

Politics of the Sea Syllabus

Marine Affairs Program

MARA5589/POLI5589 Winter 2024

Dalhousie University acknowledges that we are in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People and pays respect to the Indigenous knowledges held by the Mi'kmaq People, and to the wisdom of their Elders past and present. The Mi'kmaq People signed Peace and Friendship Treaties with the Crown, and section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982 recognizes and affirms Aboriginal and Treaty rights. We are all Treaty people.

https://ehprnh2mwo3.exactdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf

Dalhousie University also acknowledges the histories, contributions, and legacies of African Nova Scotians, who have been here for over 400 years.

https://cdn.dal.ca/content/dam/dalhousie/pdf/dept/hres/AnnualReport/Scarborough_Charter_EN_Nov2022.pdf

Course Information:

- Lectures: Mondays 11:30 – 14:20, RM 2102 McCain Building
- Instructor: Wilf Swartz, Marine Affairs Program
- Email: wilf.swartz@dal.ca
- Office: RM 808 Life Sciences Building
- Office Hours: Wednesdays 9:00 – 11:00
- Prerequisites: n/a

Welcome to MARA5589. It is my intent to make this course an inclusive and respectful environment, learning from the many perspectives that come from having differing backgrounds and beliefs. I firmly believe that the richness of students' diverse experience will be a strength of this class, and your suggestions are not only encouraged but always appreciated. We are all expected to commit to creating a safe space that promotes open inquiry and self-expression, while also acknowledging and understanding how others' viewpoints may be different from their own.

If you need to discuss deadlines, tasks, assessment, or anything else, please contact me via email. I will respond to your queries within 48 hours.

Course Description:

The objectives of MARA5589 are two-fold: 1) to familiarize students to key concepts and thoughts that are shaping the contemporary discussions on ocean-related policies; and 2) to introduce existing ocean governance frameworks while equipping students with tools to identify and evaluate various policy options. The first objective is achieved through a series of guest lectures where we will undertake critical assessments of prevailing ideas serving as justifications for commonly prescribed ocean policies. These lectures utilize case studies spanning various ocean sectors, including offshore developments, fisheries and desalination. Draw from social theories and movements, ranging from feminist and postcolonial scholarships to critical race theory, the aim is to explore the inequities underpinning many of these policies. The second objective is realized via class projects and discussions, with references to the ongoing Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) on Plastic Pollution as our case study.

Course Materials:

Students are required have access to a laptop for research purposes and assignment preparations. Course content, including all assigned readings as pdfs, and announcements will be made available on Brightspace.

Learning Objectives:

This course has four primary learning objectives. Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Critically evaluate contemporary ocean policy discourses and construct compelling arguments.
2. Read and comprehend complex written material, delivering timely and concise assessments.
3. Apply policy analysis methods to facilitate informed decision-making on ocean-related public policy issues.
4. Present individual research in a public forum and evaluate other's presentations respectfully.

Assessment:

Multiple assessments will be used in this course to help me assess the extent to which you are meeting the learning outcomes listed above. Due to the nature of the assignment, weekly reading memos cannot be deferred; however, if the dates for other assignments do not work for you, please let me know in advance so we can discuss alternative arrangement.

Reading Memos – prior to each class, you will submit a 300 word (maximum) reading analysis, including two questions for the upcoming guest lecture.

Policy Analysis – in a group, you will write a 2000 word (maximum) policy analysis paper, which you will present in the class on Week 10, clearly articulating (1) policy problem of your choice; (2) proposed options; (3) your assessment of these options and (3) your recommendation. Your final paper is to be submitted by 24 March.

Term Paper – you will write a paper of at least 3000 words, which you will present to the class on Week 12. The topic is open though limited to the broad terrain of the topics and issues covered in the lectures. Students must submit: (1) topic outline by 31 January; (2) annotated bibliography by 29 February; (3) final paper by 12 April.

Assignment	Due Date	Weight
Reading Memo 1	14 January	3%
Reading Memo 2	21 January	3%
Reading Memo 3	28 January	3%
Reading Memo 4	4 February	3%
Reading Memo 5	11 February	3%
Reading Memo 6	25 February	3%
Reading Memo 7	3 March	3%
Reading Memo 8	10 March	3%
Reading Memo 9	17 March	3%
Policy Analysis	18 March (presentation)	10% (presentation)
	24 March (paper)	20% (paper)
Reading Memo 10	24 March	3%
Term Paper	1 April (presentation)	10% (presentation)
	12 April (paper)	30% (paper)

Conversion of numerical grades to final letter grades follows the [Dalhousie Grade Scale](#)

A+ (90-100)	B+ (77-79)	C+ (65-69)	D (50-54)
A (85-89)	B (73-76)	C (60-64)	F (0-49)
A- (80-84)	B- (70-72)	C- (55-59)	

Course Policies on Missed or Late Academic Requirements

All classes will take place in person, although the majority of the guest lectures will be given online in class. If you are going to miss a class, please let me know by 10am of that day (no reason necessary). I will set up a Teams link for you to join in, but please understand that you may not be able to fully participate in in-class activities.

Late assignments will incur a penalty of 10% per day unless otherwise discussed.

Course Content:

Each class will be comprised of two parts; one half of the day will feature a guest lecture focusing on prevalent ideas and thoughts shaping ocean public policies and their critique; the other half will cover the introduction of processes and frameworks of ocean governance, including policy analysis methods.

While the readings listed for each week apply to both components of the class; please focus your reading assignments on the materials designated for the guest lecture component of the class, as indicated by **.

Week 1 – 8 January:

Part 1 – Course introduction: we will get to know one another in class, share our goals for the course and review the syllabus.

Part 2 –The Malthusian overfishing: we will explore whether the Malthusian overfishing logic, characterized by the notion of “too many fishers chasing too few fish,” and the Tragedy of the Commons are adequate explanations for overexploitation of fisheries resources and their relevance in shaping policy response.

Readings:

- Pauly D (1990) On Malthusian overfishing.
<http://www.searoundus.org/doc/Researcher+Publications/dpauly/PDF/1990/Other/OnMalthusianOverfishing.pdf>
- Finkbeiner et al (2017) Reconstructing overfishing: Moving beyond Malthus for effective and equitable solutions.
<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/faf.12245>
- Baker-Médard & Sasser (2020) Technological (mis)conceptions: examining birth control as conservation in coastal Madagascar.
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0016718519303136>

Week 2 – 15 January:

Part 1 – International ocean governance: we will examine the framework of ocean governance as prescribed by the Law of the Sea, exploring elements such as ocean jurisdictions (Exclusive Economic Zones) and the rights, duties and obligations of flag and coastal states.

Part 2 – Neutrality of science (guest lecturer: Gerald Singh): we will discuss the intricate relationship between science and policies, challenging the notion that science is inherently incompatible with ideology. As a case study, we will examine recent discussions related to the proposal for an Intergovernmental Panel on Ocean Sustainability (IPOS).

Readings:

- Churchill, Lowe & Sander (2022) The law of the sea: fourth edition, Chapter 1 Introduction.

- **Pielke R (2012) The Honest Broker, Chapter 1 Four idealized roles of science in policy and politics.
- Singh et al. (2023) An international panel for ocean sustainability needs to proactively address challenges facing existing science-policy platforms
<https://www.nature.com/articles/s44183-023-00024-8#:~:text=A%20new%20IPOS%20may%20facilitate,representation%2C%20accountability%2C%20and%20politicization>
- **Singh et al. (2021) Will understanding the ocean lead to “the ocean we want?”
<https://www.pnas.org/doi/abs/10.1073/pnas.2100205118>

Week 3 – 22 January:

Part 1 – Techno-solutionism and path dependency (guest lecturer: Brian O’Neill): using a case study of a desalination project in Arizona/Mexico, we will explore the limitations of technological optimistic ideology. This analysis will highlight instances where a continued reliance on technological advancements proves inadequate in addressing institutional and political challenges.

Part 2 – Other international instruments: we will discuss international instruments, commitments, and obligations beyond the UNCLOS, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, the BBNJ Treaty, SDGs and 2030 Agenda, as well as the ongoing negotiations on plastic pollution.

Readings:

- **O’Niell (2022) Desalination as a new frontier of environmental justice struggle: a dialogue with Oscar Rodriguez and Andrea Leon-Grossmann
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10455752.2022.2126130>
- O’Niell and Boyer (2023) ‘Locking in’ desalination in the US-Mexico borderlands: path dependency, techno-optimism and climate adaptation <https://www.water-alternatives.org/index.php/alldoc/articles/vol16/v16issue2/705-a16-2-8/file>

Week 4 – 29 January: **please note that I will be absent this week

Resource allocation (by Megan Bailey): using multiple case studies from Nunavut and the Nova Scotia lobster fisheries, we will discuss the politics surrounding fisheries allocations amongst multiple parties with divergent objectives, interests, and rights. Our discussion will explore the concept of “optimization” concerning public resources, considering its applicability when considering the complexities inherent in managing fisheries.

Readings:

- TBD

Week 5 – 5 February:

Part 1 – International institutions: we will discuss the multitude of international institutions that play distinct roles within the ocean governance framework. These organizations include

UN agencies, international organizations, regional bodies and civil society groups, each contributing to the complex landscape of ocean governance.

Part 2 – Commodification of ocean resources (guest lecturer: Hekia Bodwitch): continuing on from the discussions in Week 4, we will examine how the market-based approach of ITQs has failed to redress the legacy of colonialism in New Zealand.

Readings:

- **Bodwitch et al (2022) Why New Zealand’s Indigenous reconciliation process has failed to empower Māori fishers: distributional, procedural, and recognition-based injustices <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0305750X22000845>
- **Bodwitch (2017) Challenges for New Zealand’s individual transferable quota system: processor consolidation, fisher exclusion & Māori quota rights <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0308597X16307060>

Week 6 – 12 February:

Part 1 – Policy Analysis I: we will begin our policy analysis process by determining the project’s analytical scope, including determining appropriate decision-maker, defining the policy problem and mapping the problem’s causes and symptoms.

Part 2 – Equity and equality, and anti-inequity in ocean governance (guest lecture: Yoshi Ota): drawing on various critical theories, we will discuss the concepts of equality and equity in the context of the oceans. We will also introduce anti-inequity as an alternative perspective to the traditional “equitable approach,” imploring policy interventions and initiatives to explicitly recognize and redress structural inequities.

Readings:

- **Ota et al. (2022) Finding logic models for sustainable marine development that deliver on social equity <https://journals.plos.org/plosbiology/article?id=10.1371/journal.pbio.3001841>
- O’Neill et al. (forthcoming) Understanding maritime inequities: towards a critical environmental justice approach to ocean equity.
- Singh et al. (2023) An inequity assessment framework for planning coastal and marine conservation and development interventions [https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fmars.2023.125650/full?utm_source=Email_to_authors&utm_medium=Email&utm_content=T1_11.5e1_author&utm_campaign=Email_publication&field=&journalName=Frontiers in Marine Science&id=125650](https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fmars.2023.125650/full?utm_source=Email_to_authors&utm_medium=Email&utm_content=T1_11.5e1_author&utm_campaign=Email_publication&field=&journalName=Frontiers%20in%20Marine%20Science&id=125650)

Week 7 – 26 February:

Part 1 – Policy Analysis II: we will discuss the process of identifying policy options, including status quo, and criteria for systematic evaluations of these options.

Part 2 – Climate justice and offshore oil production (guest lecturer: Leah Fusco): using the case study of environmental impact assessment for offshore oil project in Newfoundland, we

will discuss how the current approach to blue economy overlook equity and justice implications, particularly across scales.

Readings:

- **Fusco et al. (2022) Blueing business as usual in the ocean: blue economies, oil, and climate justice
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0962629822000841>
- **Fusco et al. (2022) Oil, transitions, and the blue economy in Canada
<https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/14/13/8132>

Week 8 – 4 March:

Part 1 – Feminist approach to ocean governance (guest lecturer: Annet Pauwelussen): we will explore how feminist theory can help reframe academic and policy debates on human-ocean relations, and illuminate the structural asymmetries therein.

Part 2 – Policy Analysis III: we will undertake the “analyze” phase of the policy analysis process comprising of implementation and continuous assessment of the key trade-offs.

Readings:

- **Pauwelussen and Lau (2023) A review of gender studies and feminist theory in and for marine social science (pdf)

Week 9 – 11 March:

Part 1 – Policy Analysis IV: the final phase of the policy analysis, the process of writing the results of the analysis, presenting result to the decision-maker and key interested parties, and listening to others on how the analysis can be adapted in a manner that meets the needs of the decision-maker, will be discussed.

Part 2 – Decolonizing the High Seas (guest lecturer: Hussain Sinan): drawing extensively on our guest lecturer’s research into and experience within the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission, we will explore how international institutions which were established nominally in the postcolonial period of the late 20th Century, continue to perpetuate the legacy of colonialism in the ways the High Seas are governed.

Readings:

- **Sinan et al. (2022) David against Goliath? The rise of coastal states at the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission
<https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fmars.2022.983391/full>
- Sinan et al. (2021) Disentangling politics in the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0308597X21003924>

Week 10 – 18 March:

Part 1 – Policy Analysis presentations: each group will present the results and recommendations of their policy analysis projects to their peers.

Part 2 – Equity and MPAs (guest lecture: Ana Spalding) The majority of the world’s ocean-dependent people live in low to middle-income countries in the tropics (i.e., the ‘tropical majority’). Yet the ocean governance agenda is set largely on the basis of scientific knowledge, funding, and institutions from high-income nations in temperate zones. Drawing on diverse perspectives from the tropics, we discuss implications of marine conservation policies on the welfare of the people living in coastal communities.

Readings:

- **Spalding et al. (2023) Engaging the tropical majority to make ocean governance and science more equitable and effective <https://www.nature.com/articles/s44183-023-00015-9>
- Spalding (2020) Towards a political ecology of lifestyle migration: Local perspectives on socio-ecological change in Bocas del Toro, Panama <https://rgs-ibg.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/area.12606>

Week 11 – 25 March:

Part 1 – Reconciliation in the ocean sphere (guest lecture: TBC)

Readings:

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Week 12 – 1 April:

Part 1 – Primer on Plastic Pollution INC-4 (guest lecturer: Eva van der Marel): we will discuss the gaps and limitations of the existing international framework on plastic pollution and the ongoing negotiation for developing an international legally binding instrument.

Part 2 – Class presentations: Everyone will present their term paper in a format akin to an academic conference presentation. Each presentation will be given 8 minutes followed by a brief (2 min) Q+A session.

Readings:

- **Van der Marel (2022) Trading plastic waste in a global economy: soundly regulated by the Basil Convention? <https://academic.oup.com/jel/article/34/3/477/6713994>

University Policies and Statements

Recognition of Mi'kmaq Territory

Dalhousie University would like to acknowledge that the University is on Traditional Mi'kmaq Territory. The Elders in Residence program provides students with access to First Nations elders for guidance, counsel, and support. Visit or e-mail the Indigenous Student Centre at 1321 Edward St or elders@dal.ca. Additional information regarding the Indigenous Student Centre can be found at: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/communities/indigenous.html

Internationalization

At Dalhousie, 'thinking and acting globally' enhances the quality and impact of education, supporting learning that is "interdisciplinary, cross-cultural, global in reach, and orientated toward solving problems that extend across national borders." Additional internationalization information can be found at: <https://www.dal.ca/about-dal/internationalization.html>

Academic Integrity

At Dalhousie University, we are guided in all our work by the values of academic integrity: honesty, trust, fairness, responsibility, and respect. As a student, you are required to demonstrate these values in all the work you do. The University provides policies and procedures that every member of the university community is required to follow to ensure academic integrity. Additional academic integrity information can be found at: https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/academic-integrity.html

Accessibility

The Student Accessibility Centre is Dalhousie's centre of expertise for matters related to student accessibility and accommodation. If there are aspects of the design, instruction, and/or experiences within this course (online or in-person) that result in barriers to your inclusion, please contact the Student Accessibility Centre (https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/accessibility.html) for all courses offered by Dalhousie with the exception of Truro. For courses offered by the Faculty of Agriculture, please contact the Student Success Centre in Truro (<https://www.dal.ca/about-dal/agricultural-campus/student-success-centre.html>)

Conduct in the Classroom – Culture of Respect

Substantial and constructive dialogue on challenging issues is an important part of academic inquiry and exchange. It requires willingness to listen and tolerance of opposing points of view. Consideration of individual differences and alternative viewpoints is required of all class members,

towards each other, towards instructors, and towards guest speakers. While expressions of differing perspectives are welcome and encouraged, the words and language used should remain within acceptable bounds of civility and respect.

Diversity and Inclusion – Culture of Respect

Every person at Dalhousie has a right to be respected and safe. We believe inclusiveness is fundamental to education. We stand for equality. Dalhousie is strengthened in our diversity. We are a respectful and inclusive community. We are committed to being a place where everyone feels welcome and supported, which is why our Strategic Direction prioritizes fostering a culture of diversity and inclusiveness (Strategic Priority 5.2). Additional diversity and inclusion information can be found at: <http://www.dal.ca/cultureofrespect.html>

Student Code of Conduct

Everyone at Dalhousie is expected to treat others with dignity and respect. The Code of Student Conduct allows Dalhousie to take disciplinary action if students don't follow this community expectation. When appropriate, violations of the code can be resolved in a reasonable and informal manner - perhaps through a restorative justice process. If an informal resolution can't be reached, or would be inappropriate, procedures exist for formal dispute resolution. The full Code of Student Conduct can be found at: https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/student-life/code-of-student-conduct.html

Fair Dealing Policy

The Dalhousie University Fair Dealing Policy provides guidance for the limited use of copyright protected material without the risk of infringement and without having to seek the permission of copyright owners. It is intended to provide a balance between the rights of creators and the rights of users at Dalhousie. Additional information regarding the Fair Dealing Policy can be found at: https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/academic/fair-dealing-policy-.html

Originality Checking Software

The course instructor may use Dalhousie's approved originality checking software and Google to check the originality of any work submitted for credit, in accordance with the Student Submission of Assignments and Use of Originality Checking Software Policy. Students are free, without penalty of grade, to choose an alternative method of attesting to the authenticity of their work and must inform the instructor no later than the last day to add/drop classes of their intent to choose an alternate method. Additional information regarding Originality Checking Software can be found at: https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/academic/student-submission-of-assignments-and-use-of-originality-checking-software-policy-.html

Student Use of Course Materials

Course materials are designed for use as part of this course at Dalhousie University and are the property of the instructor unless otherwise stated. Third party copyrighted materials (such as books, journal articles, music, videos, etc.) have either been licensed for use in this course or fall under an exception or limitation in Canadian Copyright law. Copying this course material for distribution (e.g. uploading to a commercial third-party website) may lead to a violation of Copyright law.