Humans and the Environment
(Biol 204-01 Spring 2021)

Lectures: M,W 4:00-5:15, Rita Liddy Hollings Science Center Rm 154
Instructor: Professor Courtney Gerstenmaier Felton
E-mail: cegerste@cofc.edu
Phone: (843)-259-2586 texts only
Office: 65 Coming St. Rm 102
Office Hours: Mondays 2-4:00

Course Overview: This course will focus on the interdependence of humans and their
environment. Emphasis will be on our place in nature, pollution, man-modified habitats, and
environmental protection. We will finish this course by exploring where you and your ideas
could bring us.

Course Objectives:
- Students will become familiar with ways humans have been interacting with their
  environment
- Students will understand the evolutionary path that led to Homo sapiens
- Students will understand how human actions have positively and negatively impacted
  the environment.
- Students will think about applications of course material (to improve thinking, problem
  solving, and decisions)
- Students will understand the complex relationship between environmental problems
  and solutions
- Students will have an appreciation of where we might be headed

Student Learning Outcomes
- Students will become familiar with the interactions between humans and the
  environment and how they shape each other
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of the interaction between man and the
  environment through critical thinking, writing, and presentations

Materials Required
- Course Text: None
- Webcam
- High speed internet access
- Access to ZOOM, VoiceThread, and OAKS

Prerequisite: None
COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Exams
We will have two exams and a final cumulative exam that will be administered during the course. These tests are designed to assess your knowledge of the subjects covered. They will consist of multiple choice, true-false, fill-in-the-blank, and short answer questions.

OAKS Assignments
There will be online assignments, course readings and quizzes offered through the OAKS platform. These assignments will be placed on the OAKS course calendar and will be mentioned during class. It is your responsibility to keep an eye on OAKS for these assignments.

Nature Journal
This journal is designed to get everyone outside and to think about your own interactions with nature. Each week a journal prompt will be posted on Oaks that you have a week to respond to. Generally, a 2 to 3 paragraph thoughtful response will gain you more credit, although there is some flexibility in how you respond to the prompt. You must complete 10 of the 15 journal entries to be eligible for full credit. A rubric for the journal prompts can be found on OAKS.

Class Discussion
Each course module will include a discussion that will help guide your thinking through the topic. For each discussion thread you are required to respond a total of 3 times. Once to the discussion thread itself and twice as responses to your classmates posts. Discussion board contributions are graded using the following criteria 1) frequency (number of postings), 2) quality of your postings (based on the discussion rubric), and 3) timeliness. A rubric for the discussion prompts can be found on OAKS.

Wicked Problems Model
In this assignment, you will create a model (drawing, diagram, flowchart, etc) that explores the causes and effects of an environmental issue you are interested in. This assignment will consist of two parts an initial model that will be worked on at the beginning of the semester and a final model due later in the semester. You will be assessed on how your model changes over time, as well as the feedback you provide to your fellow classmates on their models. The initial model will be due Wednesday, March 3rd and the Final model will be due to dropbox on Wednesday, April 7th.

Humans and the Environment Project
This is a two-part project where you get to think through an environmental issue you are interested in and come up with a solution. The first part of the project involves designing and preparing your own proposal for an activity that would engage citizens with their environment in a positive way related to your environmental issue. This could be a citizen science project, environmental education project, campus project, clean up technology, etc. The final portion will be a two-minute shark tank pitch of your project through flipgrid.

The written assignment and presentation will be due on Monday, April 19th. More information on the project can be found on OAKS.

Note: Missing an assignment, test, or final without permission from the instructor will result in a zero. If the student cannot be present, they are expected to contact the instructor BEFORE the assignment/test/final. Whether the student is allowed to make-up the assignment/test/final is entirely at the discretion of the instructor regardless of a letter from the dean.
**Grading of Assignments:** The following criteria will be used to calculate the grade.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two In-class Exams</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam (cumulative)</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>H&amp;E Project:</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proposal</td>
<td>(10%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pitch</td>
<td>(5%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oaks Assignments:</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Model</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nature Journal:</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>5%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Grading Scale:**

- B+: 87-89
- C+: 77-79
- D+: 67-69
- A: 93-100
- B: 83-86
- C: 73-76
- D: 63-66
- F: <59
- A-: 90-92
- B-: 80-82
- C-: 70-72
- D-: 60-62

Other aspects of grading follow the CofC standards. The last day of drop/add is Monday, Aug 31st. The last day to withdraw with a grade of “W” is Wednesday, Oct 28th.

**Extra Credit:** I will offer potential extra credit with a maximum 5% value added to your lowest exam score. NOTE: These extra credits are a token to encourage general science involvement. *Your time is better spent studying for an exam!!* Extra credit must be submitted by the last day of lectures (Apr 19th, 2021) to be considered. Before you start, I strongly advise you to come and see me to discuss the specifics of the assignment.

- **Option 1)** A 1-page review of a lecture, talk, paper, or other activity attended outside of class. I will provide details for some opportunities in class, but feel free to ask me if something qualifies. Potential options include: Biology Department Seminars, Holland Lifelong Learning Seminars, and the Fort Johnson Marine Science Seminars.
  
  *worth 1% can do up to 5

- **Option 2)** A project (video, poem, drawing, sculpture) that shows the interactions between man and the environment the good, the bad, or the ugly
  
  *worth 5%

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**COURSE DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

**Course Design**

This course will be taught in a way to facilitate both in-person and virtual learning. Each module will open on Monday and you will have until Sunday at 11:59pm to complete the readings, assignments, discussion posts, and journal entries unless a different date is specified.

The course lectures will be taught in a hybrid manner with group A coming into the building on Mondays while group B watches a live stream from “home” and we will switch on Wednesdays with group B being in-person and group A watching from home.
This is all subject to change depending on the College of Charleston’s policies.

**OAKS**
I will be using OAKS throughout the semester to provide you the syllabus, class materials, assignments, quizzes, and your grades. I will update OAKS frequently so you will need to check it multiple times a week to stay up to date.

**ZOOM**
We will be using ZOOM for any synchronous lecture sessions. The access links and passwords will be available on our OAKS homepage. I will be using the waiting room feature for our ZOOM sessions. I ask that you make your username your first and last name so I can quickly assess that you should be added to the meeting. Class sessions will be recorded via both voice and video recording. By attending and remaining in this class, you consent to being recorded. Recorded class sessions will be available on our OAKS page after the session and will not be shared with anyone who is not enrolled in the class.

**VoiceThread**
Some of our modules will include a VoiceThread component. If you do not already have an account please create one at [https://voicethread.com/login/](https://voicethread.com/login/).

**FlipGrid**
We will be using flipgrid for the final project presentations. Flipgrid is a free technology that will allow us to have video discussions on a topic, in this case your final project proposal!

**COURSE POLICIES**

**Patience Please**
An online course is something new for many of us. Although I have had training and read research about best practices for online education, we should expect that there will be glitches along the way. Most importantly, you must be willing to take responsibility for learning to use OAKS and the Voicethread software. There are many resources (CofC tutorials) available for you to use and you should turn to those first. The ability to learn to learn is the hallmark of a college-educated person. Let’s start this course by recognizing that you will have to do that to successfully complete this course.

**Communication and Response**
I will usually check e-mail twice a day during the week, most likely in the mid-morning and then again in the late afternoon before 6 pm. Please do not wait to the last minute to complete any assignment because if you run into trouble, there is no guarantee that I will be there to provide a solution at the moment you want it. On weekdays I will reply to e-mail within 24 hours on the weekends plan on 48 hours for a reply.

**Attendance**
Attendance in this course will set you on the road to success and will be taken. Lecture is an excellent time to ask questions and participate in an active discussion of topics and hands-on activities. Lecture is also when I will mention any announcements about posting of critical information on OAKS including handouts, study guides, extra credit opportunities, and online quizzes.

Due to our current climate, your grade will not be negatively affected by missed classes. However, I do expect you to be proactive and collect any notes, handouts, or other materials from a missed lecture. If
you will have a planned absence on the day of an exam – you must notify me BEFORE the exam is given.

COVID-19
As y’all know we are in unprecedented times. While I am excited to teach you this semester, my first goal is to keep us all safe and healthy. In this regard, I ask you if you haven’t already to sign the Cougar Pledge. Once we are back on campus and it is safe to meet face-to-face, I will require the following of all of us:

1. To properly wear a facing covering when in our classroom and building. This means wearing a mask that reaches from the top of the nose to the bottom of the chin.
2. To maintain a six-foot distance from others in our classroom
3. To monitor and maintain my personal health, regularly check my temperature and avoid public spaces if I am showing symptoms of COVID-19
4. To receive a COVID-19 test when showing symptoms and remain out of public space until I obtain results and/or have been released from isolation or quarantine by a licensed medical provider.
5. To be sensitive and respectful of others in regards to COVID-19 and conversations surrounding the topic.

Classroom Courtesy
A movie theater and a classroom might not have much in common except when it comes to the distraction of electronic devices. Students are asked to keep all cell phones and other devices that beep in silent mode and out of sight unless being used for taking notes. Exceptions will be made in extreme situations such as spouses anticipating the birth of a child or a serious emergency. Permission to leave an electronic device on should be obtained prior to class.

NETIQUETTE
To maintain a respectful and supportive environment, please uphold these rules of netiquette. Netiquette is network etiquette, the do's and don'ts of online communication.

- **Be kind and ethical.** Avoid using sexist, racist, and homophobic language in your writing and speaking; it will not be tolerated. Ask yourself, "Would I say this to the person's face?" If the answer is no, rewrite. [I'm assuming here that you would not feel comfortable saying rude or harassing things to a person's face. . .]
- **Be aware** of how your communication may be perceived by others. For example, if you use ALL CAPITAL LETTERS, will folks feel like you are angry or shouting? Or, if you have a dry sense of humor, will your sarcasm be evident or might folks misinterpret your message?
- **Be forgiving.** We all make communication faux pas, so ask clarifying questions rather than attacking. But if you experience any questionable or outright inappropriate behavior from your colleagues, please let me know.
- **Respect disagreement.** I expect everyone in the class to respect others’ rights to speak, to listen attentively to what is said, and to use discretion and sensitivity when speaking. This does not mean you have to agree with everything said. Debate is a valuable component of a learning community. However, I expect you to be respectful of me and of your colleagues.
- **Share your knowledge.** As Bill Nye says, “everyone you will ever meet knows something you don’t.” You are an expert in something (perhaps many things), so if that expertise becomes relevant, share your knowledge!
- **Cite your sources.** When you share opinions, it’s important to support your claims with sources. This doesn't mean that you must have a citation for everything you post, but providing evidence will strengthen your arguments and will also provide additional resources for your
colleagues. But whenever you are using the intellectual property of others, you must always cite your sources.

- **Help each other.** If you notice a colleague has asked a question or written about a problem, jump in and offer assistance. This is especially true in the Course Lounge discussion board.

**Inclement Weather, Pandemic, or Substantial Interruption of Classes**

If in-person classes are suspended, I will provide you with a plan for our change to complete virtual learning using a combination of asynchronous (on your own time) and synchronous instruction. For virtual learning, you will need access to a computer equipped with a web camera, microphone, and internet access. Resources are available to provide you with these essential tools.

**Continuity of Learning**

Due to social distancing requirements, this class will include a variety of online and technology enhanced components to reinforce continuity of learning for all enrolled students. Before the drop/add deadline, you should decide whether the course plan on the syllabus matches your circumstances.

**Academic Integrity**

Students are expected to behave in an honest and responsible manner. Violations of the honor code are offensive and will generally be dealt with severely. We will adhere to the following policy as quoted from the Honor Council’s recommended guidelines:

“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 an 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 XX 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](http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/honor-system/studenthandbook/index.php)

**STUDENT SUPPORT**

**Office Hours**
Please reach out to me if you need any additional help in my class or are just looking for some general advice about your academic path here at the college. I will happily meet you virtually by appointment or on Mondays from 2-4:00pm.

**Discussion Board**
If you have a question, I encourage you to look at the Discussion Page. I have created a forum for you to ask questions. Someone else may have already asked your question. If not, feel free to pose the question. If you know an answer, feel free to respond to one of your classmates.

**IT Help**
If you have technical problems, please contact the Student Computing Support Desk at 843.953.5457 or email studentcomputingsupport@cofc.edu. Check for computing downloads and tutorials at [https://blogs.cofc.edu/sits/](https://blogs.cofc.edu/sits/).

**Student Accommodations**
Any student eligible for and needing accommodations because of a disability is requested to speak with the professor during the first two weeks of class or as soon as the student has been approved for services so that reasonable accommodations can be arranged. For more information visit: [http://disabilityservices.cofc.edu/index.php](http://disabilityservices.cofc.edu/index.php)

**Center for Student Learning**
I encourage you to utilize the Center for Student Learning’s (CSL) academic support services for assistance in study strategies, speaking & writing strategies, and course content. They offer tutoring, Supplemental Instruction, study strategy appointments, and workshops. Students of all abilities have become more successful using these programs throughout their academic career and the services are available to you at no additional cost. For more information regarding these services please visit the CSL website at [http://csl.cofc.edu](http://csl.cofc.edu) or call (843) 953-5635.

**Access to Computers/internet**
Beginning Fall 2020, laptops are required for all students. If you are unable to obtain a laptop Information Technology has a limited number of laptops available to students who can’t afford one. For more information or laptop requirements please look at Information Technology’s website: [https://it.cofc.edu/laptops/](https://it.cofc.edu/laptops/).

**Physical & Mental Health Resources**
At the college, we take every students’ mental and physical wellbeing seriously. If you find yourself experiencing physical illnesses, please reach out to student health services (843.953.5520). And if you find yourself experiencing any mental health challenges (for example, anxiety, depression, stressful life events, sleep deprivation, and/or loneliness/ homesickness) please consider contacting either the Counseling Center (professional counselors at [http://counseling.cofc.edu](http://counseling.cofc.edu) or 843.953.5640) or the Cougar Counseling Team (certified volunteers through texting "4support" to 839863 or visit [http://counseling.cofc.edu/cct/index.php](http://counseling.cofc.edu/cct/index.php)). You can also visit both on campus on the 3rd floor of Robert
Scott Small. These services are there for you to help you cope with difficulties you may be experiencing and to maintain optimal physical and mental health.

**Life-College Balance and Self-Care**

Whether it is family and relationship problems, working nearly full-time, depression, anxiety, problems related to alcohol or other drug use, sexual assault and/or the death of family and friends, I am aware of and sympathetic to the fact that college students experience these and other challenges that make it difficult to focus on academics. If you experience one or more of these things during our class and you are struggling to complete coursework, please communicate with me. There are numerous resources that I can recommend to you and, to an extent, I can work with you on deadlines. You can review those resources at [https://sites.google.com/cofc.edu/self-care-hoffmann/home?authuser=1](https://sites.google.com/cofc.edu/self-care-hoffmann/home?authuser=1) and/or you can contact me directly.

Depending on what you are going through and the extent to which it is affecting your life, withdrawing from the class is sometimes the best option—Wednesday, October 28th is the deadline for withdrawing from full semester classes. Regardless of your circumstances, please reach out to me or somebody else for support.

**Food & Housing Resources**

Many CoC students report experiencing food and housing insecurity. If you are facing challenges in securing food (such as not being able to afford groceries or get sufficient food to eat every day) and housing (such as lacking a safe and stable place to live), please contact the Dean of Students for support ([http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/about/salt.php](http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/about/salt.php)). Also, you can go to [http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/student-food-housing-insecurity/index.php](http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/student-food-housing-insecurity/index.php) to learn about food and housing assistance that is available to you. In addition, there are several resources on and off campus to help. You can visit the Cougar Pantry in the Stern Center (2nd floor), a student-run food pantry that provides dry-goods and hygiene products at no charge to any student in need. Please also consider reaching out to me if you are comfortable in doing so.
**Course Road Map**

**Introduction**
Jan 11

**Module 1: Science Skills**
Jan 13 - Jan 20

**Module 2: How We Arrived Here**
Jan 25 - Feb 3

**Module 3: Human Population**
Feb 8 - Feb 10

**Test 1**
Feb 15

**Module 4: Feeding our Population**
Feb 17 - Feb 24

**Module 5: Powering our Population**
Mar 1 - Mar 8

**Module 6: Natural Resources**
Mar 10 - Mar 17

**Test 2**
Mar 22

**Module 7: Climate**
Mar 24 - Mar 31

**Module 8: Policy and Beyond**
Apr 5 - Apr 7

**Module 9: Solutions**
Apr 12 - Apr 19
Tentative Detailed Lecture Schedule

The material in this syllabus is subject to scheduling changes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment/Reading Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 11 – Mon</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 13 – Wed</td>
<td>Wicked Problems</td>
<td><em>Last day of drop add</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 18 – Mon</td>
<td><strong>Martin Luther King Day – No Class</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 20 – Wed</td>
<td>Science Skills</td>
<td>Science Comm Reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 25 – Mon</td>
<td>Human Evolution</td>
<td>Human Evolution Reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 27 – Wed</td>
<td>The Origins of Us Movie</td>
<td>Origins of Us Worksheet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 1 – Mon</td>
<td>Human Evolution</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 3 – Wed</td>
<td>Industrialization</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 8 – Mon</td>
<td>Human Population</td>
<td>Human Pop Quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 10 – Wed</td>
<td>Anthropocene and Environmental Health</td>
<td>Anthropocene Readings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 15 – Mon</td>
<td><strong>Test 1</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 17 – Wed</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>Agriculture Quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 22 – Mon</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>Green Revolution Quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 24 – Wed</td>
<td>Factory Farming</td>
<td><em>Proposal Topic Due on OAKS</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 1 – Mon</td>
<td>Traditional Energy</td>
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<td>Mar 3 – Wed</td>
<td>Green Energy</td>
<td><em>Initial Model Due</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 8 – Mon</td>
<td>Green Energy</td>
<td>Energy Reading and Quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 10 – Wed</td>
<td>Water Resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 15 – Mon</td>
<td>Pollution and Waste</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 17 – Wed</td>
<td>Biodiversity</td>
<td>Biodiversity Reading Quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 22 – Mon</td>
<td><strong>Test 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 24 – Wed</td>
<td>Climate Change</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 29 – Mon</td>
<td>Climate Change – SC Edition</td>
<td>In class assignment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 31 – Wed</td>
<td>Climate Change Mitigation</td>
<td>Reading and Quiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 5 – Mon</td>
<td>Environmental Movement</td>
<td>In class assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 7 – Wed</td>
<td>Environmental Policy and Ethics</td>
<td>Reading and Quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 12 – Mon</td>
<td>Sustainable Cities</td>
<td>Reading and Quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 14 – Wed</td>
<td>Sustainable Solutions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 19 – Mon</td>
<td><strong>Project Day</strong></td>
<td>Final Project Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 21 – Wed</td>
<td>Thursday classes meet this day…</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Jan 13th: Last day of drop/add
Mar 22nd: Last day to withdraw with a grade of “W”
FINAL EXAM: Sunday, April 25th 3:30 – 5:30 pm*