Sociology 125: Nature and Society
Fall, 2014

Instructor: Tracy Perkins
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Class: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12-1:45, Engineering 2 room 194
Office hours: Thursdays 2-4
College 8, 3rd floor, room 332
Mailbox: College 8 Faculty Services, 2nd floor, room 235

“The challenge of modernity is to live without illusions and without becoming disillusioned.”
- Antonio Gramsci

The aims of this course are to:

• Explore diverse relationships to the environment.
• Draw on key debates in the field to analyze the causes of and potential solutions to contemporary environmental problems.
• Situate contemporary environmental activism within the history of US environmentalism.
• Show how environmentalism intersects with race, class, gender and other social categories.
• Improve reading, analysis, and discussion skills.
• Improve writing and presentation skills.
• Create a productive, respectful and creative learning environment and intellectual community in class.

Required Readings

• Course readings available on e-commons.
• Please do the readings in the order they are listed on the syllabus. The sequencing of the readings often reflects debates in the field as they develop over time.
• Please bring the day’s readings to class every day.
Class Time
Our class time will take on a variety of formats, including lecture, large group discussion, small group discussion, film, class activities, and time for individual written reflection. I encourage you to ask questions during lectures.

Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>% of Course Grade</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td></td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Responses</td>
<td>11:55 pm the night before class</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take-home Midterm</td>
<td>Nov. 6th, in class</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research-based Essay</td>
<td></td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Proposal</td>
<td>Nov. 13th, in class</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Draft Essay</td>
<td>Dec. 2nd, in class</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Poster &amp; Participation in</td>
<td>Dec. 17, in class</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Conference</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Final Essay</td>
<td>Dec. 17</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extra Credit Opportunity</td>
<td>According to sign-up sheet</td>
<td>2%</td>
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Participation
Your class participation will be graded based upon:

• Attendance
• Completion of the class activities
• Your attentiveness
• Active participation in discussion
• Respectful interaction with other students

Reading Responses
You are responsible for writing one reading response for the readings covered for each class session. The response should cover all of the readings assigned for that day. These will be uploaded into the “assignments” section of our class website on e-commons. Please boldface the authors’ names to make it easy for me to see where you are discussing each reading. Please cut
and paste your text into the space available, do not upload or attach separate documents. Each reading response should be 300-400 words long, and should include

1) a brief description of the key points made in that day’s readings
2) your analysis of the readings, and
3) any questions you may have

Over the course of the quarter you will write 15 reading responses for the 18 class sessions between, and including, Oct. 7 – Dec. 11. You may upload your responses until 11:55pm the night before the class session for which the readings are due, when e-commons will close the assignment. Late responses will not be accepted. Each response is worth 2 percentage points of your final grade.

**Take-home Midterm**

You will have two days to complete a take-home midterm exam. It will be made up of short-answer responses to questions based on the readings and themes covered in class.

**Research-based essay, poster and student conference**

This assignment will allow you to further explore a topic related to our course that you find particularly intriguing. You will submit a paper proposal, draft paper, final paper, and research poster. You will submit your final paper at the time of our scheduled final, which is also when we will hold our student conference. The conference will be structured like an academic poster session. You will have a scheduled time to stand by your poster and present your research and answer questions about it. During the rest of the time, you may visit other students to look at their posters and ask them about their research. Attendance at the entire conference is mandatory.

I encourage you to work in groups on your final project, although this is not a requirement. If you work in a group, you will present your final poster together, but will write the accompanying papers individually. I will hand out detailed instructions for this assignment later in the term.

**Extra Credit Opportunity**

There is one opportunity to get extra credit in this class. Successful completion of the assignment is worth 2 percentage points of extra credit toward your final grade.

Choose one current event that relates to the key themes of the class. Write a 300-400-word mini-essay that includes a link to the news source and connects the item to class material. You will turn in your mini-essay on Sunday evening, and your current event will reflect class content for the week that follows. I will choose from all the submissions one or more current event to feature at the beginning of each class period, and may call on you to explain your choice to the rest of the class. You will sign up for a specific week to turn in your news item during the first week of class.

This 300-400 word mini-essays will be turned in through the assignment tool on our class website on e-commons. You will need to cut-and paste your work into the box available.
Submissions will be accepted until 11:55 pm on the Sunday before the week for which you have signed up. At that point e-commons will close the assignment. Late assignments will not be accepted.

**Late Policy**
Late essay assignments can be turned in to me anytime between the end of the class in which they are due and 48 hours after the end of class for reduced credit. You do not need to ask my permission to take advantage of this opportunity. Late reading responses and extra credit assignments will not be accepted.

**Class Attendance**
- Class attendance is mandatory. Failing to come to class or arriving to class late will hurt your overall grade for this course.
- Your attendance will be a significant part of your class grade. All absences, regardless of cause, are marked as an absence. Since there are no excused/unexcused absences in class, you do not need to ask my permission to miss class nor explain your reasons to me after an absence unless you want to. Although it won’t change your grade, I am always happy to listen if you need someone to talk to about problems happening in your personal life.
- If you come to class after attendance has already begun or been completed, it is your responsibility to speak with me after class to make sure I mark you as present.

**Communications**
- The less time I spend responding to individual e-mails, the more time I have to prepare for leading a high-quality class. To that end, before you send me a question via e-mail, first check my syllabus to see if the information you want is listed there. Also, I will not respond to questions about the concepts covered in class via e-mail. These are best asked in class or office hours.
- I will use your UCSC e-mail account for any outside of class communication with you. You are responsible for checking this account regularly. If you do not check it daily, I suggest you set your UCSC account to forward to the account that you do check daily.

**Plagiarism**
- Any act of academic misconduct, such as cheating or plagiarizing on exams, is a serious violation of the University’s norms of conduct. Students who plagiarize or cheat on assignments or exams receive an F in the course and will be reported to their College Provost for further sanctions. Read the Student Guide to Academic Integrity for more information: http://undergraduate.ucsc.edu/acad_integrity/student.html

**Disability**
• If you qualify for classroom accommodations because of a disability, please submit your Accommodation Authorization from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to me during my office hours in a timely manner, preferably within the first two weeks of the quarter or at least two week prior to an exam. Contact DRC at 831-459-2089 or by email at drc@ucsc.edu.

Resources

• Other writing support and general tutoring: http://www2.ucsc.edu/lss/tutorial_services.shtml
• Forwarding your UCSC e-mail: https://www2.ucsc.edu/its/cgi-bin/chpobox
• How to get tested for a learning disability: http://drc.ucsc.edu/current_students/doc_guidelines_ld2.shtml
• Counseling and psychological services: http://www2.ucsc.edu/counsel/
Class schedule

INTRODUCTION

Oct. 2 What does the environment have to do with sociology?

Oct. 7 Nature and society on campus
*Campus hike with Alex Jones, Campus Natural Reserve Steward*
- Natural History of the UCSC Campus - http://mnhc.ucsc.edu/ucscnh/

UNIT 1: CORE DEBATES

Oct. 9 Wilderness as natural, wilderness as social

Oct. 14 (Over)population?

Oct. 16 Immigration and the environment
  - Introduction: Environmental Privilege in the Rocky Mountains
  - Ch. 4: Nativism and the Environmental Movement
Oct. 21  Can technology save us?
  o Introduction: This Book is Not a Tree
  o Ch. 1: A Question of Design

Oct. 23  Is capitalism the problem?
  o Introduction: A Rift in Earth and Time

UNIT 2: IDENTITY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Oct. 28  Race and the environment
  o Ch. 3: Forty Acres and a Mule
  o Ch. 5: It’s Not Easy Being Green
  o Ch. 5: “Smokey Bear is a White Racist Pig”

Oct. 30  Class and the environment
  o Ch. 3: Battles over Old Growth: The Problem of Multiple Interests
  o Ch. 4: When Classes Meet: Class-Cultural Lenses

Nov. 4  Gender and the environment
*Take-home midterm distributed*
  o Ch. 4: Nature’s Housekeepers: Progressive Era Women as Midwives to the Conservation Movement and Environmental Consciousness

Nov. 6 Indigeneity and the environment
Take-home midterm due in class
  o Introduction

Nov. 11 Veteran’s Day, no class

Nov. 13 Religion and the environment
  o Ch. 7. Walking Together Separately: Evangelical Creation Care

UNIT 3: U.S. ENVIRONMENTALISM & ITS DISCONTENTS

Nov. 18 Urban reform and second wave environmentalism
  o Ch. 2 Urban and Industrial Roots: Seeking to Reform the System
  o Ch. 3: The Sixties Rebellion: The Search for a New Politics

Nov. 20 Regulatory pushback: The Sagebrush Rebellion & neoliberalism
Guest lecture: Bernie Zaleha, UC Santa Cruz
  o Introduction

  o Ch. 2: From Public to Private Global Environmental Governance: A Brief History

Nov. 25 **Third wave environmentalism**


  o Ch. 5: The Third Wave

Nov. 26 **Thanksgiving, no class**

Dec. 2 **Radical environmentalism**

  o Theory of Anarchy


Dec. 4 **Environmental justice activism**

  o Preface: We Speak for Ourselves: The Struggle of Kettleman City
  o Ch. 1: A History of the Environmental Justice Movement

Dec. 9 **Environmental consumerism**

*Guest lecture: Alison Alkon, University of the Pacific*

  o Ch. 6: Imaginary Refuge
  o Ch. 7: Political Anesthesia
○ Conclusion: The Future of an Illusion

CONCLUSION

Dec. 11 Denial and hope


  • Ch. 1: Looking into Darkness
  • Ch. 10: Changing the Imagination of Change
  • Ch. 12: The Angel of Alternate History
  • Ch. 14: Getting the Hell Out of Paradise

Dec. 17, 12-3 Student conference - Location TBA