

San José State University
Department of Environmental Studies
ENVS 150, Introduction to Environmental Thought, Fall 2015

Course and Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. Will Russell

Office Location: Washington Square Hall (WSQ) 115E

Telephone: (408) 924-5487

Email: will.russell@sjsu.edu

Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday, 1:00 PM – 2:45 PM,
and by appointment

Class Days/Time: Monday, 3:00 PM – 5:45 PM

Classroom: Dudley Moorhead Hall (DMH) 164

Prerequisites: Passing WST score

GE/SJSU Studies Category: SJSU Studies Area S (Self, Society & Equality in the U.S)

T.A. Emily Moffitt emily.moffitt@sjsu.edu

Library Liaison Peggy Cabrera peggy.cabrera@sjsu.edu



Course Description

An introduction to significant works in the field of environmental studies in the United States. Topics covered include preservation, conservation, biocentrism, environmental justice, eco-feminism, deep ecology, and environmental activism.

Course Overview

This course is designed to provide upper division students with the opportunity to investigate their personal environmental philosophy within a cultural and historic context. The evolution of our society has a direct and profound influence on our attitudes toward Nature. Similarly, dysfunction in our relationship with Nature, as a society, is tied to inequities in our interactions with each other (sexism, racism, and economic stratification). The purpose of this course is to create a framework for a dialog on these topics that will help students to develop tools for addressing the social structures and inequalities that have led us to the brink of environmental collapse.

Learning Outcomes

SJSU Studies Area S (Self, Society & Equality in the U.S)

1. SLO 1 - Students will be able to describe how identities (i.e. religious, gender, ethnic, racial, class, sexual orientation, disability, and/or age) are shaped by cultural and societal influences within contexts of equality and inequality.

2. SLO 2 - Students will be able to describe historical, social, political, and economic processes producing diversity, equality, and structured inequalities in the U.S.
3. SLO 3 - Students will be able to describe social actions that have led to greater equality and social justice in the U.S. (i.e. religious, gender, ethnic, racial, class, sexual orientation, disability, and/or age).
4. SLO 4 - Students will be able to recognize and appreciate constructive interactions between people from different cultural, racial, and ethnic groups within the U.S.

Department Student Learning Objectives (SLO)

1. SLO 1 - Qualitative Environmental Literacy: Students are able to write a logical analytical paper using good writing style and construction supported by appropriate research.
2. SLO 2 - Content Environmental Literacy: Students will develop proficiency in the interdisciplinary sustainability principles that are the foundation of environmental studies; they will know the key environmental challenges facing the planet, know relevant interdisciplinary information about these challenges, and be able to develop/identify feasible solutions.

Required Texts/Readings

Textbook

McKibben, Bill (Editor). 2008. American Earth: Environmental Writing Since Thoreau. Library of America, New York, NY. **Available at SJSU Spartan Bookshop.**

Garcia, Camille Rose. 2006. The Magic Bottle. Fantagraphics Publishing, Los Angeles, CA. **Available on Amazon, etc.**

Supplemental Materials

Additional readings will be available on Canvas:

Bari, J. 1994. Timber Wars. Common Courage Press, Monroe, ME. **Available on Canvas.**

Elk, Black. 1972. Black Elk Speaks. Pocket Books, New York, NY. **Available on Canvas.**

Homeland [videorecording] : Four Portraits of Native Action / Katahdin Foundation presents; produced and directed by Roberta Grossman. 2005. Bullfrog Films. **Available from IRC, Room 112.**

Naess, Arne and George Sessions. 1984. Basic Principles of Deep Ecology. **Available on Canvas.**

Schultz, A. and S. Sichley. 2011. Urban Agriculture Policy in San Jose. Urban Planning Department, SJSU. **Available on Canvas.**

Shiva, Vandana. 2002. Staying alive: Women, ecology, and development. Zed Books, London. **Available on Canvas.**

Smith, Henry. 1887. Chief Seattle's 1884 Oration. Seattle Sunday Star on Oct. 29, 1887. **Available on Canvas.**

Thoreau, Henry David. Resistance to Civil Government. Search at:
<https://sniggle.net/TPL/index5.php?entry=rtcg#p07>

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](#) 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.

Reactions

Every class day you will 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. In addition, each student must post two ‘Responses’ to other students’ posted Reactions. The Reaction and Responses must be posted by the day of class.

Personal Environmental Philosophy

Written Essay

A 2000-2500 word (5-page single spaced) personal environmental philosophy will be required from each student. The philosophy should describe your personal environmental perspective in direct reference to the philosophies described in the course readings and class discussions. Also include how your personal lens - cultural identity, gender, family history, life experience, etc. influence your philosophy. Be sure to answer the question “How do I as an individual relate to the natural world – am I a part of it, or apart from it?” Include a bibliography with referenced material that includes at least ten outside references (not from the course text). You may include as many references from the text as you like.

Presentation

You will also be required to present your philosophy formally in class (5 minutes). The presentation will be a an opportunity to share your personal perspective as it relates to the environmental movement. Be sure to include your personal lens (culture, family, gender, etc.), and how your philosophies relates to those that we have discussed in class.

In-Class Assignments

In class activities will be conducted throughout the semester. In most cases an assignment (written or otherwise) will accompany this activity. Participation in these activities is essential, and successful completion of them will constitute a significant portion of the total class grade.

Midterm Exam

The midterm exam will cover all course material up until the day of the exam including: readings and module content, and in-class discussions and assignments. The exam will include short answer, multiple-choice, and essay style questions. No blue book or Scranton is necessary – you need only bring a pen or pencil, and a head full of knowledge.

Final Exam

The final exam will be comprehensive, and will include material from the entire semester. The exam will include short answer, multiple-choice, and essay style questions. No blue book or scranton necessary.

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.**

Note that “All students have the right, within a reasonable time, to know their academic scores, to review their grade-dependent work, and to be provided with explanations for the determination of their course grades.” See [University Policy F13-1](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F13-1.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F13-1.pdf> for more details.

Grading

Grading Rubric for Writing Assignments: An “A” paper will include all of the elements listed in the assignment in an integrated, compelling, and readable format with minimal grammatical and stylistic errors. A “B” paper will include all of the elements listed in the assignment, but may lack some integration and can include a few grammatical and stylistic errors. A “C” paper will include the essential elements listed in the assignment but might include significant stylistic and grammatical errors. A “D” paper may include some of the elements listed in the assignment but will may have serious issues with regard to style, organization, and grammar. “F” papers will be those where the basic elements of the assignment were not met.

Course Grade: Your grade in this course will be based on your written work, presentations, and your participation in online as well as in-class discussions.

Assignment	Percent of Grade
Reaction and Responses	20
In-class Assignments	20
Environmental Philosophy	20
Midterm Exam	20
Final Exam	20
<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>100</i>

Points Acquired	Letter Grade
980-100	A+
900-979	A
880-899	B+
800-879	B
780-799	C+
700-779	C
680-699	D+

600-679	D
0-600	F

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 use of cell phones and smart phones during class time is strictly prohibited. Computers may be used during class time at the instructors 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

General Expectations, Rights and Responsibilities of the Student

As members of the academic community, students accept both the rights and responsibilities incumbent upon all members of the institution. Students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with SJSU's policies and practices pertaining to the procedures to follow if and when questions or concerns about a class arises. See [University Policy S90-5](http://sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S90-5.pdf) at sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S90-5.pdf. More detailed information on a variety of related topics is available in the [SJSU catalog](http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/catalog/rec-12234.12506.html), at <http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/catalog/rec-12234.12506.html>. In general, it is recommended that students begin by seeking clarification or discussing concerns with their instructor. If such conversation is not possible, or if it does not serve to address the issue, it is recommended that the student contact the Department Chair as a next step.

Dropping and Adding

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drop, grade forgiveness, etc. Refer to the current semester's [Catalog Policies](http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html) section at <http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html>. Add/drop deadlines can be found on the current academic year calendars document on the [Academic Calendars webpage](http://sjsu.edu/provost/services/academic_calendars) at sjsu.edu/provost/services/academic_calendars. The [Late Drop Policy](http://sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy) is available at sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for dropping classes. Information about the latest changes and news is available at the [Advising Hub](http://sjsu.edu/advising) at sjsu.edu/advising.

Consent for Recording of Class and Public Sharing of Instructor Material

[University Policy S12-7](http://sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-7.pdf), sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-7.pdf, requires students to obtain instructor's permission to record the course:

- Common courtesy and professional behavior dictate that you notify someone when you are recording him/her. You must obtain the instructor's permission to make audio or video recordings in this class. Such permission allows the recordings to be used for your private, study purposes only. The recordings are the intellectual property of the instructor; you have not been given any rights to reproduce or distribute the material.
- Course material developed by the instructor is the intellectual property of the instructor and cannot be shared publicly without his/her approval. You may not publicly share or upload

instructor generated material for this course such as exam questions, lecture notes, or homework solutions without instructor consent.

Academic Integrity

Your commitment, as a student, to learning is evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University. The [University Academic Integrity Policy S07-2](http://sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S07-2.pdf) at sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S07-2.pdf 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 [Student Conduct and Ethical Development website](http://sjsu.edu/studentconduct) is available at sjsu.edu/studentconduct.

Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make 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](http://sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf) at sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the [Accessible Education Center](http://sjsu.edu/aec) (AEC) at sjsu.edu/aec to establish a record of their disability.

Student Technology Resources

Computer labs for student use are available in the [Academic Success Center](http://sjsu.edu/at/asc) at sjsu.edu/at/asc located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and in the Associated Students Lab 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. A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include DV and HD digital camcorders; digital still cameras; video, slide and overhead projectors; DVD, CD, and audiotape players; sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

ENVS 150, Introduction to Environmental Thought, Fall 2015
Course Schedule

The schedule is subject to change with fair notice and the notice will be made available.

Date	Topics	Readings	Assignments Due
8/24	Introductions The history of the Earth in 60-minutes		
8/31	Traditional Ecological Knowledge	Chief Seattle, 1884 Oration Black Elk (preface + ch 1-5)	Reaction 1
9/7	Labor Day – No Class		
9/14	Roots of Environmentalism	McKibben (Thoreau 1-2 & 26-36; Marsh 71-80)	Reaction 2
9/21	Preservation v. Conservation	McKibben (Muir 84-85 & 104-112; Pinchot 172-180)	Reaction 3
9/28	Ecology and the Early Environmental Movement	McKibben (Carson 365-376 & Abbey 413-433)	Reaction 4
10/5	The Tragedy of the Commons and the Population Bomb!	McKibben (Hardin 438-450 & Ehrlich 434-437)	Reaction 5
10/12	Midterm Exam		
10/19	Environmental Justice <i>Philosophy Presentations</i>	McKibben (Chavez 690-695 & Anthony and Soule 849-854)	Reaction 6
10/26	EcoFeminism <i>Philosophy Presentations</i>	Bari (219-225) - Ecofeminism - Chipko Shiva (chap. 3)	Reaction 7
11/2	Deep Ecology <i>Philosophy Presentations</i>	Naess and Sessions Merchant (chap. 4)	Reaction 8
11/9	Dark Dreams and Environmental Fiction <i>Philosophy Presentations</i>	McKibben (Dick 451-453) Camille Rose Garcia	Reaction 8
11/16	Direct Action and Civil Disobedience <i>Philosophy Presentations</i>	McKibben (Hill 907-919) Thoreau "Civil Disobedience"	Reaction 10
11/23	Urban Agriculture Revolution <i>Philosophy Presentations</i>	McKibben (Pollan 948-969) Urban Agriculture in San Jose	Reaction 11
11/30	Environmentalism Now! <i>Philosophy Presentations</i>	McKibben (Walker 659-670 & Gore 855-859) Encyclical	Reaction 12 <i>Environmental Philosophy Due</i>
12/6	Final Exam		