Course Summary

Institutions are rules, both formal and informal, that shape interactions between individuals, groups, and organizations. Because institutions exist in a vast array of forms at many different levels, they affect nearly every aspect of environmental management. This course provides tools that can be used to analyze informal, local, national, and international institutions. By recognizing the myriad of rules that affect the design, implementation, and effectiveness of environmental management activities, you will be equipped to design successful management activities in many settings.

Critical to all types of institutional analysis are the concepts of rule-making, enforcement, and monitoring. Institutions such as government constitutions, cultural practices, or organizational procedures constraint and shape how rules are made. For any rule to affect behavior, some entity must be willing to impose costs or provide benefits for compliance. Mechanisms of enforcement include social pressures, market demand, legal sanctions, and reputational status. To be able to enforce rules, information about compliance must be available. Monitoring produces this information and comes about through dense social relationships, government audits, private certification schemes, and voluntary reporting requirements, among many other possibilities. Institutional analysis seeks to diagnose the ways that behaviors can be shifted in desirable directions through rule-making, monitoring, and enforcement strategies. As we will see, environmental policies and management activities are seldom effective if they are not nested within supporting institutions.

Course Goals

- Analyze how formal and informal institutions affect individual and organizational behaviors in a variety of settings;
- Assess innovations in rule-making, monitoring, and enforcement and their effects on environmental management;
- Explore the opportunities for institution building and reform at the community, domestic and global levels;
- Complete professional tasks that use institutional analysis;
- Develop professional communication skills related to institutional analysis;

Evaluation

Mini-Projects: The main goal of this course is to use institutional analysis to complete tasks found in professional settings. As such, the course is built around four mini-projects, which will be outlined in separate documents. For each of the mini-projects,
you are encouraged (but not required) to collaborate with up to two classmates. You may only collaborate with any single person one time over the four mini-projects. Everyone in a group must take full ownership of the final project and will receive the same grade, since I have no way to distinguish individual contributions. Choose your collaborators carefully.

Participation: Your active participation is important for the success of this course. Unlike a traditional lecture course evaluated by exams, sessions have been designed to build skills through active participation and discussion. I expect that you will closely read all of the assigned articles and documents before coming to class and that you will be prepared to engage in all discussions and activities. In addition, you will be required to prepare professional presentations for the mini-projects, the quality of which will factor into both your participation and assignment grades. You are expected to attend all course sessions. Talk to me beforehand if you need to miss class for a legitimate reason, otherwise absences will negatively affect your participation grade.

Mini-Project #1 (Institutional profile) 20%
Mini-Project #2 (Monitoring brief) 20%
Mini-Project #3 (Institutional response) 20%
Mini-Project #4 (Institutional proposal) 20%
Participation 20%

Assignment completion policy: You must complete all assignments to pass the course.

Re-grades: I take student evaluation seriously and do not entertain requests to re-grade assignments unless I receive a formal, written request for a re-grade that compellingly documents a serious oversight on my part. A serious oversight on my part indicates that the entire assignment should receive further attention. Your score may go up or down if I decide that an assignment needs this kind of attention, so plan accordingly. That being said, I strongly encourage you to meet with me during office hours to discuss the substance of my comments about your mini-projects.

Academic Honesty: I expect you to adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty. This means only turning in work that is your own and properly citing all information and ideas that you draw from others. Any assignment that does not adhere to UCSB academic honesty guidelines will not receive credit and will be referred to campus judicial procedures. See: http://judicialaffairs.sa.ucsb.edu/AcademicIntegrity.aspx
Key for types of class sessions: Discussion, Lecture, Activity, Presentations

Unit 1: Institutional Forms and Features

Session 1 (Tu 1/10) – Institutional roots of environmental problems (D)


Discussion: Come prepared to describe an environmental problem that you care about and one reason (there may be many) that the problem has not been solved.

Session 2 (Th 1/12) – Types of institutions (L/A)


Ostrom, Governing the Commons, Ch. 2

Activity: Working in small groups, identify the most important institutions involved in producing the outcome that is assigned to your group. Bring laptops.

No Class on Tu 1/17 or Th 1/19

Session 3 (Tu 1/24) – Presentations of institutional profiles (P)


Mini-project #1 (Institutional Profile): identify the institutional features that affect the management outcome of an environmental resource of your choice and submit a 4-5 page institutional profile. Due Friday 1/27 @ 5pm.

Unit 2: Rule-Making

Session 4 (Th 1/26) – Self-organized institutions (L/D)

Ostrom, Governing the Commons, Ch. 6.

**Session 5 (Tu 1/31) – Governments as rule-making institutions (L/A)**

North, *Institutions, Institutional Change, and Economic Performance*, Ch. 1


**Activity:** In groups, identify the advantages, disadvantages, and challenges of working through governmental legislation as a way of address the assigned environmental problem. Bring laptops.

**Session 6 (Th 2/2) – Politics: The struggle to control rule-making institutions (L)**


**Session 7 (Tu 2/7) – Participation and rule-making (D/A)**


**Activity:** Design a participatory process for making the public decision assigned. Bring laptops.

**Unit 3: Monitoring**

**Session 8 (Th 2/9) – Strategic Monitoring (L)**


Read in detail about one EPA compliance monitoring program: [https://www.epa.gov/compliance/compliance-monitoring-programs](https://www.epa.gov/compliance/compliance-monitoring-programs)

**Suggested extra reading:**


**Session 9 (Tu 2/14) – Citizen Monitoring (L)**


**Session 10 (Th 2/16) – Innovations in Monitoring (P)**

**Background reading for some ideas:**


Read the challenge: [http://www.wcuavc.com/](http://www.wcuavc.com/)
Mini-project #2 (Monitoring Brief): Write a 2-page memo to a policy-maker of interest explaining how deficiencies in monitoring arrangements are contributing to an environmental problem and suggesting ways to improve monitoring. Due Monday 2/20 @ 5pm.

Unit 4: Enforcement

Session 11 (Tu 2/21) – Strategic enforcement (D)


Suggested extra reading:

Environmental Protection Agency. 2016. National Enforcement Initiatives. Available at: [https://www.epa.gov/enforcement/national-enforcement-initiatives](https://www.epa.gov/enforcement/national-enforcement-initiatives)


NO CLASS 2/23

Session 12 (Tu 2/28) – Market-based enforcement (D)


Session 13 (Th 3/2) – Presentations of Eco-Label analysis (P)

Background reading:


Mini-project #3 (Institutional Response): Analysis of an Eco-Label from the perspective of a firm or an NGO. Write a 3-4 page strategic assessment about how the firm or NGO should behave with respect to the Eco-Label based on the institutions it establishes. Due Monday 3/6 @ 5pm.

**Session 14 (Tu 3/7) – Legal enforcement (L)**


**Session 15 (Th 3/9) – Social enforcement (D)**


**Building Institutions**

**Session 16 (Tu 3/14) – Development assistance and government reform (L)**


Special Mini-Conference: Final Presentations (W 3/15, 5:20-8:20pm)
Mini-Project #4: Create a 4-5 page proposal for building and/or reforming an institution to manage an environmental problem. Address rule-making, monitoring, and enforcement, including trade-offs between these components of institution building. Due Thursday 3/23 @ 5pm.

Session 17 (Th 3/16) – Building global institutions (L)
