

AMS/ EnvS/HUM 159

Tuesdays 6:30 – 9:15 pm

Classroom: SH 120

NATURE AND WORLD CULTURES

Spring 2007

SAN JOSE STATE UNIVERSITY

Dr. Jeanine Pfeiffer

Office: Clark Hall 414H

Tel.: 408/924-4780

Cell: 530/219-2838

jmpfeiffer@ucdavis.edu

Instructor's Office Hours: Tuesdays 4:00 – 5:30 pm (or by appointment)

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

In *Nature and World Cultures* we will survey the conceptual and empirical relationships between nature and societies across the globe. In class lectures, films, discussions, and assignments we will investigate and compare a wide range of cultural philosophies, experiences, knowledge about, interactions with, and responses to, nature. This interdisciplinary course asks the questions: (a) **What are the reciprocal and dynamic relationships between culture and the environment?** (i.e., how does each influence the other?); and (b) **How do socio-cultural factors: spiritual beliefs, economic standing, geographic location, historical events, and personal philosophies influence and/or change an individual's or a group's relationships with their surrounding environment?**

During the course we will examine works of authors representing different ethnicities, professions, socio-economic classes, spiritual traditions, educational backgrounds and geographical regions. Texts in the reader originate from the Americas, Australia, Africa, Latin America, Melanesia, South and Southeast Asia, and the Pacific Islands. We will read and hear the words of anthropologists, ecologists, journalists, naturalists, Native scholars, historians, indigenous peoples, poets, activists, museum curators, immigrants, filmmakers, and conservation organizations, and compare the authors' narratives with our own experiences and insights.

We will investigate cutting-edge theoretical frameworks and their real-world applications in:

- ❑ Ethnoscience relating to the natural world (ethnoecology, ethnobiology, ethnobotany, ethnozoology, etc.)
- ❑ The relationships between biological and cultural diversity (biocultural diversity); agrobiodiversity
- ❑ Traditional ecological knowledge (TEK); indigenous resource management systems
- ❑ Specific topics within cultural ecology and environmental anthropology: cultural keystone species, sacred ecology, indigenous cosmology; anthropomorphism; environmental activism
- ❑ Ecotourism and Nature-Based Tourism
- ❑ Biological invasions and biocultural diversity

CLASS PARTICIPATION AND GRADING:

I expect punctuality, mutual respect, and professional behavior. I expect every student to have completed all relevant readings and assignments prior to showing up for each class, and to arrive prepared to discuss the readings. I expect all students to attend and participate fully and actively in every class, unless you have contacted me in advance and obtained approval for an absence or tardiness.

Each class will contain at least one graded assignment, which will be scored zero ("0") if handed in late [i.e., any time other than the date and time of the relevant class section, unless approved by the instructor]. I ask all of us to exercise courtesy, respect, and tolerance when we participate in class discussion and group assignments.

Grading follows a strict percentage. Points are assigned as follows (out of a possible total of 1000 points):

Study assignments	20%	=	200 points	[10 assignments worth 20 points each]
Essay assignments	30%	=	300 points	[4-part assignment; each worth 40-120 points]
In-class work & quizzes	10%	=	100 points	[6 assignments worth 10 - 20 points each]
Mid-term exam	20%	=	200 points	
Final exam	20%	=	200 points	

Grading percentage breakdown:

94% and above	A	86% - 84%	B	76% - 74%	C	66% - 64%	D
93% - 90%	A-	83% - 80%	B-	73% - 70%	C-	63% - 60%	D-
89% - 87%	B+	79% - 77%	C+	69% - 67%	D+	below 60%	F

Students are *strongly encouraged to consult with the instructor for guidance* by email or cellphone (**recommended**), or during office hours **at least 48 hours prior** to the relevant class when any part of any assignment is unclear or especially difficult. The mid-term exam covers Classes 1-8; the final exam covers Classes 9-14.

AMS/ EnvS/HUM 159 CLASS SCHEDULE Spring Semester 2007

REQUIRED TEXT:

The Class Reader (300 pages) is available at Maple Press, 481 E. San Carlos (between 10th & 11th).

Class No.	WORK DUE	DATE	CLASS TOPIC	REQUIRED READINGS	FILMS	READER PAGES
1	-----	Jan. 30	Interpretations of Nature	Smith 2001; Vaughn 2002	America's Endangered Species	1 - 12
2	STUDY 1	Feb. 6	Observing Nature (Ecotourism)	Hinch 1998; Carter 2002	Trekking on Tradition	13 - 24
3	STUDY 2	Feb. 13	Cultivating & Harvesting Nature	LaDuke 2004a & 2004b; Anderson 2005; Ekachai 1990; Jensen 2004; Maharam 2001	Plants of the Cherokee; Seasons of the Salish	25 - 42
4	ESSAY 1	Feb. 20	Cultural Keystone Species	Garibaldi and Turner 2004	The Buffalo War	43 - 60
5	STUDY 3	Feb. 27	Native America – Cultural & Sacred Ecology I	Menchú 2001; Endrezze 2001; Gonzalez 2001; Bol 1998	The Hopi	61 - 83
6	STUDY 4	Mar. 6	Native America – Cultural & Sacred Ecology II	Ellinger 2006; Bibby 1996; Harmer 2003	Pomo Basketry	84 - 116
7	ESSAY 2	Mar. 13	Native America – Cultural & Sacred Ecology III	McLeod 2002; Crozier-Hogle & Wilson 1997; Abbe & Frank 2003	In the Light of Reverence	117 - 130
8	STUDY 5	Mar. 20	Native America – Cultural & Sacred Ecology IV	Nabhan 2003; Plotkin 2000	The Shaman's Apprentice	131 - 145
		Mar. 27	SPRING BREAK / TAKE-HOME MIDTERM EXAM			
9	STUDY 6	Apr. 3	Australia	Baker 1993; Horst & Wightman 2001	The Dreamers of Arnhem Land	146-165
10	STUDY 7	Apr. 10	The Pacific, Melanesia and Southeast Asia	Cox 2000; Majnep 2001	The Tado	166 - 181
11	ESSAY 3	Apr. 17	Africa	Survival 1998; Nisa 1981; Isaacson 2001	The Baka; Nisa, The Story of a !Kung Woman	182 - 204
12	STUDY 8	Apr. 24	Re-establishing Connections with Nature - I	Lamberton 2000; Kimmerer 2003	The Parrots of Telegraph Hill	205 - 226
13	STUDY 9	May 1	Re-establishing Connections with Nature - II	Nash 2004; Askins 2003; Hill 2000	The Story of Rimba	227 - 258
14	STUDY 10	May 8	Endangered Species; Endangered Societies	Hinchman 2003; James 2001a & b; Stumpff 2003	Homeland: Gwich'in Chapter	259 - 282
15	ESSAY 4	May 15	Biological Invasions & Biocultural Diversity	Mackenzie 2003; Eaton 2002; Pfeiffer & Voeks 2007	Fear & Fishing in Lake Davis	283 - 300
	FINAL	May 22	TAKE – HOME FINAL EXAM			

1. GE Area V Goals

Courses in Culture, Civilization, and Global Understanding should give students an appreciation for human expression in different cultures and an understanding of how that expression has developed over time in different cultures. These courses should also increase students' understanding of how other cultural traditions have influenced American culture and society, as well as how cultures in general both develop distinctive features and interact with other cultures.

2. GE Area V Student Learning Objectives

Students shall be able to:

- a. compare systematically the ideas, values, images, cultural artifacts, economic structures, technological developments, or attitudes of people from more than one culture outside the U.S.;

In this section of AMS/EnvS/HUM 159 we will do this by comparing nature-based knowledge systems, beliefs, and practices of over twenty different cultural societies across the globe. We will use an overarching, interdisciplinary conceptual framework to investigate historical parallels amongst different traditional societies in response to modern pressures; as well as analyzing how these societies have developed distinct and unique relationships between their cultural systems and the surrounding environment.

Student essays, which research the socio-cultural evolution of a cultural group of your choice (e.g., Samoans, Miwok, Ukrainians, etc.), focus on a specific aspect of the group's relationship to nature (e.g., their agricultural or food systems, their environmental practices, their ethnobotanical or ethnozoological traditions, religious beliefs, ceremonial practices, etc.) and how that part of their culture has evolved over the past four centuries.

- b. identify the historical context of ideas and cultural practices outside the U.S. and how they have influenced American culture;

The course includes a number of reading assignments specifically discussing immigrant and diasporic societies based in the United States, and how these societies' nature-based practices have evolved and adapted after their relocation to the U.S.

- c. explain how a culture outside the U.S. changes in response to internal and external pressures.

One of the over-arching themes in this section of AMS/EnvS/HUM 159 is cultural evolution; i.e., how societies have adapted their cultural systems in response to changes in their surrounding environment. The course also considers how political, economic, and social pressures have led to significant environmental changes, which in turn have led to equally significant cultural changes in societies with close links with local ecologies.

N.B. Courses to meet Areas R, S, and V of San Jose Studies must be taken in three different departments or academic units.

3. GE Writing Requirement

In order to meet the SJSU GE writing requirements, we will be completing a written essay every week, consisting of (i) your responses to questions relating to the required readings ("Study Assignments"), or (ii) one portion of your 4-part [3000-word minimum] course term paper ("Essay Assignments"), that you will be writing progressively over the semester. During each part of your term paper, you will be receiving feedback on the structure, clarity, content, logic, and sophistication of your writing from the instructor and from a staff member/peer mentor at the SJSU Writing Center. –

University, College & Department Policy Information:

You are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, withdrawal, etc. found at <http://www2.sjsu.edu/senate/S04-12.pdf>

DR. PFEIFFER'S POLICY: Deal with administrative issues EARLY to avoid registration headaches.

a) Academic integrity statement (from Office of Judicial Affairs):

“Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San José State University and the University’s Academic Integrity Policy requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty are required to report all infractions to the Office of Judicial Affairs. The policy on academic integrity can be found at <http://www2.sjsu.edu/senate/S04-12.pdf>

b) Campus policy in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act:

“If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities register with DRC to establish a record of their disability.”

DR. PFEIFFER’S POLICY: I am accustomed to facilitating the full participation of students who have special needs, or who are experiencing short-term crises. I encourage all students to communicate with me if they are experiencing difficulties with completing assignments in a timely fashion due to a serious issue.

c) Cell Phones:

Students will turn their cell phones off or put them on vibrate mode while in class. They will not answer their phones in class. Students whose phones disrupt the course and do not stop when requested by the instructor will be referred to the Judicial Affairs Officer of the University.

DR. PFEIFFER’S POLICY: All technology needs to be SILENT during class. If your cellphone – or any other electronic equipment – goes off in class, prepare to feel *acute embarrassment*.

d) Computer Use:

STANDARD POLICY: In the classroom, some faculty allow students to use computers only for class-related activities. These include activities such as taking notes on the lecture underway, following the lecture on Web-based PowerPoint slides that the instructor has posted, and finding Web sites to which the instructor directs students at the time of the lecture. Students who use their computers for other activities or who abuse the equipment in any way, at a minimum, will be asked to leave the class and will lose participation points for the day, and, at a maximum, will be referred to the Judicial Affairs Officer of the University for disrupting the course. (Such referral can lead to suspension from the University.) Students are urged to report to their instructors computer use that they regard as inappropriate (i.e., used for activities that are not class related).

DR. PFEIFFER’S POLICY: No computer use in class, unless the student has an approved learning disability requiring the computer use, or has received prior approval from me for some other reason.

Academic Honesty:

STANDARD POLICY: Faculty will make every reasonable effort to foster honest academic conduct in their courses. They will secure examinations and their answers so that students cannot have prior access to them and proctor examinations to prevent students from copying or exchanging information. They will be on the alert for plagiarism (a definition of plagiarism can be found on Judicial Affairs website at <http://www2.sjsu.edu/senate/plagiarismolicies.htm>. Students who are caught cheating will be reported to the Judicial Affairs Officer of the University, as prescribed by [Academic Senate Policy S04-12](#). If you would like to include in your paper any material you have submitted, or plan to submit, for another class, please note that SJSU’s Academic Integrity policy S04-12 requires approval by instructors.

DR. PFEIFFER’S POLICY: Due to the way assignments are structured and graded, **it is virtually impossible to plagiarize in this course**. I will not tolerate ANY attempts to claim someone else’s work or words as your own without crediting and citing the source(s). We will ALWAYS cite our sources, both written (in our text & bibliographies) and oral (using quotes & noted as Personal Communication).

Evacuation plan for the classroom.

At the signal from the instructor, all students will exit the classroom calmly and efficiently, taking valuables with them, and exit the building through the nearest available staircase. The class will reassemble at a safe distance from the building.