Bemidji State University

COMM 3400: Environmental Communication

A. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Credits: 3
Lecture Hours/Week: 0
Lab Hours/Week: 0
OJT Hours/Week: *
Prerequisites: None
Corequisites: None

MnTC Goals: Goal 10 - People/Environment

This course examines the intersections between environmental issues, communication processes, and social change. Students will explore the unique contribution that communication theory and research can bring to the study of the environment in private and public contexts such as political, legal, organizational, educational, mediated, relational, and cultural. Students will learn how to appropriately advocate for environmental change in private and public spheres. Overall, this course helps students understand how communication creates, shapes, and maintains social realities as we make sense of our decisions about how to negotiate relationships between humans and Earth. [Core Curriculum Goal Area 10]

B. COURSE EFFECTIVE DATES: 01/09/2022 - Present

C. OUTLINE OF MAJOR CONTENT AREAS

1. The social construction of nature, and human relationships with nature, through discourse, rhetoric, and communication practices
2. Self and connection to nature
3. Interrelationships of bio-physical and socio-cultural systems
4. Critical and cultural approaches to environmental discourse
5. Diverse environmental voices in the public sphere
6. Public understanding of environmental issues including public participation in environmental decision-making and expert-public-government dialogue
7. Examination of communicated messages in various institutions and contexts such as educational, cultural, legal, mediated and digital, and political
8. Storytelling and narrative framing of environmental communication
9. Environmental justice and climate justice movements
10. Science and climate communication
11. Communication in environmental controversies, stakeholder dialogue, and conflict
12. Communication and advocacy in environmental campaigns
13. Communication in environmental advocacy, public relationships, and deliberation
14. Public health and environmental risk communication
15. Communication and societal change
D. LEARNING OUTCOMES (General)

1. explain significant communication theories and principles that have relevance to environmental discourse in our personal, technical, corporate, and public spheres.
2. reflect and act upon daily habits to become more conscientious about their environmental beliefs and their connection to nature.
3. identify and examine ethical principles of environmental communication as a crisis and care discipline.
4. apply rhetorical, cultural, mediated, and crisis communication lenses to environmental issues that impact ecosystems, organizations, cultures, and institutions.
5. critically analyze and assess environmental discourse and its underlying assumptions and implications for institutional structures (e.g., social, legal, political, mediated, organizational, educational, cultural) that affect decisions, interpretations, analyses, and evaluations made by ourselves and others.
6. examine the interrelationships of bio-physical and socio-cultural systems and their connection to interacting with such systems.
7. investigate diverse perspectives, ethical implications, and biases related to environmental messages from a communication perspective and identify ways to engage others in meaningful conversations.
8. conduct a communication analysis of a particular organization to examine its environmental mission, communication messages, and make recommendations to enhance the organization’s environmental goals through effective communication strategies.
9. create and present communication messages appropriate to audience, purpose, and context that articulate environmental solutions and actions.

E. Minnesota Transfer Curriculum Goal Area(s) and Competencies

Goal 10 - People/Environment

1. Discern patterns and interrelationships of bio-physical and socio-cultural systems.
2. Describe the basic institutional arrangements (social, legal, political, economic, religious) that are evolving to deal with environmental and natural resource challenges.
3. Evaluate critically environmental and natural resource issues in light of understandings about interrelationships, ecosystems, and institutions.
4. Propose and assess alternative solutions to environmental problems.
5. Articulate and defend the actions they would take on various environmental issues.

F. LEARNER OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

As noted on course syllabus

G. SPECIAL INFORMATION

None noted