

## About the Case Study Approach



2015 Case Study Short Course

### ***What is a case study?***

In most contexts, a “case study” is a detailed descriptive or exploratory analysis of a particular example or problem. Case studies are commonly used for teaching, as well as for research in social science disciplines. Although case studies used in teaching are often based upon case studies used in a research context, they are not the same. Cases for classroom use may not follow standards for research cases, and also contain all the information and materials that another instructor would need to teach the case: teaching notes that provide background information about the case; learning goals and objectives; guidance on classroom management of the exercise; suggested assessments; supplementary materials such as videos and PowerPoints; and all materials needed for the students to carry out the case.

Below are a few resources that provide good starting points if you are interested in learning more about using case studies to teach about socio-environmental (S-E) synthesis or are thinking about writing a case study of your own.



For an overview of the case studies approach for teaching about socio-environmental synthesis:

- **Teaching socio-environmental synthesis with the case studies approach** by Cynthia A. Wei, William R. Burnside, and Judy P. Che-Castaldo (2014)

Journal of Environmental Studies and Sciences DOI: 10.1007/s13412-014-0204-x

<http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s13412-014-0204-x> [1]



**The National Center for Case Study Teaching in Science (NCCSTS)**, an NSF-funded project based at the University of Buffalo, offers a rich set of resources on case study teaching in science. The website includes a case study collection, articles that provide guidance in writing case studies, instructional videos, and other resources. Several cases developed through the SESYNC short courses have been peer reviewed and published in the NCCSTS case study collection.

<http://sciencecases.lib.buffalo.edu/cs/> [2]



**The Science Case Network** is an active community of science educators, learners, researchers, developers, and professional organizations interested in furthering the accessibility, development, and use of cases and problem based learning (PBL) in undergraduate biology education. The Science Case Network website compiles and connects visitors to case study teaching resources from several academic institutions.

<http://sciencecasenet.org/resources/> [3]



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CASE  
STUDIES IN THE  
ENVIRONMENT

**Case Studies in the Environment** Case Studies in the Environment is a journal of peer-reviewed case study articles, case study pedagogy articles, and a repository for editor-reviewed case study slides. The journal aims to inform faculty, students, researchers, educators, professionals, and policymakers on case studies and best practices in the environmental sciences and studies. <http://cse.ucpress.edu/> [4]

- **Pursuing the Promise of Case Studies for Sustainability and Environmental Education: Converging Initiatives** by Cynthia A. Wei, Meghan Wagner and Minna Brown (2018)  
<http://cse.ucpress.edu/content/early/2018/04/17/cse.2018.001065> [5]

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**Source URL:** <https://www.sesync.org/for-you/educator/case-studies>

#### Links

- [1] <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s13412-014-0204-x>
- [2] <http://sciencecases.lib.buffalo.edu/cs/>
- [3] <http://sciencecasenet.org/resources/>
- [4] <http://cse.ucpress.edu/>
- [5] <http://cse.ucpress.edu/content/early/2018/04/17/cse.2018.001065>