



University of Maryland
CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

Environment & Society

3 credits

MEES ***
Semester?

Course Objectives / Overview

MEES 620 is the foundational course for the Environment and Society Foundation within the Marine Estuarine Environmental Sciences Program (MEES). The Environment and Society Foundation, and this course, is the outcome of an ongoing collaboration between the College of Behavioral Sciences (BSOS) at the University of Maryland, College Park and the MEES Program. The fundamental goal of this course is to provide students with a foundational understanding of social and natural science approaches to studying and addressing socio-environmental issues.

The first half of the course focuses on the theories and approaches used by different social and natural science disciplines to study environment and society interactions. Disciplines covered include anthropology, environmental science, economics, and political science, among others. In the second half of the course, students will build upon this newly acquired disciplinary knowledge, and review and critique various approaches to studying coupled human and natural systems (CHNS). CHNS is a

INSTRUCTOR DETAILS:

William C Dennison
dennison@umces.edu
410-221-2004

TBD (Paolisso retiring; perhaps Liz Van Dolah; TBD)

Faculty name 2
faculty_email
faculty phone number

Faculty name 3
faculty_email
faculty phone number

Faculty name 4
faculty_email
faculty phone number

CLASS MEETING DETAILS:

Dates: Fall 2020
Times: 2-5 Thurs
Originating Site:
Zoom

CURRICULUM FULLFILMENT:

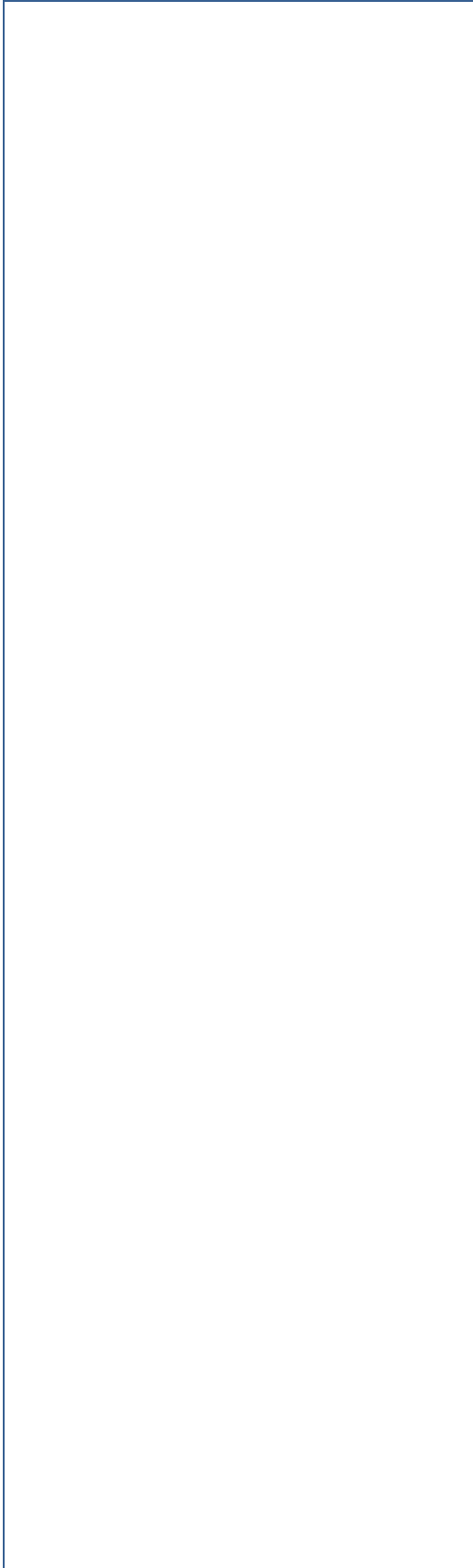
MEES Foundation course for
Environment & Society Foundation

Prerequisites
N/A

Teaching Assistant
TBD

conceptual framework that is now widely used to bridge cultural, socio-economic, and natural science environmental research. Readings, lectures, and class discussions will provide examples of various sub-discipline approaches embedded in CHNS research. To assist in understanding and synthesizing the theoretical and methodological approaches presented, students will develop their own interdisciplinary approach for studying a coupled human and natural system of interest.

This course will be taught using free interactive video conferencing software (zoom.us). The class will meet in person two times during the semester (see below schedule). We will use the Canvas Learning Management System to support classroom instruction and student assessment. This class fulfills the foundation course requirement for students enrolled in the MEES Environment and Society Foundation.



Expected Course Learning Outcomes

Our expectation is that at the end of the semester, students will be able to:

- Compare and contrast different theoretical and applied disciplinary approaches for researching environmental issues.
- Critique approaches to environmental issues in terms of contributions to coupled human and natural systems research and practice.
- Create a novel interdisciplinary approach for researching a complex coupled human and natural system.

Course Assessment / Grading

Short essays (11): 40%

Approaches critique: 20%

Blog: 10%

Final paper: 20%

Class participation: 10%

Tentative Weekly Course Schedule

Weekly Course Schedule 2020

| We ek | Dat es | Readings and Activities |
|---|----------------|---|
| 1 | 3 Sep* * | Course and Foundation Overview and Introductions <i>(MEES office, H.J. Patterson Hall, College Park)</i> |
| Approaches to Understanding Environment and Society Interactions | | |
| 2 | 10 Sep | Environmental and Ecological Sciences (Bill Dennison) Essay Required |
| 3 | 17 Sep | Environmental and Ecological Anthropology (Liz Van Dolah) Essay Required |
| 4 | 24 Sep | Sustainability (Xin Zhang) Essay Required |
| 5 | 1 Oct | Environmental Economics (Lisa Wainger) Essay Required |

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|---|-----------|---|
| 6 | 8 Oct | Science, Technology, and Society (Nicole Mogul) Essay Required |
| 7 | 15 Oct | Environmental Justice (Christy Miller Hesed) // Political Science (Isabella Alcaniz) Essay Required |
| 8 | 22 Oct | Discussion of Student Critiques of Approaches |
| Approaches to Studying Coupled Systems | | |
| 9 | 29 Oct | Cultural Models and Cultural Consensus (Liz Van Dolah) Essay Required |
| 10 | 5 Nov | Transdisciplinary Approaches (Bill Dennison) Essay Required |
| 11 | 12 Nov | Socio-Ecological Approach (Liz Van Dolah) Essay Required |
| 12 | 19 Nov | Ethnographic Approaches and Knowledge Integration (Jen Shaffer) Essay Required |
| 13 | 3 Dec | Political Ecology (Yancey Orr) Essay Required |

| | | |
|----|-----------------|---|
| 14 | 28 Nov | <i>Thanksgiving Recess</i> |
| 15 | 10 Dec* * | Student Presentations <i>(MEES office, H.J. Patterson Hall, College Park)</i> |
| 16 | 17 Dec | Final papers due via Canvas |

Required textbooks, reading and/or software or computer needs

No required textbook, all readings (generally 3 papers/week) posted on Canvas

Course Communication

Canvas used, instructors provide Zoom office hours, email and phone contacts provided to students

Resources

Canvas site: myelms.umd.edu/courses/1270644

Campus Policies

The University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science has drafted and approved of various academic and research-related policies by which all students and faculty must abide.

Please see especially Policy [III-1.00](#): Policy on Faculty, Student and Institutional Rights and Responsibilities for Academic Integrity.

Course-Specific Policies and Expectations

[Separate from the campus-wide policies linked earlier, you may want to outline any additional course policies of which students need to be aware. Also include late work policy, etc.]