international water policy
GEOG 467/567
Mondays 9:00-11:50, Condon 206

Dr. Katie Meehan
meehan@uoregon.edu
(541) 346-4521
Condon 107C

Overview
The world’s water resources are widely considered to be in crisis—from prolonged drought and climate change, urbanization and increasing demand, and institutional breakdown. What are the drivers of governance failure in the water sector? How should we respond? This course examines major issues in international water policy, including water markets, privatization, large dams and dam decommissioning, environmental and in-stream flows, urban provision and social equity, climate change, and the promise of water supply alternatives. We pay special attention to recent debates about water law and policy reforms in both national and international arenas. The course combines analysis of key international organization (e.g., The World Bank, Global Water Partnership, World Water Council) with case studies of several countries whose experiences with water policy holds broader international significance, such as Chile, Spain, Mexico, Australia, the United States, and the European Union. Overall, the objective of the course is to equip students with an interdisciplinary understanding of contemporary water problems, policies, and institutions, from the different analytical perspectives of law, geography, political economy, development studies, and institutional economics.
Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Define and contextualize key terms in global water policy.
- Characterize and critically assess claims, reforms, institutions, and case studies in water governance, drawing on different perspectives and disciplines.
- Critical analyze a key problem in water governance, through the production of an original text (either a policy brief or research paper) that draws on original research and applies the theoretical vocabulary and concepts learned in the course.

Expectations

Graduate and professional students from all departments and programs are welcome, though experience in (or at least a healthy appetite for) water issues will help you succeed in this course. Advanced undergraduates (i.e., juniors and seniors) are also welcome. If you are a freshman or sophomore, it is required that you have successfully completed GEOG 360 (Watershed Science and Policy) prior to registration. All students are expected to attend class regularly, actively engage in discussions and activities, and treat classmates and the instructor with respect.

The course is designed in a seminar format: each Monday we will meet once for 2.75 hours. At the start of each class, I will spend approximately 15-20 minutes “signposting” background details of the issue at hand. The remainder of class time is dedicated to collectively wrangling the issue: through discussion, unpacking the main ideas, raising questions, offering insights, and facilitating healthy disagreement or debate. Class meetings may be broken up into “chunks” that focus on different activities: small group discussions, concept map development, occasional PowerPoint presentations or guest lectures, and other activities. In other words, much of the course “learning” occurs via active student engagement. Not surprisingly, individual attendance and active participation are essential to individual achievement and to the overall success of the class.

Structure and Requirements

For the above reasons, reading is critical to this course and reflected in the heavy load of assigned material. To elevate the level of in-class discussion, students will respond to a weekly Blackboard question prior to each class. An example of a high-quality response would run about 150-200 words and engage/question/debate/defend specific issues in the readings, using direct quotes and perhaps your experiences in the wider world (or outside sources) to support your position. Leadership is critical to the learning process: for this reason, graduate students will take a turn at actively guiding a discussion session on the readings.

Coursework is geared toward the production of a final project. Undergraduates will produce a policy brief and graduates will write a research paper that grapples with a major water problem or governance issue. By week 6, all students will select an appropriate topic. By week 7, all students will produce a mini-proposal that includes a problem statement, brief introduction, and initial literature review. By week 9 students will submit a solid first draft of their paper or policy brief to the professor and an assigned peer. Each student will read another’s draft and write a peer review due in week 10 (guidelines will be provided on how to produce an effective review). The peer review is designed to help writers improve their structure, content, logic, and overall writing flow. I will also review the drafts, and provide
detailed comments by week 10. At that point, students will address lingering issues, re-write, and submit a final version of the paper or policy brief during finals week.

**Guest Speakers**

We are fortunate to have three world-renowned water scholars visiting UO Geography this fall term, to speak in our department colloquium series. Frank Magilligan (Dartmouth College) is an expert in fluvial geomorphology and the ecological impacts of dam removal; Karen Bakker (University of British Columbia) researches water privatization and governance in cities around the world; and Martin Doyle (Duke University) studies the hydrology, geomorphology, and management of rivers. Each will give a talk in the Geography department, and we will also organize opportunities for students to interact with them on a more personal basis. While these speakers will meet and lecture outside of our Monday class time, I expect 467/567 students to attend at least two (out of the three) lectures—these events will make up for the fact that our Week 9 class is cancelled.

**Readings**

Course readings are an eclectic mix of journal articles, book chapters, and policy papers that tackle key problems in water governance, drawing on different disciplinary perspectives and case studies of international significance. Many of the readings are “key texts” in academic, policy, and development circles, so a strong grasp of these texts is critical.

The following book is required:


All other required readings will be available as PDFs on the course Blackboard site.

In the schedule below, I have added suggestions for further reading on each topic. Please note that these suggestions are recommended and NOT required reading. However, they may serve as an initial bibliography for students interested in pursuing a specific topic or case study.

**Assessment**

While class meetings of GEOG 467 and 567 will be held jointly, course requirements and assessment will differ for graduates and undergraduates. There are a total of 200 points available, divided as shown:

- **Undergraduates (GEOG 467)**
  - *Weekly Reading Responses (40 pts = 5 pts/ea x 8 questions; 20% of total grade):* Over the term, students will post short responses (approximately 150-200 words) to a question prompt on Blackboard, prior to the class meeting. Responses should tackle a key issue, raise a series of questions or counterarguments, examine or compare a case study, or revisit concepts and insights from across the readings.
  - *Attendance and Participation (40 pts or 20% of total grade):* Students will be assessed on attendance and quality of participation during in-class activities. Because class meetings are few and participation is fundamental to the course, attendance is mandatory. Unexcused absences will result in a significant decrease in this component of your grade. Short reaction papers (approximately 1 page) to guest lectures are included within A&P.
- **Final Project (120 pts total; 60% of total grade):** The final project includes four subcomponents.
  - **Mini-Proposal** (20 pts or 10% of total grade)
  - **First Draft of Policy Brief** (20 pts or 10% of total grade)
  - **Peer Review** (20 pts or 10% of total grade)
  - **Final Version of Policy Brief** (60 pts or 30% of total grade)

- **Graduates (GEOG 567)**
  - **Weekly Reading Responses (40 pts = 5 pts/ea x 8 questions; 20% of total grade):** Over the term, students will post short responses (approximately 200-250 words) to a question prompt on Blackboard, prior to the class meeting. Responses should tackle a key issue, raise a series of questions or counterarguments, examine or compare a case study, or revisit concepts and insights from across the readings.
  - **Attendance, Participation, and Discussion Leadership (40 pts or 20% of total grade):** Students will be assessed on attendance and quality of participation during in-class activities. Because class meetings are few and participation is fundamental to the course, attendance is mandatory. Unexcused absences will result in a significant decrease in this component of your grade. Short reaction papers (approximately 2 pages) to guest lectures are included within A&P. Graduate students will also take a turn at leading a discussion or in-class activity at least once throughout the term.
  - **Final Project (120 pts total; 60% of total grade):** The final project includes four subcomponents.
    - **Mini-Proposal** (20 pts or 10% of total grade)
    - **First Draft of Paper** (20 pts or 10% of total grade)
    - **Peer Review** (20 pts or 10% of total grade)
    - **Final Version of Paper** (60 pts or 30% of total grade)

**Grades**

The final grade will be specified using the following approximate distribution:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>97%-100%</td>
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<td>A</td>
<td>93-96%</td>
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<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89%</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>83-86%</td>
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<td>B-</td>
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<td>C+</td>
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<td>C</td>
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<td>C-</td>
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<td>D</td>
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<td>0-59%</td>
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# The Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sept 24</td>
<td>Introductions</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Oct 1</td>
<td>International Debate I: Water Markets, Privatization, and Economic Reform</td>
<td>Case study: Chile</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Oct 8</td>
<td>Institutional Economics</td>
<td>Case study: The US West</td>
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<td>Common Property and Legal Pluralism</td>
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<td>Guest speakers this week:</td>
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<td>Frank Magilligan (Dartmouth College), Tuesday Oct 16, 4:00-5:00pm, Knight Library Room 101</td>
<td>“Dam(n)ed landscapes: The impacts of dams and dam removal on riverine systems”</td>
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<td>Karen Bakker (University of British Columbia), Thursday Oct 18, 4:00-5:00pm, Condon 106</td>
<td>“Water privatization and the global water crisis”</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Oct 15</td>
<td>Expert Networks</td>
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<td>Case studies: The World Bank and the EU Water Framework Directive</td>
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<td>Select final project topic</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Oct 22</td>
<td>International Debate II: Big Dam Development and Small Dam Removal</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Oct 29</td>
<td>Water Poverty and Urban Development</td>
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<td>Case studies: Mumbai, Jakarta, Lagos</td>
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<td>Mini-proposal due in class (hard copy)</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Nov 5</td>
<td>International Debate IV: The Right to Water</td>
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<td>Guest speaker this week:</td>
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<td>Martin Doyle (Duke University), Thursday November 15, 4:00-5:00pm, Condon 106</td>
<td>“Rivers of ideas: Keynes’s dam, Hayek’s meanders, and Aristotle’s regimes”</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Nov 12</td>
<td>NO CLASS MEETING</td>
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<td>Draft of Research Paper/Policy Brief due on BB by 12noon</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Nov 19</td>
<td>Water Supply Alternatives and the Challenge of Climate Change</td>
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<td>Case studies: Australia and Mexico</td>
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<td>Peer reviews due in class (bring two hard copies)</td>
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<td>Final Version of Research Paper/Policy Brief due on BB by 12noon</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Nov 26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finals</td>
<td>Dec 11</td>
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Week 2: International Debate I

Water Markets, Privatization, and Economic Reform

Case study: Chile

Required
Carl Bauer (2004) Siren Song, Ch. 1, pp. 1-30; and Ch. 2, pp. 31-50

Recommended

Week 3: Institutional Economics

Case study: The US West

Required


**Recommended**


Marie Livingston (2005) “Evaluating changes in water institutions: methodological issues at the micro and meso levels,” *Water Policy* 7 pp. 21-34

**Week 4: Common Property and Legal Pluralism**

**Required**


**Recommended**

Week 5: International Debate II
Big Dams and Small Dam Removal

Required


Sandra Postel and Brian Richter (2003) Rivers for Life, Ch. 4


Recommended


The Nature Conservancy, Freshwater Initiative, documents at www.nature.org/initiatives/freshwater/


**Week 6: Expert Networks**

*Required*


**Week 7: Water Poverty and Urban Development**

Selected chapters from Karen Bakker, Governance Failure.

**Week 8: International Debate IV – The Right to Water**

*Required*


**Week 10: Water Supply Alternatives and the Challenge of Climate Change**

Readings tba.
Other Resources and Recommendations for Further Reading

Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM)

United States I: Historical Evolution of Water Rights
Walter Prescott Webb (1931), The Great Plains, Ch. 9, “New laws for land and water,” pp. 431-452

United States: Federal Policies in 20th Century


U. S. Dept. of Interior (2005) Water 2025: Preventing Crises and Conflict in the West


The Rules

Affirmation of Community Standards

The University of Oregon community is dedicated to the advancement of knowledge and the development of integrity. In order to thrive and excel, this community must preserve the freedom of thought and expression of all its members. A culture of respect that honors the rights, safety, dignity, and worth of every individual is essential to preserve such freedom. We affirm our respect for the rights and well being of all members.

We further affirm our commitment to:

- Respect the dignity and essential worth of all individuals
- Promote a culture of respect throughout the University community
- Respect the privacy, property, and freedom of others
- Reject bigotry, discrimination, violence, or intimidations of any kind
- Practice personal and academic integrity and expect it from others
- Promote the diversity of opinions, ideas, and backgrounds, which is the lifeblood of the university

Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with Dr. Meehan. Please bring a notification letter from Disability Services outlining your approved accommodations. For more information, see:

http://ds.uoregon.edu/DS_home.html

Classroom Behavior

Above all, students should conduct themselves as adults in the classroom. Classroom discussion should be civilized and respectful to everyone and relevant to the topic at hand.

Please turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices (excluding laptop computers used for note taking during lecture) before you enter the classroom. You are expected to be on time. Packing up your things early is disruptive to others around you and the instructor. Threatening or violent behavior will not be tolerated.

Any continued disruption of class will result in a warning. After one warning, if the disruption continues, you will be asked to leave the classroom for the remainder of class. For more information, see the UO Student Conduct Code:

http://studentlife.uoregon.edu/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=pulFazFDbsg%3D&tabid=69

Laptop Use Policy

Students that inappropriately use laptops, internet, and/or other technological devices in the classroom distract their peers (and the instructor). You may use laptops (or other devices) only to advance your learning (taking notes, for instance). In order to use such a device in class, you must:

(1) Write an email to the instructor (Dr. Katie Meehan, at meehan@uoregon.edu) by the end of the second week in class why you need to use the device in class; and
(2) **Use the device appropriately.** If you use the electronic device in a manner other than explained in your email or stipulated by the course syllabus, you lose the privilege of using the device in class.

**Absences**

Course activities/components that are missed due to an unexcused absence will not be “made up”.

Excused absences include:

(1) You are traveling to an official university-sponsored event (e.g. an academic conference or event for Intercollegiate Athletics, Club Sports, or the UO Marching Band); or

(2) You have a prescheduled medical appointment.

If you foresee an absence due to one of the reasons described above, contact the instructor a minimum of one week in advance of the anticipated absence with appropriate documentation. Appropriate documentation includes a letter (on official letterhead) from your coach, instructor, professor, or doctor that provides us with the details of the pre-existing time conflict and is signed by the appropriate party.

**Academic Misconduct**

Plagiarism, fabrication, and cheating are reprehensible and punishable. Plagiarism is the inclusion of someone else’s product, words, ideas, and data as one’s own work. Fabrication is the intentional use of information that the author has invented when s/he states or implies otherwise, or the falsification of research with the intent to deceive. Cheating is an act of deception by which a student misrepresents or misleadingly demonstrates that s/he has mastered information on an academic exercise (i.e., a test) that s/he has not mastered, including the giving or receiving of unauthorized help. Any case of possible plagiarism, fabrication or cheating will result in a failing grade on that particular course component.

To learn how to avoid plagiarism, please speak with the instructor before submitting an assignment. The UO Library also has helpful guidelines here: [http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/](http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/)

**And finally, Subject to Change Statement**

Information contained in the course syllabus, other than the grading policy and course standards, may be subject to change with advanced notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor.