

Big Blue and You: An Interdisciplinary Look at Science and the Ocean



HPR 110
Spring 2012
Tuesday/Thursday 3:30-4:45
Lippitt 403

Course Facilitators

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We all live, work, or go to school in Rhode Island, the Ocean State, but how many of its people know anything about the ocean beyond the best beaches, surf spots, and fishing sites? No matter what field each student goes into, the ocean will have an effect on them and they will have an effect on it. This is the generation that will be deciding ocean policy in a few years and this course is our effort to create informed citizens. You will learn the science involved, but this course will focus more on the relationship between the ocean and its people, especially in respect to these four major issues: pollution, coastal development, climate change, and fishing. We will take you on an interdisciplinary exploration of why we have these issues, what the world is

currently doing to remedy the situations, and what can be done by anyone from the highest public official to the everyday citizen.

Course Objectives:

Students will:

1. Become informed about the issues facing the ocean and what is currently being done to address them.
2. Use creative thinking and writing to disseminate scientific information to the public.
3. Create original methods that everyday citizens can use to help move the globe towards ocean sustainability.

Class Schedule

Week	Date	Topic	Notes
Week 1	1/24	Introduction	
	1/26	The Human Connection	
Week 2	1/31	Ocean Organisms I	
	2/2	Ocean Organisms II	
Week 3	2/7	Environment and Habitat	
	2/9	Communications	
Week 4	2/14	GUEST LECTURE	
	2/16	Marine Pollution (I)	
Week 5	2/21	Marine Pollution (II)	
	2/23	GUEST LECTURE	Documentary review due
Week 6	2/28	Climate Change (I)	
	3/1	Climate Change (II)	
Week 7	3/6	Climate Change (III)	
	3/8	Mock debate	
Week 8	3/13	--	Spring break!
	3/15	--	Spring break!

Week 9	3/20	GUEST LECTURE	
	3/22	Marine Bioresources	
Week 10	3/27	Coastal Development	
	3/29	GUEST LECTURE	
Week 11	4/3	Fisheries (I)	
	4/5	Fisheries (II)	
Week 12	4/10	Fisheries (III)	Public awareness project due
	4/12	GUEST LECTURE	
Week 13	4/17	Presentations	
	4/19	Presentations	
Week 14	4/24	Presentations	
	4/26	Closing lecture	

Reading List:

- Students will be provided with copies of relevant articles on Sakai for each class.
- PEW Oceans Report
- 50 Ways to Save the Oceans [David Helvarg] (recommended)

Grading

Participation	20%
Current events	10%
Documentary review	15%
Public awareness project	15%
Mock discussion	15%
Presentation	25%

Participation: Students will be graded on attendance and contribution to class discussions.

Current events: Every week, students will take turns looking up a recent article about the issue currently being discussed, writing a brief summary, and presenting the summary to the class.

Documentary review: Students will write an in-depth review of a documentary, including a discussion on the science involved and how the facts and opinions are presented. Writing skills are important to this project, as is critical thinking when students must take an unbiased look at the issues.

Public awareness project: Groups will develop a creative project aimed towards spreading public awareness of the subjects we are discussing. This will involve showing others how to make a difference and thinking creatively. A possible collaboration with the Good Five Cent Cigar to publish articles on the ocean will also help students develop writing skills.

Mock discussion: To explore the political system, a proposal will be put forth and students will hold a mock discussion to decide whether or not it would be passed and then they will compromise on a bill that could pass.

Presentation: Since the span of this course does not allow for going into deep detail on each possible solution available, each student will deliver to their peers a 15 minute presentation on a solution they would like to see implemented based on issues discussed.

Grading Scale

A	93-100%
A-	90-92%
B+	87-89%
B	84-86%
C+	77-79%
C	74-76%
C-	70-73%
D+	67-69%
D	60-66%

Course Expectations:

Students should attend class and actively engage in class discussions and out of class work and research. Current event assignments will be shared weekly and both these articles and class participation make up 30% of your grade. During the course of the semester, there may be

up to two unexcused absences; any further unexcused absences will result in a lower participation grade. If you know of a university excused absence, please let us know as far in advance as possible, as this may determine assignments for the mock discussion and other in-class activities.

Be courteous to both your fellow students and your teachers by turning off your cell phones before class. No texting allowed during class.

Student Disabilities:

Any student with a documented disability is welcomed and urged to come to us as early as possible so that we may arrange reasonable accommodations. As part of this process please be in touch with the Disability Services for Students office at 330 Memorial Union, (874-2098).

Academic Ethics:

Students are expected to abide by the highest standards of academic integrity. Cheating and plagiarism are forbidden and unethical. This may include:

- Reuse of assignments without permission,
- Unauthorized electronic assistance
- Plagiarism
- Unauthorized collaboration
- Forgery
- Alteration of graded assignments

Anyone that is found to be involved in any of the above activities will be given a zero and subject to the consequences of such activities.

Academic Enhancement Center (AEC):

The course may be difficult at times. Feel free to make use of the facilitators and the tutors at the AEC that is found on the 4th floor in Roosevelt Hall. They are open Monday through Thursday from 10 AM to 9 PM and many tutors are available to help. The tutors may help clarify concepts, check your understanding, revise papers and help to study effectively. A complete schedule for the tutor availability is found at www.uri.edu/aec, or by phone at 874-2367.

We hope you guys enjoy the course as much as we are. Have fun and learn lots!

“We ourselves feel that what we are doing is just a drop in the ocean. But the ocean would be less because of that missing drop.”

-Mother Teresa