PROJECT OVERVIEW & PROBLEM DIAGNOSIS

**Overview:** As indicated in the syllabus, this semester you will spend a considerable amount of time researching and contemplating one particular water policy problem. The primary objective of this project is to give you an opportunity to delve deeply into a particular water-related topic and to apply the various tools, frameworks, and perspectives we encountered in course to a particular topic related to water. In addition to developing a deep understanding of the particular water issue you will select, this project provides several opportunities for you to improve your ability to access, synthesize and effectively communicate information from a range of disciplines and perspectives. *I provide an illustrative list of potential topics on a separate page, but you should feel free to propose a topic that suits your interests!*

*Students should email me a topic to approve no later than Monday, September 25th.* I am happy to schedule time to meet with you to discuss your choice of topic in advance. Note: you may work in groups for this assignment or individually. *Please inform me of your decision regarding whether you will work in group and the composition of the group by the 25th as well.*

**Problem Diagnosis (Due – Oct. 16th):** The first component of this project is a problem diagnosis. This component of the project is designed to help you get your hands (and head!) around the particular issue you have selected. In particular, this assignment is designed to help you map the social, physical, and intellectual terrain of the water related topic you have selected and to assist you in focusing your thinking on how you will focus your efforts this semester.

The deliverable for this assignment is a brief memo outlining the contours of your topic (see guiding questions below). Each person/group will submit one memo. The audience for this memo is a policy maker who has asked you to provide a detailed, but concise initial overview of the topic you have selected. The policy maker is familiar with water issues broadly, but does not have particular expertise in water science or policy.

*There is not a pre-determined length for this assignment, but I anticipate a complete and carefully crafted (and edited) memo of 1000 to 1500 words will suffice for most cases.* (This approximate word count does not include references and any appendices you might want to include.) *In addition to the memo, I ask that you also submit a separate list of 5 to 10 peer-reviewed journal articles you propose to include in your systemic literature review (the second component of this semester-long project).*

This assignment is **due Tuesday, October 16th** before class starts (8:30 am).

You will have to access a wide range of sources to complete this assignment and all sources must be cited appropriately. I would be happy to provide feedback on an outline of your memo, but please plan appropriately. I will attempt to provide feedback within two (business) days of receiving an outline for review.

Below are several questions to guide your thinking for this assignment. This list is reflective of the types of questions you might want to ask as you try to wrap your hands around the policy problem you have been assigned. I encourage you pursue other questions you feel are essential for helping you understand the landscape of your topic.
Guiding questions:
• What is the “problem” associated with the issue you have chosen? Why does it matter (e.g., why is this problem worthy of our attention)?
• What is the magnitude and geographic extent of the problem?
• Are there particular cases (locations, events, technologies, etc.) that have received (or deserve) particular attention? What are these cases?
• What are the primary social, political, and environmental drivers of the issue?
• What (if any) policies or practices have been used or proposed to address this issue?
• What (if any) types of scientific uncertainty are present in the topic you’ve chosen?

Illustrative Topics:
• Green infrastructure (water, wastewater, or storm water)
• Affordability and water
• The human right to water and sanitation
• Dams and development
• Water and economic development
• Water, sanitation, and health
• Emerging contaminants in drinking water
• Rural, piped water supplies in low and middle-income countries
• Pricing water services
• Pricing sanitation services
• Water, international conflict, and cooperation
• Climate-resilient water and sanitation service delivery
• Water safety planning
• Domestic (US) inequality in access to water and sanitation services
• Non-revenue water
• Intermittent supply and 24x7 service
• Behavioral economics and water
• Energy-water(-food) nexus
• Water scarcity and conflict
Please turn in.

Name: 

Date: 

I have reviewed the resources related to plagiarism provided in the syllabus and understand what constitutes plagiarism. 

Signed: ________________________________