**Strategic Environmental Assessment – 3 credits**

(Compulsory course)

**Spring semester, 2020-2021**

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| Cooordinator | **Nguyen Thi Van Ha** |
| Credits | 4.5 ETCS (Selective course), 33.75 in-class hours |
| Lecturers | Nguyen Thi Van Ha (HCMUNRE, Vietnam)  Nguyen Lu Phuong (HCMUNRE, Vietnam)  Thai Phuong Vu (HCMUNRE, Vietnam)  Pham Thi Diem Phuong (HCMUNRE, Vietnam)  Tran Thi Bich Phuong (HCMUNRE, Vietnam) |
| Level | MSc and PhD courses |
| Host institution | Faculty of Environment, HCMUNRE, Vietnam |
| Course duration | 15 weeks (Fall 2021 -2022) |

### Summary

The aim of the course is to present and discuss key concepts of SEA, and promote an understanding of environmental integration in strategic planning and decision making across key actors. The course is concerned with the general issue of integrating environmental sustainability considerations in strategic planning and decision-making, including Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), with a particular focus on the role of institutions, and the role of norms, values and behavior for attaining sustainable development.

Concepts from decision- and policy-making theories are introduced to explain the general setting for decision-making of strategic actions. This includes analyzing decision-making in policies, and investment plans and programs. The course teaches skills that are useful and required for professional use. It investigates the role of institutions, and political-economy factors for large companies’ and government agencies’ planning, decision-making and effective environmental management. Further, it explores a wide range of examples from developed and developing countries. The students explore why environmental considerations are often poorly integrated in strategic planning and policymaking, and learn how SEA approaches can be adapted and designed to different contexts. The course also deals with legal aspects and frameworks of different countries applying SEA.

### Target student audiences

Master or PhD students majoring in environmental engineering, environmental sciences, environmental management, etc.

### Prerequisites

Required courses (or equivalents): Environmental Management, Environmental Impact Assessment.

### Aims and objectives

The course is aimed to provide knowledge and practical application of concepts, history, methodologies and research tools appropriate for assessing potential environmental impacts and mitigation for a strategy, a master plan, or a program before giving the decision on approval of them or commissioning them in sustainability development orientation.

### General learning outcomes:

By the end of the course, successful students will achieve the following course expected learning outcomes (CELO):

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| --- | --- |
| **CELO** | **CELO Description** |
| Knowledge and Understanding: | |
| **CELO1** | Understand SEA role and its contribution into planning process, decision making and sustainable development |
| **CELO2** | Understand SEA procedures, key components and methodologies and tools |
| **CELO3** | Analyze SEA legislation framework, institution analysis and stakeholder involvement |
| **CELO4** | Identify gaps between theory and practice of SEA, between government and donors or international investment |
| **CELO5** | Prepare ToR, conduct SEA for specific case study or sectors |
| Skills outcome | |
| **CELO6** | Work in group to prepare one SEA and present it to other group |
| **CELO7** | Prepare and Review SEA |

### Overview of sessions and teaching methods

The course will make most of interactive and self-reflective methods of teaching and learning and, where possible, avoid standing lectures and presentations.

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| **Learning methods** | * Video presentations * Interviews, surveys, fieldtrip, group work * Project Based Learning * Problem Based Learning * Play role * Stakeholder Analysis * Group based learning * Scenarios analysis * Case studies |

***Overview of learning sessions***

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Topic** | **Description** | **Credit hours** | **Lectures** | **Practice and Discussion** |
| **Topic 1** | Course description  Introduction to SEA; Env problems and Systems | 1  2 | 1  2 | 0 |
| **Topic 2** | SEA and other environmental assessment tools and planning cycle and project cycles | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| **Topic 3** | Key concepts of SEA- phases and procedural steps | 6 | 5 | 1 |
| **Topic 4** | National system for SEA, Legal framework | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| **Topic 5** | Conducting SEA -Building national SEA system – Institutional analysis | 6 | 5 | 1 |
| **Topic 6** | SEA tools for screening and scoping | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| **Topic 7** | Methodologies to do SEA | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| **Topic 8** | Conducting SEA- Participation, stakeholder representation | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| **Topic 9** | Conducting SEA- TOR and review | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|  | How to do SEA (5) -Evaluation and follow up  SEA effectiveness | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| **Topic 10** | SEA in Practice | 8 |  | 8 |
|  | Quiz | 1 |  | 1 |
|  | **Total** | **45** | **27** | **18** |

### Course workload

The table below summarizes course workload distribution:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activities** | **Learning outcomes** | **Assessment** | **Estimated workload (hours)** |
| **In-class activities (33.75 hours)** | | | |
| Lectures | Understanding theories, concepts, methodology and tools | Class participation | 10 |
| Moderated in-class discussions | Understanding various policy and management contexts, stakeholder analysis and common problems in preparation of Strategic Environment Assessment | Class participation and preparedness for discussions | 10 |
| In-class assignments, field assignment | Working in group for scenarios analysis assignment in class  Working in group for preparing an SEA for a selected case | Class participation and preparedness for assignments | 10 |
| Reading and discussion of assigned papers for seminars and preparation for lectures | Familiarity with and ability to critically and creatively discuss key concepts, tools and methods as presented in the literature | Class participation, creative and active contribution to discussion | 2.5 |
| Group presentation | Ability to interpret data, to analyze audience, and to use the concepts, tools, and methods for communicating and defending the ideas presented in report | Quality of group assignments and individual presentations | 5 |
| **Independent work (75 hours)** | | | |
| Group work:   * Contribution to the group case-study projects * Contribution to the preparation and delivery of individual presentation * Contribution to the web-application | Ability to interpret data, to analyze audience, and to use the concepts, tools, and methods for communicating information to all participants  Select one SEA report, read and evaluate the quality of report; withdraw the lessons which could be transferred to Viet Nam and write an essay about this | Quality of group assignments and individual presentations  Quality of developed essay; essay should not more than 2 page of A4 | 20 |
| Course group assignment | Ability to conceptualize and frame an environmental governance problem, find related literature and data, interpret data, use the concepts, tools and methods covered in the course, and draw policy/management relevant conclusions  Select one case study and work in group to prepare the SEA TOR; and SEA framework | Quality of developed essay | 40 |
| Group presentation | Ability to interpret data, to analyze audience, and to use the concepts, tools, and methods for communicating and defending the ideas presented in report | Quality of group assignments and individual presentations | 15 |
| ***Total*** |  |  | ***113.75*** |

### Grading

The students’ performance will be based on the following:

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| Assessment | * Progress assessment (30%):   - Quiz/Midterm examination (10%): students have to complete the quiz or Mid-term report.  - Homework (20%): Essay on SEA report analysis and then withdrawn the learnt lessons which could be transferred to Viet Nam or developing countries.     * Final assessment (70%): * Group report (40%): The students will be divided into groups of 2-3 students and choose one case study to develop SEA TOR and SEA framework. * Final examination (30%) |
| Evaluation | A (8.5 – 10)  B (7.0 – 8.4)  C (5.5 – 6.9)  D (4.0 – 5.4) |

### Course schedule

The overall schedule is provided below:

### Course schedule

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Week** | *Lecture topic* | *Contents* | *Lecturer* |
| **1** | Course introduction; | Course rationale, objectives. Presentation of students, teachers, etc.  Formalities and practicalities Intro to assignments and literature seminars | Nguyen Thi Van Ha |
|  | Introduction to SEA; Env problems and Systems | Why SEA? Rationale.  Introduction to systems: technical, social, environmental, economic systems | Nguyen Thi Van Ha |
|  | What is SEA? | SEA tools, Identifying alternatives, predicting, evaluating and mitigating env impacts, documentation, implementation, monitoring | Nguyen Thi Van Ha |
| **2** | SEA and other environmental assessment tools and planning cycle and project cycles | The link between SEA and EIA, ERA, EP, etc.  The integration of SEA and planning cycle  The integration of SEA and project cycle | Nguyen Thi Van Ha |
| **3 -4** | Key concepts of SEA- phases and procedural steps | Screening, scoping, baseline, identifying and problems, stakeholders, decision, monitoring etc. | Nguyen Thi Van Ha  Pham Thi Diem Phuong |
|  | How to do SEA - the SEA process (1) | Setting the context for SEA: screening, scoping, baselines, identifying environmental problems |  |
| **5** | National system for SEA, Legal framework | National system and legislation framework on SEA | Nguyen Lu Phuong  Tran Thi Bich Phuong |
|  |  | Case study - Vietnamese legislation for SEA | Tran Thi Bich Phuong |
| **6** | Conducting SEA -Building national SEA system – Institutional analysis | The role of institutions in SEA and implementation? How to undertake institutional analysis? Institutions for national SEA systems? Functions of national SEA system  Gap analysis  Good governance  Institutional analysis | Nguyen Thi Van Ha  Tran Thi Bich Phuong |
| **7** |  | Institutional analysis for SEA, EIA and EPP – Case study | Tran Thi Bich Phuong |
| **8** | SEA tools for screening and scoping | SEA screening – identifying key environmental issues | Thai Phuong Vu |
|  |  | SEA scoping – identifying strategic issues | Nguyen Thi Van Ha  Pham Thi Diem Phuong |
| **9** | Methodologies to do SEA | Methodologies to do SEA | Nguyen Thi Van Ha |
|  |  | SEA scoping - Case study exercise | Nguyen Thi Van Ha  Pham Thi Diem Phuong |
| **10** | Conducting SEA- Participation, stakeholder representation | Approaches and challenges to stakeholders  Involvement of the public, strengthening voice of the poor, constituencies, tools for participation and stakeholder involvement | Nguyen Thi Van Ha  Pham Thi Diem Phuong |
| **11** | Conducting SEA- TOR and review | Drafting ToR  SEA review process and criteria  Permits and appeal | Nguyen Lu Phuong |
| **12** | How to do SEA (5) -Evaluation and follow up  SEA effectiveness | Evaluation, SEA follow-up and monitoring of implementation; SEA effectiveness  Monitoring SEA  Role of Court, MONRE | Nguyen Thi Van Ha |
| **13-15** | SEA in Practice | Presentation of examples of “real” SEAs  Students make short presentations of SEA applications from their respective countries | Nguyen Thi Van Ha  Thai Phuong Vu |

### Course assignments

Course assignments will constitute a multi-part project:

* Assignment #1 (mostly in-class) – Screening and scoping of SEA case study.
* Assignment #2 (mostly in-class) – Institutional analysis for SEA case study.
* Assignment #3 (mostly in-class) – Scenarios analysis for SEA case study
* Assignment #4 (mostly in-class) – Play role as a review committee member for SEA case study

### Literature

Ahmed, Kulsum and Sanchez-Triana, 2008. *Strategic Environmental Assessment for Policies – An Instrument for Good Governance*, World Bank, Washington DC. (219 pages).

<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTRANETENVIRONMENT/1705772-1210788188539/21819527/SEA_FOR_POLICIES.pdf>

Sadler, Barry; Aschemann, Ralf; Dusik, Jiri; Fishcher, B. Thomas; Partidário, R. Maria and Rob Verheem, 2011. Handbook of Strategic Environmental Assessment. Taylor and Francis, USA, 589 pp.

OECD, 2006. Applying Strategic Environmental Assessment: Good practice guidance for development co-operation OECD DAC Guidelines and reference series, OECD, 160 pages; <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/4/21/37353858.pdf>

Schmidt, Michael; Glasson, John; Emmelin, Lars and Hendrike Helbron, 2008. Standards and Thresholds for Impact Assessment. Environmental Protection in the European Union ISSN 1613-8694. 487pp.

Therivél, Riki, 2010. *Strategic Environmental Assessment in Action*. Second edition, Earthscan, UK. (335 pages)

**Optional Books and Scientific Papers:**

Engert, S., Rauter, R., and Baumgartner, R. J. (2016). Exploring the Integration of Corporate Sustainability into Strategic Management: A Literature Review. *Journal of Cleaner Production,* 112(Part 4), 2833-2850. <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652615011208>

Kørnøv, Lone and Wil Thissen (2000) Rationality in decision- and policy-making: implications for strategic environmental assessment. Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal 18 (3) pp. 191–200

Schmidt, Michael; João, Elsa and Eike Albrecht (2005), Eike Implementing strategic Environmental Assessment. ISSN 1613 -8694. Springer Berlin, Heidelberg. 733 pp.

Slunge, Daniel, and Thi Huyen Tran Trang; 2014. Challenges to institutionalizing strategic environmental assessment: The case of Vietnam, *Environmental Impact Assessment Review*, Vol 48, pp 53-61.