

**Course Syllabus – DRAFT****ver. 1.3****ISEN 453 *The Economics of Environmental Justice***

Spring 2021

Instructor(s): TBD**NU Faculty Advisor:** [Megan Kashner](#), Social Impact, Kellogg**Possible Guest Lecturers:**[Terry Travis](#), EV Hybrid Noire[Meleah Geertsma](#), NRDC, Senior Attorney[Matthew Tejada](#), US EPA, Director of Environmental Justice[Jacqueline Patterson](#), Senior Director, Environmental and Climate Justice Program NAACP**Office Hours:** By appointment**Class Timing:** Spring Quarter 2021; 3 hours of classroom instruction per week; Aiming for 50% in person instruction at Evanston Campus (strict protocols); all guests via Zoom; Likely in person classes on M or Tu and guest lecturers on Wed / Th; no class on Fridays; this course will be taught between May 3 and June 4, 2021**Class Type:** 0.5 credit (5 weeks) Elective for Master of Science in Energy & Sustainability; open to other graduate students including Kellogg students and McCormick School of Engineering graduate students

Course Synopsis: This class will cover three main topics:

- What is environmental justice (EJ)?
- Why is it important? What is the normative and economic case for redressing environmental justice issues?
- Does/can environmental justice make economic sense for a variety of stakeholders?

This course is designed for a broad base of students working in energy and sustainability to ensure a common understanding of environmental justice and its role in today's markets. This course is highly appropriate for students who may not make environmental justice the central focus of their career but will undoubtedly need to understand the definition of, rationale for and economic value of environmental justice.

Definition of Environmental Justice from the US Environmental Protection Agency

Environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. This goal will be achieved when everyone enjoys:

- *the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards, and*

- *equal access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment in which to live, learn, and work.*

Course Goals: At the end of this course, students should clearly understand the following:

- **Context for Environmental Justice** – the historical conditions that have driven focus on EJ and created a current day scenario where EJ has not yet been achieved
- **Stakeholders in Environmental Justice** – who does / should care about EJ and why; understand the impact on various communities (geographies / neighborhoods, demographic groups, businesses, governments etc.)
- **Costs & Benefits of Environmental Justice** – Ability to outline major drivers of cost and benefit associated with EJ. During the course, students will conduct / build an economic model at least 3 times (2x cases, 1x for final)
- **Relationships Between EJ and Broader Social Movements** – Developing an understanding of the relationship between EJ and causes such as indigenous people’s rights, urban policy reform, not-in-my-backyard mentalities etc. Students should be able to clearly link these with these the broader issue of climate change in general.
- **Ability to explain and discuss EJ** – Build the vocabulary and understanding of environmental justice that will allow emerging professionals to determine what role EJ will have in their future endeavors (business, government, non-profit etc.)

The primary success metric in the course is to ensure that students are conversant in environmental justice and can lead a fact-based conversation about the application of EJ in today’s market upon completion of the course

Grading/Assessment:

Grading will be based on the following rubric:

| Component | Weight | Details | Due |
|-----------------------|--------|--|--------------------|
| Quiz | 10% | Short online quiz on the history of environmental justice and basic concepts related to it. | Week #1 |
| Reflective Response | 10% | A 500-600-word reflection on the themes discussed in the class so far. How have they challenged or augmented your view of climate change and the environment? What, if anything, surprised you? How do you find yourself situated in the themes of the course? | Week #3 |
| Case Studies | 30% | Deliver 2-3-page write ups on environmental justice case examples (x2, 15% each) | Week #2 Week #4 |
| Final Model and Paper | 40% | Examine one current or historical environmental justice case and perform an economic analysis. Make a recommendation for how to ensure economic benefit (including externalities) OR explain through detailed | Finals Week |

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| | | analysis how this EJ case cannot create economic value. Good responses will incorporate theories and methods learned in class. | |
| Participation | 10% | Active participation in all 5 weeks of the course is critical. Environmental Justice can be a difficult topic to discuss but contribution to the course will require students to navigate these topics. It is important to build this skill for use in the workplace. | All quarter |

Grading Policy:

- Grades will be assigned based on all the work you have completed during the semester following the traditional practice of A=90-100, B=80-89, C=70-79, D=60-69, F<60.

Course Readings by Module:

The following texts are required for the class. Other articles and essays will be distributed in class. Students should bring the assigned texts and copies of all articles to class for discussion.

GENERAL

- [EPA Factsheet on Environmental Justice](#)

INTRODUCTION

- [How Decades of Racist Housing Policy Left Neighborhoods Sweltering](#): New York Times
- Ryan Holifield (2001) [Defining Environmental Justice and Environmental Racism](#), Urban Geography, 22:1, 78-90, DOI: 10.2747/0272-3638.22.1.78
- Naomi Klein (2014) This Changes Everything: Beyond Extractivism (Chapter 5).

COSTS, BENEFITS, STAKEHOLDERS

- Parviainen, T., Lehtikoinen, A., Kuikka, S. *et al.* [How can stakeholders promote environmental and social responsibility in the shipping industry?](#). *WMU J Marit Affairs* 17, 49–70 (2018). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13437-017-0134-z>
- EPA: [Technical Guidance for Assessing Environmental Justice in Regulatory Analysis](#)

CORPORATES AND STATES

- Leonard, L. [Mining Corporations, Democratic Meddling, and Environmental Justice in South Africa](#). *Soc. Sci.* 2018, 7, 259.
- The Guardian: [“Amnesty seeks criminal inquiry into Shell over alleged complicity in murder and torture in Nigeria”](#)

MOBILITY, EMPLOYMENT, ACCESS

- Rector, J. (2018). The Spirit of Black Lake: Full Employment, Civil Rights, and the Forgotten Early History of Environmental Justice. *Modern American History*, 1(1), 45-66. doi:10.1017/mah.2017.18
- Patz, J.A., Gibbs, H.K., Foley, J.A. *et al.* Climate Change and Global Health: Quantifying a Growing Ethical Crisis. *EcoHealth* 4, 397–405 (2007). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10393-007-0141-1>
- Greentech Media: [Why It’s Still Important to Talk About Diversity in the Renewables Industry](#)

ENERGY POVERTY, INFRASTRUCTURE, GOVERNMENT

- Chester Energy and Policy: [Green Causes Are Not Always Colorblind: Racial Disparity in Energy Issues](#)

Supplemental Reading List

Readings:

William Reilly, “Environmental Equity”
 Bill Clinton, “Executive Order 12898” (and accompanying Memorandum)
 Robert Bullard, “Environmental Justice in the Twenty-First Century”
 Robert Bullard et al., “Environmental Justice: Milestones and Accomplishments”
 Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, “Resolution Recognizing the Duty of the Federal Government to Create a Green New Deal”
 Ike Okonta and Oronto Douglas, “Where Vultures Feast: Shell, Human Rights and Oil”
[Racing to Justice](#) John A. Powell
[Democracy in Black](#) Eddie S. Glaude
[The Economics of Environmental Justice](#) Samuel Stolper and Catherine Hausman

Video Viewings

[ProPublica](#)
[NRDC](#)

CLASS OUTLINE

| Weekly Topic | Description |
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| <p>1: Introduction to Environmental Justice <i>May 3, 2021</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to course, logistics, syllabus. • How do we define environmental justice? • Who is disproportionately affected: race, class, gender, indigeneity, Global North/South. • Introducing key concepts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Historical Context ○ Contemporary Impact of Unjust Policy ○ Notion of ‘Sacrifice Zones’ ○ Opportunities in EJ • One key example that ties this all together/encapsulates these issues: potentially case study of Nauru (see Klein reading). <p>QUIZ DUE BEFORE WEEK #2</p> |
| <p>2: Costs, Benefits and Stakeholders: Economic Modelling <i>May 10, 2021</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laying out stakeholders in EJ today: corporations, state actors, MNCs, global non-profits, grassroots activists, frontline communities. • Costs and benefits of EJ to each. • What tools can be used for EJ by each stakeholder: CSR, policy, activism, reparative measures, protests etc. |



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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we attach economic value to EJ? Quantifying externalities through existing models (Nordhaus etc.), models from the EPA etc. • Sample cases that have incorporated a wide variety of stakeholders: for example public-private collaboration in Chicago. <p>CASE STUDY #1 DUE</p> |
| <p>3: Environment & Social Justice: Corporate/State Responsibility <i>May 17, 2021</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EJ in the supply chain: Relationships between circular economy, renewable power, clean tech and EJ. • EJ and CSR (corporate social responsibility): How can CSR be optimized for EJ? Has it been an effective tool in the past? • Corporations and Politics: How have MNCs eroded political process historically, especially in the Global South? What does this have to do with EJ, sacrifice zones, human rights? Key example of Shell in Nigeria. • EJ and the State: Example of Dakota Access Pipeline protests, relationship of the state and policing to EJ. <p>REFLECTION PAPER DUE</p> |
| <p>4: Mobility, Employment & Access <i>May 24, 2021</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EJ and employment: what are the historical linkages between demands for employment and EJ? • Representation and EJ: how can new green jobs be avenues for redressing injustices? How representative is the energy and sustainability sector today? • EJ and Health: How are health and EJ related? What is the connection between conventional energy generation, EJ and health? • Economic modelling of health, developmental issues: difficulties in quantifying externalities. <p>CASE STUDY #2 DUE</p> |
| <p>5: Energy Poverty, Infrastructure and Government Investment <i>May 31, 2021</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green infrastructure and EJ: access to small-scale green tech such as rooftop solar, disproportionate benefits of large-scale green tech. • Global dimensions of energy poverty and EJ: how can the Global South afford a transition to green energy? • Introducing additional stakeholders: international orgs and their role. • Relation to contemporary politics: GND, just transition plans for fossil fuel workers. • Conclusion: wins for environmental justice, successful corporate-public partnerships, opportunities. <p>FINAL MODEL PAPER</p> |

There will be no final exam for this class but final models and papers will be due on scheduled final exam date (week of June 7, 2021).



Northwestern University Policies & Resources:

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is taken very seriously at Northwestern. Students are responsible for reading and understanding Northwestern's Academic Integrity policies. All suspected violations will be reported to the McCormick College of Engineering's Dean's Office. These include: cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, unfair advantage, unauthorized collaboration, and aiding and abetting of academic dishonesty. Students found in violation of academic integrity may receive a zero on the assignment or a failing grade for the course, and may be suspended or permanently expelled from the University. See [Academic Integrity: A Basic Guide](#) for more information.

AccessibleNU and Disability Accommodations

Any student requesting accommodations related to a disability or any other condition is required to register with AccessibleNU (847-467-5530) and provide professors with an accommodation notification from AccessibleNU, preferably within the first two weeks of class. All information will remain confidential. See the [AccessibleNU website](#) for more information.

Illness and Medical Leave of Absence

Review the University's [policy](#) on missing academic work due to illness. Your instructor cannot waive an assignment missed due to illness unless she can verify your illness with Health Services.

Discrimination and Sexual Harassment

Northwestern's Policies on Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Harassment apply to all members of the University community, including students, staff, faculty, and third parties. Any student, staff, faculty member, or third party who believes that they have been discriminated against or harassed on the basis of their race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, parental status, marital status, age, disability, citizenship, veteran status, genetic information or any other classification protected by law, should contact the Office of Equity at (847) 467-6571. Additional information about the University's discrimination and harassment policies, including the campus resources available to assist individuals with discrimination or harassment concerns, is available online on the [Office of Equity Website](#). Students, staff, and faculty who report harassment, discrimination, or sexual misconduct are also protected under the [University's Policy on Non-Retaliation](#).

Sexual Misconduct and Reporting

Northwestern University is committed to fostering an environment where students are safe and free from sexual misconduct. [Confidential resources](#) are available to those who have experienced sexual misconduct. Faculty and instructors are not confidential resources and are required to report incidents of sexual misconduct, whether discussed in your assignments or in person, to the Office of Equity, which can

provide information about resources and options. We encourage students who have experienced sexual misconduct to talk with someone to get support. For more information, including how to request interim protective measures and academic accommodations or file a complaint, see the [Get Help page](#).

Other Resources

Students can find useful resources for safety and security, academic support, and mental and physical health and well-being at the [NUhelp website](#).

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