Preparing students to tackle urgent and complex environmental problems is a critical challenge. Problems such as global climate change, water resource management, and sustainable development are dynamic, multi-faceted problems that require interdisciplinary and collaborative approaches to solve.

Socio-environmental (S-E) synthesis is a problem-solving approach that considers the integrated nature of the environment and human society and combines insights, methods, and data from the natural and social sciences to produce knowledge and inform solutions. The National Socio-Environmental Synthesis Center (SESYNC) is dedicated to educating about this approach and its broad relevance and to teaching the core concepts and competencies necessary to understand, research, and address S-E problems. As part of SESYNC’s education efforts, a current initiative focuses on the development of the case study approach for teaching about S-E synthesis and the creation of a SESYNC case study collection. [1]

Click here for more information about this approach. [2]

About the Short Course

SESYNC invites participants for a four-day short course on Teaching Socio-Environmental Synthesis with Case Studies. The course will be held July 28–31, 2015, at SESYNC in Annapolis, Maryland.

The goals of the short course are to:

- Introduce participants to socio-environmental (S-E) synthesis as a problem-solving approach.
- Engage participants in advancing the teaching of S-E synthesis and related concepts and competencies.
Enable participants to use a powerful and effective teaching approach, the case study method, to teach S-E synthesis.

Support participants in developing their own case study classroom activity that can be used in their classrooms and shared on the SESYNC website.

We seek a diverse group of participants, including faculty, postdocs, and graduate students from both the social and natural sciences. Participants should have a strong interest in learning about and teaching S-E synthesis and be willing to commit to writing a case study related to S-E synthesis. We welcome applications from individuals or small teams (2–4 people) that will collaborate on writing a case study. Teams are strongly encouraged, but not required. Please note that completion of the case study will require additional time beyond the duration of the course.

**Costs**

Registration fees are $250 for faculty and $100 for graduate students and postdocs. Flights and hotel costs for non-local participants will be pre-paid by SESYNC in accordance with our travel policies. All eligible travel expenses (e.g., meals and ground transportation) will be reimbursed by SESYNC upon receipt of a completed case study that can be shared online.

All participants are expected to create and submit a completed case study focused on teaching about S-E synthesis.

**Apply**

Applicants should submit an application online here. The online application includes questions about your interests and expectations for the course, your background, and a resume or CV.

Deadline for applications is Monday, March 23, 2015, at 5 pm Eastern Daylight Time (EDT). Participants will be selected based on fit of their background, interests, and expectations. Additional factors such as career stage, research field, ethnicity, and gender will also be considered to ensure diversity. Applicants will be notified in mid-April if they are selected for the course.

**Additional Considerations**

- Applications from teams are encouraged, but not required for selection. We will also facilitate the formation of new teams before and during the course. However, participants are not required to work in a team to write their case. Thus, individuals are also welcome to apply.
- Participants are expected to stay for the entire duration of the course.
- All participants are expected to complete a case study focused on socio-environmental (S-E) synthesis, either individually or as a team (no more than four members) by November 1, 2015. The case must contain all the critical elements of a S-E synthesis case (this will be explained during the course), and all qualified cases will be posted on the SESYNC website (cases may be revised by authors at a later date, and we will update a case with the revised version). Completion of case studies will require time outside of the course to complete. In our experience, individually written cases take the longest to produce.
- Participants will retain copyright for their cases and are free to submit their cases to other collections as long as the case can remain in the SESYNC collection. We only require acknowledgement of SESYNC and NSF support and permission to share the case on our website.
- In preparation for the course, participants will be asked to develop topic ideas for their case studies in advance; readings about S-E synthesis and the case study method will also be provided.
- Following the course, participants will be asked to complete follow-up surveys about their
experiences with writing and teaching their case studies. We strongly encourage all participants to seek opportunities to test their cases in a classroom.

Questions?

Please contact Dr. Cynthia Wei, SESYNC Assistant Director of Education and Outreach, at: cwei@sesync.org

SESYNC Team

- **Dr. Andres Baeza**, [6] Postdoctoral Fellow
- **Dr. William Burnside**, [7] Postdoctoral Fellow
- **Dr. Neil Carter**, [8] Postdoctoral Fellow
- **Dr. Judy Che-Castaldo**, [9] Postdoctoral Fellow
- **Dr. Jampel Dell’Angelo**, [10] Postdoctoral Fellow
- **Dr. David Hawthorne**, [11] Director of Education and Outreach
- **Dr. Matthew LaFevor**, [12] Postdoctoral Fellow
- **Dr. Margaret Palmer**, [13] Executive Director
- **Dr. Cynthia Wei**, [14] Assistant Director of Education and Outreach (lead)

The University of Maryland is an Equal Opportunity Employer
Minories and Women Are Encouraged to Apply

Source URL: https://www.sesync.org/opportunities/teaching-se-synthesis-with-case-studies-july-2015

Links
[2] https://www.sesync.org/for-you/educator/teaching-resources/resources-case-study-approach
[5] mailto:cwei@sesync.org
[8] https://www.sesync.org/users/ncarter
[9] https://www.sesync.org/users/jchecastaldo
[10] https://www.sesync.org/users/jdellangelo
[12] https://www.sesync.org/users/mlafevor
[14] https://www.sesync.org/users/cwei