Welcome to the Forest Sustainability seminar!

This top block will provide easy access to key links (below the horizontal line) and regular updates and reminders for upcoming activities.

The first class meeting is Monday, October 5.

By Sunday, Oct. 4, please do the following:

- Review the Course Syllabus and Course Logistics.
- Go to the Week 1 Block and do the 'Preparation' activities. These include setup instructions for using Zoom and Slack in the class.

On Monday, October 5, join the live class session at 3:30 Pacific time at https://ucsb.zoom.us/j/95997719576. If possible, join a few minutes early to ensure that your audio and video are working properly.

Zoom links for class sessions

If you need to join by phone (US): (669) 900-6833, meeting ID 959 977 19576
One-click mobile: +16699006833,,95997719576#

The live Zoom sessions will be recorded for students who may not be able to attend in real time. By default, your microphone will be muted when you join the session. If you do not want to be included in the recording, simply keep microphone off and turn off your camera. You may ask questions in the chat window. NOTE: Student participants are prohibited from recording of any kind. Only the instructor is permitted to record.

Office hours

To meet with Bruce, please use one of these links to schedule a meeting using the Shoreline schedulers:

- 5-minute meeting
- 15-minute meeting
- 30-minute meeting

Course Announcements

Messages that Bruce has sent to the entire class are archived here.

Click here to leave anonymous feedback!
Course syllabus

Course objectives
Through this course, you will:

- Describe features of complex adaptive systems as they relate to forests
- Analyze biophysical and social aspects of forests through the lens of complex systems theory
- Create a MESM Group Project proposal that addresses a real-world problem in forest sustainability
- Join a community of students, practitioners, and scholars interested in forest sustainability

Course format
This course has two primary components:

1. Learning about substantive topics in forest sustainability
2. Developing MESM Group Project proposals that are related to forest sustainability.

The class will meet weekly via Zoom (contact Bruce if you anticipate being unable to participate regularly). Most sessions will address both course components.

Topics in forest sustainability
We will examine forest sustainability from a variety of perspectives, including ecology, hydrology, climate science, policy, and CEM. Many of these will be led by guest experts from Bren and across UCSB. To do this, students will

- Read one or two papers on the subject
- In some cases, watch a short video lecture by the guest instructor
- Post responses to the readings and video on the course Slack workspace
- Participate in a Zoom discussion with the guest instructor

Group Project proposals
A particularly exciting aspect of this course is the opportunity to develop Group Project proposals in topics that you are interested in working on. In past years, most or all of the proposals generated in this class have been selected to move forward as official Bren group projects. The full details of the Group Project generation are in the section "Preparing your group project proposal." In brief, we will spend the first few weeks of the quarter identifying potential topics and clients; the middle of the quarter drafting and getting feedback on proposal components; and the end of the quarter finalizing the substance of the proposal (some aspects, such as formal letters of support from the client, can come after the class is over).

Textbook
There is no textbook for this course. Links to readings will be posted in the relevant week's block on the GauchoSpace page. I am trying to organize a reader that you may purchase if you wish to take a break from screens and read on paper; details will be posted here once that's finalized.

Grading
- Participation in online discussions (30%)
- Participation in in-class discussions (30%)
- Preparation of Group Project proposal (40%)

Online participation
Full credit requires:

- Posting at least once each week in the Slack workspace
- Regularly engaging with other students' posts
- Slack posts demonstrate engagement with the readings and other preparatory material

In-Class participation
Full credit requires:

- Attending all class sessions (unless excused by instructor)
- Regular participation during class (asking and answering questions, contributing insights to discussions, etc.)

Group project proposal
The group project proposal will be graded based on the final written version; there will be opportunities for feedback on preliminary versions throughout the quarter (see below).
A high-scoring proposal will have the following characteristics:

- The Objectives and Significance sections are clearly stated, and make a compelling case for the project's need
- The Background section indicates a clear understanding of the project context
- The Approaches section describes a sound methodology that seems likely to address the project questions
- The proposal follows the Bren School Guidelines for Group Project Proposals and contains all elements prescribed therein (except 4g (internships), 5b (budget), and 5c (client letter of support))

Schedule

Exact topic titles may be updated! The corresponding blocks from further down the GS page will be unhidden as soon as I have materials from the guest instructor.

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Zoom protocols

The live class sessions will occur over Zoom.

Recordings

- The live class sessions will be recorded, for the benefit of students who are unable to attend. If you do not want to be recorded, you may turn off your video and mute your audio, and participate in discussion via the Zoom chat window.
- The recordings will be posted in the GauchoCast block, and will only be available to members of the course.
- Breakout rooms will not be recorded

During class

- If you are comfortable being recorded, your bandwidth is sufficiently high, and your circumstances permit, please keep your video on whenever feasible. It makes the discussion much more engaging when we can see each other!
- If you are not using a headset, please mute your audio when you're not speaking to reduce the impact of background noise.
- To ask or answer a question, or comment as part of a discussion, please use the raise hand feature in the participant window. I'll call on you in the order in which hands are raised.
- If you need to step away from your computer during class, please select the "away" icon (looks like a clock) in the participant window. Don't forget to unselect it when you get back!
- If something is going wrong with the session (e.g., the speaker's video is frozen, or audio is not coming through), send a message on the Zoom chat. If I don't respond to that, send me a DM on Slack.
- If everything seems frozen, then the problem is probably with your connection; feel free to disconnect and rejoin the meeting.
- If your internet goes down entirely, feel free to connect by phone.

Breakout rooms

We will sometimes break into smaller groups for focused discussion using the Breakout Rooms (BR) feature of Zoom.

- Assignment to rooms will generally be random.
- If the activity is pre-planned, then there will be a Google Doc with discussion questions, directions, and places for each group to make notes. The link will be on the GS page, and I'll also post it in the Zoom chat before launching the BRs.
- If the activity is spontaneous, then I'll put the discussion question into the Zoom chat before launching the BRs.
- If there needs to be a designated reporter, pick the person with the birthday whose day of the month is
closest to the current day of the month.

- If you need me to join your BR, click the 'Ask for help' button in the meeting controls. If you want to send me specific information, send me a DM on Slack.
- When the countdown timer starts, feel free to use the full time to finish your discussion.

**Slack workspace**

I'm experimenting with using a Slack workspace for online discussion, as it seems to be much more agile than the GauchoSpace forums. If you have feedback on ways to make the Slack integration more effective, send it to Bruce!

If you are new to Slack, check out https://slack.com/help/articles/218080037-Getting-started-for-new-members

The workspace is structured into a number of channels (see below). You can star individual channels (right-click on the channel name) and can sort them either alphabetically or by most recent (Preferences > Sidebar).

**Channels**

- **#discuss-wkxx** (xx = 01, 02, etc.): discussion channel for material related to the class in week xx. Most activity will be prior to the class meeting (and so perhaps in the prior week). Bruce will provide specific discussion prompts each week, but feel free to also ask questions about the reading or class session, or point out something that you found particularly interesting.

- **#gp-clients**: channel for suggesting and discussing potential Group Project clients.
  
  To post a new suggestion for a Group Project client, please
  1. First write a new post in the main channel with the organization's name
  2. Then use the Reply in thread option to write a more detailed description of the organization and the topics they may be interested in. You can also include relevant links and details about individuals with whom you've been in contact. This will start a new thread and will keep the topics in the main channel easier to find.

  When discussing or commenting on a client, please do so in the topic's thread.

- **#gp-topics**: channel for suggesting and discussing potential Group Project clients.
  
  To post a new idea for a Group Project topic, please
  1. First write a new post in the main channel with a short, headline-style description of the topic
  2. Then use the Reply in thread option to write a more detailed description. This will start a new thread and will keep the topics in the main channel easier to find.

  When discussing or commenting on a topic, please do so in the topic's thread.

- **#general**: channel for general discussion that is broadly related to the topic of forest sustainability.
  Examples could include links to news items, something you've read outside of class, connections to material in other courses, etc.

- **#random**: channel for non-forest-related discussion that you want to share with the class

Once group project proposal teams have gotten established, we will add channels for each team to facilitate their ongoing interaction.

**Best practices**

- Keep your tone informal, but clear and polite. Frame your comments and questions in a similar way as you would if we were having an in-person discussion.
- If you are criticizing the content of a post, be sure to focus your critique on the ideas (and be as specific as possible); don't disparage the person who wrote the post.
- If you want to say something that is a direct response to or elaboration on an existing post, use the 'Reply in thread' feature; further discussion of that post can then be in the thread so it doesn't get jumbled with other posts.
- Feel free to respond with emojis ('Add reaction') but only if it is a genuine reaction--we don't want to create a contest to see who can collect the most likes!
- If you are overwhelmed by notifications, you can modify, to some degree, what triggers a notification on your computer or phone. All critical course announcements will be sent via email rather than Slack, so you are safe turning notifications off altogether (but if you do this, remember to check the workspace every day or two!).
  - You can have different notification levels for each channel. For example, you could set your overall notifications (in Preferences > Notification) to "Direct messages, mentions & keywords," and set the notifications for your group project channel (right-click > Change Notifications) to "Every new message"

**Contacting your instructor**

For routine communication, you can reach me via email (use the "Email your instructor" block on the right side of the GauchoSpace page, or use kendall@bren.ucsb.edu in your email software). I will endeavor to respond to emails within one business day.

For time-sensitive communication, direct message me on the Forest Sustainability Slack channel. During working hours I will get notification of new messages, so this is ideal, for example, if you have a last-minute conflict with class, or have a critical question about course material. If your message requires a response, I will reply as soon as possible.

How should you address your instructor?
You are welcome and invited to call me by my first name (Bruce). However, if you are uncomfortable with this level of informality, it is perfectly fine to address me as Doctor Kendall or Professor Kendall.

A typical week

Because class meets on Mondays, most of the preparation for week \( n \) will have to be done during week \( n-1 \). All material will be posted to GauchoSpace at least a week in advance.

I recommend that you establish a regular schedule; here is a suggestion:

- Tuesday: Take a day off from thinking about forests
- Wednesday-Thursday: do the readings and watch any video material
- Friday: Post on the course Slack workspace
- Saturday-Sunday: Read your classmates' posts, and respond where appropriate
- Monday after 12: briefly review your notes and posts to remind yourself that there's more to think about than Statistics and CEM ;-) 
- Monday 3:30: Join the live Zoom class

To help you keep track of your progress, there are checkboxes by each activity. Checking these is not mandatory, but make use of them if you find them helpful.

Informal interaction after class

In normal times, it is easy for you to ask me questions, socialize with each other, or make plans as soon as class is over. We will experiment with ways to recreate this on Zoom.

Here is the initial plan:

- At the end of the scheduled class time, everyone who needs or wants to leave should feel free to do so.
- I will remain online in the main meeting room so that you may talk to me.
- I'll create breakout rooms so that you can have small-group conversations.
  - Before launching the rooms, I'll make you all "co-hosts" so that you can move around on your own (note that you need to first go into your initially assigned room).
  - The first few weeks I'll assign initial groups at random so you can get to know one another. Once GP Proposal teams have started to form, we'll organize the rooms around those.
- I will leave the meeting running for as long as you like.
- If this doesn't work well we can always change the plan!
Not available