

Spring 2009

EnvS 001: INTRODUCTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

FORMAL PAPER 1: 800-1000 Word Writing Assignment (worth 15 points)

General Instructions

This assignment is designed to achieve four objectives: 1) acquaint you with an important topic in Environmental Studies; 2) provide specific instruction on correct writing style; 3) give you practice with paraphrasing, summarizing, citing information, and avoiding plagiarism; 4) teach you how to find and use a peer-reviewed article in your essay.

This paper must be typed, using Times New Roman 12-point font. Use double spacing. Using this spacing, your paper will be three to four pages in length. Please print on both sides of the page, if possible, and do not use cover sheets.

Maintain one-inch margins on the top, bottom, and both sides. Paragraphs will be indented five spaces. Give your paper an appropriate title and provide an extra space between the title and the body of your text. Number the pages. Include your name and the date. Spell-check your work and proofread your paper after you spell-check to catch any style, syntax, or spelling errors. The word count for this paper should be 800-1000 words. You will also check your paper for plagiarism with Turnitin.com. The directions for how to do this are on page 2. You can not receive credit for this paper without generating an Originality Report through Turnitin.com. This essay is to be written in expository style, presenting well-organized facts and expert opinion and then using that information to support your analysis.

This assignment is due on **March 5. Plagiarism in this paper will result in NO CREDIT.**

Specific Instructions

Content. This paper will address the question: How can we reduce the global ecological footprint and our own contribution to that footprint?

Use information in Chapter 1 of Miller and Spoolman (2009), the report by Venetoulis and Talberth (2005), which is provided on my website, and one article from a peer-reviewed journal to write an expository essay that addresses these points:

1. Define “ecological footprint” and discuss why this concept is important to sustainable living.
2. What components go into the footprint calculation for a nation? Per capita, what is the range of national ecological footprints from the largest to the smallest? According to Venetoulis and Talberth (2005), what is the relationship of the entire human population’s footprint to the earth’s ability to support us?
3. Discuss the relative contributions of developed and developing nations to the global footprint.
4. Find an article from the peer-reviewed literature that discusses the ecological footprint of a nation (other than the US) or a region of the world. The article could focus on one part of the footprint such as energy consumption, consumption of goods, or food production/consumption. Briefly summarize what the author(s) were researching in their paper. How

does their work help us understand the differences in people's ecological footprint around the world? What can this nation/area do to reduce their footprint?

5. Use yourself as an example of how someone in the US, a developed nation, could reduce his/her footprint. First, use the Ecological Footprint calculator at <http://myfootprint.org> to calculate your own ecological footprint. To begin, click on "Take the Quiz" near the bottom of the web page. What were your scores in the four categories: carbon, food, housing, and goods/services? What were your percentage shares by biome: cropland, pastureland, marine fisheries, and forestland? What was your total footprint and how many earths would be needed to support the world's human population at your lifestyle? At the end of the quiz, click on "Reduce your footprint." What actions could you take to reduce your footprint?
6. Based on your knowledge of this subject, which presents the biggest obstacle to reaching a sustainable human ecological footprint: human population growth in less developed countries or affluence in more developed countries? Explain your view, supporting your perspective with facts or expert opinion. Do not use inflammatory language. Be sure your argument is logical.

Use appropriate facts, data, and terminology in your paper. Be factual and do not give value judgments. Avoid redundancy or vague sentences. Be sure each sentence includes new data or ideas that *move the discussion forward*.

Checking your Paper with Turnitin.com. As part of this paper, you will turn in the Originality Report you generate through the website, www.turnitin.com. When you go to this site, you will need to follow the directions to first create a "user profile" so that you can log on to the site. If you have used Turnitin.com before, then you should already have a user profile. Then, log on to the site. You will need the class ID and password to join the class. The class ID is 2618980 and the password is Sustainable. This should take you to the class page. Click on "Paper 1 Ecological Footprint." Follow the directions to submit your paper to Turnitin.com. Run the Originality Report. Your paper needs to be in the blue or green range to receive credit. If you are in a higher range, Turnitin.com will show you where your paper is having trouble. Revise your paper to avoid those problems. Print out the Originality Report and turn it in with your paper.

Style, Construction, and Organization. This paper must exhibit good sentence construction, syntax, and punctuation. If you are unclear on what constitutes correct writing style, please consult the APA style manual, *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, (5th ed.). 2002. This book is available in the Spartan Bookstore and in the writing section of most bookstores.

Here are a few important points on sentence construction:

- Every sentence must have a subject and verb. Do not submit incomplete sentences.
- Include only one or two ideas in a sentence. Avoid "run-on" sentences. If your sentence is too long, divide it into two.
- Each sentence must have a purpose and must advance the discussion.
- Use active verbs that require a subject to be named. In other words, avoid the passive tense. An example of a passive sentence is, "A pamphlet will be written." State who will do the writing to make this an active sentence, such as, "The City Fire Department will write a

pamphlet describing safe evacuation procedures.” This new sentence also includes valuable explanatory information.

This paper must also exhibit good organization and paragraph construction. Each paragraph must communicate a complete idea with supporting information to clarify or support that idea. Each paragraph must advance the purpose of the paper in a logical fashion, until the title of the paper has been adequately addressed. Here are a few important points on paragraphs:

- Each paragraph must have a topic sentence that introduces the topic to be covered in the paragraph.
- The following sentences must provide data, arguments, or other information that support or elaborate on the paragraph’s topic. The last sentence should provide a transition that moves the reader into the next paragraph.
- The next paragraph must follow logically from the previous paragraph.
- The final paragraph should briefly summarize the material in the paper and smoothly close the topic.

Summarizing, Paraphrasing, Quoting, and Plagiarism. In this paper, you will be taking information written by another author and you will communicate that information in your paper. The goal of the paper is to summarize the material, distilling the most important information in order to make your points. After you locate the most important information, then you must convey the material *totally in your own words*. This is paraphrasing. Paraphrasing is what you are doing if you were to describe to a friend the information you read in your textbook.

If your paraphrase is close to the exact words used by another author or if, in fact, you use the exact words of an author without citing that author, then you are plagiarizing. Plagiarizing is a form of stealing and is a punishable offense at San Jose State University. Read the San Jose State University policy on plagiarism on line or in your catalog. This course will follow that policy. You **MUST** avoid plagiarizing. Changing one or a few words in another author’s sentence is not paraphrasing; it is plagiarizing. If you must use language close to another author’s words, cite that author in the text of your paper. If you use an author’s exact words you must **quote** them and then cite the author. To cite the author, give the author’s name and the publication date in the text and then provide a full bibliographic reference at the end of the paper. For an exact quotation, also include the page number(s) in the in text citation. Be sure to contact me if you are not sure you are plagiarizing.

Examples for Reference List

Miller, G. T., & Spoolman, S. E. (2009). *Living in the environment* (16th ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Venetoulis, J., & Talberth, J. (2005). *Ecological footprint of nations: 2005 update*. Oakland, CA: Redefining Progress.