

San José State University
Department of Anthropology
ANTH 129 Environmental Anthropology – Spring 2017

Instructor:	A.J. Faas, Ph.D.
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Office Hours:	Tuesdays 3-5pm, Thursdays 3-4pm
Class Days/Time:	Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:30am-11:45am
Classroom:	Clark Hall 204
Prerequisites:	ANTH 011 or instructor consent

Course Description

Anthropologists plan and conduct research to assess and compare the characteristics of different cultures, communities, and organizations, including their economic systems, demographics, health status, languages, religions, and the ecosystems of which they are a part. Some anthropologists specialize in environmental anthropology. For example, environmental anthropologists have studied how Native American cultures use fire to clear brush, maintain hunting grounds and trails, and avert disastrous fires caused by lightning. Some study how aboriginal and other cultures make the most of limited water resources, or use the land without degrading it. Others conduct research on the growing number of climate refugees--those people who are being displaced from their communities as the result of global climate change in the 21st century. Still others analyze the ways in which culturally constructed ideologies (for example, the notion of human dominion over nature) inform the beliefs and practices of human groups.

This course examines the relationship of human societies to their biological environments--from an anthropological perspective. Emphasis is placed on the damage the planet is incurring due to the cultural activities of humankind and what cultures, communities, and other forms of human organization need to accomplish to counteract environmental degradation and the risks of hazards and disasters. This course is methodologically and theoretically informed by cultural anthropology, archaeology, and physical anthropology and will draw upon the discipline's long-standing concern with the relationship between human societies and the environment. Course materials and lectures will review environmental anthropology from a range of theoretical perspectives including Julian Steward's "method of cultural ecology," Lesley White's "science of culturology," cultural materialism, political economy, feminism, post-structuralism, and more. Most of the course readings are ethnographic accounts, based upon participant-observation, ethnographic interviews, and other methods developed by anthropologists over the past century. A range of topics will be covered over the course of the semester including indigenous ecological

knowledge and the loss of such knowledge; population growth and resource consumption; ozone depletion and air pollution; climate change in contemporary and ancient periods (including the Ice Age) and its impact on human groups; the ways in which biological diversity is being transformed by economic development, migration, and other human activities; and sustainable initiatives and cultural alternatives.

Topics to be covered this semester include: cultural ecology, historical ecology, political ecology, environmental devastation, environmental justice, indigenous rights, disasters, vulnerability, natural resource management, unequal development, and environmental futures.

Much of this course's conceptual framework will be covered during the lectures and class discussions, so it is critical that you attend class meetings. Exams will be based upon readings, class discussions, and lectures. This course is open to all upper-division undergraduate and graduate students.

Learning Outcomes and Course Goals

The Department of Anthropology seeks to enhance student knowledge and skills in the following areas. Departmental objectives that this course explicitly addresses are asterisked.

Knowledge

1. Understanding culture as the distinguishing phenomenon of human life, and the relationship of human biology and evolution.
2. Awareness of human diversity and the ways humans have categorized diversity.
3. Knowledge of the significant findings of archaeology, cultural anthropology, and physical anthropology, and familiarity of the important issues in each sub-discipline.
4. Knowledge of the history of anthropological thought and its place in modern intellectual history.*
5. Comprehension of migration, colonialism, and economic integration as significant phenomenon shaping global society.

Skills

1. Ability to access various forms of anthropological data and literature.*
2. Awareness of importance and value of anthropological knowledge in contemporary society, and the ability to apply it to social issues.*
3. Knowledge of the research methods of the sub-disciplines of anthropology, and the ability to apply appropriate research methods in at least one sub-discipline.*
4. Ability to present and communicate anthropological knowledge and the results of anthropological research to different audiences.*

Professional Values

1. Knowledge of political and ethical implications of social research*

Course Learning Outcomes

The student who satisfactorily completes this course should:

1. Document theoretical approaches to the anthropological study of the environment, including cultural ecology, cultural materialism, political economy, political ecology, feminist, and post-structural approaches
2. Identify environmental problems and issues that are affecting indigenous communities, people living in rural areas, inhabitants of cities, and displaced populations
3. Use ethnographic data to document the relationship of cultural beliefs and practices to social adaptations, maladaptations, environmental change, and environmental concerns
4. Analyze archeological information to get a better understanding of how human societies culturally conceptualize, manipulate, and transform their environments over the *longue durée*, including periods marked by rapid climate change
5. Deploy anthropological research methods to identify human ecosystem problems and propose possible solutions

Required Texts/Readings

Sawyer, Suzana

2004 *Crude Chronicles: Indigenous Politics, Multinational Oil, and Neoliberalism in Ecuador*. Chapel Hill, NC: Duke University Press.

Button, Gregory V., and Mark Schuller (eds.)

2016 *Contextualizing Disaster*. New York: Berghahn.

*Additional readings, indicated by “***” in the course schedule, are available on Canvas.*

Course Requirements and Assignments

Assignments for this course include the following: (1) complete SJSU plagiarism tutorial (no credit); (2) class participation (10% of course grade); (3) take-home midterm exam (20% of course grade); (4) take-home final exam (20% of course grade); (5) reading journal (20% of course grade); (6) Term paper (30% of course grade).

- Download the guidelines for the course assignments. Read the guidelines carefully to ensure that you complete course assignments according to instructions.
- All assignments and exams must be completed in order to pass. ***I will not accept late assignments nor will I administer makeup exams unless documents can be presented as evidence of illness, death in family, jury duty, recognized religious observance, etc.***
- No assignments will be accepted via e-mail—I must receive hard copies of all assignments.
- Please write clearly and correctly; seek help if you need it. Please proofread your papers carefully. Reading your work aloud often reveals mistakes in syntax and spelling.

SJSU Plagiarism Tutorial. All students must complete the SJSU plagiarism tutorial online and submit a printout of a passing grade on the quiz to the professor by February 2. The tutorial takes about 15 minutes to complete. Please note that I will not accept any assignments from students until I receive the plagiarism tutorial printout. The tutorial can be found here:

<http://goo.gl/7s6Tka>.

Class Participation (10% of final grade). Students are required to have completed assigned readings by the date indicated in the course schedule (see schedule below) and be prepared to discuss the material in class, either in group discussion or class-wide question and answer. You are expected to be respectful of other students, the professor, and opinions, be mindful and courteous in your participation, and avoid dominating discussions.

Midterm and Final Exams (each counts for 20% of final grade, 40% total). There will be take-home midterm and final examinations—essay questions requiring some independent research—based on lectures and readings. You will have a week to work on and submit your exams. The midterm will cover all material up to that point, while the final will cover all material after the midterm and likely include a question based on cumulative material.

[University Policy S06-4](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S06-4.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S06-4.pdf>) states that “There shall be an appropriate final examination or evaluation at the scheduled time in every course, unless the course is on the official List of Courses in which a final is optional.”

Reading Journal (20% of final grade). Students are required to keep an electronic reading journal in which they write summaries of each reading assigned in class. Keep this journal current and bring it with you to each class. I will collect and grade all journals on two surprise dates during the semester and one final date (May 11).

What to write? Please summarize the main argument of each reading, including: (a) The main thesis or objective (what the author is trying to argue); (b) the evidence the author presents to support the argument; (c) core conclusions of the article; (d) you may (this is optional) record your opinions of the reading and any questions you may have (please clearly distinguish this section).

How long? 250-500 words.

Grading: Each surprise deadline counts for 25% of the assignment grade and the final deadline counts for 50% of the assignment grade. You will be graded on completeness, including all articles since last due date and all components (a, b, c above); and comprehension, or evidence that you have read carefully and have either clear summary or good questions that demonstrate you are working to understand the reading.

If you are absent or forget your journal on a surprise deadline: You lose 10% if you submit the journal by 6pm on the day. No credit if turned in later without a documented emergency.

Term Paper (30% of final grade) Each student will complete review of anthropological studies examining some core domain of environmental anthropology (e.g., disasters, environmental justice, deforestation, natural resource management).

Term papers will be ten double-spaced pages (Times New Roman, 12-point font, one-inch margins) for undergraduate students and 20 double-spaced pages for graduate students. *Page totals do not include references.*

Students are expected to use at least 5 academic sources (journal articles or books) in the paper (graduate students must use 10).

For all references, you should conform to the American Anthropological Association

Style Guide, available on the Canvas page for this course.

The assignment has several parts and due dates (see class schedule below): (1) paper idea in two paragraphs, one describing the site/group and the other the topic (10% of assignment grade); (2) annotated bibliography (a list of sources and summaries like the reading journal, 10% of assignment grade); (3) Paper outline with short summaries of each section (10% of assignment grade); (4) Final paper (70% of grade).

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally 3 hours per unit per week with 1 of the hours used for lecture) for instruction or preparation/studying or course related activities including but not limited to internships, labs, clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.

Grading Distribution

100 - 97	A+	79 - 77	C+
96 - 93	A	76 - 73	C
92 - 90	A-	72 - 70	C-
89 - 87	B+	69 - 67	D+
86 - 83	B	66 - 63	D
83 - 80	B-	Below 63	F

Plus and minus grades will be assigned (e.g. roughly 70-72.9 = C-, 73-76.9 = C, and 77-79.9 = C+), but extra credit will not be accepted.

Canvas

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on the Canvas learning management system course website. You are responsible for regularly checking Canvas and your email to learn of any updates.

Classroom Protocol and Student Responsibilities

1. It is expected that students will be attentive and respectful of their fellow students, the instructor and cultures and traditions which are not their own.
2. Students arriving habitually late to class will be asked to leave as this is disruptive to the learning process.
3. **Mobile phones, laptops, and tablets must be turned off during class and must be out of sight or else the instructor will collect the device from the student until the end of class.**
4. Students may record lectures for their own private use only, **not to be redistributed or sold.**
5. Students are required to read SJSU's Academic Integrity Policy S07-2 (see below). **This university policy on plagiarism and cheating will be strictly honored.**
6. In the event that the building is evacuated because of an emergency during class time, the class will convene in the parking lot directly adjacent to the building. No assignment will be canceled because of any such emergency.

7. If you miss a class, ask your fellow students for copies of their notes. If you need further help, please see me in my office hours.
8. Students are responsible for being aware of exam dates and assignment deadlines.
9. If you have any concerns about your class performance or comprehension, see me in my office hours or schedule an appointment. I am always willing to help students and I care about whether students are grasping the material and enjoying the class.

ANTH 129 Spring 2017 Course Schedule

Changes to the following schedule will be made if necessary. Students will be notified in class and by e-mail (using the official class roster e-mail addresses), and all students are responsible for any changes in the calendar.

Note that readings marked with “***” can be found on Canvas.

COURSE MEETING	TOPICS, READINGS, ASSIGNMENTS, DEADLINES
Thursday, January 26	<i>Class Introduction and Overview of Material and Assignments</i> What is this course about and what can you get from it?
Tuesday, January 31	<i>Historical Orientation to Environmental Anthropology</i> <i>What are the key concepts associated with (a) Julian Steward and Leslie White; (b) Neoevolutionism and Neofunctionalism; (c) Processual approaches to environmental anthropology?</i> <u>Reading</u> Orlove (1980) Ecological Anthropology**
Thursday, February 2	<i>Steward’s Cultural Ecology</i> <i>What are the main features of cultural ecology and the “culture core” and what evidence does Steward present to support his framework?</i> <u>Reading</u> Steward (1955) The Patrilineal Band** Plagiarism Tutorial Due
Tuesday, February 7	<i>Rappaport’s Neofunctionalism</i> <i>How does Rappaport explain the relation between culture and ecosystems? What is the role of ritual and religion in ecosystem management?</i> <u>Reading</u> Rappaport (1967) Ritual Regulations of Environmental Relations**

Thursday, February 9	<p><i>Environmental Anthropology at the End of the 20th Century</i></p> <p><i>What were the key trends in ecological anthropology and the anthropology of environmentalism at the end of the 20th century? What are the key features of political and historical ecology?</i></p> <p><u>Reading</u> Little (1999) Environments and Environmentalisms**</p>
Tuesday, February 14	<p><i>Environmental Anthropology at the End of the 20th Century</i></p> <p><i>What are the core distinctions between the “old ecology” and “new ecologies”? What are the core principles of political ecology? How can these new ideas be used in applied anthropology?</i></p> <p><u>Reading</u> Kottak (1999) New Ecological Anthropology**</p> <p>Paper Ideas Due</p>
Thursday, February 16	<p><i>Indigeneity, Extraction, Politics, and Environment</i></p> <p><i>What are the core issues facing the indigenous peoples of the Ecuadorian Amazon? How did they confront these issues?</i></p> <p><u>Reading</u> Sawyer (2004) Crude Chronicles - Opening</p>
Tuesday, February 21	<p><i>Indigeneity, Extraction, Politics, and Environment</i></p> <p><i>How are indigenous Amazonian peoples popularly imagined? What are the key features of state and corporate standards of property and landuse and how do they compare to indigenous conceptions?</i></p> <p><u>Reading</u> Sawyer (2004) Crude Chronicles - Amazonian Imaginaries</p>
Thursday, February 23	<p><i>Indigeneity, Extraction, Politics, and Environment</i></p> <p><i>How did the state and corporate interests in Amazonian resources clash with indigenous values, livelihoods, and rights? How did the people involved manage these conflicts? What does it mean to be a neoliberal subject?</i></p> <p><u>Reading</u> Sawyer (2004) Crude Chronicles - Crude Excesses</p>
Tuesday, February 28	<p><i>Indigeneity, Extraction, Politics, and Environment</i></p> <p><i>What is neoliberalism and how did the neoliberal agenda affect indigenous livelihoods and the Amazonian environment?</i></p> <p><u>Reading</u> Sawyer (2004) Crude Chronicles - Neoliberal Ironies</p> <p>Annotated Bibliography Due</p>

Thursday, March 2	<p><i>Indigeneity, Extraction, Politics, and Environment</i></p> <p><i>How did state and corporate actors attempt to “depoliticize” the environmental conflicts in the Amazon and how did the indigenous people, in turn, politicize their concerns?</i></p> <p><u>Reading</u> Sawyer (2004) Crude Chronicles - Corporate Anti-Politics</p>
Tuesday, March 7	<p><i>Indigeneity, Extraction, Politics, and Environment</i></p> <p><i>How did the “modernization” of Amazonian territory, economy, and environment clash with indigenous livelihoods and values?</i></p> <p><u>Reading</u> Sawyer (2004) Crude Chronicles - Contested Terrain</p> <p>MIDTERM DISTRIBUTED</p>
Thursday, March 9	<p><i>Indigeneity, Extraction, Politics, and Environment</i></p> <p><i>How did the cultural assumptions of liberal legal frameworks clash with indigenous movements for environmental justice? What were some of the results of indigenous mobilization against neoliberal reforms? What is the relationship between politics, economic development, and environment in the Ecuadorian Amazon?</i></p> <p><u>Reading</u> Sawyer (2004) Crude Chronicles - Liberal Legalscapes Sawyer (2004) Crude Chronicles – Closing: A Plurinational Space</p>
Tuesday, March 14	<p>MIDTERM DUE BY 10 A.M.</p>
Thursday, March 16	<p><i>Introducing the Anthropology of Disasters</i></p> <p><i>What are some of the key historical events in the development of the anthropology of disasters? What are some of the core concepts in the anthropological approach to disasters?</i></p> <p><u>Reading</u> Faas and Barrios (2015) Applied Anthropology of Risk, Hazards, and Disasters**</p>
Tuesday, March 21	<p><i>Disasters and Vulnerability</i></p> <p><i>What are the principal ways of conceiving of disaster vulnerability? How does vulnerability frame the way anthropologists study disasters?</i></p> <p><u>Reading</u> Faas (2016) Disaster Vulnerability in Anthropological Perspective**</p>

Thursday, March 23	<p><i>Disasters and the Historical Production of Vulnerability</i></p> <p><i>What were the historical roots of disaster vulnerability in the Callejon de Huaylas? How do anthropologists investigate the historical production of vulnerability?</i></p> <p><u>Reading</u> Oliver-Smith (1999) Peru's 500 Year Earthquake**</p>
March 27-31	NO CLASS: SPRING BREAK and Cesar Chavez Day
Tuesday, April 4	<p><i>Disaster Narratives and Global Perspectives</i></p> <p><i>What do anthropologists learn from studying narratives of disaster? How do anthropologists situate disasters in global contexts?</i></p> <p><u>Reading</u> (ConDis Intro) Button and Schuller (2016) Introduction</p>
Thursday, April 6	<p><i>Historical Processual Approach to Disasters</i></p> <p><i>How do the authors draw historical connections between different disasters and environmental processes?</i></p> <p><u>Reading</u> (ConDis Ch1) Button and Eldridge (2016) A Poison Runs Through It</p>
Tuesday, April 11	<p><i>Disaster Discourses and Narratives</i></p> <p><i>What are the distinctions between disaster narratives and discourses in developed and developing countries? What are the different explanations of root causes?</i></p> <p><u>Reading</u> (ConDis Ch2) Bankoff and Borrinaga (2016) Whithering the Storm</p>
Thursday, April 13	<p><i>Disasters in the Media</i></p> <p><i>How did media portrayals of the Haitian earthquake affect disaster response and humanitarian aid? What were the benefits and drawbacks of media attention?</i></p> <p><u>Reading</u> (ConDis Ch3) Schuller (2016) "The Tremors Felt Round the World"</p>
Tuesday, April 18	<p><i>Disaster Discourses and Narratives</i></p> <p><i>What is the relationship between competing narratives of disaster and how do they relate to material, political, and economic actions in humanitarian response?</i></p> <p><u>Reading</u> (ConDis Ch4) Parson (2016) Contested Narratives</p> <p>Term Paper Outlines Due</p>

Thursday, April 20	<p><i>Global Economy and Disaster Reconstruction</i></p> <p><i>How do dynamics of the global economy affect reconstruction after disaster?</i></p> <p><u>Readings</u> (ConDis Ch5) Love (2016) Decentralizing Disasters</p>
Tuesday, April 25	<p><i>Expert Knowledge in Disaster Reconstruction</i></p> <p><i>What is meant by “technoscientific” knowledge and how do the assumptions of technoscientific thinking come to bear on disaster reconstruction?</i></p> <p><u>Reading</u> (ConDis Ch6) Barrios (2016) Expert Knowledge and the Ethnography of Disaster Reconstruction</p>
Thursday, April 27	<p><i>Expert and Local Knowledge in Slow-Onset Disasters</i></p> <p><i>What are the competing elements of expert and local knowledge in response to climate change? How do locals contest these distinctions? How do these different ways of thinking affect disaster vulnerability?</i></p> <p><u>Reading</u> (ConDis Ch7) Marino and Lazrus (2016) “We Are Always Getting Ready”</p>
Tuesday, May 2	<p><i>Political Ecology of a Superstorm</i></p> <p><i>How does political ecology help us understand the multiple layers of significance of disaster vulnerability? How do different environmental dynamics intersect to produce vulnerability?</i></p> <p><u>Reading</u> (ConDis Ch8) Checker (2016) Tempests, Green Teas, and the Right to Relocate</p>
Thursday, May 4	<p><i>Considering Culture in Disaster</i></p> <p><i>What are the common problems associated with culture in disaster contexts? How does Maldonado encourage others to consider culture in disaster contexts?</i></p> <p><u>Reading</u> Maldonado (2016) Considering Culture in Disaster Practice**</p>
Tuesday, May 9	<p><i>Culture and Climate Change</i></p> <p><i>How does culture frame the way we perceive, interpret, experience, and respond to the major elements in our environments? Why are culture and local experience so important in investigating environments and environmental change?</i></p> <p><u>Reading</u> Roncoli, Crane, & Orlove (2009) Fielding Climate Change in Anthropology**</p>

Thursday, May 11	<p><i>Anthropology and Environmental Crisis and Disaster</i></p> <p><i>How does the anthropology of disasters encourage us to think about the environment and environmental problems?</i></p> <p><u>Reading</u> Kulstad-Gonzalez and Faas (2016) Afterward: Preparing for Uncertainties**</p> <p>Reading Journals Due</p>
Tuesday, May 16	<p><i>Semester Debrief and Q & A</i></p> <p>Term Papers Due</p> <p>FINAL EXAM DISTRIBUTED</p>
Monday, May 22	Final exam due by 10:00am in Clark Hall 404L

University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo>