

IDIS 110
World Geography and Global Issues
Culture, Place, and Environment
Spring, 2012

Class Location: Memorial Hall 302
Tuesday/Thursday 2:35pm-3:45pm

Instructor: Professor Elisabeth Stoddard

Office: Zinzendorf 102

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4pm-5pm or by appointment

Contact Information: Email: stoddarde@moravian.edu

Course Description and Objectives

Course Description

This course will provide students with an introduction to the numerous relationships between human societies and their physical environments, with an emphasis on the significance of place, space, culture, political-economics, and sustainability. We will use geographic concepts to understand nature-society issues across the globe. Among the major themes considered are human adaptations to ‘natural’ environments, human use and transformation of the environment, questions of environmental limits and sustainability, the politics of nature, and the significance of human-environment relations in both industrialized and less industrial societies.

This course meets Moravian College’s M5 Cultural Values and Global Issues general education requirement. It does so through an examination of the ways in which different cultural values and political dynamics which shape our environment and global physical landscapes. We will consider how different understandings and interpretations of “nature” shape global issues, such as conservation, climate change, national identity, and hazards.

Course Objectives

- Students should be able to explain the role that culture and politics plays in shaping the environment and the physical landscape.
- Students should be able to explain the role that science and politics plays in shaping our understanding and conceptualization of nature.
- Students should be able to identify the role of culture and politics in current events and global policy issues surrounding nature-society relationships.
- Students should become more aware of their own cultural values and the common environmental issues we face, making them more prepared to contribute positively to our global future.

Required Texts

Required reading assignments for this course are listed in the class schedule. We will not be using a textbook; instead, we will be using chapters from books, articles, and mixed media that will be **made available through Blackboard**. The assigned readings and exercises are key for a given day's lecture and discussion, as well as for assignments and exams. Therefore, it is *essential* that you do the reading or other assignments for a given class *before* coming to that class.

Attendance, participation, exams, assignments, and grades

Attendance

Class lectures and discussions will cover material that is NOT detailed in the readings, such as key concepts that will be covered on exams. Therefore, it is critical for every student to attend class regularly. You have one unexcused absence for the semester. All other unexcused absences will be deducted from your attendance grade.

Attendance will be taken daily and will count towards 10% of your grade.

Praxis Assignments and Question Sets

You will have 2 question sets and 2 praxis assignments. Praxis refers to putting theory or concepts into practice. For your praxis assignments, you will look for examples of the concepts we are discussing in class in the global news media. You will write one brief paragraph that summarizes the news article and one brief paragraph that explains how particular concepts from class help to explain ideas within the article. The goal of praxis and the question sets is to help you internalize what you are learning and to make you more prepared for the exams and final paper. Praxis and Question sets turned in late will receive a 10% deduction for each day late. If you need to turn in an assignment late, please talk to me before the assignment is due, and we can try to work something out.

Each praxis assignment and question set is worth 5%, for a total of 20% of your grade.

Global news media sources:

- NY Times World: <http://www.nytimes.com/pages/world/index.html>
- Public Radio International: <http://www.pri.org/>
- BBC News World: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world/>
- CNN World: <http://edition.cnn.com/WORLD/>
- All Africa: <http://allafrica.com/>
- Asia News Network: <http://www.asianewsnet.net/home/>
- Europe News: <http://europenews.dk/>
- National Geographic international websites:
<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/siteindex/international/>

- BBC News-Middle East: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world/middle_east/
- Al Jazeera: <http://english.aljazeera.net/>
- World Press: <http://www.worldpress.org/>
- The Antarctic Sun: <http://antarcticsun.usap.gov/>
- Australian Broadcasting Corporation: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/>
- National Public Radio (US and World): <http://www.npr.org/>

Exams

There will be two exams, which will each cover about 5 weeks of course material.

These exams are both worth 15%, for a total of 30% of your grade.

Make-up exams. No make-up exams will be given unless the absence is (1) *prearranged with and approved by me* or (2) *the result of a documented emergency* (such as a serious injury). **Documentation is necessary in any case.** *The exam will be a zero unless these conditions are met.* Any other excuses will not be accepted. In the case of flu or other illness, the make-up exam will be either an essay or a verbal exam with the instructor, at my discretion.

Assignments

- *Environmental Racism/Environmental Justice Presentation*
Environmental racism is the disproportionate impact of environmental hazards on the poor, people of color, and other minorities. Environmental justice is the movement's response to environmental racism-- to not only address the unequal distribution of environmental hazards, but to also abolish them. We will spend a couple of weeks learning about the concepts of environmental racism and environmental justice. Then, in groups of 3, you will give a short presentation (10 minutes) to the class that details an example of environmental racism in areas inside and outside of the US, using presentation software (e.g. PowerPoint). You will also write a one page paper about what you learned from your topic and others. You will be graded by me and your partners. Grades from your partners will be kept confidential. These grades will be combined and will count for 20% of your final grade.
- *Final Paper*
You will research and write an approximately 5 page paper about a current or hypothetical future policy issue focused on relationships between humans (culture/political-economy/social construction/knowledge/ethics) and the environment. First, you will give an overview of the issue (~ ½ page). Second, you will summarize arguments in favor of the policy (~ 1 page). Then, you will summarize arguments against the policy (~ 1 page). Next, you will defend *your* view on the topic--using 5-10 theories

that we discussed in class (~1 ½ pages). These concepts must be highlighted in bold and briefly defined. You will end with a conclusion, discussing the future of the issue (~ 1 page). I will provide multiple suggestions for topics, but you should feel free to propose your own as well. This paper will count as your final exam, and will be due by 4:30 pm on our assigned exam day, Friday, May 3. You will be asked to hand in your final paper idea on April 18. and your final paper outline on April 23. I will comment on your paper idea and outline and return it to you during the next class periods. The final paper is worth 20% of your grade, with 5% of your final paper grade based on your final paper outline.

Grades

Your grade will for the course will be based on the following components:

- Exam 1: 15%
- Exam 2: 15%
- Environmental Justice Presentations: 20%
- Final Paper: 20%
- Attendance: 10%
- Praxis Assignments/Question Sets: 20%

Grading scale

A: 94-100

A-: 90-93

B+: 87-89

B: 84-86

B-: 80-83

C+: 77-79

C: 74-76

C-: 70-73

D+: 67-69

D: 64-66

D-: 60-63

F: <60

Academic Integrity

Please act with personal integrity and be respectful of other students. Do not engage in, or tolerate, acts of falsification, misrepresentation, or deception. Your written work, including on exams, must be your own. A first infraction will lead to a grade of zero on the assignment or exam in question; a second incident will result in course failure. If you have any questions about how to use or cite sources, please talk with me before turning in the assignment in question. For more details on Moravian College's Academic Honesty Policy, see:

<http://www.moravian.edu/studentlife/handbook/academic/academic2.html>

Accommodations and Educational Support

Accommodations

Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact Ms. Elaine Mara, Assistant Director of Learning Services and Disability Support. Ms. Mara's office is located at 1307 Main Street. She can be contacted by phone at (610) 861-1510 and by email at: marae@moravian.edu. Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the office of Learning Services. For more information on Moravian College's Disability Support Services, see: <http://home.moravian.edu/public/stusvc/learning/>

Educational Support

The Writing Center is a free resource for improving your writing. At the Writing Center, trained Moravian students can help you to improve your writing. They can help at any stage of the writing process, whether you haven't started the assignment and need help picking a topic, or you're near the end and want to check that everything is in order. The Writing Center is on the second floor of Zinzendorf Hall, and the phone number is 610-861-1592. Their hours vary each semester, but they are generally open Monday-Thursday mornings, afternoons and evenings, and Sunday evenings. For more information on educational support (e.g. tutoring), see: <http://home.moravian.edu/public/eng/writingCenter/tutors.htm>

Course Schedule

| Date | Topic | Readings/Assignments Due |
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| WEEK ONE: Introduction and Environmental Determinism | | |
| Tues 1/15 | 1) Geography the discipline: themes and regions 2) The environment as material, cultural, and political | None |
| Thurs 1/17 | Environments determining culture: environmental determinism | Pages 16, 17, and 18 in Mitchell, D. 2000. Chapter 1: Culture Wars: Culture is Politics by Another Name Pages 149, 150, and 151 (the section titled "Environmental Determinism") in Blaut, J.M. 2000. Ch. 8: Jared Diamond: Euro-Environmentalism |
| WEEK TWO: Culture and the Environment; Population and Environmental Scarcity | | |
| Tues 1/22 | The impact of culture on the landscape | Mitchell, D. 2000. <i>Cultural Geography: a Critical Introduction</i> , pp. 20-36. |

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| Thurs 1/24 | Population and Scarcity Calculating our Footprints: http://www.footprintnetwork.org/en/index.php/GFN/page/calculators/ | *Read the “Key Terms” first, then read Hartmann, 1995. “Key Terms” for Robbins et al., 2010 Ch. 2 (3 pages) (I will post Ch.2 for your reference in case you want to look at it) Hartmann, B. 1995. “The Malthusian Orthodoxy” <i>Reproductive Rights and Wrongs: The Global Politics of Population Control</i> , selections from Ch. 2. |
| WEEK THREE: Population, Markets, Environmental Resources and Scarcity | | |
| Tues 1/29 | Market-Based Solutions to Environmental Problems | Robbins et al, 2010. “Markets in Commodities” in <i>Environment and Society: a Critical Introduction</i> , Ch. 3. |
| Thurs 1/31 | Uneven Access to Resources | Daniel, S. 2011. “Land Grabbing and Potential Implications for Food Security” in <i>Sustainable Agricultural Development</i> , Ch. 2. |
| WEEK FOUR: Review | | |
| Tues 2/5 | Bottled Water: resource scarcity, uneven access, and water grabbing | Robbins et al, 2010. “Bottled Water” in <i>Environment and Society: a Critical Introduction</i> , Ch. 13. Exam review sheet will be given out at the end of class. Praxis assignment #1: population, scarcity, access to resources. Submit via email by Mon. 2/4 by 10 pm. |
| Thurs 2/7 | Review for Exam Go over footprint calculations | Bring review sheet, course materials, and laptops to class for group review session. |
| WEEK FIVE: Exam I | | |
| Tues 2/12 | No Class | Study for Exam |
| Thurs 2/14 | Exam 1 in class | Exam 1 in class |
| WEEK SIX: Movie: Wasteland and Political Economy Perspective | | |
| Tues 2/19 | Movie: Wasteland | No assignments due |
| Thurs 2/21 | Political Economy Perspective | Robbins et al, 2010. “Political Economy” in <i>Environment and Society: a Critical Introduction</i> , Ch. 7. |
| WEEK SEVEN: Political Economy Perspective in Practice and The Social Construction of Nature | | |
| Tues 2/26 | Political Economy Perspective: French Fries | Robbins et al, 2010. “French Fries” in <i>Environment and Society: a Critical Introduction</i> , Ch. 14. |

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| | <p>Group exercise in class:</p> <p>Question Set #1: We will break up into 5 groups. Each group will come up with the answer for one question on page 265 in Robbins et al, 2010, Ch. 14 “French Fries”. The group will have to explain these answers to the class. Everyone in class who participate in researching and presenting the answers will get credit for the assignment.</p> | <p>Be prepared for group exercise in class: have Chapter 14 with you (or notes from them) in order to work on questions in groups. Also have your notes from Ch. 7: Political Economy.</p> |
| Thurs 2/28 | The Social Construction of Nature | Robbins et al, 2010. “Social Construction of Nature” in <i>Environment and Society: a Critical Introduction</i> , Ch. 8 |
| WEEK EIGHT: No Class; Spring Break!!! | | |
| Tues 3/5 and Thurs 3/7 | No class; spring break | No class; spring break |
| WEEK NINE: The Social Construction of Nature in Practice and Environmental Ethics | | |
| Tues 3/12 | <p>The Social Construction of Nature: Wolves</p> <p>Question Set #4: We will break up into 5 groups. Each group will come up with the answer for one question based on page 201 in Robbins et al, 2010, Ch. 11 “Wolves”. The group will have to explain these answers to the class. Everyone in class who participate in researching and presenting the answers will get credit for the assignment.</p> | <p>Robbins et al, 2010. “Wolves” in <i>Environment and Society: a Critical Introduction</i>, Ch. 11.</p> <p>Be prepared for group exercise in class. The exercise (described to the left) involves answering questions based on page 201 from your reading (above). I will alter these questions to incorporate social construction of nature concepts. Please have Chapter 11 with you (or notes from them) in order to work on questions in groups. You will also need your notes from Tuesday’s class on the social construction of nature</p> |
| Thurs 3/14 | Environmental Ethics | Robbins et al, 2010. “Environmental Ethics” in <i>Environment and Society: a Critical Introduction</i> , Ch. 5. |
| WEEK TEN: Consequences of Environmental Knowledge and Discourse | | |
| Tues 3/19 | <p>FIELD TRIP: Meet at 2:30 pm, Return at 3:50pm</p> <p>Exam II Review Sheet handed out</p> | <p>FIELD TRIP: Meet at 2:30 pm, Return at 3:50pm</p> <p>Praxis assignment #2: Environmental ethics, knowledge, and the politics of conservation. Submit via email by Mon. 3/18 by 10 pm.</p> |

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| Thurs 3/21 | Exam Review | Bring review sheet, course materials, and laptops to class for group review session. |
| WEEK ELEVEN: Exam and Introducing Environmental Racism/Environmental Justice | | |
| Tues 3/26 | Exam 2 in class | Exam 2 in class |
| Thurs 3/28 | Environmental Justice (EJ) EJ Movie: Semper Fi: Always Faithful | Shrader-Frechette, 2002, "Introduction" in <i>Environmental Justice: Creating Equality, Reclaiming Democracy</i> , pp. 3-18. |
| WEEK TWELVE: Environmental Justice Presentations | | |
| Tues 4/2 | EJ: Topics, Concepts, Social Movement Project partners will be assigned Project Assignment and Rubric will be handed out Sign up for presentation dates | Shrader-Frechette, 2002, "Distributive Justice, Participative Justice, and the Principle of Prima Facie Political Equality" in <i>Environmental Justice: Creating Equality, Reclaiming Democracy</i> , Ch. 2. Cole and Foster, 2001, "A History of the Environmental Justice Movement" in: <i>From the Ground Up: Environmental Racism and the Rise of the Environmental Justice Movement</i> , Ch. 2 pp. 19-33. |
| Thurs 4/4 | Work on EJ presentations with partners at the library | Work on EJ project with your partner |
| WEEK THIRTEEN: Environmental Justice Presentations | | |
| Tues 4/9 | EJ presentations | Groups give EJ presentations Work on EJ project with your partner |
| Thurs 4/11 | EJ presentations | Groups give EJ presentations Work on EJ project with your partner Start thinking about final paper idea |
| WEEK FOURTEEN: EJ Presentations and Nature and Identity | | |
| Tues 4/16 | EJ presentations Discussion of EJ Paper and Final Paper Idea due 4/18 | Groups give EJ presentations Work on EJ project with your partner Start thinking about final paper idea |
| Thurs 4/18 | EJ presentations | DUE 1) ONE PAGE ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE |

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| | Finish up EJ presentations | PAPER DUE as a document attachment via email by 8pm, 4/18 (stoddarde@moravian.edu) 2) FINAL PAPER IDEA: One Paragraph. DUE as a document attachment via email by 10pm, 4/18 (stoddarde@moravian.edu) |
| WEEK FIFTEEN: Final paper outline and review | | |
| Tues 4/23 | FIELD TRIP: Meet at 2:30 pm, Return at 3:50pm | FIELD TRIP: Meet at 2:30 pm, Return at 3:50pm |
| Thurs 4/25 | Final Paper Outline Workshop | FINAL PAPER OUTLINE DUE IN CLASS, TYPED OUT ON PAPER See Blackboard for Details |
| FINALS WEEK | | |
| Fri 5/3 | Final Paper Due | Final Paper Due by 4:30 pm Submit paper as a word document via email to (stoddarde@moravian.edu) by 4:30 pm |