ENVS-5909-902/CSTP-5909: Improving Environmental Communication and Adaptation Decision-making in the Humanitarian Sector
Spring 2017

Instructor:
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Meeting Time:
TBD – The course will meet for two hours every other week (for a total of 8 meetings) in the CSTPR conference room at a time convenient for the instructor and participants.

Course Overview
This course is primarily designed to introduce 2017 RCRCCC interns and other interested students to the mission and goals of the Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Center (RCRCCC) and provide them with background knowledge of themes relevant to climate change, decision-making, and humanitarian work. We will briefly cover the structure and mission of the Red Cross Red Crescent movement, problem-oriented research and policy analysis, the use of weather and climate forecasts for development and humanitarian contexts, and one or two additional subject matters (such as games for humanitarian action, or forecast-based financing) relevant to the intern(s)’s final placement.

The goal of this course is to prepare interns with background on the work of the International Federation of the Red Cross Red Crescent (IFRC) and the RCRCCC so that they can contribute positively during their time in the field. It should also provide the foundation for creative and critical thinking about the relationship between science and humanitarian action and the issues you will encounter in the field.

Required Texts & Materials
All materials are available online through the CU Boulder library. They will also be provided via a practicum Drop Box folder.

Course Format & Grading
The course will consist of small group discussion of each week’s readings and two critical write-ups (up to 1000 words) due at the mid-way point and at the end of the semester. Student preparation for the discussions is essential to fruitful discussion. Please come having read all of the mandatory material. The final grade will be based 50% on preparation and discussion and 50% on the critical write-ups. Of the and your grade will be based on your preparation for the sessions.
Course Themes and Readings

Week 1: Getting Familiar with the IFRC – Late January Date TBD

Please come to this first meeting having reviewed the following background material on the RCRCCC and IFRC. This will be a time for you to ask questions about the RC movement, structures, mission etc.

Readings:
IFRC Website: www.ifrc.org
In particular, please take note of the following:
• History: http://www.ifrc.org/who/history.asp?navid=03_09
• Mission: http://www.ifrc.org/who/index.asp?navid=03_01
• http://www.ifrc.org/who/society.asp?navid=03_07
• http://www.ifrc.org/who/movement.asp?navid=03_08
• 7 Fundamental Principles: http://www.ifrc.org/what/values/principles/index.asp
• Code of Conduct: http://www.ifrc.org/publicat/conduct/code.asp

The Geneva Conventions:
http://www.icrc.org/Web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/genevaconventions

IFRC Publications on Disaster Management (read through according to interest and keep as a reference. Priority items include docs on: Vulnerability and Capacity Assessments (VCA), Early Warning/Early Action, Contingency Planning, and Risk Reduction):
http://www.ifrc.org/what/disasters/resources/publications.asp

Week 2: The RC & Climate Change – Early Feb. Date TBD

Web resources:

The Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre Website:
http://www.climatecentre.org/site/home

The RC/RC Climate Centre’s Climate Guide:
(Note: You may also look at the individual chapters of the Climate Guide, which you can find in Dropbox.)

The IRI-IFRC Partnership:
http://www.preventionweb.net/english/professional/news/v.php?id=1204

World Climate Conference-3 Geneva, Intern Findings:


IFRC (2011) Key Determinants of a Successful CBDRR Programme: Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction Study. IFRC, Geneva Switzerland.

**Week 3: Problem Oriented Research & Policy Analysis - Late Feb. Date TBD**

In today’s session we will practice thinking about policy issues in terms of the 5 elements of the Problem Orientation Framework of the Policy Sciences.

The Problem Orientation:

Science as a means of understanding elements of the policy problems:


**Week 4: Forecasts, Science, & Decision-making - Early March Date TBD**

The IRI provides climate information resources for the IFRC at the global and regional scales. These are mostly seasonal forecasts, but also include other data and information. Browse through just to be familiar with what they look like, what information is
available, etc.

IRI Website: http://portal.iri.columbia.edu/portal/server.pt

IRI’s Net Assessment Forecasts:

The Federation Map Room: http://iridl.ldeo.columbia.edu/maproom/.IFRC/


Optional:

Suarez and Tall (2010) Toward Forecast Based Humanitarian Decisions: Climate Science
to Get from Early Warning to Early Action. From the proceedings of Humanitarian Futures Program Meeting, King’s College London, 30 March 2010.


**Week 5: Climate Change, Vulnerability, & Disasters - Late March Date TBD**

**Required:**


Carr and Osuwu-Daaku (2015) *The shifting epistemologies of vulnerability in climate services for development: The case of Mali’s agrometeorological advisory programme.* Area. DOI: 10.1111/area.12179
Toole, Klocker, and Head (2015) *Rethinking climate change adaptation and capacities at the household scale*. Climatic Change. DOI 10.1007/s10584-015-1577-x

Optional:

*(It’s worth skimming the full Special Report when you have time. There are useful executive summaries at the beginning of each chapter to help you decide which sections might be most relevant to your projects.)*

**Week 6: Communication and Application of Climate Science - Early April Date TBD**

Required:


Patt, A. et al. (2007) *Learning from 10 Years of Climate Outlook Forums in Africa*. Science. 318:


Optional:


Weeks 7 & 8: Optional Themes Relevant to Intern Placement Late April & Early May
Dates TBD

These themes and associated readings may be relevant depending on the interns’ final placements. The instructor will work with participants to select from these or other topics.

Participatory Methods & Vulnerability and Capacity Assessments:

- The Art and Science of VCA: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fv5vE2vxYwY
- ABC of VCA: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wS719VN-HfU&list=PL8CD23028A59D4074&index=12
- How to do a VCA (In Dropbox (DB))
- VCA Tool Box (In DB)
- What is a VCA (in DB)


Forecast-based Financing:


Climate Services:

Brasseur, G., & Gallardo, L. (2016). Climate Services: Lessons Learned and Future Prospects. Earth’s Future, n/a–n/a. doi:10.1002/2015ef000338


Dinku et al. (2014) Bridging Critical Gaps in Climate Services and Applications in Africa. Earth Perspectives. 1:15.

Climate Service Ethics:


Tozier de la Poterie & Daly (2016). Forthcoming Book Chapter.


Indigenous Climate Knowledge:


Co-production of Science and Climate Information:


Region/Country Specific Preparation:

Once your placement has been determined you may consider the following to prepare you:

• Review the website of the RC/RC office hosting you.
• Read previous internship reports from interns that were in your country/region (available upon request from Erin).
• Review strategic plans for the region/country.
• Research and ask your advisors for location-specific information on: culture, politics, safety, the weather and climate information providers in the area, how the RC works in your region, what areas of work the Zone/Region/National Society you will work with is responsible for, what other agencies they currently partner with, what types of forecasts they use and the extent to which they use them.