U.S. Water Governance

ENV 590
Fall 2017 (half semester)
M/W 8:30-9:45 am
Environment Hall 1101

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This course examines the governance systems that manage freshwater resources in the United States. American water policy is densely institutionalized, constrained by historical systems of rights and long-established patterns of water usage. It is also organizationally complex, with authority fragmented among myriad agencies and authorities at all jurisdictional levels. Our task will be first to understand current governing structures as a consequence of historical, functional, and political forces, and second to analyze contemporary efforts to promote collaboration, adaptive management, and market solutions within the framework of existing governance systems.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students will gain an understanding of:
- The organization of U.S. water governance systems and the logic of their complexity.
- Recent innovations in water policy design and management strategies.

Students will gain competencies in:
- Situating water resources problems and issues within the complex governance system.
- Identifying institutional and organizational obstacles and opportunities for water reform.

ASSIGNMENTS

Readings and Discussion (20% of course grade)
Participation in seminar discussion is mandatory. Seminar discussions will concentrate on the assigned readings, rigorously examining the theoretical and empirical contributions of each work. All students must be prepared to participate in these discussions. Please be sure to complete all of the assigned readings and take time to reflect upon them prior to class.

Response Memos (30%)
Students are required to write a 1-2 page response to the readings every week. These short papers should not summarize the readings. The goal instead is to respond to some or all of the works;
you might do this by comparing their questions or approaches, proposing an alternative hypothesis or argument, evaluating their research designs, discussing their connection to readings from previous weeks, or considering the implications of their findings for an applied water resources problem or issue.

*Short Research Paper (50%)*

Students will write a 6-8 page paper analyzing the governance context for a water resources problem or issue of their choosing. The paper will identify existing scopes of authority over the problem, characterize forms of stakeholder engagement, and analyze how organization of governance contributes to the problem or potential solutions.

**DUKE COMMUNITY STANDARD**

All activities of Nicholas School students, including those in this course, are governed by the Duke Community Standard.

Duke University is a community dedicated to scholarship, leadership, and service and to the principles of honesty, fairness, respect, and accountability. Citizens of this community commit to reflect upon and uphold these principles in all academic and nonacademic endeavors, and to protect and promote a culture of integrity.

To uphold the Duke Community Standard:

- I will not lie, cheat, or steal in my academic endeavors
- I will conduct myself responsibly and honorably in all my endeavors; and
- I will act if the Standard is compromised.

Proper citations in all papers submitted for this course are absolutely mandatory. For information on citing sources and avoiding plagiarism, see the library’s web site at [https://plagiarism.duke.edu/](https://plagiarism.duke.edu/). If you have questions about the Community Standard or citation practices, please consult with the instructor or the NSOE Communications Studio.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

August 28. Introduction

August 30. NO CLASS

September 4. State of the Nation’s Water Resources


September 6. Values

Read at least two:


September 11. Water Quality Protection


September 13. Water Federalism

Read at least two:


September 18. Domestic Water Wars

Read at least two:


September 20. Water and Cities


September 25. Managing through Crisis: Flint and Coal Ash


Sturgis, Sue. 2016. NC’s Coal Ash-Poisoned Wells: A Harbinger for Problems Ahead in Other States? Facing South, April 1.


September 27. River Infrastructure


October 2. Collaborative Watershed and Groundwater Management


Read at least two:

Heikkila, Tanya, and Andrea K. Gerlak. 2005. The Formation of Large-scale Collaborative Resource Management Institutions: Clarifying the Roles of Stakeholders, Science, and


**October 4. Markets and Privatization**

Read at least two:


