

San José State University
Department of Environmental Studies
ENVS 250, Environmental Thought and Philosophy, Fall '22

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Dr. Will Russell
Office Location:	WSQ 115E
Email:	will.russell@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	Monday 1:30-2:30 (by appointment)
Classroom	WSQ 111; or ENVS Garden
Class Days/Time:	Monday, 10:30 AM – 1:15 AM



Course Description

An intensive, critical analysis of current and historic works of significance in the field of environmental studies, with emphasis on their contributions toward the evolution of conservation and environmental thought. Topics covered include preservation versus conservation, biocentrism, environmental justice, eco-feminism, deep ecology, and environmental activism. Individual student research is presented with oral and written reports.

Course Overview

This seminar is designed to provide students with an opportunity to investigate the historic and cultural context of current environmental issues and philosophies. The evolution of our society has direct and profound influence on our attitudes toward nature. These attitudes are reflected in science, literature, government, art, and our management of natural resources. It will be the responsibility of each student to define the historic context of their own field of interest, present their findings to the class, and lead class discussions. As a graduate seminar, the goals of the course are to perfect communication skills as well as add to students' general understanding of environmental issues.

Learning Outcomes

Student Learning Objectives (SLO)

SLO - Knowledge of Environmental Thought: Students will demonstrate thorough knowledge of the history of environmental thought and specific topics including

preservation versus conservation, biocentrism, environmental justice, eco-feminism, deep ecology, and environmental activism.

Required Texts/Readings

Textbooks

Most of the course materials are linked in Canvas as pdf or urls, with the exception of the following two books. Both of these books are relatively inexpensive and can be purchased online, and it is recommended that you purchase them. They are also both available as e-books however, through the SJSU MLK library, so you may choose to go that route instead.

LaDuke, W. (2017). *All our Relations: Native Struggles for Land and Life*. Haymarket Books. This book is available as an e-book through the MLK library. You will need to sign into the library to access the book: (<https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.libaccess.sjlibrary.org/lib/sjsu/detail.action?docID=4548443>).

Quinn, D. (1995). *Ishmael*. Bantam. This book is available as an e-book through the MLK library. You will need to sign into the library to access the book. https://csu-sjsu.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/fulldisplay?docid=alma991013829517302919&context=L&vid=01CAL_SJO:01CAL_SJO&lang=en&search_scope=MyInst_and_CI&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=everything&query=any,contains,Ishmael&offset=0.

Worster, D. (1994). *Nature's economy: a history of ecological ideas*. Cambridge University Press. The following excerpts from this book will be posted on Canvas. Part 1: Two Roads Diverged: Ecology in the Eighteenth Century (Ch 1 - Science in Arcadia; Ch 2 - The Empire of Reason)

Other Readings

Additional readings will be available on Canvas.

Course Requirements and Assignments

SJSU classes are designed such that in order to be successful, it is expected that students will spend a minimum of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours per unit per week), including preparing for class, participating in course activities, completing assignments, and so on. More details about student workload can be found in [University Policy S12-3](http://sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf) at sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf.

NOTE that [University policy F69-24](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F69-24.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F69-24.pdf> states that "Students should attend all meetings of their classes, not only because they are responsible for material discussed therein, but because active participation is frequently essential to insure maximum benefit for all members of the class. Attendance per se shall not be used as a criterion for grading."

Please read the following assignment descriptions carefully. Failing to comply with the specific directions given below will result in a loss of credit points for each assignment.

Discussion Posts

Post a 500-600 word reaction to the day's readings to the 'Discussions' section in Canvas. The Reaction should address the discussion question posted by the instructor for that day, and include quotes (with page numbers) from the readings to support your ideas. In addition, post at least two 'responses' to other students' posted reactions. For full credit, responses will encourage dialog by challenging assumptions and asking questions.

Topic Presentation

Each student will develop a short in-class presentation/discussion based on topic related to the themes discussed in the course. The presentation will be based on material researched by the student presenter. Each presenter will provide one additional reading no more than 10 pages in length that will be made available electronically one week in advance of the class meeting. The presentation will be 10-15 minutes in length, and will be followed up with discussion. The presentation may include activities, creative expression, and audio visual aids. Power-point is not encouraged for this assignment.

Research Paper

Each student will write a 3000-4000 word research paper on a topic of their choosing that relates to the theme of the course (it is recommended that students explore their thesis topics with this paper). The paper will include the philosophical and theoretical foundation for the student's proposed Masters thesis topic (or other instructor approved topic). The paper will be presented in the standard collegiate essay form (introduction, body, conclusions, etc.). A minimum of 10-15 primary references will accompany the paper and will be cited in the text. The paper will be presented in APA format single spaced throughout with 12-point type. The essay will be submitted electronically through Canvas.

Research Paper Presentation

Each student will present their Environmental theory paper in class (**15 minutes**). The presentation should be professional in quality and creative in nature. Students are free to use PowerPoint or other audio visual aids, but are also welcome to include creative, participatory, and performance, aspects as well.

Grading Policy

Class Participation

1. Attendance – You are required to attend every class meeting unless you are ill or have an emergency. If you need to miss class for either of these reasons e-mail me as promptly as possible especially if you are expected to present that week.
2. Participation in discussions – Participation does not mean being verbose. In many cases allowing or encouraging others to speak is more valuable to the group dynamic. Providing the group your insights in an engaging and respectful manner. Statements are always more interesting if they are backed up by logic and evidence.
3. Presentations – As a presenter it is your job to make your subject informative and entertaining. Please be professional and creative!

4. **Respect and decorum** – All class participants will behave in a manner that provides a positive and comfortable learning environment for everybody.

Grading

Your grade in this course will be calculated as follows.

Assignment	Point Value
Discussion Posts	20
Topic Presentation	20
Research Paper	20
Research Paper Presentation	20
Participation	20
<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>100</i>

Penalty for Late Work

All assignments will be turned in during class time by the due. Assignments turned in after the due date will be dropped a full letter grade for each class meeting that they are late.

Classroom Protocol

All class participants will behave in a manner that provides a positive and comfortable learning environment for everybody. Use of cell phones during class time is discouraged. Computers may be used during class time at the instructor's discretion exclusively for tasks directly related to class activities. Students should be in class prepared to work at the beginning of each class session. Disruption of the class by students arriving late will not be tolerated. Failure to meet the expectations of classroom protocol will result in a loss of participation points.

University Policies

Academic Integrity

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 members are required to report all infractions to the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The policy on academic integrity can be found at http://sa.sjsu.edu/student_conduct.

Campus Policy in Compliance with the American 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 requesting accommodations must register with DRC to establish a record of their disability.

Student Technology Resources

Computer labs for student use are available in the Academic Success Center located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and on the 2nd floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library.

ENVS 250, Seminar: Environmental Thought and Philosophy, Fall 2022

Course Schedule - subject to change.

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Date	Topics	Readings	Assignments Due
8/22	Course introduction		
8/29	Traditional Practices and Indigenous Knowledge	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. LaDuke, Intro:1-6 (<i>e-book SJSU Lib</i>). 2. Tunuri and the Blue Deer: children's book video (<i>link on Canvas</i>) 3. Hawaiian cultural landscape (<i>link on Canvas</i>) 	<p>Discussion Post Article Discussion</p>
9/5	No Class	Labor Day	
9/12	Biocentrism	1. Quinn "Ishmael": whole book (<i>e-book SJSU Lib</i>).	<p>Discussion Post Article Discussion</p>
9/19	The Neolithic Revolution	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shard. D. 1974. The Neolithic Revolution (<i>pdf on Canvas</i>). 2. A Brief History of Slavery (<i>pdf on Canvas</i>). 3. The Happiest Humans to Inhabit Earth? (<i>link on Canvas</i>) 	<p>Discussion Post Article Discussion</p>
9/26	Impacts of Colonialism	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How our colonial past Altered the Ecobalance of an Entire Planet (<i>link on Canvas</i>) 2. Colonialism, The Hidden Cause of Our Environmental Crisis (<i>pdf on Canvas</i>) 3. <i>Pachamama - Animated Film</i> (extra credit on Netflix) 	<p>Discussion Post Article Discussion</p>
10/3	Arcadia and the Age of Reason	Nature's Economy, Donald Worster. Part 1:Two Roads Diverged: Ecology in the Eighteenth Century (Ch 1 - Science in Arcadia; Ch 2 - The Empire of Reason)	<p>Discussion Post Article Discussion</p>
10/10	The Romantic Era	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. March Man and Nature (<i>pdf on Canvas</i>) 2. Thoreau Huckleberries (<i>pdf on Canvas</i>) 3. Thoreau Civil Disobedience (<i>pdf on Canvas</i>) 	<p>Discussion Post Article Discussion</p>
10/17	The Progressive Era and the Great Debate	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Muir (<i>pdf on Canvas</i>) 2. Pinchot (<i>pdf on Canvas</i>) 	<p>Discussion Post Article Discussion</p>
10/24	Racism and the Environmental Movement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ethnic Cleansing and Americas Creation of the National Parks (<i>pdf on Canvas</i>) 2. Environmentalism's Racist History (<i>pdf on Canvas</i>) 3. The Tragedy of the Tragedy of the Commons (<i>pdf on Canvas</i>) 	<p>Discussion Post Article Discussion</p>
10/31	Environmental Justice	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chavez 2. Mustafa Ali (<i>linked video on Canvas</i>) 3. Dolores Huerta (<i>linked video on Canvas</i>) 	<p>Discussion Post Article Discussion</p>
11/7	Ecofeminism	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Vandana Shiva (<i>pdf on Canvas</i>) 2. Bari (<i>pdf on Canvas</i>) 	<p>Discussion Post Article Discussion</p>

Date	Topics	Readings	Assignments Due
		3. Judi Bari (<i>linked video on Canvas</i>)	
11/14	A New Hope	1. Haaland (<i>link on Canvas</i>) 2. Evo Morales (<i>pdf on Canvas</i>) 3. Greta Thunberg (<i>linked video on Canvas</i>) 4. Green New Deal (<i>linked video on Canvas</i>)	Discussion Post Article Discussion
11/21	Research Paper Presentations		
11/28	Research Paper Presentations		
12/5	Research Paper Presentations		Research Paper Due