NR 567 ANALYSIS OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. Robin Rothfeder
Office: MSNR 211
Office Hours: Tuesday and Wednesday 1-2 pm or by appointment
Virtual Office Hours: conducted via MS Teams
Email: Robin.Rothfeder@colostate.edu
Phone: 970-491-6919
Communication Policy: Emails during weekdays will receive a response within 36 hours; emails during weekends will receive a response the following Monday

PREREQUISITES FOR COURSE

N/A

COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES

National governments in the U.S. and globally are major sponsors of development projects that have significant impacts on the environment. The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 mandates that all federally-sponsored projects that significantly impact the quality of the human environment must go through a detailed analysis of those impacts. The NEPA model has been replicated in many state and local policies, and around the world. At the core of NEPA is the analysis of environmental impacts, using certain analytical standards and requirements. The purpose of this class is to examine in detail the purpose, goals, and results of NEPA, and the analytical requirements and standards of environmental impact analysis. The course will incorporate real-world case studies, including local projects.

Upon the completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Analyze the purposes, goals, and outcomes of the National Environmental Policy Act and its role in federal agency decision-making
2. Describe the role of Congress, federal agencies, the public, and the courts in shaping NEPA
3. Explain the details of Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Statement processes
4. Apply analytical and legal standards relating to NEPA
5. Discuss the role of values, collaboration, science, agency expertise, and public participation in NEPA decisions and actions
6. Analyze important, contemporary and controversial NEPA issues

REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS
There is not a textbook associated with this class. All required content will be posted in Canvas.

PARTICIPATION/BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS
As a graduate level course, there are high standards for preparedness, reading materials, analysis, and discussion. Although the course will emphasize the role of NEPA and EIS in natural resource management contexts in the US, you are encouraged to explore international contexts if it assists in advancing your thesis or dissertation work. Key elements to the course are discussion and critical thinking. The course is divided into 15 modules of content presented on a weekly basis. You are expected to progress through the material in order and according to the schedule presented in Canvas.

- Class Meeting Days / Hours: Asynchronous Online
- Class Location: Canvas learning management system
- Course Credits: 3

Please review the core rules of netiquette for some guidelines and expectations on how to behave in an online learning environment.

IMPORTANT COVID INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS:
All students are expected and required to report any COVID-19 symptoms to the university immediately, as well as exposures or positive tests from an on-CSU testing location.

If you suspect you have symptoms, or if you know you have been exposed to a positive person or have tested positive for COVID, you are required to fill out the COVID Reporter (https://covid.colostate.edu/reporter/). If you know or believe you have been exposed, including living with someone known to be COVID positive, or are symptomatic, it is important for the health of yourself and others that you complete the online COVID Reporter. Do not ask your instructor to report for you. If you do not have internet access to fill out the online COVID-19 Reporter, please call (970) 491-4600. You may also report concerns in your academic or living spaces regarding COVID exposures through the COVID Reporter. You will not be penalized in any way for reporting. When you complete the COVID Reporter for any reason, the CSU Public Health
office is notified. Once notified, that office will contact you and, depending upon each situation, will conduct contact tracing, initiate any necessary public health requirements and notify you if you need to take any steps.

For the latest information about the University’s COVID resources and information, please visit the CSUCOVID-19 site: https://covid.colostate.edu/.

**COURSE POLICIES (LATE ASSIGNMENTS, MAKE-UP EXAMS, ETC.)**

Deadlines for assignments are clearly defined in Canvas. There are no make-ups unless negotiated at least two weeks in advance of the deadline. Late papers will be assessed a penalty: 5% penalty for 1 day late and 10% for 2-7 days late. Assignments will not be accepted if overdue by more than seven days.

**EXTRA CREDIT**

No extra credit will be offered.

**ATTENDANCE**

Any student who misses course content for any reason will be held responsible for all materials covered and all announcements made during their absence. If you are going to miss an assignment, quiz, exam, etc., you must discuss this with me and have my approval beforehand. If you have a university-approved circumstance, or a special religious observation, that requires flexibility in due dates, testing environments, etc., please let me know toward the beginning of the semester.

**GRADES OF "INCOMPLETE"**

Per university policy, an instructor may assign temporary grade of Incomplete to a student who demonstrates that he or she could not complete the requirements of the course due to circumstances beyond the student’s control and not reasonably foreseeable. A student must be passing a course at the time that an Incomplete is requested unless the instructor determines that there are extenuating circumstances to assign an Incomplete to a student who is not passing the course. When an instructor assigns an Incomplete, he or she shall specify in writing using the Department Incomplete Grade Form the requirements the student shall fulfill to complete the course as well as the reasons for granting an Incomplete when the student is not passing the course. The instructor shall retain a copy of this statement in his or her grade records and provide
copies to the student and the department head or his or her designee. (Section 1.6 of the Academic Faculty and Administrative Professional Manual). For more information:

https://registrar.colostate.edu/incomplete-grades/

**FINAL EXAM POLICY**

Final examination week is part of the regular semester. Student attendance shall be consistent with University policy. If a student has three or more final examinations (not classes) scheduled for the same day or if conflicts of examination times occur, the student may negotiate a time change with the instructors involved. If the parties involved cannot find a mutually agreeable time, the Registrar’s Office indicates which courses must be changed. **Note:** The Registrar’s Office must be notified at least one week prior to Final Examination Week to allow instructors time to make appropriate accommodations. It is the student’s responsibility to initiate negotiations.

http://www.registrar.colostate.edu/final-exams

**BASIS FOR FINAL GRADE**

The NR 567 assignments emphasize in-depth critical thinking and analysis. Assignment details are provided within each module in Canvas and are also linked under the Assignments and Discussions links. Students are advised to keep a personal copy of all work created for the course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSIGNMENT</th>
<th>GRADE POINTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussions (1 intro @ 10 pts. + 6 topics @ 15 pts. each)</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other active/interactive learning experiences</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>EA Analysis Group Project</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Project: Research Questions &amp; Methodology</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Project: Outline</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>Final Project: Lay Summary</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Project: Final Paper Rough Draft</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>Final Project: Peer Review</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Project: Revised Final Paper</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>425</strong></td>
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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>100% to 96.67%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>&lt;96.67% to 93.33%</td>
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ASSIGNMENTS

DISCUSSIONS
Graduate courses should really engage your critical thinking skills. To get the most out of this course, you will need to complete the assigned readings each week and actively engage in online discussions. You will be required to post a critical reflection on the suite of readings for your fellow students to read and respond to. The instructor will provide a prompt to guide your response. This is also an opportunity for you to pose any questions or points of confusion you found within the readings. You will be responsible for responding to two discussion posts by your fellow students per module. Your responses must be substantive, respectful and professional. Initial discussion posts will be due no later than Thursday of the corresponding week. Replies to others’ comments will be due by Sunday at midnight. There will be 1 introductory discussion worth 10 points, and 6 topical discussions worth 15 points each, for a total of 100 discussion points. Please see the grading rubric in Canvas for additional details.

ACTIVE/INTERACTIVE ASSIGNMENTS
Throughout this course, you will complete a variety of active/interactive learning experiences to demonstrate your knowledge of, and critical thinking about, course content. These activities will include assignments such as concept mapping, current events analysis, debates, etc. There will be 5 activities worth 20 points each, for a total of 100 points. Specific instructions and grading rubrics can be found in Canvas.

GROUP ASSIGNMENT: ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (EA) ANALYSIS
This group assignment will give you practice in analyzing an actual NEPA document, an Environmental Assessment, preparing you to write your own individual EA Analysis. Each group will review and analyze one section of the Example Environmental Assessment and then present the findings to the class.
FINAL PROJECT

NEPA implementation continues to evolve. Agency practitioners and academic researchers are generally unaware of the “living” nature of NEPA and its evolving administrative application and federal case law.

This project is a chance to delve into a specific NEPA-related topic with more depth. A separate document is provided in Canvas that describes this assignment in greater detail.

CSU’S LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT STATEMENT

Colorado State University acknowledges, with respect, that the land we are on today is the traditional and ancestral homelands of the Arapaho, Cheyenne, and Ute Nations and peoples. This was also a site of trade, gathering, and healing for numerous other Native tribes. We recognize the Indigenous peoples as original stewards of this land and all the relatives within it. As these words of acknowledgment are spoken and heard, the ties Nations have to their traditional homelands are renewed and reaffirmed.

CSU is founded as a land-grant institution, and we accept that our mission must encompass access to education and inclusion. And, significantly, that our founding came at a dire cost to Native Nations and peoples whose land this University was built upon. This acknowledgment is the education and inclusion we must practice in recognizing our institutional history, responsibility, and commitment.

https://landacknowledgment.colostate.edu

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The About webpage of the Vice President for Diversity includes a comprehensive statement of CSU’s commitment to diversity and inclusion.

It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well served by this course, that students’ learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, and culture. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated. Please let me know ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally or for other students or student groups.
**LIBRARY & RESEARCH HELP**

The CSU Libraries Help Desk provides basic research and technical assistance either in person at Morgan Library or by phone at 970-491-1841. Virtual assistance is also available via the Libraries’ Ask Us chat and email services (http://lib.colostate.edu/help/ask-us).

For more in-depth assistance, contact Meggan Houlihan, Head of Student Success at CSU Libraries: meggan.houlihan@colostate.edu.

As a student enrolled in this course, one of your responsibilities is to submit course work by the due dates listed in Canvas. With that said, I take my role as your instructor very seriously, and, in fact, I care about how well you do in this course and that you have a satisfying, rewarding experience.

To that end, it is my commitment to you to respond individually to the work you submit in this class and to return your work in a timely manner. Smaller, weekly assignments and quizzes will be returned within 10 week days and major assignments, exams, and essays will be returned within 14 week days. (If the grading of your work takes longer than the times I have listed here, I will keep you informed of my progress and make every effort to return your work with feedback as soon as possible.)

**USEFUL WEBSITES WITH IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER**

https://www.online.colostate.edu/faqs/important-dates.dot#fall

**CANVAS INFORMATION & TECHNICAL SUPPORT**

Canvas is where course content, grades, and communication will reside for this course.

- [Login for Canvas](#)
- [Canvas Support](#)
- For passwords or any other computer-related technical support, contact the Central IT Technical Support Help Desk.
  - (970) 491-7276
  - help@colostate.edu

The [Technical Requirements](#) page identifies the browsers, operating systems, and plugins that work best with Canvas. If you are new to Canvas quickly review the [Canvas Student Orientation](#) materials.
**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY & CSU HONOR PLEDGE**

The Department of Forest and Rangeland Stewardship takes academic integrity seriously. At minimum, academic integrity means that no one will use another's work as their own. You can find an overview and CSU’s definition of plagiarism on the [CSU Writing Center](https://www.csu.edu/writingcenter) website.

If you plagiarize in your work you could lose credit for the plagiarized work, fail the assignment, or fail the course. Each instance of plagiarism, classroom cheating, and other types of academic dishonesty will be addressed according to the principles published in the [CSU General Catalog](https://www.csu.edu/catalog) (under “Academic Integrity/Misconduct”).

This course will adhere to the CSU [Academic Integrity/Misconduct](https://www.csu.edu/admissions/academic-integrity) policy as found in the General Catalog and the [Student Conduct Code](https://www.csu.edu/studentconduct).

Academic integrity lies at the core of our common goal: to create an intellectually honest and rigorous community. Because academic integrity, and the personal and social integrity of which academic integrity is an integral part, is so central to our mission as students, teachers, scholars, and citizens, I will ask that you affirm the CSU Honor Pledge as part of completing your work in this course.

Further information about Academic Integrity is available at CSU’s [Academic Integrity - Student Resources](https://www.csu.edu/academic-integrity).

**UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING/ACCOMMODATION OF NEEDS**

I am committed to the principle of universal learning. This means that our classroom, our virtual spaces, our practices, and our interactions be as inclusive as possible. Mutual respect, civility, and the ability to listen and observe others carefully are crucial to universal learning.

If you are a student who will need accommodations in this class, please contact me to discuss your individual needs. Any accommodation must be discussed in a timely manner. A verifying memo from [The Student Disability Center](https://www.csu.edu/studentdisability) may be required before any accommodation is provided.

The Student Disability Center (SDC) has the authority to verify and confirm the eligibility of students with disabilities for the majority of accommodations. While some accommodations may be provided by other departments, a student is not automatically eligible for those accommodations unless their disability can be verified and the need for the accommodation confirmed, either through SDC or through acceptable means defined by the particular
department. Faculty and staff may consult with the SDC staff whenever there is doubt as to the appropriateness of an accommodative request by a student with a disability.

The goal of SDC is to normalize disability as part of the culture of diversity at Colorado State University. The characteristic of having a disability simply provides the basis of the support that is available to students. The goal is to ensure students with disabilities have the opportunity to be as successful as they have the capability to be.

Support and services are offered to student with functional limitations due to visual, hearing, learning, or mobility disabilities as well as to students who have specific physical or mental health conditions due to epilepsy, diabetes, asthma, AIDS, psychiatric diagnoses, etc. Students who are temporarily disabled are also eligible for support and assistance.

Any student who is enrolled at CSU, and who self-identifies with SDC as having a disability, is eligible for support from SDC. Specific accommodations are determined individually for each student and must be supported by appropriate documentation and/or evaluation of needs consistent with a particular type of disability. SDC reserves the right to ask for any appropriate documentation of disability in order to determine a student's eligibility for accommodations as well as in support for specific accommodative requests. The accommodative process begins once a student meets with an accommodations specialist in the SDC.

THIRD-PARTY TOOLS/PRIVACY

Please note that this course may require you to use third-party tools (tools outside of the Canvas learning management system), such as Skype and others. Some of these tools may collect and share information about their users. Because your privacy is important, you are encouraged to consult the privacy policies for any third-party tools in this course so that you are aware of how your personal information is collected, used and shared.

UNDOCUMENTED STUDENT SUPPORT

Any CSU student who faces challenges or hardships due to their legal status in the United States and believes that it may impact their academic performance in this course is encouraged to visit Student Support Services for Undocumented, DACA & ASSET for resources and support. Additionally, only if you feel comfortable, please notify your professor so they may pass along any additional resources they may possess.
TITLE IX/INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE

For the full statement regarding role and responsibilities about reporting harassment, sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and the retaliation policy please go to: CSU Policy: Title IX Sexual Harrasment.

If you feel that your rights have been compromised at CSU, several resources are available to assist:

- Student Resolution Center, 200 Lory Student Center, 491-7165
- Office of Equal Opportunity, 101 Student Services, 491-5836

A note about interpersonal violence: If you or someone you know has experienced sexual assault, relationship violence and/or stalking, know that you are not alone. As instructors, we are required by law to notify university officials about disclosures related to interpersonal violence. Confidential victim advocates are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to provide support related to the emotional, physical, physiological and legal aftermath of interpersonal violence. Contact the Victim Assistance Team at: 970-492-4242.

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES

CSU does not discriminate on the basis of religion. Reasonable accommodation should be made to allow individuals to observe their established religious holidays. Students seeking an exemption from attending class or completing assigned course work for a religious holiday will need to fill out the Religious Accommodation Request Form and turn it in to the Division of Student Affairs, located on the second level of the Administration building.

Once turned in, the Division of Student Affairs will review the request and contact the student accordingly. If approved, the student will receive a memo from the Dean of Students to give to their professor or course instructor.

Students are asked to turn in the request forms as soon as the conflict is noticed. Similarly, unanticipated conflicts requiring a religious observance, such as a death in the family, can also be reviewed.

CSU PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY

Inclusion: We create and nurture inclusive environments and welcome, value and affirm all members of our community, including their various identities, skills, ideas, talents and contributions.
**Integrity:** We are accountable for our actions and will act ethically and honestly in all our interactions.

**Respect:** We honor the inherent dignity of all people within an environment where we are committed to freedom of expression, critical discourse, and the advancement of knowledge.

**Service:** We are responsible, individually and collectively, to give of our time, talents, and resources to promote the well-being of each other and the development of our local, regional, and global communities.

**Social Justice:** We have the right to be treated and the responsibility to treat others with fairness and equity, the duty to challenge prejudice, and to uphold the laws, policies and procedures that promote justice in all respects.

**NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**


Source: [http://oeo.colostate.edu/non-discrimination-statement](http://oeo.colostate.edu/non-discrimination-statement)

**MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS**

CSU is a community that cares. You are not alone. CSU Health Network Counseling Services has trained professionals who can help. Your student fees provide access to a wide range of support services. Call Counseling Services at (970) 491-6053, and they will work together with you to find
out which services are right for you. Visit https://health.colostate.edu/about-counseling-services to learn more.

and https://health.colostate.edu/mental-health-resources/ for additional student mental health and well-being resources. If you are concerned about a friend or peer, use Tell Someone by calling (970) 491-1350 or visiting https://supportandsafety.colostate.edu/tell-someone/ to share your concerns with a professional who can discreetly connect the distressed individual with the proper resources. Rams Take Care of Rams. Reach out and ask for help if you or someone you know is having a difficult time.

**Student Case Management**

Student case management is available to help students with extenuating life circumstances and connect them with resources. In some cases, after you and I discuss your situation, I may request verifiable documentation for class absences from the SCM office if you request considerations for absences or missed coursework.