

ENVT 200-03: INTRODUCTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABILITY STUDIES

College of Charleston
Spring 2017

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Location: 403 RSS Bell South Building

Time: TR 10:50 am-12:05 pm

Credits: 3 Semester Hours (fulfills core requirement Environmental Studies Minor)

Prerequisite: You must have attained at least sophomore standing for enrollment.

Textbook: There is no textbook required for this class.

Course Description and Instructional Format:

This course serves as an introduction to interdisciplinary environmental studies. The course will utilize approaches from the natural and applied sciences, humanities, and social sciences to investigate human-nature interactions, where the guiding context is recognition of the current ecocrisis and a desire for sustainability.

Course Goals and Objectives:

- 1.) To introduce the student to the emerging field of Environmental Studies, providing exposure to some of its methodologies, domains of investigation, and some of its key scholars
- 2.) To develop critical thinking skills about human/nature-environment interactions
- 3.) To understand how ethics and values, politics, economics, media, and technology both mediate and influence how humans interact with their environments

Course Student Learning Outcomes:

- 1.) Gain a working understanding of biophysical climate change, and the ethical and political responses to it
- 2.) Gain a working understanding of food and water issues, in their physical, ethical, and political manifestations
- 3.) Gain a working understanding of basic ecological concepts like carrying capacity, food chains, and various biogeochemical cycles
- 4.) Systematically explore possible solutions to current and future environmental problems, and barriers to these successes
- 5.) Develop interdisciplinary acumen in regards to understanding human-nature interactions
- 6.) Develop comfort in working with small groups and in participating in class discussions by requiring active engagement in both forms of discussion during every class meeting

Instructional Methods: Classes will be a combination of traditional lectures, classroom discussion, and in-class activities. Your participation is absolutely essential. PowerPoint lecture slides will be posted on OAKS after each class. Required readings will be announced on OAKS.

Assessment:

Final grades will be determined by the following components:

<u>Component</u>	<u>% of Grade</u>
Class Participation	15
Research Paper	15
Policy Memo	15
Blog Posts (5)	10
Social Media Campaign	10
Midterm Exam	15
Final exam	15
Quizzes and Other Assignments	5
Total:	100

Grading Scale

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>%</u>
A	≥ 93
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	≤ 59
XXF	0 due to academic dishonesty

Class Participation: This includes attendance, the ability to contribute to class discussions, and active participation in in-class team-based activities. [Kahoot!](#), [Poll Everywhere](#), and other interactive learning platforms may be used to encourage in-class participation and to serve as informal assessment tools. To participate, you must be in class!

Research Paper: Students will research an environmental issue of their choice in-depth. Various topics and the rubric will be discussed in class.

Policy Memo: Students will write well-researched, concise letters to a US politician, either at the State or Federal level, which voices their voting stance on a policy issue with environmental implications. Rubrics will be discussed in class.

Blog Posts: Five blog posts on various topics will be due throughout the semester.

Social Media Campaign: This will be a group project designed to use marketing techniques to teach the public at large about an environmental issue. Each group will present their projects on the last day of class (4/25).

Term exams: There will be a mid-term exam on Thursday, March 2nd during the usual class period and a final exam on Tuesday, May 2nd from 8-11 am. These exams will cover fundamentals taught in class and will be comprised of mixed response questions, including multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions.

Quizzes and Other Assignments: This may include take-home quizzes on required reading and in-class assignments.

Requirements, Expectations, and Resources:

- 1.) **Attendance:** Attendance is mandatory and will count towards your participation grade. Roll will be taken at the beginning of each lecture. If you are more than 5 minutes late to class, you will be counted as absent for that day. Tardiness harms your understanding of the material and disrupts the class. Students are responsible for any missed content. It is your responsibility to be present and to be to class on time. Only excused absences render the above moot—it is the student’s responsibility to approach the [Absence Memo Office](#) and present them with valid excuses for missing class, at which point we receive an email that says either “documented” or “undocumented” (keep in mind that if you are sick, you must have a doctor’s note to present the Office, or it will be “undocumented”). Undocumented excuses count as an unexcused absence. Undocumented absences will affect your class participation grade. Keep in mind, even if documented, excusing an absence is ultimately the professors’ decision.
- 2.) **Common Courtesy:** As stated by the Code of Conduct in the CofC Student Handbook, cell phones and other electronic devices must be turned off during the whole class period. Computers are not allowed in the classroom, except on days when they will be needed for in-class exercises. The instructors also reserve the right to ask any student engaging in disruptive behavior (i.e. whispering, reading a newspaper, texting messages, etc.) to leave the class. Repeated observations of students texting, will result in a failing grade for the class participation component of the overall course grade. Please observe this policy with diligence.
- 3.) **Academic Integrity:** Lying, cheating, attempted cheating, and plagiarism are violations of our Honor Code that, when identified, are investigated. Each incident will be examined to determine the degree of deception involved.

Incidents where the instructor determines the student’s actions are related more to a misunderstanding will be handled by the instructor. A written intervention designed to help prevent the student from repeating the error will be given to the student. The intervention, submitted by form and signed both by the instructor and the student, will be forwarded to the Dean of Students and placed in the student’s file.

Cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be reported directly by the instructor and/or others having knowledge of the incident to the Dean of Students. A student found responsible by the Honor Board for academic dishonesty will receive a “XXF” in the course, indicating failure of the course due to academic dishonesty. This grade will appear on the student’s transcript for two years after which the student may petition for the “XXF” to be expunged. The “F” is permanent. The student may also be placed on disciplinary probation, suspended (temporary removal) or expelled (permanent removal) from the College by the Honor Board.

Students should be aware that unauthorized collaboration--working together without permission-- is a form of cheating. Unless the instructor specifies that students can work together on an assignment, quiz and/or test, no collaboration during the completion of the assignment is permitted. Other forms of cheating include possessing or using an unauthorized study aid (which could include accessing information via a cell phone or computer), copying from others' exams, fabricating data, and giving unauthorized assistance.

Research conducted and/or papers written for other classes cannot be used in whole or in part for any assignment in this class without obtaining prior permission from the instructor.

Students can find the complete Honor Code and all related processes in the Student Handbook at <http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/honor-system/studenthandbook/index.php>.

- 4.) **Accommodation for Disabilities:** The College will make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities. Students should apply for services at the Center for Disability Services/SNAP located on the first floor of the Lightsey Center, Suite 104. Students approved for accommodations are responsible for notifying me as soon as possible and for contacting me one week before accommodation is needed.
- 5.) **Academic Support Services:** The Center for Student Learning (CSL) is located on the first floor of the library, offers a wide variety of tutoring and other academic resources that support many courses offered at the College. Services include walk-in tutoring, by appointment tutoring, study strategies appointments, Peer Academic Coaching (PAC), and Supplemental Instruction (SI). All services are described and all lab schedules are posted on the [CSL website](#), or call (843) 953-5635 for information.
- 6.) **Use of Technology:** Unless explicitly authorized, the use of technology such as laptops and smartphones is absolutely prohibited.
- 7.) **Respectful Conduct:** An environment of mutual respect is essential to this course. Please engage in discussions in a way that is respectful of yourself and others. This includes using nonjudgmental language, giving your full attention to whomever has the floor, encouraging others to speak, and responding to others with maturity and respect. We will also hold ourselves to high academic standards, by staying on topic during discussions and by distinguishing between evidence and opinion.

ENVT 200-03 Spring 2017 Schedule*

<u>Week</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic(s)</u>	<u>Due</u>
1	1/12 (R)	Welcome to ENVT 200! (1) Questionnaire (2) Syllabus (3) Icebreaker/Peer introductions	
	1/17 (T)	(1) Environmental movements & their historical contexts (2) Defining sustainability (3) Introduction to ecology & conservation biology	
2	1/19 (R)	(1) Blog assignment introduction (2) Population dynamics (3) Human-biosphere interactions (4) Ecofootprint calculator class discussion (5) Ecosystem services	<i>Overpopulated (2013)</i> Ecofootprint Calculator

3	1/24 (T)	(1) Environmental ethics (2) Deep ecology (3) Ecofeminism	
	1/26 (R)	(1) Lowcountry conservation culture (2) Urban planning & land use	Blog Post 1
4	1/31 (T)	Food systems	
	2/2 (R)	Food security	Blog Post 2
5	2/7 (T)	Food Inc (2009) – Part 1	
	2/9 (R)	Food Inc (2009) – Part 2 & class discussion	
6	2/14 (T)	(1) CofC librarian presentation (2) Research paper topic brainstorming session	
	2/16 (R)	Global climate change – Part 1	Blog Post 3
7	2/21 (T)	Global climate change – Part 2	
	2/23 (R)	Pollution	Research Paper Outline
8	2/28 (T)	(1) Pollution (cont.) (2) Research paper peer review exercise	Research Paper (working draft)
	3/2 (R)	MIDTERM EXAM	
9	3/7 (T)	SPRING BREAK! (NO CLASS!)	
	3/9 (R)	SPRING BREAK! (NO CLASS!)	
10	3/14 (T)	Ecological economics	Final Research Paper
	3/16 (R)	(1) Green business model (2) Corporate responsibility (3) Full cost analysis	Midterm Grades
11	3/21 (T)	Environmental policy – Part 1	Blog Post 4
	3/23 (R)	Environmental policy – Part 2	Last day to withdraw with grade “W”
12	3/28 (T)	(1) Media marketing (2) Introduction to group project: Sustainability-focused social media campaign	
	3/30 (R)	PLASTICS SUMMIT (NO CLASS!)	
13	4/4 (T)	Environmental justice/environmental racism	Post-Summit writing assignment
	4/6 (R)	Ethics of climate change	Policy Memo Topic
14	4/11 (T)	Ethics of climate change	
	4/13 (R)	(1) Policy memo peer review exercise (2) Eco-design: green chemistry, biomimicry, & green building (Part 1)	Policy Memo
15	4/18 (T)	Eco-design: green chemistry, biomimicry, & green building (Part 2)	Blog Post 5
	4/20 (R)	Tipping points, resilience, and adaption	Policy Memo (revised)
16	4/25 (T)	Last Day of Class! Group presentations	Group Project Presentation
	5/2 (T)	CUMULATIVE FINAL EXAM: 8-11am	

***Note:**

The above schedule is subject to change. Schedule departures will be announced in lecture and on OAKS.