

## Rig Blowout, Aftermath Focus of Series

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mr4@tulane.edu

Talk about “teachable moments.” Focusing on the deadly explosion of the Deepwater Horizon oil rig and the ensuing environmental disaster, Tulane Law School this fall will conduct the “BP Blowout Lecture Series.” The course, which is open to all Tulane students as well as members of the general public, will examine a diverse array of issues related to the unfolding story in the Gulf of Mexico.



The Deepwater Horizon oil rig burns in the Gulf of Mexico after a massive explosion on April 21 more than 50 miles southeast of Venice, La. It sank the following day. (AP Photo/Gerald Herbert)

“This is not a law course,” says law professor Oliver Houck. “This is a primer on the history, economics and biology of what's happening out there.”

Houck, who is organizing the series along with William Goodell, an adjunct professor at the law school, anticipates that students returning to campus from their summer breaks will be hungry to learn about and discuss the disaster.

“The adrenal levels kicks in,” says Houck. “The students become vitally interested because it is playing out in front of their eyes.”

The [series](#) kicks off with a lecture about the blowout, with subsequent lectures taught by a variety of experts who will discuss the Gulf's ecosystem, ongoing containment and cleanup operations, biological and community impacts, and issues related to law and policy.

Students who are taking the course for credit are required to produce a research paper.

And the opportunities for research “are fascinating,” says Houck. “How do you develop a recovery plan for such an event? How would you assess natural resources damages? What went wrong in the leasing process? How would you construct a worst-case analysis? There is no end of research that goes spinning off from this.”

The lectures, followed by question-and-answer sessions, will take place in Room 110 of Weinmann Hall, 6329 Freret St., on Monday afternoons from 4:15 p.m., with the exceptions of the opening lecture that takes place from 11 a.m. to noon on Friday, Aug. 27, and another that occurs 2 to 5 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 24.

For more information, contact [Forest Wootten](#).