

NRS 592, Public Engagement with Science, Spring 2015
CASE STUDY PRESENTATIONS

Project description

Students will divide into small groups to identify, build, and present a case study that showcases, thinks through, and makes recommendations about some of the rich and difficult facets of public engagement with science in a particular case. Case study presentations will be staggered throughout the semester, with each group assigning related readings one week prior to the class, leading classmates through a 45-minute presentation/discussion of their case study, and submitting a related digital portfolio of case study materials.

The sorts of things that might make good case studies include:

- the Rhode Island Shellfish Management Plan
- the Ocean SAMP process
- restoration projects on the Woonasquatucket River
- Providence's Urban Pond Procession
- the Rhode Island Natural History Survey BioBlitz
- the beach erosion controversy in Matunuck, Rhode Island

But please be creative! Your case doesn't need to be local in scope and it doesn't need to be environmental. Combine your creativity with your critical thinking skills to come up with a case that's interesting, complicated, rich, and dynamic. Students are encouraged to identify case studies that resonate with their research and teaching interests.

This project connects to the following course goals and outcomes:

Course Goals

- To recognize the various forms through which public stakeholders intersect with scientific research and decision-making and the complications and consequences of each
- To identify best practices for public engagement and science communication
- To become familiar with a variety of organizations throughout Rhode Island working to engage relevant publics in scientific research and decision-making

Student Learning Outcomes

- Create real-world case studies that exemplify public engagement with science
- Apply relevant academic theory to analyze real-world cases
- Plan and present a polished collaborative oral presentation
- Formulate rich questions for practicing experts in the field

Resource:

Teaching Socio-Environmental Synthesis with Case Studies 2013

National Socio-Environmental Synthesis Center

<https://www.sesync.org/project/short-courses/teaching-socio-environmental-synthesis-with-case-studies>

In general, case studies will be graded based on the quality of the materials collected, the relevance to our course theme, the critical thinking demonstrated by students, the usefulness of the solutions presented, and the polish of the in-class presentation and digital portfolio. Specific criteria follow.

SELECTION OF CASE (20%)
Focuses on a relevant and multifaceted case
Includes appropriate material that introduces and provides depth to the issue
PRESENTATION (50%)
Includes contributions from all group members
Is polished, formal, and well-prepared both visually and orally
Features activities and discussion questions that get students actively engaging with the presentation
Explicitly mentions and illuminates course texts and concepts
Is well paced to last ~45 minutes
Begins with an overview of the issue, and then extends into specifics
DIGITAL PORTFOLIO (30%)
Includes a table of contents (or similar)
Includes a written introduction to the issue
Includes a lesson plan for the case study
Features complete sentences, well-formed paragraphs, few to no grammatical errors