

Capstone Course: Environmental Problem Solving

August 1-31, Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

The course will meet synchronously via Zoom with materials and assignments on [Canvas](#).

Instructor: Prof. Adam French (he/him), akfrench@ucsc.edu

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TA: Duncan Miller (he/him), dugmille@ucsc.edu

Office hours: Please see Canvas

This is a draft syllabus and subject to change

Course description

Official: “A synthetic course that draws on the knowledge and skills students bring from other courses in the major. Focuses on written and oral individual and group projects in which students must take the initiative. Emphasizes developing skills critical for students in their future careers.”

In other words: This course combines discussion, hands-on work in class, and minimal lecture to help you synthesize aspects of your learning from your tenure as an Environmental Studies student and to prepare you for leaving UCSC. We will explore practical skills such as project funding and job searching, we will engage in discussion and critical analysis of problem solving in current environmental issues, and we will analyze our own and others' oral and written presentation of ideas.

Learning objectives

At the end of the course, you will be able to:

- Write a critical review of a current environmental topic, summarizing the field of relevant literature in an organized manner and applying critical analysis to describe the field's strengths and weaknesses.
- Evaluate your own interests, skills, knowledges, and working preferences to help determine what potential jobs may suit you and to describe them well for a potential employer.
- Write a succinct and informative resume and cover letter that shows your experiences and how you would be an asset to a potential employer.
- Approach a job search and a job interview knowing some of the key aspects to making them good experiences.
- Write a succinct, detailed, and informative grant proposal for obtaining funding for research or a project.

- Prepare and deliver a strong, interesting presentation on an environmental topic for an audience of your peers, balancing detail with clarity and focus.

Course components

All assignments must be completed for a passing grade in the course

Participation:

Our class meetings will include lecture, discussion, and in-class activities, including peer reviews and other collaborative work in small group formats. There are also a number of quizzes and discussion assignments on Canvas that will contribute to your overall participation grade. Your attendance and engagement in class meetings and activities are important and contribute significantly to your final grade. I know that being engaged in class looks different for different students, and that it is a skill that can be developed. A goal for this course is to help you develop your skills in participation, based on what's important to you.

We will discuss “Zoom etiquette” and expectations in further detail; but, in general, please plan to turn your cameras on during discussion portions of the class and mute your microphone whenever you are not speaking.

The reading load for this class is light, as you are expected to devote much time to preparing the drafts and final versions of the core assignments. However, when we do have readings, completing them will help keep us on the same page in the material (literally!), and allow us to have the richest time together as we work through developing materials, connections, and insights for the next steps of your journeys.

Overall, participation is **20%** of your final grade.

Written assignments:

You have four major written assignments:

1. an assessment of your transferable skills, knowledges & preferences for job hunting (**10%**),
2. a resume and cover letter for a particular job (**10%**),
3. a short grant proposal (**10%**), and
4. an individual STRIVE paper of 8-10 pages (**35%**: 5% for the outline; 5% for the first draft and 25% for the final draft).

The resume & cover letter, grant proposal, and STRIVE paper will go through drafts. Your final submissions of these three assignments should include a) your rough draft with instructor comments, b) your final draft, and c) a cover letter describing how you addressed reviewer comments.

An important note on timeliness: Timeliness is a form of self-care for you, to help avoid being overwhelmed by accumulated work later. It's also care for others around you, including instructors.

Late assignments will receive a deduction of 10% per day (24 hours or portion thereof) to a 50% penalty, so it's always worth it to still turn in an assignment late! If something comes up that is going to cause a problem with submitting an assignment on time, please talk with Adam.

Oral assignments:

You have two oral assignments: a short STRIVE project proposal (5%) and a final STRIVE project presentation (10%).

Course materials

The required text for the course is *What Color Is Your Parachute?* by Richard N. Bolles (Ten Speed Press). Any recent edition is fine; it is updated every year. We have electronic and print copies available in the library (thank a librarian!). If you would like your own copy, please consider purchasing from a local bookstore or the UCSC bookstore.

I will post additional readings on Canvas, particularly short articles for discussion. As noted above, keeping the readings condensed allows you to focus on your written work.

Important deadlines, resources, and policies

Deadlines:

- Add/Swap Course: Aug. 3
- Drop Course: Aug. 7
- Request "W": Aug. 20 (no tuition reversal)
- Change Grade Option: Aug. 27
- Grades due for Instructors: Sep. 7

Academic accommodations: UC Santa Cruz is committed to creating an academic environment that supports its diverse student body. If you are a student with a disability who requires accommodations to achieve equal access in this course, please submit your Accommodation Authorization Letter from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to me privately during my office hours or by appointment, preferably within the first week of the quarter. At this time, I would also like us to discuss ways we can ensure your full participation in the course. I encourage all students who may benefit from learning more about DRC services to contact the DRC at 831- 459-2089, or at drc@ucsc.edu.

Inclusivity: It is my intent that students from all backgrounds and with all perspectives feel included and are able to learn and achieve their goals in this course. The diversity that all students bring to this class is a resource, strength, and benefit to us all. It is my intent to bring to class materials and activities that embrace a diversity of perspectives, experiences, and positions.

Your suggestions for making this learning community as inclusive as possible are encouraged and appreciated. Please let me know if you identify ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally or for other students or student groups. If any of our class meetings conflict with your religious or cultural events, please let me know so that we can work together to make alternative arrangements.

CARE: UCSC Campus Advocacy, Resources & Education (CARE) believes that all people deserve to live and engage in an environment free from violence. The CARE program provides support, advocacy, resources and violence prevention education to the UC Santa Cruz community. We respond to the needs of students and others impacted by stalking, dating/domestic violence and sexual assault by providing free and confidential services. CARE also works collaboratively with students, faculty and staff to educate the campus community about the vital role that each of us has in preventing violence and creating social justice locally and globally.

Title IX: Title IX prohibits gender discrimination, including sexual harassment, domestic and dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. If you have experienced sexual harassment or sexual violence, you can receive confidential support and advocacy at the Campus Advocacy Resources & Education (CARE) Office by calling (831) 502-2273. In addition, Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) can provide confidential, counseling support, (831) 459-2628. You can also report gender discrimination directly to the University's Title IX Office, (831) 459-2462. Reports to law enforcement can be made to UCPD, (831) 459-2231 ext. 1. For emergencies, call 911.

Faculty and Teaching Assistants are required under the UC Policy on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment to inform the Title IX Office should they become aware that you or any other student has experienced sexual violence or sexual harassment.

Academic Integrity (*thanks to UCSC's Center for Innovations in Teaching and Learning and UC Berkeley's Center for Teaching and Learning for structure & language*)

Academic integrity is the moral code of academia, the trust that researchers, scholars, and creative artists put in each other to do what is right and honest, even when no one is looking.

Plagiarism & self-plagiarism: To copy text or ideas from another source (including your own for other courses and work purchased or copied from others) without appropriate attribution is plagiarism. This also applies to the discussion forums. For additional information on plagiarism, self-plagiarism, and how to avoid them, see, for example:

<https://guides.library.ucsc.edu/citesources/plagiarism>

Overall, please refer to <https://ue.ucsc.edu/academic-misconduct.html> for the university's policy on Academic Dishonesty. Acts of academic dishonesty in this class will be reported to the department, to the Provost of your college, and to the Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education, and may result in an F on the assignment, dismissal from class with a final grade of F, and even suspension or expulsion from the university, depending upon the severity of the violation.

Course schedule****subject to change; version on Canvas will be current****

Date	Class content	Assignments Due
Aug 1	Course introduction; personal objectives and purpose; STRIVE project introduction Small groups: STRIVE project brainstorm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read syllabus and explore course Canvas site • Complete student survey via Canvas
Aug 3	Personal skills and work preferences assessment (Flower exercise) Small groups: What Makes a Review exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read chapters 5 & 6 in Bolles • STRIVE topic research ideas
Aug 8	Personal skills and work preferences; career planning and job hunting introduction Small groups: Strive project discussions with teaching staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read chapters 1-4 & 7 in Bolles • Personal assessment (Flower Exercise)
Aug 10	STRIVE project presentations; job hunting strategies and resources Small groups: Strive project discussions with teaching staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STRIVE Project outline and preliminary bibliography • STRIVE Project overview presentation in class
Aug 15	Resumes and cover letters; online personas Small groups: Resume exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read chapter 8 in Bolles • Draft of STRIVE paper
Aug 17	Grants & grant writing Small groups: Resume and cover letter peer review session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft resume and cover letter
Aug 22	Interviewing and presentation skills Small groups: Grant proposal peer review session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read chapter 9 in Bolles • Draft grant proposal
Aug 24	Discussion & speakers TBA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final resume & cover letter

Aug 29	STRIVE project presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Final grant proposal• STRIVE presentations to class
Aug 31	STRIVE project presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• STRIVE presentations to class
Turn in Final STRIVE paper via Canvas by midnight on Sep. 1!		