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Going beyond Cookie Cutter Outreach

A Climate Change Film Series and Dialogue

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NUTRITION INFORMATION

In the fall of 2013, the University of Maine approved a new major, the Human Dimensions of Climate Change. Coursework aimed to address critical interdisciplinary concerns about human impacts on the environment. To provide a cocurricular opportunity for students to explore this topic, which was also relevant to larger community interests and campus research agendas, an anthropology professor and her liaison librarian partnered to create the Human Dimensions of Climate Change Film Series + Dialogue. This series is now in its sixth iteration.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Describe critical issues related to the human dimensions of climate change, including effects on vulnerable populations, power dynamics, political influences, and ways science is communicated to the public.
- Identify possible solutions to the human dimensions of climate change through dialogue with both climate change experts and fellow students, staff, faculty, and community members.

NUMBER SERVED

Attendance depends on space (our series has seen as many as 50 attendees and as few as 15). Holding each event in a library space that has flexible seating allows for easy removal of tables and arrangement of chairs to increase or decrease seated space. Attendance can be unlimited if remote access is available.

COOKING TIME

Varies. Considerations include

- Choice of films, which is a top priority and depends on stakeholder needs or interests, the thematic approach (e.g., politics, science communication, vulnerable communities), and financial support.
- Identifying and contacting discussants, which involves researching possible candidates and exchanging correspondence. Duration depends on librarian or faculty familiarity with campus expertise and the time it takes for potential discussants to respond.
- Publicity, which is key. Initial flyers and posters that can double as email fodder are tried-and-true approaches. Reuse of designs in future series—similar layout, different content—reduces future time investment.

- The film viewings plus the post-film discussions themselves (1½–2 hours per event).

DIETARY GUIDELINES

The Human Dimensions of Climate Change Film Series + Dialogue aims to seed conversations about important and contentious topics and serves as a vehicle for climate change education through film viewings and facilitated discussions. Although it was originally conceived as a cocurricular educational series for the university's Human Dimensions of Climate Change program, the interdisciplinarity of the topic makes it amenable to a wide range of contexts and campus events. The broad applicability of the series has resulted in a diverse audience of students, faculty, staff, and community members.

INGREDIENTS AND EQUIPMENT

The film series includes three consecutive weekly viewings and a post-film dialogue at each viewing. Films include documentaries or shorts, as well as other media such as television shows. Ingredients include

- Computer, projector, and screen
- Internet access if using streaming video

- DVD or other media if using hard-copy films
- Librarian or faculty member to introduce films and discussants
- Discussants (faculty, staff, students, or community members)
- Meeting space

PREPARATION

- Librarian and faculty colleague select films and choose a theme (if so desired).
- Librarian and faculty colleague brainstorm discussants, from either the campus or the larger community. There is a wide range of possible discussants since the Human Dimensions of Climate Change is interdisciplinary in scope. Consider experts in anthropology, Native American studies, education, climate science, communication and journalism, marine science, and political science. You incur no cost for discussants when drawing from the campus or community. If funding is available, compensating local speakers and reaching speakers beyond the local community can be considered.
- Librarian and faculty colleague design publicity for print and online outreach. Both methods have demonstrated success. Or reach out to a public relations or marketing colleague if that is possible on your campus.
- Librarian reserves room for viewing.
- Librarian arranges library space for the film showing. Rows provide a more cinema-like experience and allow for

more seating; however, pods or groups of small tables facilitate small-group discussion.

- Librarian or faculty colleague sends reminder emails to discussants and includes publicity for them to share with interested parties.

COOKING METHOD

- Librarian and faculty colleague take turns each week introducing the series, highlighting their collaboration, sharing the purpose of the series, and thanking sponsors.
- A film is shown.
- When the film ends, the librarian or faculty colleague introduces the discussant. The format for discussion is flexible; this can be shaped by the discussant, which has been of interest to faculty in our series, or can include question prompts from the series organizers, which our student discussants appreciated.
- Conclude with final thoughts and take-aways, a sign-in sheet for extra credit (if offered), and evaluations (if of interest).

ALLERGY WARNING

Students have myriad opportunities to engage with their personal, professional, and academic interests. If instructors are willing to offer extra credit for attendance, this can greatly increase participation.

CHEF'S NOTES

Purchasing documentaries with public per-

formance rights is always costly. However, cost-saving measures abound. Consider that

- Campus populations are transient, so reusing a film from a previous series is permissible. (This also reduces time needed to identify and purchase new films.)
- You can purchase a television series and show one episode per viewing or per series, leaving you with several series' worth of material to draw upon.
- Your library may subscribe to a film or video database that has built-in public performance rights (e.g., Kanopy).
- There are free streaming films online that can be incorporated into your series. Examples include
 - Global Oneness climate shorts, <https://www.globalonenessproject.org/library/collections/climate-change>
 - Disruption, <http://watchdisruption.com>
 - "A Climate Calamity in the Gulf of Maine" (New England focus), Part 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MF-Mmk30cOE>; Part 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZimEBFw1Q7c>
 - Maine Island Institute's climate shorts, <http://www.islandinstitute.org/program/climate-impacts>

Last but not least is the icing on the cake. Each of the following is an additional opportunity to showcase library resources and services:

- Place publicity materials (posters, flyers) in your institutional repository to docu-

ment the event and make the information available for others to build upon.

- Design an accompanying exhibit that points to relevant collections and services.
- Create a social media campaign for Earth Week that highlights sustainability-focused services and resources at the library, and include the film series.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Human Dimensions of Climate Change Film series exhibit guide, <https://libguides.library.umaine.edu/hdcc2019>.

Bonnet, Jennifer, and Cindy Isenhour. "2018 Film Series: Human Dimensions of Climate Change." Anthropology Faculty Scholarship 38, DigitalCommons@UMaine. Spring 2018. https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/ant_facpub/38.

Example of promotional material placed in our institutional repository.