COURSE DESCRIPTION

Common dimensions of environmental conflict management (ECM) cut across different scales and types of conflicts. These dimensions call for a generic framework that can be adapted to a broad variety of individual conflicts. Our ECM framework consists of four elements: (1) assessment, (2) design, (3) facilitation, and (4) implementation. Assessment refers to identifying the needs of the environmental conflict in question. Design is development of an effective process for engaging stakeholders, and includes both macro- and micro-oriented approaches for creating a situation that is most likely to produce agreement on good decisions. Facilitation describes the strategies used by ECM professionals to help participants make the most of the ECM process. Implementation focuses on the results, or outcomes of the ECM process.

The major goals of this course are to enable students to develop

1. understanding of
   a. the relationship between conflict and democratic governance
   b. the potential value of conflict for environmental management
   c. how communication contributes to and/or constrains environmental conflict

2. skills as
   a. managers/facilitators of environmental conflict
   b. participants in environmental conflict.

We will consider the conflicts we face as humans communicating AMONG ourselves, ABOUT our physical environment and RELATING to the rest of the world. This will include an exploration of conflicting values, meanings, and discourses that define and construct our understanding of nature/the environment/natural resources. Within this intellectual context, we will examine how communication creates, shapes, and maintains the social realities we use to make sense of our decisions about how to negotiate relationships between humans and Earth. Through course readings, class discussions, and student projects we will examine concepts such as "nature," "environment," "technology," "natural resources," "development," and "progress" with respect to what they entail as communication phenomena.

We also will develop the ability to select appropriate approaches to managing conflicts in this arena. We will use the same methods (course readings, class discussions, student projects) for this task as for the first. We will read materials that explain both the conceptual underpinnings and the application of various approaches to conflict management; and then we will discuss this material in class. In the final class project, everyone will include an explanation of how a selected approach may be useful as part of your strategy for managing an environmental conflict.

Please plan some time to read and think about your reading assignments before you come to class. Otherwise you will not be able to act as an informed participant in our discussions. As you read, jot down questions, suggestions, or challenges that occur to you. Bring your readings and notes to class, so we can talk about your concerns.

Environmental conflicts tend to be complex, and rarely can be resolved without understanding both the symbolic and material context within which they have developed. We will read selections that introduce us to a process-oriented perspective on conflict. This perspective is most appropriate when working with difficult, complicated, often intractable conflicts; those that are complex and rooted in basic cultural values and norms.
Throughout the semester we will read and discuss various book chapters, articles from journals and gray literature. Secondly, we will discuss conflict management approaches developed specifically for natural resource management, whether as a third party intervener, or as a stakeholder. We will begin by reading a few chapters from a book intended to provide a basis for a conversation about environmental communication as a public and political practice (Cox). We also will examine reasons why people might want to engage in, and encourage conflict.

All readings and class activities will provide a background against which we will critically examine communication practices that have contributed to current environmental conflicts. We will examine how these practices provide major premises and arguments for various ways humans relate to the environment, and for how they justify policy options.

We also will have the opportunity to participate in a Saturday training session that has been adapted (especially for our class) from training prepared for land management agencies in the U.S (USFS, BLM). Our lead trainer has been conducting these training sessions for over a decade.

For your final project, each of you will study conflict practices, as enacted by the participants in an environmental dispute of your choice. Student projects will work toward an explanation of how the use of a particular approach to management of the conflict might enable participants to develop alternative understandings of the dispute, and how these alternative understandings might contribute to resolution or improved management of the conflict.

**PARTIAL READING LIST**

*(COMPLETE LIST AVAILABLE ASAP)*

(available via dropbox)


R. Sidaway, Chapters 4 & 5 in *Resolving Environmental Disputes: From conflict to consensus*, Earthscan, 2005.


### Grading Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment**</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Evaluation criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>attendance; informed discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Clarity; content completeness, grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral presentation</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Clarity; content completeness, delivery, organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final project report</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>Clarity; content completeness; grammar, organization, style</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 100%

**ALL assignments will be evaluated as to how well they fulfill the requirements.

### Participation

The first rule for earning participation points is to attend class. The second is to carefully read and think about the assigned readings before class. The third is to engage in discussion during class. To encourage you in this effort, each of you will have 2 opportunities to lead discussion of the assigned readings.

### Written and Oral Assignments

You will deliver the research project as (a) a proposal, (b) an oral presentation, and (c) final paper.
- written assignments (a and c) will be sent as email attachments.
- written assignments (a and c) will be e-mailed to your professor by assigned date and time.
- written assignments (a and c) will be formatted as either Word or RTF documents.
- written assignments (a and c) will be written in the style of a journal selected from the list below.
You will deliver the research project as (a) a proposal, (b) an oral presentation, and (c) final paper.

- written assignments (a and c) will be sent as email attachments.
- written assignments (a and c) will be e-mailed to your professor by assigned date and time.
- written assignments (a and c) will be formatted as either Word or RTF documents.
- written assignments (a and c) will be written in the style of a journal selected from the list below.

You will analyze an environmental conflict, and suggest an appropriate method for resolving and/or managing it. The conflict should be current. You should have access to stakeholders and to data regarding the conflict. You should incorporate assessment, design, facilitation, and implementation into your project. We will define "environment" broadly, to include air, energy, fauna, flora, food, land, shelter, water, etc.

Style—I do not care which journal style you follow. I do care that you follow one. Be careful to follow the style exactly. **You cannot earn an “A” on your assignments without following your selected style.** In the header, please provide the name of the journal you are using, as well as the web address for your journal’s style sheet. The same rules will apply: follow the style exactly. I have listed some that have been used by students, but please feel free to select another.

Conservation Letters  

Environmental Communication  
[http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/authors/rencauth.asp](http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/authors/rencauth.asp)

Journal of Conflict Resolution  
[http://www.sagepub.com/journalsProdManSub.nav?prodId=Journal200764](http://www.sagepub.com/journalsProdManSub.nav?prodId=Journal200764)

Leisure Studies  
[http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/authors/rlstauth.asp](http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/authors/rlstauth.asp)

Society and Natural Resources  
[http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/authors/usnrauth.asp](http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/authors/usnrauth.asp)

Wildlife Society Bulletin  
PROPOSAL (THIS IS A WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT)
Your proposal is your first formal opportunity to receive feedback for your final report. Please take it seriously. Do not neglect basic design and methodological issues. The text for your proposal should be 1500-2000 words. Even though it is preliminary, please be sure to follow your style sheet. Your proposal should include:

(a) abstract or executive summary (150 words)**
(b) description of the conflict you have chosen (300 words)**
(c) review of the conflict literature that is most relevant to this conflict (700 words)**
(d) explanation of the methods you have used/will use to gain an understanding of how communication has functioned in this conflict (250 words)**
(e) preview how you think this conflict might be resolved and/or managed (250 words)**

**internal word counts are recommendations only. They are intended to help you plan your writing in case you are not familiar with this kind of work, or if you are just looking for detailed guidance.

Possible questions to consider when choosing your topic and preparing your proposal and your final paper:
1) What is the conflict about? (b)
2) Who are the conflict participants? (b)
3) How does communication influence this conflict and its participants? (b)
4) How does the conflict as defined by its communication give significance to, and draw significance from, the cultural context? (b)
5) How do material and symbolic aspects of this conflict interact? (b)
6) What research has been published about similar conflicts? (c)
7) Are these publications descriptive, analytical, peer reviewed, etc? (c)
8) How do these publications contribute to my goal of understanding and managing the conflict? (c)
9) What data are available to provide more complete understanding of the conflict I have selected? (d)
10) Where are those data kept, and how will I obtain them? (d)
11) What new data will I need to collect? (d)
12) How will I analyze my data? (d)
13) What advantages/disadvantages do various communication practices offer participants? (e)
14) How should various communication practices and approaches to conflict management offer promise for resolving or managing this conflict? (e)

ORAL REPORT (YOU WILL PRESENT THIS TO THE CLASS)
Your oral report is another opportunity for you to receive feedback before making final revisions to your semester project. For this oral report you will give a twelve - fifteen minute presentation in which you explain the significance of the conflict, outline your analysis of the relevant communication, and suggest appropriate means for resolution or management. Organize your presentation in a way that you address the following topics:

1) description of the conflict (what is going on) and nature of the conflict (how does it fit into environmental conflict generally)
2) assessment, including reasons for the conflict (why did it emerge at this particular place and time); current and potential stakeholders (human and nonhuman with a stake in the issue)
3) most crucial design elements for conflict management (what parts of the conflict are most critical to manage/resolve)
4) most critical facilitation aspects, as well as relevant communication/negotiation skills for this conflict
5) implementation challenges and how you might meet them (including evaluation and sustainability concerns)

To complete this assignment, turn in a 1 page paper copy of an outline or discussion notes at least 24 hrs PRIOR to your presentation. Please leave it in my mailbox on Monday. This is the only assignment for which
you should produce a paper copy. Your oral presentation should last 12-15 minutes. You will have an opportunity to lead a 10 minute discussion immediately following the presentation. The formal presentation will account for 70% of the grade for this assignment, while your ability to handle discussion questions will comprise the other 30% (if there is no discussion, the best you can do is 70%, which is a “C”).

**FINAL REPORT/SEMESTER PROJECT (THIS IS A WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT)**

Your final project will be a written analysis of the environmental dispute you have chosen to study. Please include the following sections:

1. Assess (using the history, and current status) your dispute,
2. Review relevant conflict literature, including how similar disputes have been managed in the past,
3. Identify and explain the most crucial design and facilitation elements,
4. Recommend intervention—close with recommendations for resolving or improved management of this conflict and other similar conflicts. Be sure to explain why you have chosen this approach, including how it compares to others. Make sure you include specific implementation steps. Be realistic—consider organizational, political, economic, and cultural constraints.

This manuscript should follow from your proposal, and you should be able to use the proposal as a first draft for part of this final paper. Your final analysis should be 3500-7000 words long, including text, figures/tables, and references. Organize your paper to address the following:

Be sure you identify the roles and functions of communication in shaping the issues. Following are some suggestions (in no particular order) you might find useful when thinking about and working on this project.

1. Identify the problem, that is, the issues in contention and how competing interest groups articulate them (How do participants define, view, perceive the problem?);
2. Try to help your reader understand the conflict as it relates to a larger system; Describe how this dispute relates to environmental conflicts in general; how the policy dispute relates to/shapes/defines the context within which it has developed, and the environmental dilemma as a whole;
3. Identify multiple parties and perspectives; describe the varying views on the issues held by competing interests, and who the competing interest groups are;
4. Discuss the communication competence of participants. When considering communication competence, make judgments about language use—how do groups promote/discourage dialogue? Do they use compelling myths and metaphors to convey meaning? Do their myths and metaphors reinforce traditional views of the environment? In what ways are they consistent/inconsistent with what we currently "know" (scientific information) about the environment? Are their arguments internally consistent?, etc.
5. What seem to be the strengths/weaknesses of the competing perspectives? This does not mean you pick a side and defend it. Perhaps there are strengths in many positions from which you can draw to form a more collaborative communicative position. Perhaps both positions are weak enough that the views expressed need to be re-examined from a fresh starting point.
6. Compare and contrast the feasibility and the desirability of solutions articulated by competing interest groups in light of the issues under contention. Feasibility might include such things as costs vs. benefits, procedures involved in the process for resolving the dispute, and a chronology of how the solution will unfold. For desirability, try to consider how various solutions deal specifically with the source of the problem and how both current and potential participants might benefit from the proposed action.
7. Identify major issues in contention, as well as agreements that already exist;

**Style—Please follow your selected journal style while also following the assignment. For example, let’s look at length. Conservation Letters has a category of articles called “policy perspectives”. They may be no longer than 3500 words. This means that, if you choose Conservation Letters, your paper should be 3500 words. If you choose Society and Natural Resources, you probably should submit to the section called “insights and**
applications.” These articles must be under 4,500 words. Thus, if you choose SNR, your paper should be between 3,500 and 4,500 words. Environmental Communication requests that papers be no longer than 8000 words. If you choose Environmental Communication, your paper must be between 3500-8000 words. I’d recommend about 7000 words as a good length. For Leisure Studies your article should be between 4,000 and 7,000 words. I’d recommend you try for 6,000 words if you choose this journal. Other examples might be key words and abstract. Leisure Studies requests 3-6 key words. You should include 6 key words if you choose Leisure Studies. Environmental Communication requests abstracts of 150 words, so if that is your journal, your abstract should be limited to 150 words. If, on the other hand, you are writing for Leisure Studies, your abstract may be up to 250 words. I hope you get the idea. In case you don’t, here it is again: **follow the instructions exactly.**

When you turn in your proposal and your final paper, they should be stylistically ready to send! You cannot earn an “A” on your assignments without following your selected style-exactly. In the header at the top of your written assignments, please list the journal and accompanying web site.

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**Tentative course topics/Calendar**

*(Complete reading assignments ASAP)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 Sep</td>
<td>Intro to class; Instructions for assignments; self-introductions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Sep</td>
<td>Introduction to topic. What is Environmental Conflict? What is collaboration?  Chs. 1 &amp; 2 Clarke &amp; Peterson; Putnam; Peterson &amp; Feldpausch-Parker</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>23 Sep</td>
<td>Law and policy. Ch 3 Clarke &amp; Peterson</td>
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<tr>
<td>30 Sep</td>
<td>Exploring your options. Does collaboration make sense? Assessment. What are the starting points?  Chs 4 &amp; 5 Clarke &amp; Peterson</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Oct</td>
<td>Design. How do I develop the right stakeholder process? How do I involve the broader public?  Chs 6 &amp; 7 Clarke &amp; Peterson. Seneca; Sidaway 4 &amp; 5</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>21 Oct</td>
<td>Proposals DUE Role play (application/practice)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>18 Nov</td>
<td>Environmental Conflict and Democracy revisited. - Peters 1, 7. <em>Hotel Rwanda</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>25 Nov</td>
<td>Oral presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Dec</td>
<td>Oral presentations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Dec</td>
<td>Final Paper due. 5 pm.</td>
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AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) POLICY STATEMENT

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal antidiscrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Department of Student Life, Services for Students with Disabilities in Room B118 of Cain Hall or call 845-1637.

AGGIE HONOR CODE STATEMENT

“An Aggie does not lie, cheat, or steal or tolerate those who do.”

Upon accepting admission to Texas A&M University, a student immediately assumes a commitment to uphold the Honor Code, to accept responsibility for learning and to follow the philosophy and rules of the Honor System. Students will be required to state their commitment on examinations, research papers, and other academic work. Ignorance of the rules does not exclude any member of the Texas A&M University community from the requirements or the processes of the Honor System. For additional information please visit: www.tamu.edu/aggiehonor/

On all course work, assignments, and examinations at Texas A&M University, the following Honor Pledge shall be preprinted and signed by the student:

“On my honor, as an Aggie, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this academic work.”

from the URL http://www.tamu.edu/aggiehonor/acadmiscond.htm

Definitions of Academic Misconduct

Misconduct in research or scholarship includes fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism in proposing, performing, reviewing, or reporting research. It does not include honest error or honest differences in interpretations or judgments of data.

Texas A&M University students are responsible for authenticating all work submitted to an instructor. If asked, students must be able to produce proof that the item submitted is indeed the work of that student. Students must keep appropriate records at all times. The inability to authenticate one’s work, should the instructor request it, is sufficient grounds to initiate an academic dishonesty case.

Academic dishonesty includes the commission of any of the following acts. This listing is not, however, exclusive of any other acts that may reasonably be called academic dishonesty. Clarification is provided for each definition by listing some prohibited behaviors.

1. Cheating

Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, notes, study aids or other devices or materials in any academic exercise.

Examples:

- During an examination, looking at another student's examination or using external aids (for example, books, notes, calculators, conversation with others, or electronic devices) unless specifically allowed in advance by the instructor.
- Having others conduct research or prepare work without advance authorization from the instructor.
- Acquiring answers for any assigned work or examination from any unauthorized source. This includes, but is not limited to, using the services of commercial term paper companies, purchasing answer sets to homework from tutoring companies, and obtaining information from students who have previously taken the examination.
- Collaborating with other students in the completion of assigned work, unless specifically authorized by the instructor teaching the course. It is safe to assume that all assignments are to be completed individually unless
the instructor indicates otherwise; however, students who are unsure should seek clarification from their instructors.

- Other similar acts.

2. Fabrication

Making up data or results, and recording or reporting them; submitting fabricated documents.

Examples:

- The intentional invention and unauthorized alteration of any information or citation in any academic exercise.
- Using "invented" information in any laboratory experiment, report of results or academic exercise. It would be improper, for example, to analyze one sample in an experiment and then "invent" data based on that single experiment for several more required analyses.
- Failing to acknowledge the actual source from which cited information was obtained. For example, a student shall not take a quotation from a book review and then indicate that the quotation was obtained from the book itself.
- Changing information on tests, quizzes, examinations, reports, or any other material that has been graded and resubmitting it as original for the purpose of improving the grade on that material.
- Providing a fabricated document to any University employee in order to obtain an excused absence or to satisfy a course requirement.
- Other similar acts.

3. Falsification

Manipulating research materials, equipment, or processes, or changing or omitting data or results such that the research is not accurately represented in the research record.

Examples:

- Changing the measurements in an experiment in a laboratory exercise so as to obtain results more closely conforming to theoretically expected values.
- Other similar acts.

4. Multiple Submissions

Submitting substantial portions of the same work (including oral reports) for credit more than once without authorization from the instructor of the class for which the student submits the work.

Examples:

- Submitting the same work for credit in more than one course without the instructor’s permission.
- Making revisions in a paper or report (including oral presentations) that has been submitted in one class and submitting it for credit in another class without the instructor’s permission.
- Representing group work done in one class as one’s own work for the purpose of using it in another class.
- Other similar acts.

5. Plagiarism

The appropriation of another person's ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit.

Examples:
• Intentionally, knowingly, or carelessly presenting the work of another as one's own (i.e., without crediting the author or creator).
• Failing to credit sources used in a work product in an attempt to pass off the work as one’s own.
• Attempting to receive credit for work performed by another, including papers obtained in whole or in part from individuals or other sources. Students are permitted to use the services of a tutor (paid or unpaid), a professional editor, or the University Writing Center to assist them in completing assigned work, unless such assistance is explicitly prohibited by the instructor. If such services are used by the student, the resulting product must be the original work of the student. Purchasing research reports, essays, lab reports, practice sets, or answers to assignments from any person or business is strictly prohibited. Sale of such materials is a violation of both these rules and State law.
• Failing to cite the World Wide Web, databases and other electronic resources if they are utilized in any way as resource material in an academic exercise.
• Other similar acts.

General information pertaining to Plagiarism:

Style Guides:
Instructors are responsible for identifying any specific style/format requirement for the course. Examples include, but are not limited to, American Psychological Association (APA) style and Modern Languages Association (MLA) style.

Direct Quotation:
Every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks or appropriate indentation and must be properly acknowledged in the text by citation or in a footnote or endnote.

Paraphrase:
Prompt acknowledgment is required when material from another source is paraphrased or summarized, in whole or in part, in one’s own words. To acknowledge a paraphrase properly, one might state: "To paraphrase Locke's comment..." and then conclude with a footnote or endnote identifying the exact reference.

Borrowed facts:
Information gained in reading or research, which is not common knowledge, must be acknowledged.

Common Knowledge:
Common knowledge includes generally known facts such as the names of leaders of prominent nations, basic scientific laws, etc., basic historical information (e.g., George Washington was the first President of the United States.) Common knowledge does not require citation.

Works Consulted:
Materials which add only to a general understanding of a subject may be acknowledged in the bibliography, and need not be footnoted or end-noted. Writers should be certain that they have not used specific information from a general source in preparing their work unless it has been appropriately cited. Writers should not include books, papers, or any other type of source in a bibliography, “works cited” list, or a “works consulted” list unless those materials were actually used in the research. The practice of citing unused works is sometimes referred to as “padding.”

Footnotes, endnotes, and in-text citations:
One footnote, endnote, or in-text citation is usually enough to acknowledge indebtedness when a number of connected sentences are drawn from one source. When direct quotations are used, however, quotation marks must be inserted and acknowledgment made. Similarly, when a passage is paraphrased, acknowledgment is required.

Graphics, design products, and visual aids:
All graphics, design products, and visual aids from another creator used in academic assignments must reference the source of the material.

Other similar acts.
6. Complicity

Intentionally or knowingly helping, or attempting to help, another to commit an act of academic dishonesty.

Examples:

- Knowingly allowing another to copy from one’s paper during an examination or test.
- Distributing test questions or substantive information about the test without the instructor’s permission.
- Collaborating on academic work knowing that the collaboration will not be reported.
- Taking an examination or test for another student.
- Signing another’s name on an academic exercise or attendance sheet.
- Conspiring or agreeing with one or more persons to commit, or to attempt to commit, any act of scholastic dishonesty.
- Other similar acts.

7. Abuse and Misuse of Access and Unauthorized Access

Students may not abuse or misuse computer access or gain unauthorized access to information in any academic exercise. See student rule 22: [http://student-rules.tamu.edu](http://student-rules.tamu.edu)

8. Violation of Departmental or College Rules

Students may not violate any announced departmental or college rule relating to academic matters.

9. University Rules on Research

Students involved in conducting research and/or scholarly activities at Texas A&M University must also adhere to standards set forth in University Rule 15.99.03.M1 - Responsible Conduct in Research and Scholarship.