Course Description
In the Final Seminar, the student:
(i) extends and deepens her/his knowledge of environmental conservation education to issues of personal and professional interest; and
(ii) reflects on the application of knowledge/concepts learned to actual situations.

The course is a one-semester research experience. With guidance from the instructor and peers, the student develops and refines a study theme, research question(s), research approach/method, and literature review. She/he carries out the research, analyzes the material or evidence gathered, and prepares a Final Report.

The student deepens her/his interest in a particular research or application area by investigating it further. The research combines a ‘conceptual’ dimension and a ‘practical/applied’ dimension. This investigation will consist of a review of the literature and the student’s own reflections and theorizing on the topic. This is the conceptual element to the project – i.e., that the student explore cutting-edge ideas and develops their own or thinks about lingering questions that have not yet been fully answered by the literature. In addition, the investigation should also consist of some applied component, which essentially consists of applying or investigating the concepts in a real world situation. The ‘applied element’ can be on-site observational research of a case study site, interviews of relevant stakeholders or experts in the field, application of concepts generated by the literature research to particular situations, design of an environmental education program using concepts generated by the research, evaluation of a particular program, comparative case study, gathering of survey or statistical data, archival research of a particular case, or any of a wide range of possible types of applied research. Examples of previous work will be discussed in class. By ‘research method’, we simply mean any of the investigative tools that might be used, including: interviews, case studies, participant-observation research, surveys, program evaluation, archival data gathering, etc.

To support the research process, a set of structured lectures and working sessions will be conducted in class. There will also be the occasional conferral with the instructor. Guidance and instruction on relevant research methods will be provided, as well as a tutorial on how to navigate the scholarly literature. The student will learn how to set up the research by structuring answerable research questions and reviewing the literature to gain the latest knowledge on her/his chosen topic.

Deliverables
The course is also a professional exercise, which means that the student will be graded according to professional conduct and project delivery, quality of deliverables, and overall merit of the work. The following deliverables will be submitted according to the following schedule (specs for each deliverable will be provided in class):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deliverable</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preliminary Research Agenda</td>
<td>Sept. 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Research Agenda</td>
<td>Oct. 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Half Report</td>
<td>Nov. 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Report</td>
<td>Dec. 15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation, Attendance, Professional Conduct</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preliminary Research Agenda (not graded) *</td>
<td>__</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Research Agenda (not graded) *</td>
<td>__</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Half Report</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Report</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Presentations</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Though this deliverable may not be graded, tardy or unsatisfactory output receives a 2% deduction from the final semester grade.

### Rubric

Note: Aside from the criteria below, grades are also determined on a relative scale, where only the students with the best work receive an A. For example, often no more than 30% of the students in a class will receive an A (but this percentage may be lower or higher from year to year). Also note that ‘in-between’ grade categories (A-, B+, etc.) pertain and are defined in relative fashion to the grade descriptions below.

**A—Outstanding Work**
An "A" applies to outstanding student work. A grade of "A" features not simply a command of material and excellent presentation (spelling, grammar, organization, writing style, etc.), but importantly, sustained intellectual engagement with the material. This engagement takes such forms as shedding original light on the material, investigating patterns and connections, posing questions, and raising issues.

**B—Good Work**
A "B" is given to work of high quality that reflects a command of the material and a strong presentation but lacks sustained intellectual engagement with the material.

**C—Adequate Work**
Work receiving a "C" is of good overall quality but exhibits a lack of intellectual engagement as well as either deficiencies in the student’s command of the material or problems with presentation.

**D or F—Unsuccessful Work**
The grade of "D" indicates significant problems with the student’s work, such as a shallow understanding of the material or poor writing.

An "F" is given when a student fails to demonstrate an adequate understanding of the material, fails to address the exact topic of a question or assignment, or fails to follow the directions in an assignment, or fails to hand in an assignment. Pluses (e.g., B+) indicate that the paper is especially strong on some, but not all, of the criteria for that letter grade. Minuses (e.g., C-) indicate that the paper is missing some, but not all, of the criteria for that letter grade.

The quality of the Final Report is judged on many criteria, but some important ones are as follows. First, did the student review the literature effectively and, combined with her/his own reflection and theorizing, deepen their knowledge about the selected topic? Did they arrive at fresh insights? Secondly, did they effectively apply this knowledge to real situations – i.e., did they then apply the concepts? Did they use the applied component of the work to test, verify, or extend the conceptual knowledge of the topic? Third, did they employ a logical, rational method – using evidence (from the literature, from fieldwork) to back up their findings? Fourth, is the Final Report coherent, well written, and credible? In class, the instructor will talk about how the Final Report is a short course in conducting research and writing about it, and how the final product differs from journalistic or op-ed type writing.
Incomplete Policy: Incompletes will only be granted in extreme cases such as serious illness or family emergency and only where almost all of the work for the semester has already been completed. A request for an incomplete must be in writing and documentation (such a note from a doctor or clergy) must be provided.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: Any student attending NYU who needs an accommodation due to a chronic, psychological, visual, mobility and/or learning disability, or is Deaf or Hard of Hearing should register with the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at 212 998-4980, 240 Greene Street, www.nyu.edu/csd.

Finally, please regularly check the NYU Classes course page on NYUHome (https://home.nyu.edu). Announcements, updates, the syllabus, and items of interest will be posted on NYU Classes. Copies of key course documents such as the syllabus and paper guidelines will be available on NYU Classes.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: All students must be familiar with the NYU Steinhardt School definition of plagiarism and the policy on academic integrity. The NYU Steinhardt Statement on Academic Integrity is available at: http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/policies/academic_integrity

The Steinhardt School defines plagiarism as follows:

Plagiarism, one of the gravest forms of academic dishonesty in university life, whether intended or not, is academic fraud. In a community of scholars, whose members are teaching, learning and discovering knowledge, plagiarism cannot be tolerated.

Plagiarism is failure to properly assign authorship to a paper, a document, an oral presentation, a musical score and/or other materials, which are not your original work. You plagiarize when, without proper attribution, you do any of the following:

- Copy verbatim from a book, an article or other media;
- Download documents from the Internet;
- Purchase documents;
- Report from other's oral work;
  - Paraphrase or restate someone else's facts, analysis and/or conclusions;
  - Copy directly from a classmate or allow a classmate to copy from you.
Weekly Schedule

Week 1  Introduction to Final Seminar  Sept. 8
The instructor will walk the class through the goals and scope of the class, the deliverables, and the schedule. In this first meeting, each student is expected to briefly touch on one (or two) possible topics that they might choose for their Final Report. The instructor will talk about framing the work in terms of answerable research questions.

Week 2  Program Evaluation  Sept. 15
The instructor will discuss the form and content of the Preliminary Research Agenda. He will then guide the class in applied program evaluation, especially touching on how students might choose to use this approach for their Final Report.

Week 3  Research Tutorial (Bobst Library)  Sept. 22
On this day, the class meets at Room 619 Bobst Library, where Scott Collard, Librarian for Education and Linguistics, introduces different search tools and methods, search engines, and research techniques.

Week 4  Qualitative Methods: Interviews  Sept. 29
Submission of Preliminary Research Agenda
The Preliminary Research Agenda should have been emailed to the instructor before the class meets on this day. The instructor will give a tutorial on interview methods and best practices for interview-based research (which the student may choose to use).

Week 5  Case Study Research, Observational Research  Oct. 6
The instructor will talk about case study research methods (which the student may choose to use), how to structure single-case or comparative case study research, and how to conduct observational research.

Week 6  Fall Recess (No Class)  Oct. 13

Week 7  Peer Review  Oct. 20
Submission of Final Research Agenda
Students will have emailed the Final Research Agenda prior to the class meeting. On this day, students will be grouped in small groups (e.g., three in a group), and a peer review session will be conducted. Students will share with others in the group their Final Research Agenda and obtain feedback.

Week 8  No Class Meeting  Oct. 27
There will be no meeting in class this week, giving students more freedom to conduct their field research, interviews, case study work, etc.

Week 9  Research Updates  Nov. 3
Submission of Half-Report
Students are expected to spend a minute or two, discussing their progress in their research. This can also be a time when we pose questions to the entire group and get feedback on ideas, issues, etc.

Week 10  Advising (No Meeting in Class)  Nov. 10
Each student is advised to meet with the instructor outside class to discuss their work thus far, seek advice on research issues, etc.
Week 11 Writing Guide Nov. 17
The class will discuss writing. The instructor will provide some insight into effective modes of writing for the Final Report, best and worst practices.

Week 12 Peer Review Nov. 24
Students will break into small groups. This is a chance for each student to present their research, going over research findings thus far, and getting feedback and responding to questions from the others. They can share their written work to this point and gain feedback on the writing as well.

Week 13 Presentations Dec. 1
Each student is asked to spend no more than 5-10 minutes presenting their work. It is understood that the Final Reports are not finished yet, and what is expected is simply to have each student educate others on what they have done and learned. Half of the class will present their work.

Week 14 Presentations Dec. 8
In the final class of the semester, the rest of the students will present their work.

Finals Week Submission of Final Report
Final Report due Dec. 15. To be emailed as .doc and .pdf to lejano@nyu.edu and rplejano@yahoo.com. If you could, on the subject line, kindly write: “Final Seminar” followed by your name.