



Course Approval Form

For approval of new courses and deletions or modifications to an existing course.

More information is located on page 2.

Action Requested:

Create new course Delete existing course

Modify existing course (check all that apply)

Title Credits Repeat Status Grade Type

Prereq/coreq Schedule Type Restrictions

Course Level:

Undergraduate

Graduate

College/School: Department:

Submitted by: Ext: Email:

Subject Code: Number: Effective Term: Fall Spring Summer

(Do not list multiple codes or numbers. Each course proposal must have a separate form.) Year:

Title: Current

New

Credits: Fixed Variable or to

Repeat Status: Not Repeatable (NR) Repeatable within degree (RD) Repeatable within term (RT) Total repeatable credits allowed:

Grade Mode: Regular (A, B, C, etc.) Satisfactory/No Credit Special (A, B C, etc. +IP)

Schedule Type Code(s): Lecture (LEC) Lab (LAB) Recitation (RCT) Internship (INT)

Independent Study (IND) Seminar (SEM) Studio (STU)

Prerequisite(s): Graduate course work should be near completion. Students should have a research area they wish to explore in a master's thesis, dissertation, or academic manuscript.

Corequisite(s): None

Special Instructions: (restrictions for major, college, or degree; cross-listed courses; hard-coding; etc.)

Catalog Copy for NEW Courses Only (Consult University Catalog for models)

Description (No more than 60 words, use verb phrases and present tense)	Notes (List additional information for the course)
Course is designed for students interested in social science environmental research. Students develop a central research question, construct a testable research study, and consider specific methodological issues that arise with a study's execution. A completed master's thesis proposal/final manuscript, dissertation proposal/final manuscript, or publishable paper is expected to be constructed by the end of the term.	
Indicate number of contact hours: <input type="text" value="3"/> Hours of Lecture or Seminar per week: <input type="text" value="3"/> Hours of Lab or Studio: <input type="text"/>	
When Offered: (check all that apply) <input type="checkbox"/> Fall <input type="checkbox"/> Summer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Spring	

Approval Signatures

Department Approval _____ Date _____ College/School Approval _____ Date _____

If this course includes subject matter currently dealt with by any other units, the originating department must circulate this proposal for review by those units and obtain the necessary signatures prior to submission. Failure to do so will delay action on this proposal.

Unit Name	Unit Approval Name	Unit Approver's Signature	Date

For Graduate Courses Only

Graduate Council Member _____ Provost Office _____ Graduate Council Approval Date _____

Course Proposal Submitted to the COS Curriculum Committee

1. COURSE NUMBER AND TITLE:

EVPP 730 Environmental Policy Research in Practice

Course Prerequisites:

None

Catalog Description:

Masters and doctoral course is designed to help students formulate actionable social science research ideas. Students trouble-shoot practical issues related to developing a central research question, constructing a testable research study that is grounded in social science theory, and addressing specific methodological issues that arise with a study's execution. Students are expected to develop environmental policy or management research in such a way that a completed document is defensible by the end of the term. Such a document might include a master's thesis proposal/final manuscript, dissertation proposal/final manuscript, or paper that a student wishes to submit for journal publication.

2. COURSE JUSTIFICATION:

Course Objectives:

The objective of this class is for students to:

- Develop an actionable research question that is grounded in social science theory
- Construct a testable research study
- Develop methodology to execute the research question
- Construct a defensible document – such as a completed master's thesis proposal/final manuscript, dissertation proposal/final manuscript, or paper that is suitable for journal publication

Course Necessity:

Graduate students, especially those who are attend part-time, often have difficulty translating their research ideas into an actionable study that is grounded in social science theory. Students who fail to do this are likely to move their research forward at a slow pace or drop out of their graduate program. This class is designed to help students overcome these hurdles and move their research forward in a way that is theoretically and methodologically rigorous. The structure of the course also ensures that students move their research forward in an expedited way. As yet, no course like this is taught at Mason.

Course Relationship to Existing Programs:

This course will be part of the Masters and Ph.D. programs in Environmental Science and Public Policy.

Course Relationship to Existing Courses:

This course has been taught as a Special Topics twice in 2009. It will be the first formalized course of its kind taught in the EVPP program. To my knowledge no course like it is taught in other related fields, such as Public Policy, Public and International Affairs, and Management.

3. APPROVAL HISTORY:

none

4. SCHEDULING AND PROPOSED INSTRUCTORS:

This course is anticipated to be offered every other year (or annually, depending on demand) and taught by Prof. Nicole Darnall

Semester of Initial Offering: Fall 2010

Proposed Instructors: Nicole Darnall

5. TENTATIVE SYLLABUS: See attached.



Instructor: Dr. Nicole Darnall
Course Time: Tuesday 4:30-7:10
Location: Innovation Hall 139
Office: 3020 David King Hall

Office Hours: by appt.
Email: ndarnall@gmu.edu
Office Phone: 703.993.3819

EVPP 730

Environmental Policy Research in Practice

Fall 2010

Purpose:

This course is designed to help students formulate actionable research. Student-led discussions are intended to trouble-shoot practical issues related to developing a central research question, constructing a testable research study, and addressing specific research design and empirical issues that arise with a study's execution. Students are expected to develop environmental policy or management research in such a way that a completed document is defensible by the end of the term. Such a document might include a master's thesis proposal or final manuscript, dissertation proposal or final manuscript, or paper that a student wishes to submit for journal publication.

Readings:

1. Articles passed out by instructor
2. Student provided works in progress

Course Evaluation:

Grades for EVPP 741-011 will be calculated based on the following criteria, which are explained further below:

- | | |
|------------------------|-----|
| 1. Class participation | 40% |
| 2. Works in progress | 50% |
| 3. Final presentations | 10% |

1. Class Participation & Attendance

Class participation is a significant component of your overall grades. Participation will be based on contributions to discussions, quality of questions and commentary, and critiques of students' works in progress.

To facilitate class participation, it is imperative that all reading assignments be completed *before class*. *Daily* participation grades will be assessed at the end of each class. Non-attendance earns 0 points. Missing 3 or more classes will result in a 0 for your participation grade overall, regardless of whether or not questions were submitted to the instructor prior to the absences. Attendance with no participation earns one-third of participation for that class, whereas attendance with participation earns two-thirds of participation credit. The final credit is earned based on the substance and quality of your participation. Therefore, if you attend class and do not participate in the discussion, you will earn a participation grade of 33 percent and reduce your total grade by 28 percent. Should you decide to leave at the break you will receive 0 participation points, regardless of how active you were during the first half of class.

During weeks in which you are not presenting your research, you will also be expected to comment on their peers' works in progress. Since peer review of other students' work is essential to the success of this class, students will be asked at the end of the term to assign a grade to each of their peers, which assesses the quality of their overall written and oral comments. Students will be asked to place greater weight on

substantive theoretical and structural comments than editorial comments. *These assessments will be factored into the overall participation grade.*

2. Works in Progress

Students have multiple opportunities during the course of the semester to present their works in progress. All works in progress should focus specifically on topics related to environmental policy or environmental management (as the name of the course suggests). The work should also be grounded in social science theory. For students whose research is focused more on the natural sciences, works in progress will provide an opportunity to develop a social science component of your work, which may evolve into a chapter of your dissertation, etc.

Works in progress should be circulated to the class no later than 4 days before class to ensure that the class has adequate time to read them and formulate their critiques. Students will be allocated approximately 30 minutes to discuss their work and receive feedback from others in the class. A formal presentation is not necessary since students will have read your work in progress. Ultimately, though, how you use the class time is up to you.

Works in progress should be no longer than 25 double-spaced pages or 15 single spaced pages (excluding references). Within social science research, this page restriction represents the typical length of a manuscript that is submitted for journal publication.

Works in progress are just that – a snapshot of where you are in developing your research ideas and course of action at a particular point in time. For this reason, you may find that your progress can be conveyed in less than 25 double-spaced pages. This will be especially true for students who are at the middle to later stages of their research. I *strongly* encourage you to be thoughtful in your submissions—don't submit too little of your work so that your peers lose sight of the big picture. Similarly, don't submit filler.

Works in progress will be evaluated based on their depth of thought and progress made from your previous presentation. Additionally, particular attention will be made to the value per page that they offer – i.e., be succinct and avoid filler.

During the weeks in which you are not presenting your work in progress, you will submit 1 page progress reports describing how your work has progressed in the previous week. These reports will be graded and factored into your overall “work in progress” grade. They are due Sunday evening.

3. Final Presentations

On the final day of class, students will deliver a PowerPoint presentation of their research. Presentations should sum up progress to date and discuss next steps (if any) to move your research towards completion. This is your opportunity to make a case for why you deserve a high mark for the semester.

Grade ranges:

A+ = 96 up	B+ = 88-89	C+ = 78-79
A = 92-95	B = 82-87	C = 73-77
A- = 90-91	B- = 80-81	C- = 71-72, etc.

Statement of Expectations:

My expectation is that you are seeking educational excellence, otherwise you would not be enrolled in the class and seeking a graduate degree. To this end, I expect each of you to strive for distinction. I also expect that you maintain strong moral character. All of your research should be properly cited. Citing previous research does not take away from your ideas. Rather, citations offer credibility for your point of view. Citing other scholars' work therefore helps you and gives credit for the hard work of others—win-win!

Administrative Details:**Students with Disabilities and Special Needs:**

I will make every effort to accommodate students who have special learning needs or documented disabilities. In order to do so, please inform me within the first two weeks of class and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the DRC.

Audit Policy:

Students who choose to audit the class are expected to read all of the assigned materials prior to attending class and to participate fully in classroom discussions and exercises.

Honor Code:

Please read and follow the university and department honor codes, on the web at:

<http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm> <http://www.gmu.edu/departments/pia/r-links/pia-honor-code.htm>

Policy on Late Deliverables:

Works in progress that are submitted later than 4 days prior to their discussion in class risk not being read by your peers. The consequence is receiving less feedback on your progress. Think critically before you choose to delay the circulation of your works in progress. In weighing the costs and the benefits of a late paper, my general impression is that taking the additional time does not overcome the penalty.

Extra Credit:

This class offers no extra credit.

Policy on Grades of Incomplete:

Work should be completed by the end of the class period listed in the course syllabus. Course grades of incomplete require a dean's letter.

SCHEDULE OF COURSE MEETINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS:

DATE	ASSIGNMENT/NOTES
Sept. 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read syllabus• Develop 1-page statement of your research goals for this semester, which includes milestones and indicators for how you will know your goals are being met.
First Round of Discussion	
Sept. 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student#1 Paper• Student#2 Paper• Student#3 Paper• Student#4 Paper• Shively. Chapter 1-2—The Importance of Dimensional Thinking
Sept. 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student#5 Paper• Student#6 Paper• Student#7 Paper• Student#8 Paper
Sept. 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student#9 Paper• Student#10 Paper• Student#11 Paper• Student#12 Paper
Second Round of Discussion	
Sept. 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student#1 Paper• Student#2 Paper• Student#3 Paper• Student#4 Paper
Oct. 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student#5 Paper• Student#6 Paper• Student#7 Paper• Student#8 Paper
Oct. 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student#9 Paper• Student#10 Paper• Student#11 Paper• Student#12 Paper
Third Round of Discussion	
Oct. 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student#1 Paper• Student#2 Paper• Student#3 Paper• Student#4 Paper
Oct. 27	• Columbus Day observance. No class ~
Nov. 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student#5 Paper• Student#6 Paper• Student#7 Paper• Student#8 Paper
Nov. 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student#9 Paper• Student#10 Paper• Student#11 Paper• Student#12 Paper
Fourth Round of Discussion	
Oct. 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student#1 Paper• Student#2 Paper• Student#3 Paper• Student#4 Paper
Nov. 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student#5 Paper• Student#6 Paper• Student#7 Paper• Student#8 Paper
Nov. 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student#9 Paper• Student#10 Paper• Student#11 Paper• Student#12 Paper
Fifth Round of Discussion	
Nov. 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student#1 Paper• Student#2 Paper• Student#3 Paper• Student#4 Paper
Nov. 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student#5 Paper• Student#6 Paper• Student#7 Paper• Student#8 Paper
Dec. 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student#9 Paper• Student#10 Paper• Student#11 Paper• Student#12 Paper
Dec. 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Final Research Presentations• Celebrate!