

Marine and Environmental Affairs Theory and Practice

SMEA 500 (3 credits) – Fall Quarter 2024

1. Course Information

Schedule: Mondays & Wednesdays, 9:00-10:20 AM

Location: Fishery Sciences Building (FSH) 108

Instructor: Dr. Anne Beaudreau (she/her), annebeau@uw.edu

Reader/Grader: Eliza Perkins (she/her), eperks@uw.edu

Canvas site: <https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1752103>

1.1 Office hours

Please see Canvas for the most up-to-date information on office hours.

2. Catalog Description

Explores interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary perspectives and multiple ways of knowing in marine and environmental affairs, approaches to collaborative problem-solving and decision-making, and ethical engagement with communities in environmental management contexts. Reading, writing, communication, and teamwork activities provide a foundation for working in diverse teams in policy, research, and community-engagement settings.

3. Extended Description

Marine and environmental affairs (MEA) draws together perspectives and approaches across the natural and social sciences, humanities, policy, law, and environmental justice to address complex issues in marine and coastal systems. This course will introduce students to the practice of MEA by exploring interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary perspectives and multiple ways of knowing in MEA; approaches to collaborative problem-solving and decision-making; and ethical engagement with communities in environmental management contexts. Students will gain practice in reading, writing, communication, and teamwork to provide a foundation for working in diverse teams in policy, research, and community-engagement settings.

4. Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students will demonstrate the ability to:

- Describe and discuss social, cultural, ecological, economic, political, policy, equity, and justice dimensions of issues in marine and environmental affairs (MEA)
- Summarize the range of ontologies, epistemologies, and methodologies reflected in MEA practice
- Critically read literature from multiple fields of study contributing to MEA
- Analyze a current issue in MEA through written synthesis of multiple information sources (e.g., peer-reviewed literature, government documents, news media, etc.)
- Apply collaboration skills practiced through communication and teamwork exercises to peer-review and group problem-solving

5. Instructional Approach and Learning Environment

My approach to teaching is to promote active learning in the classroom. My role in this course is to largely serve as a facilitator in your exploration of marine and environmental affairs practice. This includes providing the necessary background on each week's topics and moderating classroom discussions. Your role is to be an active, contributing member of the class. I welcome and look forward to your ideas and questions. I encourage you to take advantage of my scheduled office hours. If you are struggling with any aspects of the course material or learning environment, please talk with me—I am happy to provide the support you need to be successful.

This course follows a transdisciplinary pedagogy model that primarily emphasizes *process* and *disposition* [1]. Thus, the focus is on collaboration and weaving different viewpoints, perspectives, and approaches in our understanding of MEA, which cross disciplinary boundaries and extend beyond research and academic settings [2,3]. This is designed to set the stage for a deeper dive into the specific *content* offered through the core program requirements in Environmental Equity & Justice, Marine Law, Policy Analysis, Policy Process, Environmental/Resource Economics, Marine Science, and Research Methods.

Course topics and activities fall under three broad themes: (1) Bridging multiple perspectives and ways of knowing in MEA; (2) Building collaboration and communication skills in diverse teams; and (3) Strengthening place-based knowledge and ethical engagement with communities. To anchor broad concepts in concrete examples, we will focus on the Puget Sound social-ecological system as a case study to explore the human dimensions of marine and coastal systems. This will provide an opportunity for students to enrich their understanding of the social, political, and environmental contexts in which we live and work at the University of Washington.

A typical week will include the following classroom activities: (1) **interactive lectures** to present foundational concepts and case study examples, (2) **discussion** of assigned reading and multi-media content, and (3) **experiential learning** through skills-building activities or engagement with diverse expertise through panel discussions.

5.1 Reading and multi-media content (e.g. news articles, radio / podcasts, video)

Assigned materials will fall into two categories: a) foundational readings to provide background and context for module topics, and to supplement instructor presentations; and b) specific readings/content regarding the Puget Sound case study. You may wish to explore certain topics

¹ Ciannelli, L., Hunsicker, M., Beaudreau, A., et al. (2014). Transdisciplinary graduate education in marine resource science and management. *ICES Journal of Marine Science*, 71(5), 1047-1051.

² Mishra, S., Hall, K., Feng, A., Stipelman, B., Stokols, D. (2011). Collaborative Processes in Transdisciplinary Research. In: Kirst, M., Schaefer-McDaniel, N., Hwang, S., O'Campo, P. (Eds.) *Converging Disciplines*. Springer, NY.

³ Russell, J. (2010). A philosophical framework for open and critical transdisciplinary inquiry. In: Brown, V.A., Harris, J.A., & Russell, J.Y. (Eds.) *Tackling Wicked Problems Through the Transdisciplinary Imagination* (pp. 31-60). Earthscan, London.

more deeply outside of class and for most weeks I provide additional supplementary readings, which are optional. Please view the reading/content list as a work in progress and I welcome any recommendations or requests you might have.

5.2 Experiential learning activities

This section provides brief descriptions of the types of classroom activities (#3, above) that will take place throughout the quarter. These activities are designed to address learning objectives, and – for first year SMEA students – it is an opportunity to get to know their cohort and the SMEA faculty early in their program.

5.2.1 Skills-building activities

- **Creating community agreements.** We will model a collaborative and iterative process of developing community agreements for our SMEA 500 classroom during the first two weeks of the quarter. Community agreements are a shared framework for how we aspire to work and interact with each other in this learning environment. They serve as a foundation for building community and set the tone for inclusive and open dialogue.
- **Values affirmation activity.** Values affirmations can take many forms, but they typically involve reflecting and writing about core personal values. This approach was developed by researchers in the field of social psychology and has been used in education, business, and health settings. Self-affirmation can contribute meaningfully to collaboration because it can help team members to identify and communicate their values and better support each other's needs on a team.
- **Active listening exercises / Peer-interviews.** Being attentive, attuned, mindful, and present are attributes of active listening that help to build trust between a speaker and listener. We will work through a series of exercises to practice active listening and apply them to a peer-interviewing activity that will help students get to know each other's backgrounds and motivations for studying MEA.
- **Inclusive facilitation and directed discussion.** Students will practice using structured facilitation protocols and directed discussion guides that are designed to elicit conversation around a particular topic or issue. These tools provide a framework for inclusive participation by group members who have a range of experience, knowledge, and perspectives on the discussion topic. Students will practice applying these approaches to discussions of assigned readings and group work.
- **Giving and receiving feedback / Peer-review.** Verbal and written feedback from our teachers, colleagues, and peers can be a gift that helps us grow and reinforces our existing strengths. We will use a structured activity to practice giving feedback that is specific, constructive, and supportive, and practice receiving feedback with openness and self-awareness through active listening. This will be applied to peer review of each other's written work.

5.2.2. Discussion panels

Panel discussions with SMEA faculty will provide a range of perspectives and experiences about MEA practice. Prior to the panels, the instructor and students will work together to generate questions for panelists. Panelists are not expected to spend time preparing or providing any

materials in advance. Each panel will have a slightly different focus, depending on who is participating and when in the quarter the panel occurs. As scheduling allows, we will invite outside guests to participate on panels (e.g., leaders and MEA practitioners in the Puget Sound region).

6. Assignments

Students will be evaluated on participation, weekly reading responses, and three short papers.

6.1 Participation (15% of overall grade): Students will earn credit for participating in classroom discussions throughout the quarter. If you cannot attend class, please contact me as soon as you can (in advance when possible) to ensure that you meet learning objectives.

To earn full credit for participation (10 points/week): contribute questions or comments during class (written or verbal) or via the Canvas discussion board in the event that you miss a class. You will earn 2 points for completing a short pre-class survey.

6.2 Reading responses (25% of overall grade): **Due Mondays by 9 am via Canvas.** Brief, reflective, weekly reading responses provide an opportunity for students to write regularly, practice critically reading the literature, share their perspectives and questions, and prepare for class discussion. To receive full credit:

1. Respond to the prompt posted in Canvas by providing a one-paragraph discussion of one or more assigned readings for the week (you do not have to discuss them all if multiple papers are assigned) that offers your impressions, critical reflections, critiques, and questions that emerged from your reading. Sometimes I will provide specific discussion prompts to respond to, so please read the assignment before writing your paragraph. You are not expected to provide a summary of the content. (10 points / assignment)
2. Complete 6 out of 8 assignments during the quarter.

6.3 Short papers (3 papers; 60% of overall grade): Students will create three short written pieces, spread throughout the quarter, to engage more deeply with specific topics and practice different forms of written communication that are relevant to MEA practice. Detailed guidelines will be provided for each paper. Briefly, they are as follows:

- a. **Interview article** [2-3 pages; 15% of overall grade]. Students will write a profile of their interview partner, based on peer interviews done in class.
- b. **Reflexive essay** [3-4 pages; 20% of overall grade]. A reflexive approach can help a researcher become more aware of how their experiences, biases, values, and beliefs affect the research process and collaborative work with others. Through this piece, students will explore how their identities and worldviews intersect with their work.
- c. **Issue brief** [6-8 pages; 25% of overall grade]. Students will choose a focal environmental issue in Puget Sound to explore in more depth throughout the quarter (e.g., water quality, air quality, marine mammal protection, hatcheries, hydropower, fisheries, aquaculture, restoration). They will create an issue brief (or briefing paper) written for an informed (but not necessarily expert) audience that

summarizes ecological, political, economic, social, and cultural dimensions of the issue, and cites at least three different types of sources (e.g., peer-reviewed literature, gray literature, public media, public comment, legal documents, expert knowledge, etc.).

7. Grading

Each assignment type comprises the following percentage of the final grade—

Assignment (N/quarter)	Total points possible	Percent of grade
Participation (10 + pre-class survey)	102	15
Reading responses (6)	60	25
Short paper: interview article (1)	100	15
Short paper: reflexive essay (1)	100	20
Short paper: issue brief (1)	100	25
TOTAL		100

To calculate your final grade, use the following formula:

$$\text{Final grade} = (15 * \text{participation points} / 102) + (25 * \text{reading response points} / 60) + (15 * \text{interview article points} / 100) + (20 * \text{reflexive essay points} / 100) + (25 * \text{issue brief points} / 100)$$

Conversion of final grades to the 4.0 scale required by UW is determined as follows:

Final grade	Grade point
≥ 95	4.0
> 61 to < 94	0.7-3.9, based on formula: <i>grade point</i> = 0.1* <i>final grade</i> - 5.5
≤ 61	0.6

This scheme is based on the [grading rubric developed by the UW Program on the Environment](#) and follows [UW grading policy](#).

8. Course Structure

The table below provides an overview of course structure. For each module, which spans multiple weeks, I included a set of topics that we will explore through readings & discussion, instructor presentations, and discussion panels. A detailed weekly schedule, including assignments, will be updated regularly on Canvas.

Specific topics/activities and timing subject to revision

Weeks	Modules
Week 1— W 9/25	<i>Course overview and introduction to marine and environmental affairs (MEA)</i>
Week 2—	

M 9/30, W 10/2	<u>Lecture, Readings, & Discussion</u>: Introduction to the course and our classroom community. Concept of marine and coastal social-ecological systems. Introduction to transdisciplinary inquiry. Introduction to the Puget Sound case study. <u>Activities</u>: Creating community agreements; Values affirmation activity
Week 3— M 10/7, W 10/9 Week 4— M 10/14, W 10/16 Week 5— M 10/21, W 10/23	<i>Interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary perspectives and multiple ways of knowing in MEA</i> <u>Lecture, Readings, & Discussion</u>: Working across disciplinary diversity: ontology, epistemology, and philosophy. Variation in problem framing, methodologies, and processes for investigation and validation. Situated knowledge and the knowledge-practice-belief complex. Weaving multiple ways of knowing. Positionality, reflexivity, and values in research. <u>Activities</u>: Active listening exercises / Peer-interviews; Library research; Discussion panel #1 Interview article due Fri 10/25
Week 6— M 10/28, W 10/30 Week 7— M 11/4, W 11/6	<i>Intersections of knowledge, power, and governance in environmental contexts</i> <u>Lecture, Readings, & Discussion</u>: Types of governance structures and institutions involved in MEA (focus on Puget Sound). Social-ecological dimensions of access to natural resources, and effects of structural inequalities. Representation and public participation in resource management decision-making. <u>Activity</u>: Giving and receiving feedback; Inclusive facilitation and directed discussion Reflexive essay due Fri 11/8
No class M 11/11 Week 8— W 11/13 Week 9— M 11/18, W 11/20	<i>Community-engaged practice and translating knowledge to action</i> <u>Lecture, Readings, & Discussion</u>: Ethical engagement with communities and building cultural competence as a researcher / practitioner. Reciprocity and relationality in collaboration. Role of boundary spanners and knowledge brokers. Processes and principles of knowledge co-production and data sovereignty. <u>Activity</u>: Discussion panel #2 Draft issue brief due to peer-review partner W 11/20

Week 10— M 11/25, W 11/27	<i>Conclusions and reflections</i>
Week 11— M 12/2, W 12/4	How can our practice in this course be applied to work in SMEA and beyond? How do we translate what we learned about Puget Sound to other social-ecological systems?
	<u>Activity:</u> Peer-review workshop; Issue brief gallery walk

Finals week: Issue brief due Wed 12/11 by midnight

9. Course Policies

Late Assignment Policy: If you cannot complete an assignment on time, please contact me as far in advance as possible to request an extension. Because they are due during finals week, issue briefs will not be accepted past the due date (except in the case of emergency).

Academic Integrity: The University takes academic integrity very seriously. Behaving with integrity is part of our responsibility to our shared learning community. If you're uncertain about if something is academic misconduct, please ask. I am happy to discuss questions you might have.

Acts of academic misconduct may include, but are not limited to, cheating and plagiarism. Cheating is when a student gives or receives any form of assistance during an examination or quiz; duplicated or paraphrased answers on assignments are also considered cheating. Plagiarism is defined as the submission or presentation of work that is not a student's own without acknowledgment of the source. Submission of the same work in more than one course without prior approval of all professors responsible for the courses is also considered academic dishonesty.

You are responsible for understanding and following [The University of Washington Student Conduct Code \(WAC 478-121\)](#). Concerns about behaviors prohibited by the Student Conduct Code will be referred for investigation and adjudication. Students found to have engaged in academic misconduct may receive a zero on the assignment (or other possible outcome).

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

All work submitted for this course must be your own. Any use of generative AI tools, such as ChatGPT, when working on assignments is forbidden. Use of generative AI will be considered academic misconduct and subject to investigation. If you have any questions about what constitutes academic integrity in this course or at the University of Washington, please feel free to contact me to discuss your concerns.

Student Access and Disability Resources: Your experience in this class is important to me. It is the policy and practice of the University of Washington to create inclusive and accessible learning environments consistent with federal and state law. If you have already established accommodations with [Disability Resources for Students \(DRS\)](#), please activate your accommodations via myDRS so we can discuss how they will be implemented in this course.

If you have not yet established services through DRS, but have a temporary health condition or permanent disability that requires accommodations (conditions include but not limited to; mental health, attention-related, learning, vision, hearing, physical or health impacts), contact DRS directly to set up an Access Plan. DRS facilitates the interactive process that establishes reasonable accommodations. Contact DRS at www.disability.uw.edu.

Safety and Protections from Discrimination: Title IX, Title VII, the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), Washington State law, and University of Washington policy collectively prohibit discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender expression, pregnant or parenting status, and LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer) identity. For more information on your rights and the resources available to you, please visit the [Title IX site](#).

Religious Accommodation: Washington state law requires that UW develop a policy for accommodation of student absences or significant hardship due to reasons of faith or conscience, or for organized religious activities. The UW's policy, including more information about how to request an accommodation, is available at Religious Accommodations Policy (<https://registrar.washington.edu/staffandfaculty/religious-accommodations-policy/>). Accommodations must be requested within the first two weeks of this course using the Religious Accommodations Request form (<https://registrar.washington.edu/students/religious-accommodations-request/>).

The University of Washington stands on the territories of Coast Salish peoples; the Duwamish, Muckleshoot, Suquamish, Tulalip, and Puyallup.