

Advanced Research Topics

CAS NS 433 (4 credits)

Course Catalog Description:

Advanced seminar focusing on methods and methodologies for climate change research in the humanities and social sciences. Skills development in project design and data collection from primary and secondary sources. For students with prior research experience.

Instructors: SEA Humanities faculty

Location: SEA campus in Woods Hole, MA, on shore at field sites and port stops, and aboard SEA sailing school vessel at sea.

Prerequisites: Admission to SEA Semester. Junior standing or consent of instructor.

Course Philosophy and Approach:

This advanced course guides students through the process of research project design, from surveying relevant literature, through selecting and implementing effective methods and methodologies, to communicating with targeted audiences. The course instructor will assess students' research skills and experience, work with them to address shortcomings, and meet regularly to provide guidance as needed. The course objectives are to develop a toolkit of strategies for collecting and synthesizing data, to identify and address biases and assumptions in academic research and knowledge, and to contribute to existing conversations in the space of climate change research in the humanities. Students will identify an external (outside SEA) reading audience for the project, and will learn relevant publication strategies and guidelines.

Learning Objectives:

1. Build on previous research experience, adding new strategies for project design, data collection, and presentation of results.
2. Improve ability to recognize inaccurate, flawed, and biased research and writing, and learn how to avoid these shortcomings in one's own project work.
3. Identify spaces for debate, discussion, and collaborative problem solving based on individual interests in climate change-related issues.

Evaluation:

Annotated Bibliography/Research Question	10%
First Draft of Research Paper	25%
Case Study Summaries	40%
Final Research Project	25%

Assignments:

Annotated Bibliography and Research Question

Individual students will select a research topic with the guidance of the course instructor. They will test the theories and ideas learned from an extensive review of relevant literature against their own observations and interviews. The research project goals must be sufficiently narrow in scope to be addressed in a ten-page paper. An annotated bibliography of six sources will serve as an exploratory exercise to further the student's knowledge of the relevant literature. The annotated bibliography and research question are due in Week 3 and are worth a combined 10% of the total course grade.

First Draft of Research Paper

Students have the option of identifying an ongoing or potential project from their home institutions, such as independent study work or a campus climate initiative, and writing a communication piece, such a journal article, policy brief, or white paper directed to interested readers and stakeholders. Others will choose a research topic that identifies a climate change-related issue along the program cruise track.

The first draft of the research paper will consist of a topic-specific literature review, a brief field plan for data collection during the second shore and sea components, and a summary of any data collected during the first shore component. The first research draft (7-8 pages) is due at the end of Week 6 and is worth 25% of the total course grade.

Case Study Summaries

During the semester there will be four case studies based on field trips. A case study identifies a specific problem related to the broader themes of the program and provides opportunities for field (on-site) analyses of stakeholders, policies, and other relevant factors. Students will complete a case study summary worksheet provided by the instructor and will discuss results in class. Each of the four case study summaries is worth 10% of the total course grade.

Final Research Project

The final manuscript will be 9-10 pages of text, excluding additional figures and images. It will take the form of a policy brief, public-facing article, white paper, etc. and will include an action plan to address a specific aspect of human impacts of climate change. Students in Advanced Research Topics will provide an addendum that includes a strategy for publication and a description of expected societal impact of their work. The final project is due in Week 12 and is worth 25% of the total course grade.

Expectations and Requirements:

- Punctual attendance is required at every class meeting.
- Active participation in class discussion is expected.
- Late assignment submissions are not accepted.
- The policy on academic accuracy, quoted below, will be strictly followed in this class.

The papers that you submit in this course are expected to be ***your original work***.

You must take care to distinguish your own ideas and knowledge from wording or substantive information that you derive from one of your sources. The term “sources” includes not only published primary and secondary material, but also information and opinions gained directly from other people and text that you cut and paste from any site on the Internet.

The responsibility for learning the proper forms of citation lies with you.

Quotations must be placed properly within quotation marks and must be cited fully. In addition, all paraphrased material must be acknowledged completely. Whenever ideas or facts are derived from your reading and research, the sources must be indicated. (Harvard *Handbook for Students*, 305)

- Considerations for use of internet sources: As you browse websites, assess their usefulness very critically. Who posted the information and why? Can you trust them to be correct? Authoritative? Unbiased? Your annotation should include the name of the author or organization originating any material that you reference. If you can't identify the source, don't use it!
- *Please consult information in the SEA Student Handbook on Academic Integrity and direct any questions to SEA Semester faculty.*

Inclusivity and Classroom Culture:

Our SEA community embraces diversity of age, background, beliefs, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, and other visible and nonvisible categories. We expect each one of you (and you should expect the same from us) to contribute to a respectful, welcoming and inclusive environment. If you feel that you are not being welcomed, included, or accepted here, please reach out to one of your teachers or one of the deans at SEA to share your concern.

Readings:

Fresque-Baxter, Jennifer A., and Derek Armitage. Place identity and climate change adaptation: a synthesis and framework for understanding. *WIREs Climate Change* 3:251–266. 2012.

Frontline (PBS). The Last Generation. April 6, 2018.
<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/interactive/the-last-generation/>

Jones, Carwyn. Indigenous Law/Stories: An Approach to Working with Māori Law. In: *Decolonizing Research: Indigenous Storywork as Methodology*. Jo-ann Archibald, Q'um Q'um Xiiem, Jenny Bol Jun Lee-Morgan, and Jason De Santolo, eds. Pp. 120-136. London: Zed Books. 2017.

Seed-Pihama, Joeliee. Naming Our Names and Telling Our Stories. In: *Decolonizing Research: Indigenous Storywork as Methodology*. Jo-ann Archibald, Q'um Q'um Xiiem, Jenny Bol Jun Lee-Morgan, and Jason De Santolo, eds. pp. 107-119. London: Zed Books. 2017.

Springer Nature. *Societal Impact Toolkit*. 2020. [Online](#).

Tuck, Eve, and Marcia McKenzie. *Place in Research: Theory, Methodology, and Methods*. New York: Routledge. 2015.

Vadi, Valentina. Spatio-temporal Dimensions of Indigenous Sovereignty in International Law. In *The Inherent Rights of Indigenous Peoples in International Law*. A. Di Blasé and V. Vadi, eds. Pp. 86-114. Rome: University of Rome Press. 2020.

Course Calendar:

Topic	Readings/Assignments Due
Week 1 (6 hours) – on shore at SEA campus in Woods Hole	
<p>Course Introduction</p> <p>Lecture - The Research Project</p> <p>Lecture - Getting Started: The Literature Search and the Research Question</p>	<p>Due: Topic selection</p>
Week 2 (8 hours) – on shore at SEA campus in Woods Hole	
<p>Workshop - Case Studies in Research</p> <p>Workshop - Comparative Methodologies</p>	<p>Readings: Region-specific (TBD)</p> <p>Due: Case Study 1 Summary</p>
Week 3 (6 hours) – on shore at SEA campus in Woods Hole	
<p>Lecture - Place-Based Approaches to Climate Research</p> <p>Workshop - Survey Methods for Place Attachment and Place Meaning</p>	<p>Readings: Tuck & McKenzie 2015 (Ch. 2, “Conceptualizing Place”); Fresque-Baxter & Armitage 2012; Frontline (PBS) 2018.</p> <p>Due: Annotated Bibliography and Research Question</p>
Week 4 (6 hours) – on shore at SEA campus in Woods Hole	
<p>Lecture/Seminar - Decolonizing Time and Space in Climate Research</p> <p>Workshop – Formatting the Research Project</p>	<p>Readings: Tuck & McKenzie 2015 (Ch. 3, “Decolonizing Perspectives on Place”); Vadi 2020</p> <p>Due: Case Study 2 Summary</p>

Week 5 (6 hours) – on shore at SEA campus in Woods Hole	
Lecture/Seminar - Story and Life History Work	Readings: Seed-Pihama 2017; Jones 2017.
Workshop – Choosing Field Methods	Due: Introductory Paragraph of First Draft
Week 6 (8 hours) – on shore at SEA campus in Woods Hole	
Workshop - Proofreading and Editing the First Draft	Due: First Draft

Week 7 (8 hours) – at sea	
Begin Sea Component	Readings: Site-specific readings to supplement field trip activities

Week 8 (8 hours) – at sea	
Sea Component	Due: Case Study 3 Summary
Field Data Collection for research papers	

Week 9 (8 hours) – at sea	
Research Writing Workshop	Readings: Selections from the <i>Societal Impact Toolkit</i>
Topic Discussion: Research and Societal Impact	

Week 10 (8 hours) – at sea	
Research Writing Workshop	
Topic Discussion: Writing a Research Paper from Field Data	

Week 11 (8 hours) – at sea	
Field Data Collection for research papers	
Case Study 4	Due: Case Study 4 Summary

Week 12 (12 hours) – at sea	
Field Trip	Due: Final Research Project
Field Data Collection for research papers	