Introduction to Science Policy

Course Overview: This graduate level course provides an introduction to some of the fundamental concepts in science policy and public policy. It is designed for graduate students in physical/biological science disciplines who want to gain an understanding of science in societal contexts, particularly in the policy and political processes. Through this course, students will learn the basics for scientists engaging in the policy and political processes. It will provide an opportunity for scientists to learn to become as disciplined about policy as they are their own science.

Instructors: Amy Clement (RSMAS), Gina Maranto (Abess), and Shali Mohleji (AMS Policy Program)

Course Structure: The course will be led locally by Amy Clement and Gina Maranto, but lectures will be primarily given remotely by Shali Mohleji, along with decision makers in Washington, D.C. Students will prepare for class with reading assignments and blog posts, and class periods will be used for lectures, discussion and class activities. The AMS team will visit Miami once during the semester for an in-person activity during the final class period. The class will meet once a week for 2.5 hours, Tuesdays 1:30pm – 4:00pm.

Grading: Class participation 33%; Class blogs 33%; Final activity 33%

September 2: The Basics
- Science for policy/Policy for science
- Policy, decision making, politics
- Models for science
- Science in Societal Context

September 9: Engaging with Decision Makers
- Culture of Science
- Scientific integrity
- Roles for scientists
- Politicization of science
- Framing
- Communication opportunities

September 16: Federal landscape of decision making
- Executive Branch
- Legislative Branch
- Federal Budget process

September 23: The Legislative Process
- Writing a bill/Passing a bill
- Roles for science community
- Exercise: Analyzing the Weather Forecasting Improvement Act

September 30: Gaining Experience
- Mock meetings
- Mock testimonies