

Winter 2023  ENV H 473/584



# ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH POLICY & PRACTICE

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## MEETING TIMES & LOCATION

3:30pm – 5:20pm on Wednesday in SOCC 221 & Friday in HSEB 325

## INSTRUCTOR

Emily Hovis, Assistant Teaching Professor | DEOHS  
Email: [ehovis@uw.edu](mailto:ehovis@uw.edu) | Office Hours: By Appointment

## TEACHING ASSISTANT

Matias Korfmacher, Second Year MPH Student | DEOHS  
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## COURSE DESCRIPTION

Explore how environmental health problems are controlled in the United States by examining the policies and practices of environmental health. We will look at how various government programs are established, organized, and operated to prevent or control hazards in the community, and the legal and regulatory framework behind them.

# COURSE INFORMATION

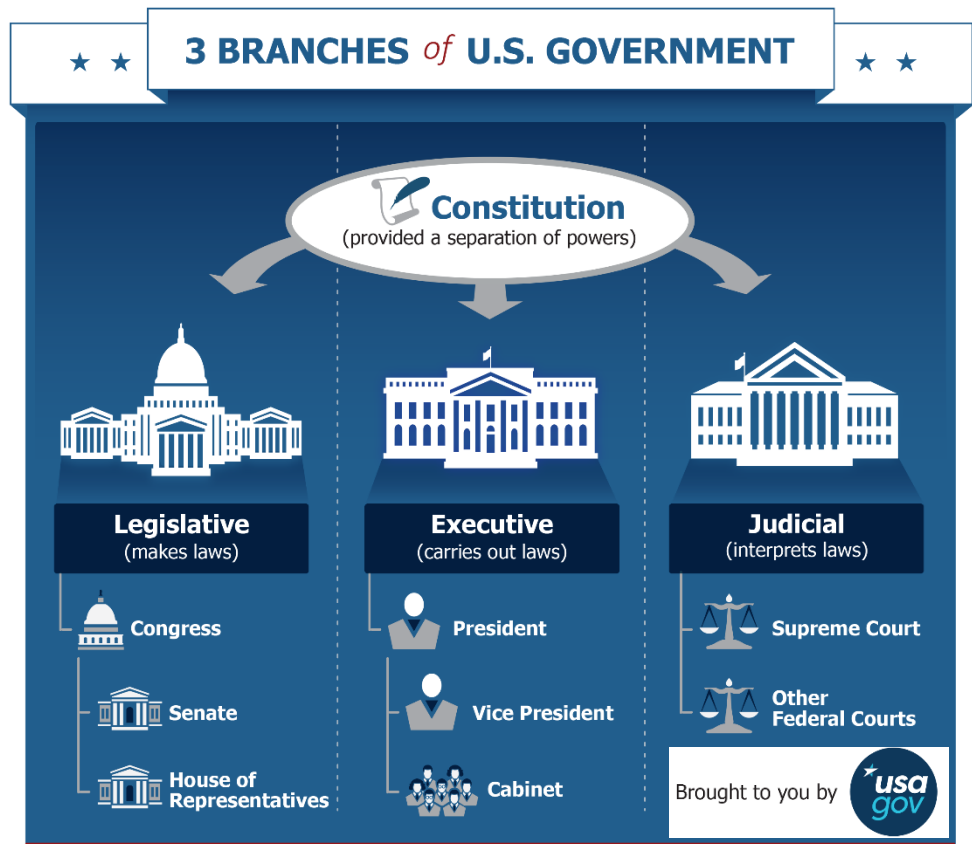
## LEARNING GOALS

Upon completion of this course, ENVH 473 students should be able to:

1. Describe the historical, political and legal basis of the major environmental health programs in the U.S.
2. Discuss the roles of federal, state, and local legislatures, courts, and executives in the environmental health-related policy making process
3. Assess jurisdictional environmental health issues and priorities
4. Develop strategies and approaches to address environmental health issues

Upon completion of this course, ENVH 584 students should be able to:

1. Assess and contrast the roles and responsibilities of state and federal governments in environmental health policy development and implementation
2. Describe the roles of politics, public opinion, and economics in environmental health policy development
3. Develop and evaluate strategies and approaches to address environmental health issues
4. Assess the magnitude, determinants, and impacts of a community-level environmental health issue
5. Develop strategies to communicate about environmental health policy issues for different audiences or sectors, using different media



## COURSE FORMAT

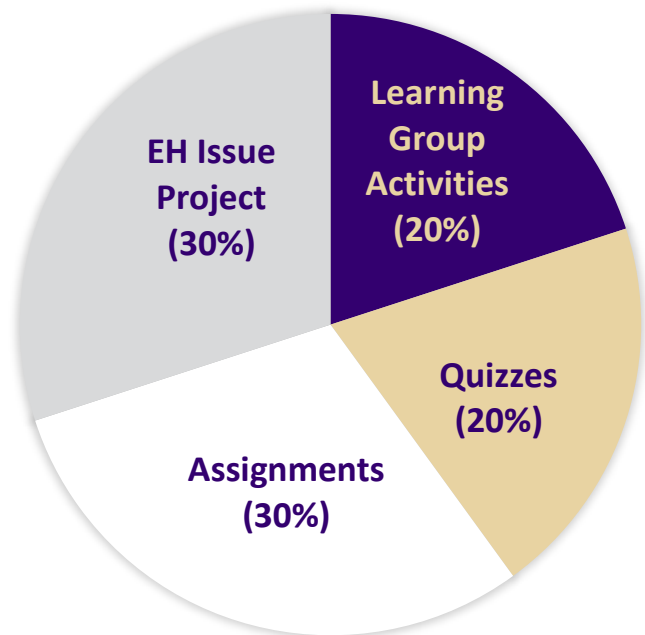
Classes will be formatted to include a combination of lectures, discussion, and case studies. When appropriate, a subject matter expert may be asked to present a topic to the course. Students are encouraged to engage these special guests through discussion and questioning. This course is grounded in student-centered, active learning. At the beginning of the course, students will be introduced to the policy making process and key considerations and tools in policy development, including economics and public interest. The course will go on to explore key environmental policy (i.e., legislation, regulations, or judicial opinion) on select environmental health issues of international concern. The associated class sessions will typically include a lecture that introduces the environmental health problems of interest and the policy solutions used to address these problems. The roles and responsibilities of federal and state governments in the implementation of the policy solutions will be discussed. Each module will include small learning group activities, such as a discussion or case briefing activity.

## GRADING / ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING

All quizzes, assignments and assessments (with few exceptions) must be submitted through Canvas by the due date. Late submissions will face a 2% penalty for each day they are late for a maximum of 50%. Your final grade will be calculated based on the following:

**Learning Group Activities (20%):** Students will form learning groups that meet in-class throughout the quarter. Learning groups meet during scheduled class time to engage in discussions, case studies, and other learning activities. Groups will turn in a written learning group activity (LGA) assignment documenting their discussion at the end of class. Each member of the group should participate in these discussions and contribute to the assignment. To encourage you to stay home due to illness, we will drop your lowest grade in this assignment category.

**Quizzes (20%):** Quizzes will be available through Canvas before our scheduled class time. Quizzes will cover key content from the assigned textbook readings and Canvas modules. Some weeks there will be multiple quizzes to complete, and some weeks there may be none. These are designed to keep you engaged in the material and to help you (and me!) assess whether you are learning as you go. You are required to complete all quizzes, but we will drop your lowest quiz score.



**Assignments (30%):** Assignments will help students stay on track, understand and remember key points, and provide the opportunity to apply learning, evaluate evidence, synthesize material, and make connections between topics. Most assignments will be submitted electronically through Canvas. Major assignments are described below:

<b>ALL STUDENTS</b>	<p><b>Public Meeting Assignment:</b> Students will be asked to attend a public meeting on an environmental health topic of their choice and summarize their experience. A list of eligible meetings in Washington is included in the assignment description. Students may elect to attend an alternative meeting with advance approval from the instructor. Virtual attendance at a national meeting or meeting located outside the Seattle area may be considered on a case-by-case basis. A formal assignment description with instructions is available on canvas.</p> <p><b>Briefing Memo:</b> Students will describe the magnitude and impacts of an environmental health problem and propose, evaluate, and recommend solutions to address the problem in the form of a concise briefing memo for a policy/decision maker. A formal assignment description with instructions is available on canvas.</p> <p><b>Guest Lecture Summaries:</b> Subject matter experts will provide guest lectures throughout the quarter. These special guests are invited to give students a different perspective on environmental health policy and practice. Students are encouraged to engage with these special guests during class through discussion and questioning. Students will then submit a short summary about what they learned, including 2 key takeaways, after each guest lecture.</p>
<b>GRADUATE STUDENTS ONLY</b>	<p><b>Public Comment:</b> As an addendum to their public meeting assignment, graduate students will write a brief, evidence-informed public comment that could be delivered at the public meeting to inform policy makers about the environmental health impacts of the issue or proposed policy.</p> <p><b>Evaluation Plan Design:</b> As an addendum to their final briefing memo assignment, students will develop an evaluation plan for the environmental public health program strategy that they are recommending.</p> <p><b>Expert Testimony Development:</b> Students will develop an expert testimony that synthesizes complex evidence for law makers to consider in the policy making process.</p>

**Environmental Health Assessment Project (30%):** During the last 5 class sessions, groups will address one real-world environmental health issue impacting the City of Seattle. Through this in-class experience, students will describe the magnitude, scope, and impacts of the problem, assess the complex causes of the problem, develop and prioritize solutions, develop a budget, and plan an evaluation. Finally, groups will create an Issue profile and present their profile to the class.

ENVH 473/584 grades will be calculated using the following 4.0 scale conversion:

4.0 Scale	Percentage	4.0 Scale	Percentage	4.0 Scale	Percentage
4.0	≥98.0%	2.8	<84.7%	1.6	<71.2%
3.9	<97.0%	2.7	<83.5%	1.5	<70.1%
3.8	<95.9%	2.6	<82.4%	1.4	<69.0%
3.7	<94.8%	2.5	<81.3%	1.3	<67.8%
3.6	<93.6%	2.4	<80.2%	1.2	<66.7%
3.5	<92.5%	2.3	<79.1%	1.1	<65.6%
3.4	<91.4%	2.2	<77.9%	1.0	<64.5%
3.3	<90.3%	2.1	<76.8%	0.9	<63.4%
3.2	<89.2%	2.0	<75.7%	0.8	<62.2%
3.1	<88.0%	1.9	<74.6%	0.7	<61.1%
3.0	<86.9%	1.8	<73.5%	0.0	<60.0%
2.9	<85.8%	1.7	<72.3%		

*Table 1 - 4.0 Scale to Percentage and Letter Grade Conversion for ENVH 473/584 Students*

## STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Each student is expected to:

1. Prepare for each class session by completing assigned readings and quizzes, participate actively in course discussions, and engage with guest speakers.
2. Complete all graded requirements and activities (see the Grading/Assessment of Learning section below).
3. Come to class on time, refrain from packing up belongings before class ends, give full respectful attention while either the instructor or another student is speaking, use courteous, respectful language, and keep comments and questions relevant to the topic at hand.

Laptops should be brought to class for learning group activities. Laptops and electronic devices are permitted in class for course-related academic purposes only. Electronic devices that might create a disruption in class should be turned off.

## COURSE MATERIALS

An overview of course materials will be available on Canvas as the first page in the weekly module. This overview will describe weekly learning objectives and list things 'to do' before coming to class:

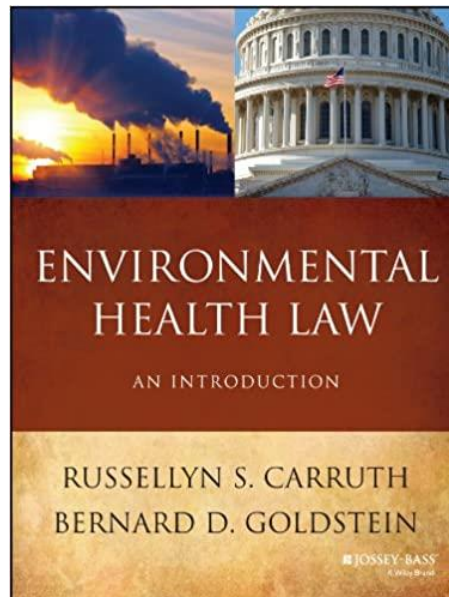


**To Read or View - Required Readings & Videos:** This section includes pages of foundational content with links to readings and videos that are designed to enrich your learning experience. These materials are required to be read before coming to class.



**To Complete and Submit – Required Quizzes & Assignments:** This section includes a list of quizzes, activities, and assignments that should be submitted/uploaded to Canvas by the listed due date.

**Required Textbook:** Carruth RS & Goldstein BD. *Environmental Health Law: An Introduction*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass: A Wiley Brand; 2014. [Free online access of this required text is available through the UW Libraries](#)



**Required Documentaries:** Students will also be required to view three documentaries publicly available through PBS:

- Frontline's *Climate of Doubt*. October 23, 2012. Available online here: <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/climate-of-doubt/>
- Frontline's *Poisoned Waters*. PBS. April 21, 2009. Available online here: <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/poisonedwaters/?autoplay>
- Frontline's *The Spill*. October 26, 2010. Available online here: <https://www.pbs.org/video/frontline-the-spill/>

# ENVH 473/584: ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH POLICY & PRACTICE TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

**Disclaimer:** The syllabus, readings, and/or lecture schedule are all subject to change. Any changes will be announced in class and posted on Canvas.

WEEK	DATE	SUBJECT
1	Wednesday 1/4	<b>Course Introduction</b>
	Friday 1/6	<b>Introduction to the Policy Process</b>
2	Wednesday 1/11	<b>The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)</b>
	Friday 1/13	<b>The Clean Air Act (CAA)</b>
3	Wednesday 1/18	<b>The Clean Water Act (CWA)</b>
	Friday 1/20	<b>The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA)</b>
4	Wednesday 1/25	<b>The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA or "Superfund Act")</b>
	Friday 1/27	<b>The River That Made Seattle: Duwamish River Superfund Site Case Study</b> <i>Guest Lecture: BJ Cummings with UW Superfund Research Program</i>
5	Wednesday 2/1	<b>The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) and the Oil Pollution Act (OPA)</b>
	Friday 2/3	<b>The Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act (EPCRA)</b>

# ENVH 473/584: ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH POLICY & PRACTICE TENTATIVE SCHEDULE (CONTINUED)

**Disclaimer:** The syllabus, readings, and/or lecture schedule are all subject to change. Any changes will be announced in class and posted on Canvas.

WEEK	DATE	SUBJECT
6	Wednesday 2/8	<b>Environmental Justice &amp; Policy</b> <i>Guest Lecture:</i> Courtney Cecale with WA Department of Ecology
	Friday 2/10	<b>Introduction to Environmental Health Practice</b>
7	Wednesday 2/15	<b>Environmental Public Health Policy in WA State</b> <i>Guest Lecture:</i> Joe Laxson with WA Department of Health
	Friday 2/17	<b>The Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) &amp; The Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FDCA)</b>
8	Wednesday 2/22	<b>The Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSH) and the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA)</b> <i>Guest Lecture:</i> Maggie Leland with WA Department of L&I
	Friday 2/24	<b>Environmental Health Assessment Activity - Identifying Environmental Health Problems in Our Community</b>
9	Wednesday 3/1	<b>Environmental Health Assessment Activity - Addressing Environmental Health Problems in Our Community</b>
	Friday 3/3	
10	Wednesday 3/8	<b>Environmental Health Assessment Activity - Communicating Environmental Health Problems in Our Community</b>
	Friday 3/10	



# COURSE POLICIES

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## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students at the University of Washington (UW) are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic conduct, professional honesty, and personal integrity.

The UW School of Public Health (SPH) is committed to upholding standards of academic integrity consistent with the academic and professional communities of which it is a part. Plagiarism, cheating, and other misconduct are serious violations of [the University of Washington Student Conduct Code](#) (WAC 478-120). We expect you to know and follow the university's policies on cheating and plagiarism, and [the SPH Academic Integrity Policy](#). Any suspected cases of academic misconduct will be handled according to University of Washington regulations. For more information, see the University of Washington [Community Standards and Student Conduct](#) website.

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## ACCESS & ACCOMODATION

Your experience in this class is important to me. It is the policy and practice of the University of Washington to create inclusive and accessible learning environments consistent with federal and state law. If you have already established accommodations with Disability Resources for Students (DRS), please activate your accommodations via myDRS so we can discuss how they will be implemented in this course.

If you have not yet established services through DRS, but have a temporary health condition or permanent disability that requires accommodations (conditions include but not limited to; mental health, attention-related, learning, vision, hearing, physical or health impacts), contact DRS directly to set up an Access Plan. DRS facilitates the interactive process that establishes reasonable accommodations. Contact DRS at [disability.uw.edu](http://disability.uw.edu).

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## BIAS CONCERNS

The Office of the Dean has a [student concern policy](#), a faculty concern policy and standard HR procedures for staff concerns. Our 2018 climate survey states that most people in SPH do not report bias incidents because they do not know where to go. Students are encouraged to report any incidents of bias to someone they feel comfortable with, including instructors, advisers or department staff. They can email [dcinfo@uw.edu](mailto:dcinfo@uw.edu) for immediate follow up. Bias concerns can be anonymously and confidentially reported at this link <https://sph.washington.edu/about/diversity/bias-concerns>. Data is collected by the Assistant Dean for EDI and the Director of Program Operations for Student and Academic Services and tracked for resolution and areas are identified for further training.

## CLASSROOM CLIMATE

We are co-creators of our learning environment. It is our collective responsibility to develop a supportive learning environment for everyone. Listening with respect and an open mind, striving to understand others' views, and articulating your own point of view will help foster the creation of this environment. We engage our differences with the intent to build community, not to put down the other and distance our self from the other. Being mindful to not monopolize discussion and/or interrupt others will also help foster a dialogic environment.

### **The following guidelines can add to the richness of our discussion:**

- We assume that persons are always doing the best that they can, including the persons in this learning environment.
- We acknowledge that systematic oppression exists based on privileged positions and specific to race, gender, class, religion, sexual orientation, and other social variables and identities.
- We posit that assigning blame to persons in socially marginal positions is counter-productive to our practice. We can learn much about the dominant culture by looking at how it constructs the lives of those on its social margins.
- While we may question or take issue with another class member's ideology, we will not demean, devalue, or attempt to humiliate another person based on her/his experiences, value system, or construction of meaning.
- We have a professional obligation to actively challenge myths and stereotypes about our own groups and other groups so we can break down the walls that prohibit group cooperation and growth. [Adapted from Lynn Weber Cannon (1990). Fostering positive race, class and gender dynamics in the classroom. *Women Studies Quarterly*, 1 & 2, 126-134.]

We are a learning community. As such, we are expected to engage with difference. Part of functioning as a learning community is to engage in dialogue in respectful ways that supports learning for all of us and that holds us accountable to each other. Our learning community asks us to trust and take risks in being vulnerable.

### **Here are some guidelines that we try to use in our learning process:**

- LISTEN WELL and be present to each member of our group and class.
- Assume that I might miss things others see and see things others miss.
- Raise my views in such a way that I encourage others to raise theirs.
- Inquire into others' views while inviting them to inquire into mine.
- Extend the same listening to others I would wish them to extend to me.
- Surface my feelings in such a way that I make it easier for others to surface theirs.
- Regard my views as a perspective onto the world, not the world itself.
- Beware of either-or thinking.
- Beware of my assumptions of others and their motivations.
- Test my assumptions about how and why people say or do things.
- Be authentic in my engagement with all members of our class.

## COVID-RELATED/WINTER QUARTER RESPIRATORY ILLNESSES - PROTOCOLS AND SAFETY

Winter quarter is a time of increased risk of acquiring respiratory illnesses including COVID, RSV, cold, and flu.

If you feel ill or exhibit respiratory or other symptoms, you should **not** come to class. Seek medical attention if necessary and notify your instructor(s) as soon as possible by email.

Please check your email daily BEFORE coming to class. If we need to conduct class remotely because the instructor or a guest speaker is unable to attend in person, we will send all registered students an email with a Zoom link for remote instruction or a plan for making up the class.

### Additional recommendations include:

- **Get boosted with the updated COVID-19 vaccines.** These vaccines are available at clinics and pharmacies, as well as [through UW Medicine](#) and local health agencies.
  - **Get your annual flu shot.**
  - **Wear a high-quality mask in indoor public spaces and while traveling. Masks are strongly recommended the first two weeks of winter quarter.** High-quality masks help protect against a range of respiratory viruses, and are [available for free in locations on each UW campus](#).
  - **Take a coronavirus test if you have symptoms or have been exposed.** Rapid antigen tests are widely available for [free in at on campus locations linked here](#). The [Husky Coronavirus Testing](#) voluntary research study is also available for UW students.
  - **Activate WA Notify on your phone** to receive exposure notifications and so that you can anonymously let others know of their exposure if you test positive.
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## EXCUSED ABSENCE FROM CLASS

Students are expected to attend class and to participate in all graded activities. A student who is anticipating being absent from class due to a Religious Accommodation activity needs to complete the Religious Accommodations request process by the second Friday of the quarter. Students who anticipate missing class due to attendance at academic conferences or field trips, or participation in university sponsored activities should provide a written notice to the instructor ahead of the absence. The instructor will determine if the graded activity can be rescheduled or if there is equivalent work that can be done as an equivalent, as determined by the instructor.

## **EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**

Diverse backgrounds, embodiments and experiences are essential to the critical thinking endeavor at the heart of University education. In SPH, students are expected:

1. To respect individual differences, which may include, but are not limited to, age, cultural background, disability, ethnicity, family status, gender, immigration status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status and veteran status.
  2. To engage respectfully in the discussion of diverse worldviews and ideologies embedded in course readings, presentations and artifacts, including those course materials that are at odds with personal beliefs and values.
  3. To encourage students with concerns about classroom climate to talk to their instructor, adviser, a member of the departmental or SPH EDI Committee, the Assistant Dean for EDI, or the program's director.
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## **LATE ASSIGNMENT POLICY**

All quizzes, assignments and assessments (with few exceptions) must be submitted through Canvas by the due date. Late submissions will face a 2% penalty for each day they are late for a maximum of 50%.

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## **NOTICE TO STUDENTS – USE OF PLAGIARISMS DETECTION SOFTWARE**

The University has a license agreement with SimCheck, an educational tool that helps prevent or identify plagiarism from Internet resources. Your instructor may use the service in this class by requiring that assignments are submitted electronically to be checked by SimCheck. The SimCheck Report will indicate the amount of original text in your work and whether all material that you quoted, paraphrased, summarized, or used from another source is appropriately referenced.

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## **PERSONAL PRONOUNS**

We share our pronouns because we strive to cultivate an inclusive environment where people of all genders feel safe and respected. We cannot assume we know someone's gender just by looking at them. So, we invite everyone to share their pronouns.

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## **RELIGIOUS ACCOMODATIONS**

Washington state law requires that UW develop a policy for accommodation of student absences or significant hardship due to reasons of faith or conscience, or for organized religious activities. The UW's policy, including more information about how to request an accommodation, is available at [Religious Accommodations Policy](#). Accommodations must be requested within the first two weeks of this course using the [Religious Accommodations Request form](#).

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## SAFETY

Call SafeCampus at 206-685-7233 anytime – no matter where you work or study – to anonymously discuss safety and well-being concerns for yourself or others. SafeCampus's team of caring professionals will provide individualized support, while discussing short- and long-term solutions and connecting you with additional resources when requested.

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## SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is a form of harassment based on the recipient's sex that is characterized by:

1. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature by a person who has authority over the recipient when:
  - Submission to such conduct is an implicit or explicit condition of the individual's employment, academic status, or ability to use University facilities and services, or
  - Submission to or rejection of the conduct affects tangible aspects of the individual's employment, academic status, or use of University facilities.
2. Unwelcome and unsolicited language or conduct that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or learning environment, or has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic or work performance.

If you believe that you are being harassed, or have observed harassment, you can report it to SPH using the bias concerns link. The University also has designated offices to help you: [SafeCampus](#); [Office of the Ombud](#); [Title IX Investigation Office](#); and [University Complaint Investigation and Resolution Office](#).

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## SPH LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The University of Washington acknowledges the Coast Salish people of this land, the land which touches the shared waters of all tribes and bands within the Duwamish, Suquamish, Tulalip and Muckleshoot nations.

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## WRITING RESOURCES

All written assignments for this class must be high quality, well researched, well organized, and well written. Use plain language instead of jargon. The instructors will consider the clarity of writing when grading assignments. Writing is an important transferable skill for all career pathways. Establishing a strong foundation in writing skills will help students be successful throughout their future course work and career. Therefore, this course includes written assignments with the goal to helping students identify areas of strength and improvement in writing. However, if a student feels that they could benefit from additional opportunities to improve their writing skills, a list of resources at the UW and others accessible online can be found on the [SPH website](#) and on the [DEOHS intranet](#).