EVS 501

DEVELOPMENT OF LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR MESM

Fall Term, 1 credit

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Course Objectives:

The fundamental objective of the course is to introduce new Master of Environmental Science and Management (MESM) students to the opportunities and structure of the degree program. Specifically, the course will:

- Facilitate communication, interaction and collaboration among MESM graduate students.

- Provide MESM students the opportunity to formulate learning outcomes for their degree program through interaction with URI faculty and staff involved in the six different MESM advising tracks as well with URI faculty and staff working in environmental science and management.

- Provide MESM graduate students the opportunity to identify and develop professional internships (EVS 597) through interactions with professionals representing environmental agencies, nongovernmental organizations, or private firms.

- Engage the students in training exercises to improve their working skills in environmental communication, leadership, and ethics.

MESM Policy on EVS 501:

MESM graduate students are required to take 2 credits of seminar. Students can either take a departmental seminar an EVS seminar, thus EVS 501 is optional. EVS 501 credits can be used for program credit in a student’s Program of Study. Students enrolled in EVS 501 are required to participate in all aspects of the seminar.

Course Format:

The course will begin with a series of working sessions focused on the courses, MESM major papers, and career opportunities available within the six tracks in the MESM program. These sessions will be led by the MESM track chairs and will
involve appropriate faculty from URI or other academic institutions as well MESM graduates.

Representatives from URI extension, government agencies, nongovernmental organizations and private firms will address the students about the nature of their organizations, preferred skills and opportunities for professional internships (EVS 597).

Students will engage in working exercises led by URI faculty and staff on such topics as environmental communication (through the creation of brief op-ed pieces), leadership and followership skills, peer review skills, and environmental ethics. When possible and appropriate, we will invite URI colleagues in these fields to speak to and interact with the MESM students.

All students will be required to develop and present a program of study that emerges from a set of defined learning outcomes and includes details on a potential professional internship. Students will receive critical feedback from MESM faculty and graduate students to help them refine their program of study and learning objectives.

Course Materials/Readings:

There are no textbooks for this course. A class website will provide information on all aspects of the course.

Grading:

EVS 501 grades are assigned on an S/U (satisfactory/unsatisfactory) basis.

Satisfactory performance is represented by:

- regular class attendance
- completion of class assignments
- presentation of learning goals and outcomes, program of study and proposed professional internship
- providing constructive feedback to fellow students on their presentations

Student Disability Services:

Any student with a documented disability should contact me as early in the semester as possible so we may arrange reasonable accommodations. As part of this
process, please be in touch with URI’s Office of Disability Services, located in Room 330 of the Memorial Union, 874-2098.

Tentative timeline for course:

**Weeks 1-4**

- Introduction to MESM Program, program timetable, degree requirements, mentoring, and benchmark events
- Introduction review of MESM Tracks
- Discussion of developing a statement of learning goals and outcomes for the MESM program

**Week 5-7**

- Review project opportunities with non-academic partners. Guest speakers from URI extension and research programs in addition to public, private, and NGO environmental organizations will speak to the students about professional internship opportunities with their programs. They will also describe the skills they look for in hiring new staff and what they envision to be the skills and knowledge required to address environmental problems in the next few decades.

**Weeks 8-9**

- Discussion and exercises on environmental communication
- Discussion and exercises on environmental ethics
- Discussion and exercises on giving and taking peer review
- Discussion and exercises in environmental leadership and followership

**Weeks 10-12**

- Students present seminars on their learning goals and outcomes, program of study and aspirations for a professional internship.

**Week 13**

- Wrap up: Conclusions and lessons learned for next year’s course