

Spring 2014
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HIST 260 (U1)
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HIST 260: Environmental History

Environmental history explores the changing relationship between human agency and the environment over the course of world history. Themes include the agricultural and industrial revolutions, the integration of world ecozones, historical epidemiology, and the impact of technological change on the environment. In the center of our attention is the way scientific understanding of nature has interacted with society and with human endeavor.

Outcomes:

- ↔ Identify and discuss the major themes and issues in the interrelationships between humans and the natural environment over the last fifteen thousand years.
- ↔ Provide a variety of examples of and details on how societies interacted with their environment in the pre-agricultural, early agricultural, agricultural, early modern, and modern eras.
- ↔ Understand environmental history as a contested field of interpretations.
- ↔ Write an essay that explores the various interpretations in an environmental history topic.
- ↔ Understand the role of science in our interaction with nature.

Texts:

- ↔ J. Donald Hughes. *An Environmental History of the World. Humankind's Changing Role in the Community of Life*. 2nd edition. New York: Routledge, 2009.
- ↔ J. R. McNeill. *Something New Under the Sun. An Environmental History of the Twentieth-Century World*. New York: WW Norton, 2000.
- ↔ Additional readings will be available as handouts.

Grading:

Paper	32%
Midterm	22%
Statements (5)	10%
Group Work	10%
Intro, bibliography	4%
Draft	4%
Comments	4%
Class Participation	14%
Each absence after 2 nd	-1/4 of letter grade

Research Paper. To choose a topic, see me first. The length of the paper is 10-12 pages. The

paper will be based on at least eight secondary sources (four books and four articles) of which **none can be an internet text** unless it is from J-STOR or Ebsco or a pdf-file of a printed text. Use footnotes in Chicago style and attach a bibliography sheet in Chicago style at the end. For more detailed instructions on the paper, see the guidelines at the end of this syllabus and handouts.

Statements. For each session designated as *Discussion* prepare a statement of at least 500 words discussing the interpretation(s) of the text(s). First, identify the thesis of the author. Second, identify the most important scholars (not historical figures) s/he is debating and engaging. Third, discuss the author's findings. The statements have to be typed and they will be graded on pass/fail basis.

Group Work. The class will be divided into groups and you can choose your own group. In each discussion session you will work in class on the reading assignment by answering a set of questions. Each group provides a folder where you keep your individual statements and group reports. After each discussion session, I collect the folders and evaluate your group work.

Exams. There is a midterm. The exam will consist of two parts. The first part will test your reading of the secondary texts by using short identification questions. The second part is an essay on a broad thematic topic. There will be no make-ups except in the case of **documented illness**.

Late Policy

Late assignments will be penalized 5% for the first day late and 5% each day thereafter. Computer problems, printing problems, and zero printer balance are not valid reasons for lateness.

Attendance Policy. You are allowed to be absent twice. After the second absence each individual absence will lower your overall grade by 1/4 of a letter grade unless you have a doctor's note or a written explanation from an athletics coach.

Electronic Devices Policy. In general you are not allowed to use electronic devices in class including laptops, netbooks, cell phones or tablets (I pads). To set the policy we will have a conversation and then an agreement that binds everybody. The conversation will cover following themes: note taking, internet browsing, texting, reading electronic text.

Support Policy for Students with Disabilities. Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact Elaine Mara, Assistant Director of Academic & Disability Support located on the first floor of Monocacy Hall, or by calling 610-861-1401. Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Academic Support Center.

SCHEDULE

Aug 26	Introduction
Part I: The Old World, 10000 AD-1500 BC	

Aug 28	Agricultural Revolution and Domestication/ Hughes, Ch 2
Sept 2	Early Empires and Environment/ Hughes, Ch 4
Sept 4	Middle Ages/ Hughes, Ch 5
Sept 9	Discussion: Braudel, <i>The Mediterranean</i>
Sept 11	Fall Convocation/ Prof. Jody Williams on War and Peace/ Johnston Hall. Write an essay (500 words) that reflects on the ways Prof. Williams' thoughts relate or could relate to environmental issues.
Part II: Early Modern Era, 1500-1800	
Sept 16	Transformation of Science: Knowledge is Power/ Due: Essay on Prof. Williams
Sept 18	Empires and Environment in the Early Modern World/ Hughes, Ch 6
Sept 23	Discussion: The Birth of the Factory/ Freese, <i>Coal</i>
Sept 25	Museum of Industrial History/ With Mike Piersa
Sept 30	Exploitation and Conservation/ Hughes, Ch 7/ Due: Paper Topic
Oct 2	Midterm Exam
Part III: The Nineteenth Century	
Oct 7	Discussion: Romantic View of Nature/ Goethe, <i>The Sorrows of Young Werther</i>
Oct 9	The History of Trees/ South Campus with Randy Haffling
Oct 16	Discussion: Urban Environment: Garden City/Buder, <i>Visionaries</i>
Oct 21	Urbanization/ McNeill, Ch 3/ Due: Intro and Bibliography
Oct 23	The Birth of Modern Science: Chemistry, Biology, Technology
Part III: Twentieth Century Transformations	
Oct 28	Air/ McNeill, Ch 4
Oct 30	Water/ McNeill, Ch 5
Nov 4	Water II/ McNeill, Ch 6
Nov 6	Earth / McNeill, Ch 7
Nov 11	Discussion: Ideas, Politics, and Environment/ McNeill, Ch 11 and Ausubel, "The Liberation of the Environment"

Nov 13	No class (I am attending a conference) but Due: Paper Draft
Nov 18	Writing Workshop. Due: Comments on Draft
Nov 20	Presentations
Nov 25	Presentations
Dec 2	Presentations. Due: Paper
Dec 4	Review: Environment and Its History

Guidelines for Paper

I. Introduction, Bibliography

Your introduction and bibliography should be two pages long.

1. Introduction

Formulate the thesis that you will defend in your paper. Formulate it in such a way that you can prove it, provide evidence to support it. Mention shortly the main schools of thought and patterns of interpretation pertaining to your topic. Shortly indicate the structure of your paper. The introduction should not be longer than a page and a half.

2. Bibliography

Your bibliography should include your secondary sources that should follow the *Chicago Manual of Style*. The paper will be based on at least eight secondary sources (four books and four articles) of which **none can be an internet text** unless it is from J-STOR or Ebsco or a pdf-file of a printed text. Use the format a. if it is a book, format b. if it is an article, and format c. if it is a chapter in an edited collection of articles. Be meticulous in crafting your bibliography and remember that the author(s) should always be credited. If you use primary sources, list also them accordingly.

a. A book written by an author or several authors (the title of a book is italicized):

Machiavelli, Niccolo. *The Prince*. Cambridge: Penguin, 1981.

Hunt, Lynn and Thomas R. Martin. *The Challenge of the West: Peoples and Cultures from the Stone Age to 1640*. Lexington: D.C. Heath Company, 1995.

b. An article in a journal, written by an author or several authors:

Stearns, Peter N. and Carol Z. Stearns. "Emotionology: Clarifying the History of Emotions and Emotional Standards." *American Historical Review* 90 (1985): 815-20.

c. A chapter in an edited book, written by an author or several authors:

Pearson, Karl. "National Life from the Standpoint of Science." In *Sources of the Western Tradition*. Vol 2., *From the Renaissance to the Present*. Edited by Marvin Perry, Joseph Peden, and Theodor von Laue. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999, 230-32.

II. Draft

Take your introduction and basic narrative and add your discussion of historical interpretations.

Your discussion should be throughout the paper, not only in the beginning. A draft should be at least eight (8) pages long and include all the parts of the final version of your paper. It should include footnotes (source references) to all used sources. Papers that do not include footnotes will not be commented—neither by the commentator nor me. I will comment on your drafts and assign a tentative grade after the commentators have done their work and after the Writing Workshop.

III. Comments on Draft

1. Write a comment on the paper you will discuss in public discussion.
2. The length of the comment is one (1) page.
3. Pay attention to:
 - a. Clarity of the argument and/or question
 - i. Is the introduction good?
 - ii. Are the conclusions appropriate?
 - b. Use and analysis of sources
 - i. Is the analysis accurate?
 - ii. Is it compelling? Does it support the overall argument
 - iii. Is it sensitive to the text?
 - c. Style
 - i. Grammar
 - ii. Spelling
 - iii. Structure
 - iv. Use of language
4. Give short but specific advice how to improve

IV. Final Version

Submit a folder including all the previous stages and versions of your work and the comments you received with the final version of your paper. The final version should fulfill all the formal requirements of an historical research paper as instructed in this syllabus. Use Chicago style including footnotes.

V. General Guidelines for Paper

The length of your paper is 10 to 12 pages. A good paper has a structure as following:

The **beginning** of the paper is an important part of your study. First, mention the argument that you will explore in your paper. Second, introduce the most important interpretations that pertain to your topic. Detailed discussion of these interpretations takes place only in the body. Finally, in two or three lines, mention how you will proceed in your paper.

The **middle** is the bulk of your paper. Discuss systematically, in compact paragraphs, each of the main themes that you find essential for your argument. Contrast your own interpretation with other interpretations (those you already mentioned in the introduction). Be critical in reading the other interpretations and try to **disagree** with them as much as possible. Move on to support your disagreement and your own point by providing evidence that shows how your interpretation is better than the others. It does not matter if you cannot provide

exhaustive evidence for your argument. But it matters that you disagree and develop your own argument. Finally, move to another point that you have chosen and discuss it accordingly.

The **conclusion** is an important section of your paper. You pull all the threads of your research together and tell your audience what are your findings. You can also make specific suggestions for further research.

Footnotes (Source References)

To guarantee that authors' rights are honored and that other scholars can control the originality, reliability, and truthfulness of your evidence historians use footnotes to refer to their sources. The first reference to any source gives the full bibliographic information of the source.¹ Any subsequent reference to the same source uses a shortened form like this.² See the examples at the bottom of this page.³ A footnote can also include a short commentary on the text it refers to.⁴ It is placed right after the sentence, “on the right side of a period and parenthesis as in this sentence.”⁵ Most often the footnote is at the end of a paragraph.

¹Lynn Hunt and Thomas R. Martin, *The Challenge of the West: Peoples and Cultures from the Stone Age to 1640* (Lexington: D.C. Heath Company, 1995), 471.

²Pearson, “National Life,” 230.

³Machiavelli, *The Prince*, 120.

⁴For a different interpretation, see Stearns and Stearns, “Emotionology,” 810.

⁵Hunt, *Challenge*, 474.