

Alternative Discourses of Payments for Ecosystem Services in the Global South

Spring 2017

ENV 590.45S

Thursdays, 3:05-5:55pm

Location TBA

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(please sign-up for time at <http://my.setmore.com/bookingpage/43af559d-5a3b-49dc-9b83-9a0cd68c34f4>)

Course Overview

Payments for ecosystem services (PES) provide financial incentives to land owners to change their management practices in ways that are thought to produce environmental benefits: green house gas sequestration, biodiversity conservation, or cleaner and/or greater quantities of water downstream. The concept of PES was one of a suite of “market based” environmental policy solutions developed in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Grounded in neoclassical economic theory and promising to introduce the efficiency and effectiveness of markets into the realm of environmental protection, market-based policies intersected with the neoliberal discourse so prevalent in policy making at the time. Promoted by multilateral lending institutions and international environmental NGOs as a panacea that could achieve the win-win of environmental improvements and poverty alleviation, PES programs have been implemented at multiple scales in countries throughout the Global South. Although the earliest and largest scale programs were implemented in Latin America (e.g. Costa Rica, Mexico, Ecuador and Brazil), the concept has since spread to Asia (e.g. China, Indonesia, Philippines and Vietnam) and Africa (e.g. South Africa, Uganda).

The original model of PES, and the policies and initiatives based on this model have been critiqued by both academics and practitioners, grounded on both observations of their inability to achieve stated goals of environmental protection and on moral arguments regarding whose values are privileged in these schemes and ethical arguments concerning the possibilities for disenfranchisement of the poor. While some critics have rejected the concept and practice of PES outright, others have instead worked to directly contest and modify the original model through the development and promotion of alternative discourses. These discourses tend to make explicit the complexity of

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values humans can hold for healthy ecosystems, to calculate the value of ecosystem services not based on the prices the market will support, but on the labor and stewardship required of the rural poor to produce them, and the reciprocal relationship between rural producers and urban consumers of ecosystem services. These alternative discourses have, in many cases, had significant impact on the ways in which PES policies and initiatives have been designed and implemented in their countries of origin, but have been vastly under-documented and under-explored in both the gray and academic literatures.

The questions we will address in this course include:

- What is discourse? How does the definition vary by discipline?
- How would we define the various alternative discourses of PES and where do they fall on the continuum of complete rejection to slight tweaks?
- What are the various conceptual bases for these contestations?
- Through what mechanisms and in what arenas does the generation of alternative discourses occur?
- In what ways have these alternative discourses influenced the manifestation of PES in these case studies?
- How can we apply critical and other theory to understand these dynamics?

The goal of this course is to provide students with the theory and methods that will allow them to be able to identify and articulate the conceptual models of various approaches to PES. Students will also learn methods and approaches to develop case studies and to present their results in public and in writing. Equally important, students will learn to apply the theories and concepts they have learned in class in working with practitioners to translate to policy relevant implementation strategies.

Course Structure

This is a 3-credit graduate and upper division undergraduate course. The enrollment limit is 18.

This course is structured as a seminar on a model of **student-led learning**, which means that we expect that students will both contribute to the structure of the course and participate actively in the intellectual development of the themes and topics we address. It also follows the **model of case-based learning**, through which students are asked to apply the theory and concepts learned in class to a particular case, articulating what they have learned about the subtle dynamics of how those theories and concepts manifest on the ground.

This course will intersect with an international workshop on Alternative Discourses of PES in the Global South that will be held at Duke April 10-12, 2017. The workshop will

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bring together the scholars and practitioners involved in researching and implementing six long-term PES initiatives with scholars of PES from Duke and beyond.

Students will work in groups to seek to answer the questions above in relation to case studies of particular PES programs. The study of the theories and practice of PES and the development of the case studies will serve as preparation for then serving as leaders for the seminar series and international workshop in spring of 2017. Students will be divided at the beginning of class into groups that will be responsible for developing one of the six case studies of PES initiatives. These groups will then:

- Conduct a literature review and write-up of the case;
- Present and discuss the case to the seminar;
- Help to organize and lead the case study development during the international workshop;
- Compile and analyze the data gathered during the workshop;
- Write a publishable policy brief in collaboration with workshop attendees describing the dynamics of the case study.

Course Requirements

There will be a number of assignments throughout the course that are intended to let you implement and articulate the theories and methods we are learning in class through both written assignments and oral presentations.

Your grade in this course will be based on:

- 25% Case Study Literature Review (prior to workshop)
- 15% Case Study In-Class Presentation (prior to workshop)
- 20% Final Policy Presentation
- 30% Final Policy Brief
- 10% Class & International Workshop Participation

Your assignments should be submitted through our Sakai site by midnight of the date they are due. *If an assignment is submitted late, 1/2 a point will be subtracted for each day it is delayed.*

Course Materials

Copies of the published papers that we will be reading through the semester will be available through library *e-reserves* that are directly accessible through our Sakai site through links in the “Syllabus” section and in folders organized by topic in the “Resources” section.

Green Classroom Certification

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This course has achieved Duke's Green Classroom Certification. The certification indicates that the faculty member teaching this course has taken significant steps to green the delivery of this course. Your faculty member has completed a checklist indicating their common practices in areas of this course that have an environmental impact, such as paper and energy consumption. Some common practices implemented by faculty to reduce the environmental impact of their course include allowing electronic submission of assignments, providing online readings and turning off lights and electronics in the classroom when they are not in use. The eco-friendly aspects of course delivery may vary by faculty, by course and throughout the semester. For more information on the Green Classroom Certification, visit: sustainability.duke.edu/action/classroom.

Honor Code

Duke University is a community dedicated to scholarship, leadership, and service and to the principles of honesty, fairness, respect, and accountability. Citizens of this community commit to reflect upon and uphold these principles in all academic and nonacademic endeavors, and to protect and promote a culture of integrity.

To uphold the Duke Community Standard:

- I will not lie, cheat, or steal in my academic endeavors;
- I will conduct myself responsibly in all my endeavors; and
- I will act if the Standard is compromised.

Course Schedule

Week 1 Introducing PES

Introductions

Develop consensus on the structure and purpose of the class

Assignments and grade structure

What is PES?

Introduction to the six cases

Week 2 Theory of Discourse

Case assignments and group formation

What is discourse?

Normative vs. critical theory of discourse

Methods for analysis w/examples

Week 3 Original Neoclassical Economic Theory of PES

What is PES?

Original neoclassical economic theory of PES

Week 4 Neoclassical Economic Revisions of Theory of PES

How have neoclassical economists revised the theory of PES based on grounded evidence?

Week 5 Neoliberal Natures & Mexico Case Study

Neoliberal natures critique of PES

Case Study Presentation #1 and feedback (Mexico)

Week 6 Incommensurability of Value and Issues of Equity & Vietnam Case Study

Ecological economics and the incommensurability of value

Case Study Presentation #2 and feedback (Bolsa Floresta, Brazil)

Week 7 Intrinsic Value of Nature & Ecuador Case Study

Intrinsic value of nature

Case Study Presentation #3 and feedback (Sociobosque, Ecuador)

Week 8 Motivation Crowding & South Africa Case Study

Motivation crowding

Case Study Presentation #4 and feedback (South Africa)

Week 9 Politics and Political Structures & Brazil Case Study

Alteration through politics and political structures

Case Study Presentation #5 and feedback (Vietnam)

Spring Break ~ Enjoy!

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Week 10 Local Values and Actions & Guatemala Case Study

Alteration through local values and actions

Case Study Presentation #6 and feedback (Guatemala)

Week 11 International Workshop

Preparation for the workshop

Week 12 International Workshop

Workshop April 10-12

Week 13 Debriefing International Workshop

Workshop summary of learning and next steps

Week 14 Final Project Presentations

Final presentations of cases incorporating what learned from the workshop

Course evaluation and wrap-up

Final Policy Brief Due [READING PERIOD]