

**Pratt Institute: Syllabus
Graduate School for Urban Planning and the Environment
Fall Term/Environmental Justice**

EMS Environmental Justice

Type of Course: Lecture

Credits: 3 credits

Class Meetings: Weekly

Prerequisites: None

Enrollment Capacity: 12

Instructor: Samara F. Swanston (917) 324- 0541 fotlah@earthlink.net Section EMS

Time and Location:

Course Overview: Environmental Justice will examine the role of equity in environmental planning, policy-making, decisionmaking respecting the distribution of environmental burdens and benefits. The course has several components. It examines the History of the Environmental Justice Movement, the Principles of Environmental Justice and Green Partnerships, and seminal Environmental Justice studies. It includes the Law of Environmental Justice including civil rights, and environmental justice laws and strategies, seminal civil rights and environmental justice litigated cases and a survey of the results of legal strategies to achieve Environmental Justice. Environmental Justice includes the role of race, class, gender and health in environmental planning and policy-making with a particular focus on the national, state and local laws, rules and zoning resolutions governing Environmental Infrastructure Siting Criteria, Impacts and fairness. The course includes the role of environmental, expert and local knowledge in influencing planning, public policy and decision making. Finally the course identifies opportunities for students to incorporate environmental justice into principled professional practice.

Learning Objectives:

There are three learning objectives for this course. The first objective is to learn the substance and understand the underlying theories of Environmental Justice, the laws applicable to it, the regulations, rules and public policies that implement it, and the adverse effects of inequitable environmental public planning and decision-making. The second objective is to study burdens associated with environmental infrastructure siting and understand the results of litigated and negotiated efforts to achieve environmental justice and improved environmental quality for impacted communities. Finally the objective is to highlight the importance of the role of environmental, expert and local knowledge in ethical planning and decisionmaking, and identify opportunities to incorporate environmental justice into a professional practice.

Course Requirements:

There will be an assigned reading each week except the first week and the last week. Students will be expected to do all their reading and be prepared to discuss it in class. If you haven't done it you should let me know. This is important because successful completion of this course will involve extensive reading. However I believe that you will find the reading to be both challenging and stimulating. Everyone contributes to environmental degradation

but not everyone bears an equal burden for it or enjoys adequate environmental protection. Students who study Environmental Justice will be prepared to approach their professional practice fully informed of the roles of race, class and gender in environmental planning and decisionmaking and will be able to integrate concepts of environmental justice into a principled professional practice.

Methods of Assessment: There will be a quiz after each substantive law unit studied, mini-statutory collaborative/lecture studios and a final exam. Your grade will be based upon your preparation, your classroom participation, and your final exam grade.

Bibliography:

Selected readings, statutes, cases and invited speakers.

Your Professor will provide all readings.

**ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE
COURSE SYLLABUS**

Professor Samara F. Swanston

****Bring assigned readings to class each day****

Environmental Justice: Examining the Relationship Between Principled Planning, Development and Environmental Justice

Week 1

Lecture: Why Study Environmental Justice?

- a. EJ FILMS (20 MINUTES) Greenpeace: Communities in Crisis, Drumbeat for Mother Earth, Legal Winds of Changes

Selected Assigned Readings

- b. Professional Responsibility and Principled Practice: Environmental Ethics and Agenda 21: Conservation and Management of Resources for Development

Week 2

Introduction to Environmental Justice, Goals, Definitions, Histories, Literature Search, Environmental Ethics: Environmental Ethics and Agenda 21, Principles of Environmental Justice and Principles of Green Partnerships, Seminal Environmental Justice Studies

- a. Siting of Hazardous Waste Landfills and Economic Status of Surrounding Communities, General Accounting Office;
- b. Toxic Waste and Race, United Church of Christ;
- c. Environmental Equity: Reducing Risk for All Communities, Environmental Protection Agency;

- d. Unequal Protection: The Racial Divide in Environmental Law, The National Law Journal

Week 3 Environmental Justice: Race, Class and Gender

- e. Estimating Human Exposures to Environmental Pollutants: Availability and Utility of Existing Databases, Archives of Environmental Health
- f. Risk of Congenital Malformations Associated with Proximity to Hazardous Waste Sites, American Journal of Epidemiology
- g. The Concept of Race and Health Status in America, Public Health Report
- h. Race, Gender, Age and Disproportionate Impact: What Can We Do About the Failure to Protect the Most Vulnerable?, Fordham Law Review
- i. Inequity in the Environmental Health Protection of Women, Rutgers Women's Rights Reporter

Week 4 Lecture: State of the Law and Environmental Policy

- a. The Law of Environmental Justice, By Michael Gerrard
Selected Readings

- c. Executive Order on Environmental Justice, Executive Order 12898, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VII Complaints
- d. Implementing Regulations
- e. Caselaw: Recreational Benefits
 - Lawrence V. Hancock;
 - DEC v Commonwealth of Virginia;
 - Simpkins v. The City of Greensboro;
 - Bohler v. Lane
 - Dawson v. City of Baltimore

Week 5

Caselaw: Transportation

Civic Improvement Committee v. Volpe

Harrison Coalition v. Ruining the Environmental V. Volpe
Parks

Beal v. Lindsay

Civil Rights

Washington v. Davis

Arlington Heights v. Metropolitan Housing Corp

Infrastructure

Johnson v. City of Arcadia

Week 6

Bean v. Southwestern Waste Management Corp.

Dowdell v. City of Apopka

Coalition of Concerned Citizens Against I-670 v. Damian

Ammons v. Dade City, Florida

Chinese Staff and Workers v. City of New York

NYC Coalition to End Lead Poisoning V. Koch

Uprose v. New York Power Authority

Week 7

Environmental Infrastructure Siting Criteria

New York City Zoning Resolutions, State Certifications of Need, Resource Limitations
Waste Transfer Siting Criteria, Power Plant Siting, Group Homes, Bus Depots, Prisons,
Solid and Hazardous Waste siting criteria

Week 8

Environmental Infrastructure Siting Impacts

Health, education, ecosystem, environmental quality, economic and aesthetic impacts

Week 9

Equity in Environmental Infrastructure Siting

NYC Fair Share, Group Homes, Bus Depots, Prisons, Solid and Hazardous Waste
Impacts, Legal Challenges

Week 10

Street Science: Community Knowledge and Environmental Health, Jason Coburn

Chapter 2 Characterizing Local Knowledge

Invited Lecture

Solid Waste Organizing and Local Knowledge: Eddie Bautista and OWN

Week 11

Street Science, Jason Coburn, Chapter 3 Risk Assessment, Community Knowledge and
Subsistence Anglers

Invited Lecture

Building Recreational Infrastructure: Environmental Knowledge and Local Knowledge:
Ceil and WHEACT

Week 12

Street Science, Jason Coburn, Chapter 6 Mapping of Local Knowledge

Invited Lecture

Recreational and Open Space Planning, Acquisition and Funding: Expert Knowledge and
Environmental Knowledge: John Stouffer and Sierra Club

Week 13

Individual Class Projects: Proposals for Integrating Environmental Justice into
Professional Practice and Comprehensive Review

Week 14

Final Exam