Course Outline

EST 470 (#42964); EST 696-01 (#37427); 3 cr

WATER IN THE MIDDLE EAST: ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

David A. Sonnenfeld

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

Spring 2020, W 9:30 am – 12:20 pm, Bray 300

DESCRIPTION

Overview
Seminar on water issues and initiatives in Israel, Jordan, and the Palestinian Territories. Participants explore a variety of perspectives on the biophysical, historical, and sociocultural roots of transboundary and other water-related issues in the region, as well as an array of top-down (technological, managerial) and bottom-up (community-based, participatory) approaches to developing solutions. Designed for students interested in environmental and natural resource policy, water resources, international relations, conflict resolution, Middle Eastern studies, and related fields. Each week, students write short commentaries on required readings; the essays serve as starting point for class discussion. Over the course of the semester, students develop and submit a research paper on a related topic. Maximum 20 students.

Procedures
The course is organized, in the first instance, as a reading seminar, with weekly readings and related short, formal essays. Commentaries/reading notes are due to the instructor and all course participants via the course Blackboard site, by no later than 9:30 am, Tuesday, the day before the class. (Guidelines for these commentaries are handed out separately.) Students are expected to read all commentaries/reading notes, as well as the required texts, prior to class. Each Wednesday morning, we will begin our discussion of the assigned text(s) with the commentaries.

Texts

REQUIRED

Additional selections (virtual Course Reader), via Blackboard
RECOMMENDED


Requirements

GRADUATE

- Attend all class sessions;
- Read required ‘everyone’ and ‘graduate’ texts and everyone’s weekly commentaries;
- Write a series of short (max. 500 words, double-spaced) commentaries on each week's required readings;
- Submit a seminar paper (15-20 pp.) related to the course topic.

UNDERGRADUATE

- Attend all class sessions;
- Read required ‘everyone’ texts and everyone’s weekly commentaries;
- Write a series of short (max. 250 words, double-spaced) reading notes summarizing and responding to key points in each week's required readings;
- Submit a research paper (10-12 pp.) related to the course topic.

Grading

GRADUATE

- Weekly commentaries (12), 50%
- Seminar paper, 40%
- Attendance and participation, 10%

UNDERGRADUATE

- Weekly reading notes (12), 50%
- Research paper, 40%
- Attendance and participation, 10%

Communication

Office:  211B Marshall
Hrs.:    TBA
Tel.  315.470.4931/ 6636, fax 315.470.6915
E-mail: <dsonn@esf.edu> and <DASonnenfeld@gmail.com>
Web:  http://www.esf.edu/es/sonnenfeld
**Bookstore**

*ESF Virtual Bookstore*, available via *myESF*. For further information see: [http://www.esf.edu/students/books.htm](http://www.esf.edu/students/books.htm)

**Seminar/ research paper**

**GRADUATE**

- At the end of the course graduate students will submit a seminar paper *closely related to course topic*. This may take a variety of forms including: research paper, draft journal article, review of the literature/review essay, thesis/dissertation chapter, research proposal, etc.
- *Abstract, Outline & Bibliography*. By **Week 7**, submit a revised abstract, outline, and preliminary bibliography for your paper
- *Final Paper*. Due by the beginning of the regularly scheduled **Final Exam** period for this course. 15-20 pp. typed, double-spaced, *plus* cover page and references.

**UNDERGRADUATE**

- At the end of the course students will submit a final research paper *closely related to course topic*. This may take a variety of forms including: research paper; formal, evidence-based essay, commentary, or editorial; integrated review of the literature/review essay; etc.
- *Proposal*. By **Week 3**, submit an abstract describing your proposed final research paper; typed, double-spaced, ~1 p.
- *Abstract, Outline & Bibliography*. By **Week 7**, submit a revised abstract, outline, and preliminary bibliography for your paper
- *Final Paper*. Due by the beginning of the regularly scheduled **Final Exam** period for this course. 10-12 pp., typed, double-spaced, *plus* cover page and references.

**TOPICAL OUTLINE**

I. **Introduction**

   *Week 1 (1/15) – Overview and introduction*

II. **Roots of Water-related Issues in the Region**

   *Week 2 (1/22) – Biophysical*

   *Week 3 (1/29) – Historical*

   *Week 4 (2/5) – Sociocultural*

---

* For extra credit, in addition to the seminar/research paper assignment described here, I am open to receiving also a supplemental digital media product based on or complementing that paper.
III. Top-down Solutions (Managerial, Technological)

Week 5 (2/12) – Israel
Week 6 (2/19) – Palestinian Territories
Week 7 (2/26) – Jordan
Week 8 – (3/4) Regional/ international

IV. Community-based, Participatory, and NGO Approaches

Week 9 (3/11) – Regional/ Transboundary

SPRING BREAK

Week 10 (3/25) – Israel
Week 11 (4/1) – Jordan
Week 12 (4/8) – Palestinian Territories

V. Conclusion/ Future Prospects

Week 13 (4/15) – Future prospects
Week 14 (4/22) – Student presentations

Finals Week – Seminar/ Research Papers Due

NOTICES

Accommodations

SUNY-ESF works closely with Syracuse University’s Office of Disability Services (ODS) 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, for assistance with the process. You may also contact ODS directly at Room 309, 804 University Avenue; visit the ODS website; or call (315) 443-4498 or TDD: (315) 443-1371, for an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting academic adjustments. ODS is responsible for coordinating disability-related academic adjustments and will issue students with documented Disabilities Accommodation Authorization Letters, as appropriate. Since academic adjustments may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact ODS as soon as possible.

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 Division of Student Affairs, tel. 315.470.6660.
I. Introduction

Week 1 (1/15) – Overview and introduction
The Jordan-Yarmuk River Basin
Course introduction
REQUIRED (ALL):
Soffer, “The Jordan-Yarmuk Basin,” pp. 119-203*
REQUIRED (GRADS):
RECOMMENDED:
ADDITIONAL:

II. Roots of Water-related Issues in the Region

Week 2 (1/22) – Biophysical
Biophysical aspects of water in Israel, the Palestinian Territories, and Jordan
REQUIRED (ALL):
• Aliewi, “Water Resources: The Palestinian Perspective”
• Tal, “Water Resources: The Israeli Perspective”
REQUIRED (GRADS):
RECOMMENDED:
Soffer, “The Jordan-Yarmuk Basin” (review)

*** Weekly Reading Note #1 due ***

* All items in Course Reader unless otherwise noted.
**Week 3 (1/29) – Historical**

Historical dimensions of water issues in the Jordan-Yarmuk River Basin

REQUIRED (ALL):

Tal & Rabbo, Part 2, “Past Water Agreements and their Implementation.” Pp. 41-63 in *Water Wisdom*, including:

- Kerret, “Article 40: An Israeli Perspective”


REQUIRED (GRADS):


RECOMMENDED:


ADDITIONAL:

Dowty, 2015. *Israel/Palestine*

Selby, 2003. *Water, Power and Politics in the Middle East*


Zeitoun, 2012. *Power and Water in the Middle East*

*** Weekly Reading Note #2 due ***

*** Seminar/ Research Paper Abstract/ Proposal Due ***

**Week 4 (2/5) – Sociocultural**

Sociocultural dimensions of water issues in the Jordan-Yarmuk River Basin

REQUIRED (ALL):


- Abdeen, “Water culture in Palestine”
- Lipchim, “Water culture in Israel”


REQUIRED (GRADS):


ADDITIONAL:


*** Weekly Reading Note #3 due ***

III. Top-down Approaches (Managerial, Technological)

Week 5 (2/12) – Israel

Water management in Israel

REQUIRED (ALL):


REQUIRED (GRADS):

RECOMMENDED:

Siegel, 2015. Let There Be Water

ADDITIONAL:
Becker, ed., 2013. Water Policy in Israel

*** Weekly Reading Note #4 due ***

Week 6 (2/19) – Palestinian Territories

Water management in the Palestinian Territories

REQUIRED (ALL):


Tal & Rabbo, Part 12, “Gaza’s Water Situation.” Pp. 265-279 in Water Wisdom, including:
  • Abu-Mayla & Adar, “The Gaza Water Crisis”

REQUIRED (GRADS):

RECOMMENDED:

ADDITIONAL:

*** Weekly Reading Note #5 due ***

Week 7 (2/26) – Jordan

Water management in Jordan

REQUIRED (ALL):

REQUIRED (GRADS):

RECOMMENDED:

ADDITIONAL:
*** Weekly Reading Note #6 due ***
*** Seminar Paper (rev.) Abstract, Outline & Bibliography Due ***

**Week 8 – (3/4) Regional/ international**

International water management in the Jordan-Yarmuk Basin

REQUIRED (ALL):


REQUIRED (GRADS):


RECOMMENDED:


ADDITIONAL:


*** Weekly Reading Note #7 due ***
IV. Community-based, Participatory, and NGO Approaches

Week 9 (3/11) – Regional/Transboundary

Transboundary community, participatory, and NGO based approaches

REQUIRED (ALL):


REQUIRED (GRADS):

Tal & Abed Rabbo, Part 13, “Citizen Involvement.” Pp. 281-293 in *Water Wisdom*. Including...


RECOMMENDED:


ADDITIONAL:


WEB RESOURCES:
Arava Institute of Environmental Studies (http://arava.org/)
Eco-Peace/ Friends of the Earth Middle East (http://ecopeaceme.org/)
Environment and Climate in the Middle East (http://mideastenvironment.apps01.yorku.ca/)

*** Weekly Reading Note #8 due ***

SPRING BREAK

Week 10 (3/25) – Israel
Community, participatory, and NGO based approaches in Israel

Topic discussion leader #1: ________________________________
Topic discussion leader #2: ________________________________
Topic discussion leader #3: ________________________________

REQUIRED (ALL):


REQUIRED (GRADS):


RECOMMENDED:


ADDITIONAL:
Siegel, Let There Be Water


*** Weekly Reading Note #9 due ***
Week 11 (4/1) – Jordan

Community, participatory, and NGO based approaches in Jordan

Topic discussion leader #1: ________________________________
Topic discussion leader #2: ________________________________
Topic discussion leader #3: ________________________________

REQUIRED (ALL):

REQUIRED (GRADS):

RECOMMENDED:

*** Weekly Reading Note #10 due ***

Week 12 (4/8) – Palestinian Territories

Community, participatory, and NGO based approaches in the Palestinian Territories

Topic discussion leader #1: ________________________________
Topic discussion leader #2: ________________________________
Topic discussion leader #3: ________________________________

REQUIRED (ALL):

REQUIRED (GRADS):

RECOMMENDED:

*** Weekly Reading Note #11 due ***

V. Conclusion

Week 13 (4/15) – Future prospects

Cooperative water management strategies; new challenges

REQUIRED (ALL):
- Twite, "The Role of Third Parties in Helping to Resolve the Conflicts over Water Issues in Israel and Palestine"

- Haddad & Feitelson, "Joint Aquifer Management Institutional Options"


REQUIRED (GRADS):

RECOMMENDED:


ADDITIONAL:


*** Weekly Reading Note #12 due ***

**Week 14 (4/22) – Student presentations**

**Finals Week – Seminar Papers Due**