

YALE-NUS PROGRAMME IN ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

YID 4202: Applied Environmental Research

Academic Year 2017-2018, Semester One (August – November 2017)

Tuesday and Friday, 1030 – 1145, CR22

Facilitator: Michael Maniates

Office: Cendana 02-04J

Email: michael.maniates@yale-nus.edu.sg

Consultation hours: Monday 10:30 – noon, Thursdays 12:30 – 2:00 p.m., and by appointment

Go to <http://tinyurl.com/maniateshours> to schedule a time

The seminar is an interdisciplinary exploration of a contemporary, often controversial environmental problem. Students conduct research, perform necessary analysis, and present their findings in project teams to relevant stakeholders. The seminar heightens students' ability to conceptualise and analyse knotty problems, fosters an ability to communicate effectively across disciplines, and develops specific research skills necessary to the final capstone project. The module is required of all students majoring in Environmental Studies and is open only to those students.

Learning Objectives

If all goes well, you will experience or enjoy:

- 1) the further development of your research skills, especially but not limited to skills around “active research” and “participatory action research”
- 2) an enhanced capacity to identify critical tasks in the formulation and completion of environmental action research, and to act on these tasks in collaborative settings
- 3) a deeper understanding of how and why knowledge products support (or fail to support) policy change, value transformation, or material improvement in natural capital
- 4) greater confidence in your ability to produce successful research proposals, in part because of your completion of a mock research proposal
- 5) an increasingly intuitive grasp of effective knowledge brokering
- 6) the benefits of co-authorship of professionally produced final reports

Assessment

Eleven Response Papers (3% each, 33% total): Due (almost) every Thursday at 5 p.m., submitted via Canvas. You will have the opportunity to write on 12 weekly prompts; I will take your top eleven scores. The focus of the response papers will vary, and may include queries about your grasp of readings, your progress on your own research, your participation in the group seminar, and your observations of group process. I do not share these responses with the class. You have one “24-hour” late pass over the semester.

Mock Research Proposal (22%): A draft is due after recess week (ungraded) with the final proposal due during the first week of final exams. Fourth-year ES students in our seminar will be offered an alternative assignment of equal weight and difficulty.

Final Knowledge Products (45%): By the end of the first week of the final exam period, the seminar group will have produced one or more knowledge/research products, targeted at specific stakeholders, in support of this semester's project. Participants in the seminar in collaboration with Professor Maniates will develop a rubric for assessing these products.

Participation: There is no separate assessment for participation. Instead, your colleagues, your professor, and you will assess your contribution to the project (40/20/40) at the middle of the semester and again at the end of the term. Your overall participation score will determine your specific grade on the 'Final Knowledge Products' portion of the course.

The Research Proposal

A successful research proposal will be well organized and clearly written. It will be the product of multiple drafts. All acceptable research proposals will have the following elements:

- A one-paragraph statement of your central question
- A description of the argument, debate, or conversation within which your capstone research is situated. You are [joining a scholarly conversation](#) with your work. What is that conversation, and what are the key articles, books, essays and other elements of 'the literature' that define this scholarly conversation? (You may think of this as a focused literature review.)
- A description/justification of the analytic methods (i.e. case study, historical, quantitative, etc.) that will move your capstone project from simple description to description *and* analysis.
- A bibliography of all works cited in the proposal
- An annotated bibliography of **at least ten scholarly sources**, representing a suitable mix (for your project) of research elements such as books, journal articles, conference papers, and grey literature (e.g. government and NGO white papers, technical reports, and working papers).
- A timeline of work, with self-imposed deadlines, for the remainder of the semester

Workload

Expect to devote ~ 10 hours a week, on average, to this course, including time in class. Some weeks will be heavier and some will be lighter. See me if you are spending more than ~ 10 hours a week so that we may discuss how you can streamline your approach.

Course policies and Procedures

- ✚ Attendance: I have no attendance policy in this course. If you miss a class, you miss whatever material we covered that day (including any in-class reflections – see above). It will be up to you to consult other members of the seminar to figure out what you’ve missed. I will be available to help as well, but the primary responsibility for figuring out what you missed will rest on you.
- ✚ Late Submissions: You may submit late material at a cost of 10% of the assignment grade per 24 hours of tardiness.
- ✚ Tardiness: I’ll aim to start promptly. Please endeavor to be in a seat before then, as coming in late will be distracting given the configuration of the room.
- ✚ Laptops: You need access to your laptops for readings, but laptops in class can also be distracting and tempting. I’ll ask you to close your laptops from time to time; please don’t be offended when I do.
- ✚ Academic Integrity
 - This would be an unfortunate moment for you to run afoul of our shared understandings of academic integrity. Please see the Yale-NUS “avoiding plagiarism” website at <http://library.yale-nus.edu.sg/plagiarism/> PLEASE review the Cornell University Plagiarism Tutorial on this page. You should also review <https://studentlife.yale-nus.edu.sg/policies/academic-integrity/>
 - Instances of lapses in academic integrity are easily found, including [this embarrassment](#) last year at the Republican National convention in the United States. But other, more subtle mistakes, often associated with sloppy paraphrasing, are equally common. Be especially diligent in your notetaking practice (consider using Zotero or another citation management to help you) and work closely with the library staff and your capstone advisor if you have doubts about your ability to write in your own voice. Also consider reviewing, thoroughly, “*They Say/I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing*,” which is a favorite of many environmental-studies professors at Yale-NUS.
 - It is difficult to overstate in this document the difficulties that we will all experience if you should violate, either intentionally or inadvertently, our norms of academic integrity. Make every effort to err on the side of full citation of the work of others, and organizing your note-taking and draft-writing work to insure that you are composing prose that revolves around your own voice rather than the voices of others.

Accommodations for students with disabilities

If you have specific physical, psychiatric, or other learning disabilities that require special accommodations, please let me know early in the semester so that your learning needs can be appropriately met.