

## NRRT 262

### Principles of Environmental Communication



#### **Fall 2023**

**Class Time/ Location: Monday/Wednesday/Friday; 1-1:50 PM; Wagar 232**

**Please note: This is an in-person course.**

**Professor:** Jen Solomon, PhD (pronouns: she/her/hers)

209 Forestry Building

Email: [jennifer.solomon@colostate.edu](mailto:jennifer.solomon@colostate.edu); Please include NRRT 262 in subject line

Virtual Student hours: **Wednesdays, 2:30-3:30 PM** and by appointment

See Modules/Class info for how to connect virtually

**Teaching Assistant:** Sara Ashley Collins (she/her/hers)

237 A Forestry Building

Email: [saraashc@colostate.edu](mailto:saraashc@colostate.edu); Please include NRRT 262 in subject line

Student Hours: **Tuesdays, 11:45 AM-12:45 PM; Fridays, 11:45-12:45 PM;** and by appointment

#### **CSU LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

*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.*

## **OVERVIEW AND INTRODUCTION**

In this course students will learn about the theoretical and applied concepts that guide the discipline of environmental communication. Students will demonstrate understanding and show application of materials for successful environmental communication concerning natural resources in a variety of conservation settings.

### **Course Objectives:**

- Students will demonstrate an understanding of basic theories and application of environmental communication.
- Students will select and employ the communication skills and strategies most appropriate for specific environmental communication objectives.
- Students will evaluate a variety of media based on environmental communication theory and concepts.

### **Required Text:**

Title: Environmental Communication and the Public Sphere, 6th Edition;

**Note: Please make sure you get the 6th edition.**

Author: Robert Cox

This is the cover  
of the book you  
need.



Please note: Other readings and media will be posted on Canvas throughout the course.

## **ASSIGNMENTS / GRADED ASSESSMENTS**

- |    |                                     |            |                     |
|----|-------------------------------------|------------|---------------------|
| 1. | Virtual Days/Assessments/Activities | (Variable) | Due: multiple dates |
|----|-------------------------------------|------------|---------------------|

Important Note: Virtual Day/Assessment assignments are due by midnight on the day listed on Canvas. You can do virtual day/assessment assignments any time prior to the due date following its release on Canvas. Information will be provided in class.

- |    |  |              |              |
|----|--|--------------|--------------|
| 2. | An Analysis of Environmental Communication Today | (100 points) | Due: Sept 27 |
| 3. | Social Marketing                                 | (100 points) | Due: Oct 20  |
| 4. | Environmental Interpretation                     | (100 points) | Due: Nov 10  |
| 6. | Art as a Form of Environmental Communication     | (100 points) | Due: Nov. 27 |

**Letter grades** will be assigned as follows:

Percentage	Letter Grade
98-100%	A+
92-97%	A
90-91%	A-
88-89%	B+
82-87%	B
80-81%	B-
78-79%	C+
70-77%	C
65-69%	D
<65%	F

*Note: There are small differences between the letter grades. In essence, this means that if you want to earn a very good grade in this course your work will need to consistently be of high quality!*

**Course Outline\***

**\*Please note that course items listed below may change due to unforeseen circumstances. The most up to date version of the course outline will be on Canvas. Please use the version listed on Canvas. All changes will be announced in class.**

**Note: All assignments are not listed below, just the major ones.**

Date	Topic / Theme	Larger Assignments (Please note, these do not include readings/media/activities/assessments/virtual day assignments which will be listed on Canvas)
Aug 21 (M)	Course Introduction	
Aug 23 (W)	Environmental Communication: What is it?	
Aug 25(F)	Communicating Nature	
Aug 28 (M)	Communication models	
Aug 30(W)	Constructivism	
Sept 1 (F)	Virtual Day : Historical Perspectives of Environmental Communication	
Sept 4 (M)	University Holiday – no class	
Sept 6 (W)	Environmental Communication: Who are we communicating to?	
Sept 8 (F)	Values	
Sept 11 (M)	Values continued	
Sept 13 (W)	Constructivist Learning	
Sept 15 (F)	Catch up day	
Sept 18 (M)	Journalism and the Environment	
Sept 20 (W)	Journalism and the Environment	

<b>Sept 22 (F)</b>	<b>Journalism and the Environment</b>	
<b>Sept 25 (M)</b>	<b>Media and the Environment</b>	
<b>Sept 27 (W)</b>	<b>Media and the Environment</b>	<b>An Analysis of Environmental Communication Today</b>
<b>Sept 29 (F)</b>	<b>Virtual Day</b>	
<b>Oct 2 (M)</b>	<b>Green Marketing</b>	
<b>Oct 4 (W)</b>	<b>Green Marketing</b>	
<b>Oct 6 (F)</b>	<b>Green Marketing</b>	
<b>Oct 9 (M)</b>	<b>Social Marketing</b>	
<b>Oct 11 (W)</b>	<b>Social Marketing</b>	
<b>Oct 13 (F)</b>	<b>Social Marketing</b>	
<b>Oct 16 (M)</b>	<b>Social Marketing</b>	
<b>Oct 18 (W)</b>	<b>Social Marketing</b>	
<b>Oct 20 (F)</b>	<b>Social Marketing</b>	<b>Social Marketing</b>
<b>Oct 23 (M)</b>	<b>Risk Communication</b>	
<b>Oct 25 (W)</b>	<b>Risk Communication</b>	
<b>Oct 27 (F)</b>	<b>Risk Communication</b>	
<b>Oct 30 (M)</b>	<b>Environmental Interpretation</b>	
<b>Nov 1 (W)</b>	<b>Environmental Interpretation</b>	
<b>Nov 3 (F)</b>	<b>Environmental Interpretation</b>	
<b>Nov 6 (M)</b>	<b>Environmental Interpretation</b>	
<b>Nov 8 (W)</b>	<b>Guest speaker</b>	
<b>Nov 10 (F)</b>	<b>Catch up day</b>	<b>Environmental Interpretation</b>
<b>Nov 13 (M)</b>	<b>The Arts in Environmental Communication</b>	
<b>Nov 15 (W)</b>		

	The Arts in Environmental Communication/Intro to assignment	
Nov 17 (F)	Virtual Day	
Nov 21	No class – Fall Break	
Nov 23		
Nov 25		
Nov 27 (M)	Public Involvement Environmental Conflict	Art in Environmental Communication
Nov 29 (W)	Public Involvement Environmental Conflict	
Dec 1 (F)		
Dec 4 (M)	Catch up day	
Dec 6 (W)	Content Review (In class activity)	
Dec 8 (F)	Course Review/(In class activity)	

### **COURSE POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS**

#### **Missing class**

Some of you may miss class due to illness or another unforeseen circumstance. If you do miss class, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed. Your first step is to consult your fellow students by using the contact information you obtained the first week, and if you have questions then please attend virtual student hours (also referred to as office hours) or email your teaching assistant (and copy Dr. Solomon).

#### **Due dates for assignments**

All assignments should be turned in by the due date. Due to anticipation of circumstances beyond the control of a student, I have instituted a “grace period”. Please read below to understand the course grading policies.

#### **Late policy: just the facts**

(This late policy below is adapted from one by Julie Zelenski, Stanford University)

- The cutoff for on-time submission can be found on the assignment on Canvas. Late days are counted in 24-hour periods. For example, if you turn the assignment in 2 hours after the deadline it is counted as one day late.
- You are given 4 “grace days” (self-granted extensions) which you can use to give yourself extra time without penalty.
- Instructor-granted extensions are only considered after all grace days are used and will be only provided for extenuating circumstances.
- Late work handed in when you have run out of grace is discounted 10 % per day late.

- Every online quiz/assessment has a “hard deadline”, usually 2 days past the original due date. Late submissions (penalty or not) are not accepted after the hard deadline. This is because students need to see the correct answers in a timely manner.
- No late submissions (penalty or not) will be accepted for the final exam.

### **Late policy: long-winded version**

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The philosophy driving this late policy has three main goals:

- Empower you to make your own decisions. You decide when your situation warrants the use of a grace day.
- Keep things fair. Students are allowed an equal amount of grace. Only an exceptional situation is granted extension beyond the grace days.
- Decrease stress related to unforeseen circumstances related to the global pandemic.
- Encourage you to “stay on top” of assignments due dates. Our suggestion is to not squander your grace days on assignments which are low stakes. To do this, hand in assignments on time as you may really need those for larger stake assignments.

### **Grace Days (Self-granted extensions)**

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Grace days are “self-granted extensions”. We recognize that the competing demands of a challenging courseload and extracurriculars, coupled with the fact that we are living through a global pandemic can be an unforgiving landscape and even the most careful of plans can be derailed by an unforeseen event.

We recognize that the unexpected sometimes happens – the network goes down, you delete a critical file, your family needs your time/energy, or a personal situation escalates. In this course, I am providing you with an opportunity to grant yourself an extension without our oversight or need for explanation. One grace day extends the deadline by 24 hours. Grace days are your means to cover unforeseen events: mild illness, stolen laptops, and so on. We don't intend them to cover ski trips, overcommitment, or poor planning, but you can use them as you choose. You may use all of your grace days for one assignment, distribute them across several assignments, or even better, (and highly recommended) hoard them for a crisis that thankfully never comes. I urge you to use them wisely and not squander them, but rather save them in case you need them for good reason.

Important note: You cannot “bank” your grace days. The first four days you are late will be allocated as grace days.

### **Assignment extensions beyond the use of grace days**

Grace days are extensions, no different than what would be given by the instructor (other than you have the authority to determine when one is warranted). Your first line of recourse when unforeseen/extenuating circumstances strike is always to grant your own extension through use of a grace day. Only after you have exhausted all of your grace days in valid use should you request further accommodation, preferably prior to the due date. In those extenuating circumstances, please contact our teaching assistant by email, and copy Dr. Solomon. If you have an extenuating circumstance, you should contact Student Case Management. Student Case Management & Referral Coordination provides crisis prevention and intervention services. In difficult situations such as medical, mental health, personal or family crisis, illness or injury, a student may find it difficult to navigate the resources and services available. Student Case Managers consult with students, faculty, staff, families, and providers to offer guidance on the next best steps.

You can find information about this service here: <https://studentcasemanagement.colostate.edu/>

If asking for an instructor-granted extension, you will be expected to legitimize how all of your grace days were used, and make a compelling case for additional accommodation beyond the grace days everyone else receives. We use this information to find an appropriate balance between providing relief to you and maintaining fairness to others.

### *Submitting late work*

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If you are choosing to use one of your grace days, you do not need to confirm with us, just submit your work normally and it will be time-stamped accordingly. Note that no assignments (penalty or not) will be accepted after the hard deadline.

### *Late work with penalty*

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When you are out of grace days, submitting late work will be penalized 10% per day (24 hour period).

### **Readings and other Media**

To facilitate a dynamic and discussion-based class environment, students are expected to have completed assigned readings/media **prior** to coming to class. Classes will be facilitated based on that expectation. Please be prepared to participate in class.

### **Classroom Climate**

This class is intended to test higher-level cognitive abilities. Students are expected to think, question, problem-solve and debate information presented in class. I will do my best to create an environment in which expressions of uncertainty, conjecture and alternative and competing views can be freely shared. I expect the same of students.

### **Participation and Engagement**

Participation involves being an active and courteous member of the class. For this class, participation means that you engage in lively, meaningful discussion and provide thoughtful contributions through class assignments. Participation means *engagement*. Please come to class with questions, concerns, and thoughts for discussion. Participation also means debate and dialog. Engage in a respectful manner with each other. Please turn your cell phone to silent. If you must text or make a call, please exit the class, as it is distracting for your classmates, guest speakers and the instructor. Please **use your laptop for class purposes only**. Surfing the web or writing emails are not class activities. If you choose to do those activities, then please leave the classroom. Although laptops are permitted, I encourage you to consider taking notes on paper. Writing notes has been shown to contribute to greater retention of material. Take a look at this article to learn more: <http://www.npr.org/2016/04/17/474525392/attention-students-put-your-laptops-away>

### **Writing and Grammar**

Good writing skills are imperative in nearly every sector of the working world. Consequently, written work is expected to be concise, organized and with minimal errors (use spell check!). Grammar will be a criterion for grading on all assigned written material. If you are looking to improve your writing, there are several on-campus resources available. More information can be found at: <http://writingcenter.colostate.edu/>



### **Questions / Concerns**

Your first point of contact for questions about the course should be your teaching assistant. (Please copy Dr. Solomon on correspondence.) Both the teaching assistant and Dr. Solomon will always find time to assist students outside of class regarding class assignments, course material, grades or any reason that is remotely related to class. During the semester if you're stuck on an assignment, unclear about a topic, concerned about your grade, pondering your future, etc. don't hesitate to reach out. Please don't wait until the end of the semester to see us if you're having difficulties early on.



### **A Note on Working in a Group**

Almost every job requires employees to work in groups at some point. Some form of frustration or conflict usually occurs when working in a group. If you find yourself working in a group for this class or any other one, where conflict is negatively affecting production there is professional help that you can obtain. You can contact the Student Resolution Center at the Office of Conflict Resolution. See the following site for more information: <https://resolutioncenter.colostate.edu/about-us/>



### **Email**

When writing the teaching assistant or Dr. Solomon and your teaching assistant, please put **NRRT 262** in the subject line. Please note, we are unlikely to respond instantaneously to your email. We will do our best to respond to your email within 48 hours (unless it is over a weekend). Sometimes popping by our student (office) hours will get you a speedier response (plus, we do enjoy chatting with you!).

### **COURSE GROUND RULES:**

- **LISTEN RESPECTFULLY, WITHOUT INTERRUPTING**
- **LISTEN ACTIVELY AND WITH AN EAR TO UNDERSTANDING OTHERS' VIEWS**
- **CRITICIZE IDEAS, NOT INDIVIDUALS**
- **COMMIT TO LEARNING**
- **ALLOW EVERYONE THE CHANCE TO SPEAK**
- **AVOID ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT ANY MEMBER OF THE CLASS**

The QRN code (below) and/or this short link (<https://col.st/2FA2g>) provides policies relevant to the this course and others at CSU; it also provides resources to help with various challenges you may encounter.





### **Academic Integrity**

This course will adhere to the CSU Academic Integrity Policy as found in the General Catalog and the Student Conduct Code. At a minimum, violations will result in a grading penalty in this course and a report to the Office of Conflict Resolution and Student Conduct Services.

We take academic integrity seriously. At minimum, academic integrity means that no one will use another's work as her or his own. The CSU Writing Center defines plagiarism this way:

"Plagiarism is the unauthorized or unacknowledged use of another person's academic or scholarly work. Done on purpose, it is cheating. Done accidentally, it is no less serious. Regardless of how it occurs, plagiarism is a theft of intellectual property and a violation of an ironclad rule demanding "credit be given where credit is due.""

**Source:** (Writing Guides: Understanding Plagiarism.

<https://writing.colostate.edu/guides/guide.cfm?guideid=17> Accessed, August 16, 2023)

If you plagiarize in your work you could lose credit for the plagiarized work, fail the assignment, or fail the course. Plagiarism could result in expulsion from the university. 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.

Of course, academic integrity means more than just avoiding plagiarism. It also involves doing your own reading and studying. It includes regular class attendance, careful consideration of all class materials, and engagement with the class and your fellow students. Academic integrity lies at the core of our common goal: to create an intellectually honest and rigorous community. For more information on practicing academic integrity see: <https://resolutioncenter.colostate.edu/academic-integrity/>

### **A Note on the use of Artificial Intelligence in your Coursework\*:**

The beta release of ChatGPT in November 2022 is among many tools using generative artificial intelligence (AI). It is inevitable that tools like ChatGPT are going to become an important skill for some careers in the not distant future. In the meantime, though, it's going to take a while for us as a society to develop an understanding of when using these tools is/isn't acceptable. There are several reasons why:

- \* Work created by AI tools may not be considered original work and instead, considered automated plagiarism. It is derived from previously created texts from other sources that the models were trained on, but it doesn't cite those sources.
- \* All AI models have built-in biases (i.e., they are trained on limited underlying sources; they reproduce, rather than challenge, errors in the sources – this is where the human mind can really be valuable!)
- \* AI tools have limitations (i.e., they lack critical thinking to evaluate and reflect on criteria; they lack abductive reasoning to make judgments with incomplete information at hand)

Academic integrity is a core principle at CSU, and it is fundamental that students in our university uphold this principle-- whether using AI-based tools or otherwise. For this course, a responsible use of AI-based tools in completing coursework must be done in accordance with the following:

1. Please assume that use of AI is not allowed unless noted in the assignment itself.
2. You must clearly identify the use of AI-based tools in your work. Any work that utilizes AI-based tools must be clearly marked as such, including the specific tool(s) used. For example, if you use ChatGPT-3, you must cite "ChatGPT-3. (YYYY, Month DD of query). "Text of your query." Generated using OpenAI. <https://chat.openai.com/>"
3. You must be transparent in how you used the AI-based tool, including what work is your **original contribution**. When/if you use Artificial Intelligence (AI) platforms in your assignments, please write a note to clarify *where* in your process you used AI and *which* platform(s) you used. It is important to be aware that what the AI writing tools generate may be inaccurate (including citations!) and you may have to do more work to create something meaningful out of them. I also hope that when the assignment is about reflecting on your own opinion or experience, you will do so. Please be aware of the limits of ChatGPT:

- If you provide minimum effort prompts, you will get low quality results. You will need to refine your prompts in order to get good outcomes. This will take work.
- Don't trust anything it says. If it gives you a number, citation, fact, assume it is wrong unless you know the answer. You need to check on the information provided. **You will be responsible for any errors or omissions provided by the tool.** It works best for topics you understand.
- AI is a tool, but one that you need to acknowledge using. As noted above, please include information explaining what you used the AI for and what prompts you used to get the results. Failure to do so is in violation of the academic honesty policies. This was not your work, but that of another.
- Be thoughtful about when this tool is useful. Don't use it if it isn't appropriate for the case or circumstance.

4. You must ensure your use of AI-based tools does not violate any copyright or intellectual property laws.
5. You must not use AI-based tools to cheat on assessments.

Violations of this policy will be dealt with in accordance with CSU's academic integrity policy. If you are found in violation of this policy, you may face penalties such as a reduction in grade, failure of the assignment or assessment, or even failure of the course. Finally, it's your responsibility to be aware of the academic integrity policy and take the necessary steps to ensure that your use of AI-based tools is in compliance with this policy. If you have questions, please speak with me first, as we navigate together how best to responsibly use these tools.

- *This note is adapted from the work of Spencer Ross (UMass Lowell) & Ethan Mollick of Wharton School University of Pennsylvania*

### **COVID-19 & Our Classroom (Adapted by Dr. Solomon from material shared by Dr. Guy McHendry)**

While we are emerging from a global pandemic, it is essential to note that COVID-19 may still affect our classroom. We are a community and are thus dependent on, and affected by, the actions, precautions, and protections each of us takes to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Our classroom provides a link between you and many others, some of whom may be at great risk due to certain circumstances beyond their control. As such, I ask that you take reasonable efforts to protect yourselves, our campus, and our broader community from the spread of COVID-19.

I want to share some thoughts about our collective experiences:

- Some of our lives may be relatively unaffected by the pandemic while others have experienced profound tragedies—we cannot make assumptions about others' experience with the virus.
- We ought to be compassionate with each other and with ourselves—now, perhaps more than ever, is the time to give the gift of grace and kindness.
- Together, we will make this semester as safe, thoughtful, rigorous, and insightful as we can—this applies both to our intellectual efforts and adherence to COVID-19 safety protocols.

All students are expected to follow the guidance provided by the University with regard to COVID-19.

### **A note on University policy related to synchronous classes due to the pandemic:**

NRRT 262 is designated as a face-to-face class and will be held in that format unless the University makes changes to course modalities. Permanent transition to online teaching will not occur without a shift in university policy or procedures. Because this is a university-approved face to face course, students are not able to attend class synchronously online. If you will miss an extended amount of time because of illness please contact the teaching assistant and instructor to discuss options. If circumstances occur that prevent in-person instruction temporarily, an email will be sent to each student in the course and instructions will be posted under Announcements on Canvas.

### **Basic Needs Statement**

At CSU, Rams take care of Rams—period. If you are experiencing food, housing, and/or transportation insecurity, please contact [lsc\\_basicneedsinfo@colostate.edu](mailto:lsc_basicneedsinfo@colostate.edu).

### **Title IX and Student Resources**

If you have experienced sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and/or stalking, know that you are not alone. Confidential victim advocates through the Victim Assistance Team in the Women and Gender Advocacy Center are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to provide support at 970-492-4242. For full information about reporting sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking and/or retaliation please go to the [Office of Title IX Programs and Gender Equity \(https://titleix.colostate.edu/title-ix/reporting-options/\)](https://titleix.colostate.edu/title-ix/reporting-options/).

### **Availability of Student Accommodations**

If you have university-approved circumstances, please contact the Dr. Solomon and the teaching assistant by email the first week of class so that we can make a plan for accommodations to ensure a productive semester together.

Students who have federally supported disabilities will find information about processes and supports available at this site:  
<https://disabilitycenter.colostate.edu/accommodations-process/>