect, interpret, evaluate, and validate scientific and policy-oriented data and findings;
- Effectively communicate scientific and policy-oriented findings in written, visual, and oral forms; and
- Contribute to team building, coordination and communication, across multiple cultures and sites, and via multiple media.

Grading

- Client evaluation of team products, 50%*
- Instructor and peer evaluation of your contributions to the course & work teams, 25%
- Two reflective essays on your personal goals for & experience in the course, 25%

*Client evaluation of the final consultancy report will be submitted by the first week of January. Initially, all ESF participants thus will receive an Incomplete ("I") for the course. Upon receipt of the client evaluation, this will be changed to a letter grade ("A", "B", etc.).

Communication

DAVID SONNENFELD:

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Acknowledgments

Bettina Bluemling and Chris Blom, Wageningen University (WUR); and Lei Zhang, Renmin University of China (RUC), were involved in the early development and design of this course. The course has continued to develop and thrive with Machiel Lamers, Myanna Lahsen, and Astrid Hendriksen, Environmental Policy Group, Faculty of Social Sciences, WUR. In 2020, we welcomed our newest partner institution, Van Lang University, and lead instructor, Ho Thi Than Hien. Our clients in the United Nations system, led by Clovis Freire, R. Alexander Roehrl, and David O'Connor, have been enthusiastic supporters of the course since its launch in 2013, and have been delightful to work with. Administrative officers at WUR and ESF, including Arthur Mol and Bruce Bongarten, respectively, were very helpful in the initiation of this venture. Funding for course development and technical consultation was provided by Wageningen University, through the "Small Projects for Innovation of Education and Distance Learning" grant program. Additional funding for participation in conferences of the State University of New York Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) initiative has been provided by ESF.

SCHEDULE *

I. Project Definition/ Launch

Week 1 – Introduction and Overview

Tues., 8/31: Course introduction

Individual introductions

Introduction to the Client and Terms of Reference

REQUIRED:

Terms of Reference (ToR)

RECOMMENDED:

Fasulo, *An Insider's Guide to the UN*

Kamau, et al., *Transforming Multilateral Diplomacy*

UNCTAD, *Technology and Innovation Report 2021: Catching Technological Waves: Innovation with Equity*. February 25, 2021. Available:

https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/tir2020_en.pdf.

ADDITIONAL:

UNCTAD, *Technology and Innovation Report 2018: Harnessing Frontier Technologies for Sustainable Development*, May 15, 2018. Available:

https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/tir2018_en.pdf

* For this multi-sited, collaborative online international learning (COIL) graduate course, now in its ninth year, all the usual and customary caveats about 'subject to change' remain applicable. ICT-mediated collaborations across time, space, and cultures are dynamic by definition! Thanks in advance for your patience as we work through whatever comes our way this time around.

Independent Group of Scientists appointed by the Secretary-General, *Global Sustainable Development Report 2019: The Future is Now – Science for Achieving Sustainable Development*. New York: United Nations, 2019. Available:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rd146wnKPV-4II4_urFqBNTyI8N06ppS/view.

Thurs., 9/2: Client introduction

*** Client introduction: UNCTAD & DSDGs staff, re: ToR ***

REVIEW:

Terms of Reference (handout)

UNCTAD, *Technology and Innovation Report 2021: Catching Technological Waves: Innovation with Equity*. February 25, 2021. Available:

https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/tir2020_en.pdf.

Week 2 – Technological Change and Sustainable Development

Tues., 9/7: NO CLASS

Thurs., 9/9: International policy issues, perspectives, and debates

*** Brief introductions by Astrid Hendriksen, Wageningen University; and Ho Thi Than Hien, Van Lang University ***

Deep dive into background readings

Questions, discussion

REQUIRED:

UNCTAD, *Technology and Innovation Report 2021: Catching Technological Waves: Innovation with Equity*. February 25, 2021. Available:

https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/tir2020_en.pdf.

Week 3 – Project Team Roles

Tues., 9/14: Being an external consultant: roles and expectations

*** Skills Module #1: Project Planning & Development ***

w/ Belbin team roles exercise

RECOMMENDED:

Thomas, ch. 1, "From managing change to managing surprise?"

Thomas, ch. 2, "The art of client management"

Thomas, ch. 5, "Understanding and defining the client's problem"

Thurs., 9/16: NO CLASS

Week 4 – Project Definition & Work Team Formation

[Sun., 9/19: Course starts at Van Lang University (VLU)]

Tues., 9/21: Refining project goals, deliverables, requirements

Review Terms of Reference

What are «new and emerging science and technologies» ?

Project planning & organization (begin)

REVIEW: Thomas, ch's 2, 5

Thurs., 9/23: Work team formation

Form, begin meeting in ESF work teams

II: Project Planning, Development & Buy-in***Week 5 – Mainstreaming Gender*****Tues., 9/28: Mainstreaming gender**

*** Skills Module #2: Mainstreaming Gender in Sustainable Development ***
w/ Prof. Lotsmart Fonjong

RECOMMENDED:

TBA

Thurs., 9/30: Work team meetings*

Continue project planning & development
Meet in ESF work teams

Week 6 – Preliminary Proposal Development**Tues., 10/5: ESF project team meeting**

ToR implementation proposal development

Thurs., 10/7: Work team meetings

Continue project planning & development
Meet in ESF work teams

Week 7 – Preliminary Proposal Presentation**Tues., 10/12: ESF project team meeting**

Finalization of preliminary implementation proposal, for client review

*** Assignment #1 due: Preliminary proposal ***

Thurs., 10/14: Presentation of preliminary proposal to client

Meeting w/ Client, via MS Teams

*** Assignment #2 due: Presentation of proposal to client ***

Week 8 – Preparing for International Collaboration**Tues., 10/19: Follow-up from client presentation/ revise proposal**

Discussion in the whole
Meet in ESF work teams

Thurs., 10/21: International consulting – collaboration tools

*** Skills Module #3: Intercultural Communication – Astrid Hendriksen ***

*** Assignment #3 due: Essay on goals for this course ***

Preparing for Tuesday's inaugural meeting with WUR student participants

* Work teams will meet during and, as needed, outside regular the class time, in fulfillment of client's Terms of Reference.

III: International Collaboration/ Data Collection & Analysis

Week 9 – Joint meetings

[Mon., 10/25: Course starts at Wageningen University (WUR)]

Tues., 10/26: Client communication and reporting

*** Skills Module #4: Client Communication & Reporting ***

RECOMMENDED:

Thomas, ch. 7, "Presenting client feedback"

Thurs., 10/28: ESF-WUR-VLU live connection (08.00 NY; 14.00 NL; 19.00 VN)

Introductions & project update

Week 10 – Project Expansion & Reorganization

Tues., 11/2: International organization & project development

Development of collaborative, international organizational structure, including coordination, communication, and international work teams (IWT)

Thurs., 11/4: International work team (IWT) meetings (online)*

*** Assignment #4 due: Complete revised proposal for client review ***

Week 11 – Revised Proposal Presentation

Tues., 11/9: Joint meeting w/ client

Individual & work team/ project introductions

*** Meeting with client ***

Thurs., 11/11: IWT meetings*

Outline final report

Week 12 – Data Analysis (work teams) *

Tues., 11/16: IWT meetings

Thurs., 11/18: IWT meetings

THANKSGIVING RECESS (11/21-28)

IV: Consultancy Reporting, Validation & Delivery

Week 13 – Preliminary Findings: Drafting & Design

Week of 11/30: Preparation of draft consultancy report

Draft Science-Policy Briefs

Draft Executive Summary/ Overview/ Introduction

Design package/ cover; Incorporate infographics; Copyedit w/ UN styleguide; Write acknowledgments; etc.

* International work teams (IWTs) will meet during the regular class time and, as needed, also out of class, in fulfillment of client's Terms of Reference.

International Work Team meetings

Week 14 – Preliminary Findings: Review, Validate, Present

Tues., 12/7: Finalization of draft consultancy report

Review and discussion of draft report (across sites)

Expert validation of preliminary results

International Work Team meetings

*** Assignment #5 due: Completion of draft report ***

Thurs., 12/9: Presentation of preliminary results

*** Client feedback, based on presentation, draft report ***

*** Assignment #6 due: Presentation of preliminary results to client ***

Weeks 15 – Consultancy Report: Finalize, Submit

[ESF final exams]

Week of 12/13: Consultancy report: finalization & submission

Submit final consultancy report, both as integrated document & with separate, standalone, editable MS Word files for each science-policy brief

Final intersite meeting, debriefing, and conclusion

*** Assignment #7 due: Reflective essay on experience in the course ***

January 2022 – Receipt of Client Evaluation

NOTICES

COVID-19 protocols

Students in this course are required to follow the ESF's evolving Covid-19 protocols and restrictions. These can be found on the college website at: <https://www.esf.edu/restart/>.

Fire alarm procedures

If a fire alarm sounds, exit the building immediately to the designated area for this course. Stay together as a class, until released. Take all personal belongings with you, including electronics, backpacks, coats, and keys. Please let your instructor know in advance if you might have any special needs in case of a building evacuation. For further information, contact the ESF Division of Student Affairs, 110 Bray Hall, tel. 315.470.6660, or email studenthelp@esf.edu.

Accommodations

SUNY-ESF works with Syracuse University's Center for Disability Resources (CDR) in assisting students with learning and physical disabilities. If you think you may need accommodations in this course related to a disability, you may contact the ESF Division of Student Affairs, 110 Bray Hall, tel. 315.470.6660, or email studenthelp@esf.edu, for assistance with the process. You may also contact CDR directly via their website at <https://disabilityresources.syr.edu>; or call 315.443.4498 or email disabilityresources@syr.edu for more detailed information. CDR is responsible for

coordinating disability-related academic accommodations and will work with the student to develop an access plan. Since academic accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact ESF's Division of Student Affairs or CDR as soon as possible to begin this process.