

NR 884 Environmental Forensics

Offered: Fall Semester

INSTRUCTOR: Jennifer Sevin, Ph.D., sjenni7@vt.edu

REQUIRED TEXT: There is no required text for this course.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Forensics is the science of investigation. Graduate students need to be able to find and examine information effectively to succeed in class and after graduation. In this skills-based course, students conduct in-depth investigations on current environmental cases. These topics are explored from every angle to determine the availability of data, validity of conclusions drawn, stakeholder motives, etc. The first week of the course provides the foundation students need to conduct their investigations. The instructor will choose the first of six cases, while the remaining five cases are selected by the class. Students serve a different investigative role for each case and, in the process, develop a suite of research and leadership skills, such as: critical thinking; team facilitation; consensus building; and decision-making. Each investigation ends with student presentations of findings.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:

This is a skills-based course designed to provide individual and team learning opportunities.

Grades will be computed on the following basis:

- Participation (individual): 7%
- Topic Presentation (individual): 5%
- Investigation Leader (individual): 10%
- Investigative Research (individual): 48%
- Presentation of Findings (team): 30%