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**COURSE OUTLINE**

**Environment and Sustainability in Practice**

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**Office Hours:** Wednesdays, 1:30 to 3:00 PM or by appointment

**Office Location:** DTB 324

**Contact:** [carodenuto@uvic.ca](mailto:carodenuto@uvic.ca) ; [Instructor's Website](#)

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

**UVic Calendar Entry:** "Examines the decision-making theory and real-world processes associated with resources management at the policy and field levels. Case studies used to illustrate decision making behaviour, from conflict to co-operation. Simulation sessions, field trip and field methods review".

Understanding how societies make decisions through their formal and informal governance processes is at the core of natural resource management and environmental sustainability. In the past decades, decision making processes have become much more complex and are facing a vast array of new challenges. As management systems have moved through shifting paradigms of integration, sustainability and ecosystem-based management, governance and decision processes have struggled to adapt and evolve. Information needs have become much more complex, our understanding of the human impacts on ecosystems is much more sophisticated, global economies, trade relationships and governance systems have become more integrated, and the rise of widespread cyber-literacy has created new demands for citizen involvement and direct governance.

This course has been designed as a capstone course in applied geography for students interested in environmental sustainability and is best taken in the final term of their undergraduate coursework. The emphasis will be on the real-world practical application of knowledge and skills learned in other courses to the challenges facing society in making complex decisions.

Through lectures, discussions, writing, debates, current issues and guest speakers, the course will explore various policies and approaches to address the threats and opportunities in making decisions about the human use of our environment, and its resources. The first half of the course will introduce concepts, theory, history and approaches to decision making to meet contemporary challenges. In the second part of the course, a series of case studies will be examined to further explore real world examples of recent decision-making processes. The case studies currently proposed in the course outline can be adapted based on the interests and needs of the class.

A bit about myself: I recently joined the Department of Geography as Assistant Professor responsible for both teaching and research. My research interests include forest governance, global supply chains, and climate policy implementation, especially in the Global South, where the adverse impacts of climate change are often felt the most. Before joining UVic Faculty, I worked internationally as a consultant in over a dozen countries in Africa, South and Central America, the Caribbean, and the South Pacific, and I

was based in Cameroon (West Africa) for two years. In this previous role, I supported developing country governments, donors (e.g. World Bank, German Development Agency), civil society, and the private sector to jointly develop viable solutions to climate change that fit the specific context. I look forward to sharing these experiences with you and am happy to discuss career options both inside and outside academia.

### **Learning Objectives:**

By the end of the course you should be able to:

- have a working knowledge of the major concepts and approaches to natural resource management decision making and governance institutions;
- understand the increasing complexity and challenges of balancing ecological and socio-economic values in decision processes and the demand for citizen involvement; and
- critically evaluate the effectiveness of decision-making processes related to effective and durable decision making and sustainability.

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### **REQUIRED TEXT(S)**

There is no textbook for this course. Assigned readings will be posted on the course website. It is important to consult these readings prior to each class so that you can actively engage in class discussions. **If you don't do the readings, you will not achieve the learning objectives for the course.**

### **EVALUATION**

This is a fourth-year seminar which will require a high degree of participation and engagement on the part of students. Regular attendance and active involvement in class is critical to success. The course will consist of a three-hour class once per week. Students will be expected to spend a minimum of 5-7 hours in additional time preparing for each session of the class and in completing assignments. Individual contact with the instructor outside of class time is welcomed and encouraged. Evaluation will not focus on the memorization of information, but rather on how well students are able to demonstrate their engagement in the class, their ability to integrate and use the conceptual frameworks and analytical tools discussed in the course, and their successful completion of real-world assignments. A detailed evaluation regime is attached. **See detailed evaluation regime on last page of syllabus.**

1. Classroom participation – 10%
2. Weekly Journal Entries - 25%
3. Sustainability Indicator - 20%
4. Briefing Note -20%
5. Term Project/Case Study Presentation– 25%

The Weekly Journals are to be submitted on Course Spaces by 5 PM on Thursday of the week of that class. The Sustainability Indicator, Briefing Note, and Term Project are to be submitted on Course Spaces as indicated.

## GRADING SYSTEM

As per the Academic Calendar:

Grade	Grade value	point	Grade scale	Description
A+	9		90-100%	<b>Exceptional, outstanding and excellent</b> performance. Normally achieved by a minority of students. These grades indicate a student who is self-initiating, exceeds expectation and has an insightful grasp of the subject matter.
A	8		85-89%	
A-	7		80-84%	
B+	6		77-79%	<b>Very good, good and solid</b> performance. Normally achieved by the largest number of students. These grades indicate a good grasp of the subject matter or excellent grasp in one area balanced with satisfactory grasp in the other area.
B	5		73-76%	
B-	4		70-72%	
C+	3		65-69%	<b>Satisfactory, or minimally satisfactory.</b> These grades indicate a satisfactory performance and knowledge of the subject matter.
C	2		60-64%	
D	1		50-59%	<b>Marginal</b> Performance. A student receiving this grade demonstrated a superficial grasp of the subject matter.
F	0		0-49%	<b>Unsatisfactory</b> performance. Wrote final examination and completed course requirements; no supplemental.
N	0		0-49%	Did not write examination or complete course requirements by the end of term or session; no supplemental.

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## GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT INFO

- Geography Department website: [uvic.ca/socialsciences/geography/](http://uvic.ca/socialsciences/geography/)
- Undergraduate Advising: [geogadvising@uvic.ca](mailto:geogadvising@uvic.ca)

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## POLICY ON LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Missing or late journal entries will not be marked. For the Indicator, Briefing Note and Term Project, 10% will be deducted for every day the assignment is late. Exceptions will only be granted for medical reasons (requiring a written note from a medical practitioner stating your inability to attend class) or other serious personal circumstances.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity requires commitment to the values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. It is expected that students, faculty members and staff at the University of Victoria, as members of a scholarly community, will adhere to these ethical values in all activities related to learning, teaching, research and service. Any action that contravenes this standard, including misrepresentation, falsification or deception, undermines the intention and worth of scholarly work and violates the fundamental academic rights of members of our community. Students are advised to consult the university's Policy on Academic Integrity in the University Calendar. I reserve the right to use plagiarism detection software programs, web searches, discussions with other instructors, or other methods to investigate evidence of plagiarism in all submitted materials.

The University of Victoria is committed to promoting, providing and protecting a positive, supportive and safe learning and working environment for all its members.

**Policy on Academic Integrity:** [web.uvic.ca/calendar2019-09/undergrad/info/regulations/academic-integrity.html](http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2019-09/undergrad/info/regulations/academic-integrity.html)

If you have any questions or doubts, talk to me, your course instructor. For more information, see [uvic.ca/learningandteaching/cac/index.php](http://uvic.ca/learningandteaching/cac/index.php).

## **ACCESSIBILITY**

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a documented disability or health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL as soon as possible <https://www.uvic.ca/services/cal/>). The RCSD staff is available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals, and arrange appropriate accommodations. The sooner you let us know your needs, the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

## **POSITIVITY AND SAFETY**

The University of Victoria is committed to promoting, providing and protecting a positive and safe learning and working environment for all its members.

## **SEXUALIZED VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND RESPONSE AT UVIC**

UVic takes sexualized violence seriously, and has raised the bar for what is considered acceptable behaviour. We encourage students to learn more about how the university defines sexualized violence and its overall approach by visiting [uvic.ca/svp](http://uvic.ca/svp). If you or someone you know has been impacted by sexualized violence and needs information, advice, and/or support please contact the sexualized violence resource office in Equity and Human Rights (EQHR). Whether or not you have been directly impacted, if you want to take part in the important prevention work taking place on campus, you can also reach out:

Where: Sexualized violence resource office in EQHR; Sedgewick C119

Phone: 250.721.8021

Email: [svpcoordinator@uvic.ca](mailto:svpcoordinator@uvic.ca)

Web: [uvic.ca/svp](http://uvic.ca/svp)

## **COURSE EXPERIENCE SURVEY (CES)**

I value your feedback on this course. Towards the end of term, as in all other courses at UVic, you will have the opportunity to complete an anonymous survey regarding your learning experience (CES). The survey is vital to providing feedback to me regarding the course and my teaching, as well as to help the department improve the overall program for students in the future. The survey is accessed via MyPage and can be done on your laptop, tablet, or mobile device. I will remind you and provide you with more detailed information nearer the time but please be thinking about this important activity during the course.

**WEEKLY CALENDAR** (may be subject to revision)

Date	Topics	Assignments Due (Journals due by 5 PM Thursday)
Week 1 – January 7	<b>Introduction:</b> Objectives, Conceptual Frameworks, Governance and the Elements of Decision Making	Journal Entry #1
Week 2 – January 14	<b>Sustainability Indicators:</b> How do we know what we know and how do we construct and communicate information for decision making?	Journal Entry #2
Week 3 – January 21	<b>Information Transparency:</b> How is public information disclosed and by whom	Journal Entry #3
Week 4 – January 28	<b>All Government is Local:</b> Case Study of local government planning (guest lecture and workshop with Lindsay Chase)	Indicator assignment due <b>Monday, Jan. 27<sup>th</sup> at 9 am</b> Journal Entry #4
Week 5 – February 4	<b>Stakeholder Salience:</b> Multi-stakeholder negotiations from theory to practice	Journal Entry #5
Week 6 – February 11	<b>Normative Decision Making:</b> Statutory Decision Making - Case Study of the BC Private Managed Forest Land Act	Journal Entry #6
Week 7 – February 18	Reading Break – no classes	
Week 8 – February 25 <u>Class held from 12:30 to 5:20</u>	<b>Natural Resource Management in Action:</b> Excursion to Sooke Watershed <u>Bus departs at 12:30!</u>	Journal Entry #7
Week 9 – March 3	<b>Decision Making, Science and Public Perceptions:</b> Capital Region Wastewater Planning	Briefing Note due <b>Monday, March 9<sup>th</sup> at 9 am</b> Journal Entry #8
Week 10 - March 10	<b>Stakeholder negotiation:</b> The Northern Gateway Pipeline	Journal Entry #9
Week 11 – March 17	<b>Career Workshop:</b> How to plan next steps, talk about your qualifications, stress management and self-care (Richard Myers, UVic Career Services)	Journal Entry #10
Week 12 – March 24	Self-study (no class): Use this time to work on your final project and practice your presentation	
Week 13 – March 31	<b>Term Project Presentations</b>	Class participation statement due Thursday, April 2 at 5 pm

## DISCLAIMER

The above schedule, policies, procedures, and assignments in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.

## NOTE:

A note to remind you to take care of yourself. Do your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle this semester by eating well, exercising, getting enough sleep and taking some time to relax. This will help you achieve your goals and cope with stress. All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. You are not alone.

Counselling Services - *Counselling Services can help you make the most of your university experience. They offer free professional, confidential, inclusive support to currently registered UVic students.* [uvic.ca/services/counselling/](http://uvic.ca/services/counselling/)

Health Services - *University Health Services (UHS) provides a full service primary health clinic for students, and coordinates healthy student and campus initiatives.* [uvic.ca/services/health/](http://uvic.ca/services/health/)

Centre for Accessible Learning - *The CAL staff are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations* [uvic.ca/services/cal/](http://uvic.ca/services/cal/). *The sooner you let us know your needs the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.*

Elders' Voices - *The Office of Indigenous Academic and Community Engagement (IACE) has the privilege of assembling a group of Elders from local communities to guide students, staff, faculty and administration in Indigenous ways of knowing and being.* [uvic.ca/services/indigenous/students/programming/elders/index.php](http://uvic.ca/services/indigenous/students/programming/elders/index.php)

## Detailed Evaluation Regime

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### Evaluation Summary:

1. Class contributions and participation – 10%
2. Weekly Journal Entries – 25% (Due weekly during the duration of the course)
3. Sustainability Indicator – 20%
4. Briefing Note – 20%
5. Term Project – 25%

- 1. Class Participation 10%:** Students will be assessed on their contributions and participation in class by asking questions, making comments and engaging in discussions and stimulating debates, and through their direct contact with the instructor. A 1-2 page written statement of key themes learned and a summary of your participation should be submitted at the end of the course to assist the instructor in assigning your participation mark. Two weeks are especially important for the participation mark: the excursion and the stakeholder negotiation. These activities are core components of this course and the weight of the weekly journal entry will be increased accordingly for these weeks (see below).

**Purpose:** To show engagement in the course and demonstrate the ability to clearly articulate thoughts and observations on themes covered.

- 2. Weekly Journals 25%:** Students will be expected to submit a class journal in the format specified on the course website. This will require a simple 1-2 page entry on each separate week throughout the term, identifying key themes from the lectures, current events outside the class, key readings and class discussion. Each journal entry will be worth **2%** of your total grade for this course (except for the weeks of the excursion and negotiation, where the journal entry is worth **4.5%**). Journal entries are required to be submitted on CourseSpaces by 5 PM Thursday on each week as indicated in the schedule above. No late policy for journal entry. If its late (even by one minute), it is not marked.

**Purpose:** To ensure that students stay engaged throughout the course and can identify key information from the readings, current events and comments of other students.

- 3. Sustainability Indicator 20%:** Based on material covered in class, students will select an example of a sustainability indicator and describe how it helps us gain a better understanding of a resource management issue. Detailed instructions will be provided.

**Purpose:** To demonstrate a good understanding of how science and information can be used to enhance public understanding of the state of our environments, and how this can be used to influence program development and decision making.

- 4. Briefing Note 20%:** Students will be required to produce a briefing note for a senior decision maker summarizing a document or report on a key resource management issue. A list of reports will be supplied along with an appropriate format for the Briefing Note.

**Purpose:** To demonstrate the ability to comprehend a complex document and to communicate critical information and its implications in a clear and concise manner.

- 5. Term Project/Case Study 25%:** As a term project, students will work either individually or in groups to undertake a critical examination of a resource management issue. This will involve researching the issue, analyzing its significance and impact, and assessing the decision-making process used to address the issue. Evaluation will be based on a presentation to the class during the final week. A general format for this presentation will be provided.

**Purpose:** To provide students with the opportunity to apply what they have learned in