

Environmental Studies Winter Term Course:

Marine Dead Zones



ENVS 411

CRN: 27034

Tuesdays and Thursdays 4-5:50 pm

Marine dead zones are increasing globally and are often linked to human activity, particularly agriculture. They pose a serious threat to marine ecosystem health and can have large impacts on natural resource economies. This course will explore the connections between environmental regulation, pollution, and marine ecology through an in-depth look at marine dead zones. We will use the dead zone in the northern Gulf of Mexico and the issues surrounding it as a case study in order to explore how the factors controlling it apply to dead zones in other places. We will examine nonpoint source pollution in the Mississippi River, the law and policy involved with this form of pollution, marine eutrophication and how it can lead to dead zones, the relevant marine ecology and oceanography, and how dead zones are affecting communities through impacts to fisheries.