

NR 5884 Water & Conflict

Offered: Fall Semester

INSTRUCTORS: Desiree Di Mauro, PhD ddimauro@vt.edu
Rebecca Patton, MS pelsa1@vt.edu

REQUIRED TEXT:

When the Rivers Run Dry: Water—The Defining Crisis of the Twenty-first Century by F. Pearce, ISBN: 978-0807085738

Water: The Epic Struggle for Wealth, Power, and Civilization by S. Solomon, ISBN: 978-0060548315

Recommended Text: *Cadillac Desert: The American West and Its Disappearing Water*, Revised Edition, by M. Reisner, ISBN: 978-0140178241

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Water is a vital resource to Earth's 7 billion humans. Only 3% of the Earth's water is potable, and it is not evenly distributed around the world. Some countries have easy access to this resource, while others have too little or too much. In this course, we'll study the management of water resources in the U.S., Bangladesh and Kiribati, the Tigris-Euphrates Basin, Yemen, and Brazil. Students will be introduced to the basic issues surrounding water management, and then case studies will be used to investigate examples of water management and conflict around the world.

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this course students will understand:

- How water resources are managed and distributed in the U.S.
- The role of the USDOD in federal govt planning regarding water issues
- Reasons for a lack or overabundance of freshwater
- Environmental refugee issues in Bangladesh and Kiribati
- Historical examples of water conflict
- Current conflicts and mismanagement involving government, private industry, and other stressors around the world

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:

Assignments counting toward final grade:

- Weekly activities (e.g., discussion, scavenger hunt) – 52%
- Class presentation – 36%
- Class participation – 12%

COURSE SCHEDULE:

- Week 1: Class Introductions, Introduction to Water Management
- Week 2: Water Basics
- Week 3: U.S. Laws & Policy Regarding Water Management
- Week 4: Water Management in the Western U.S.
- Week 5: Historical Examples of Water Issues
- Week 6: Department of Defense Water Policies
- Week 7: Environmental Refugees – Kiribati, Bangladesh, Smith Island
- Week 8: Water Issues in Yemen
- Week 9: Water Management Mini-Project
- Week 10: Water Issues in Brazil
- Week 11: Case Study: Brazil and London Olympics
- Week 12-13: Student Presentations
- Week 14: Thanksgiving Break
- Week 15: Student Presentations

SAMPLE