

ENV 200: Understanding Environmental Issues
Spring 2019, MTh: 10.00-11:15

Professor Brack W. Hale
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Office hours: *by appointment* OR
M: 14.30 – 16.30
W: 13.30 – 15.30

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GOALS

This is an integrative course for students in the Environmental Sciences and Studies program, intended for a student's second or third year, after completion of 100-level ENV coursework. As such, this course assumes students already possess a general academic background in environmental studies. It is also open to students in any major wishing to obtain a better understanding of environmental issues; it counts as a course in the Social Responsibility core for all students and fulfils the ENV 200 requirement in all the ENV programs. The course description is available in Franklin's 2018-2020 Academic Catalog.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the semester, students are able to:

- explain the concepts of the ecological footprint, ecosystem services, the Commons, environmental justice, environmental externalities, risk, sustainability, and discuss them with respect to each other.
- integrate these concepts in analyses of environmental issues, such as human population growth, resource consumption, climate change, energy use, biodiversity conservation, air pollution, and waste management.
- describe how these issues play out in the general and Swiss contexts.
- defend the importance of interdisciplinary approaches to environmental problems
- discuss possible solutions appropriate at the individual, local, regional, and global level.
- carry out a research project based on course concepts and themes.
- write brief research papers that demonstrates the ability to integrate course themes with scholarly literature using a scientific writing style.
- present a professional succinct oral report on project findings.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS

- *Environment and Society*, 2nd ed. e-textbook. **See Moodle for instructions to acquire.**
- Other readings on Moodle as posted.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

- Participation expectations are summarized in Table 1. Students should be in class on time, every day. If you are late without good reason, it counts as an absence.
- Students must come to class well prepared and actively participate. Students should expect readings and (generally) short assignments for every class period.
- Student behavior reflects professional behavior expected in most job settings.
- Students may not use laptops, cell phones, tablets, or other electronic devices during in class activity, in the classroom; phones must be turned on vibrate or off during class.
- Students inform professor immediately of any circumstances that may affect their attendance or performance in class. Students seek out materials from any missed classes on their own. I do not hand out lecture notes or slides.

- Unless otherwise stated, you will turn in all assignments on Moodle. Assignments submitted in other formats will not be considered. Assignments turned in late lose 50% of the points.
- Students check their student.fus.edu account and Moodle page **DAILY**.

Table 1: Participation rubric

Grade	Attendance	General classroom behavior	Discussion behavior
Excellent	No absences	Acts professionally at all times; constructively interacts with others. Respects electronic device policy.	Readily engages in discussion, asks relevant questions, employs concrete examples, integrates previous material, and provides thoughtful insights. Does not dominate.
Good	1 absence	Often acts professionally, generally interacts with professor and classmates constructively.	Often engages in discussion, alludes to readings to support comments. Comments are less thoughtful and more spontaneous.
Satisfactory	2 absences	Needs to be occasionally reminded to behave appropriately.	Only engages when called upon, does not connect comments to readings, but provides appropriate insights.
Poor	3+ absences*	Student's behavior often disrupts/disrespects group. Ignores class policies.	Student silent, makes irrelevant comments, or is unable to engage in conversation about class topics OR attempts to dominate.

* Except in extraordinary circumstances, **after five absences, student fails course**. Exceptions made for documented illnesses or emergency situations.

MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Students should keep a separate notebook with regularly assigned homework and reflections that will be handed in occasionally. In small groups, students will lead a discussion on one of the chapter objects during a class period. Additionally, they will research an environmental object as it relates to Franklin, producing a written and oral report. Lastly, they will attend the Protect Our Winters talk (17 April) and write a brief reflection on *snow* as an object. NB: If class participation indicates issues with on-time reading completion, reading quizzes will be implemented on a daily basis. I grade course activities on a letter scale (A- F). I use intermediate grades for coursework instead of +/- (i.e. AB, BC, CD). Final grades calculated per rubric (Table 2).

Table 2: Final grades (+/- given for intermediate situations)

Grade level	Classroom	Homework completed	Graded activities*
A	Excellent	90+ %	A-average
B	Good	80+ %	B-average
C	Satisfactory	70+ %	C-average
D	Satisfactory	60+ %	D-average
F	Poor	< 60 %	F-average

* final object project 40%, object class leadership 15%, essay 10%, test 35%

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE (specific reading and homework assignments, as well as any subsequent changes posted on Moodle)

Week of:	Topics	Chapters (+ Moodle)
	<i>Perspectives on the environment and nature</i>	
21-Jan	Overview: human population	1, 2
28-Jan	Environmental ethics; Risk	5, 6
4-Feb	Economic perspectives; the “Commons”	3, 4
11-Feb	Environmental justice; social construction of nature	8 +
18-Feb	Review and Test (20 Feb)	
	<i>Environmental objects</i>	
25-Feb	Object 1: Carbon dioxide	9
4 March	<i>Object 2: U-238; Object 3: e-waste</i>	12, 17
	Academic Travel Period	
25-March	Object 4: Lawns	14
1-April	<i>Object 5: Trees; Object 6: French fries</i>	10, 16
8-April	<i>Object 7: Wolves; Object 8: Tuna</i>	11, 13
15-April	<i>Object 9: Bottled water</i> ; required evening lecture 17 April	15, +
22-April	No class 22 April (Easter) . Project work—rough draft due	
29-April	Object presentations	
6 May	Final paper due: 6 May 17:00	

NB: Bolded object days are led by student groups.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Please refer to Franklin’s *Statement on Cheating and Plagiarism* in the *Academic Catalog* for the full version, but to summarize here: **you are to do your own work**. Behaviors such as copying the work of others, using third-party services, or any other circumvention of doing your own work are dishonest and not acceptable in this class or at this institution. **For testing situations, this includes the use of unpermitted materials or copying off a classmate; for papers and presentations, this includes improper use of references and citations.** Copying text without the use of quotations or paraphrasing the ideas of others without proper citations are both examples of plagiarism and thus unacceptable. In a case of suspected use of third-party services, the burden of the proof is on the student to demonstrate how the assignment is his/her own work.

The first case of academic dishonesty will result in an automatic grade of a zero on the assignment and a report to the Dean. The second case will result in immediate failure of the course and recommendation to the Dean for expulsion from the college.