University of Victoria  
School of Environmental Studies

ES 200: Introduction to Environmental Studies  
Spring 2013

Instructional Team

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Note: Please read this document very carefully and keep it for future reference: it should answer most of your questions about the course. If you have a question about the course at any time, please first check this document to see if it is answered here.

Course Description and Objectives

This course provides an introduction to Environmental Studies as a subject, and more specifically to the program and curriculum of the School of Environmental Studies here at UVic. The course uses a specific thematic focus to develop an understanding of the sources and character of environmental problems and some of the analytic tools and contexts necessary to respond to them. The tools and contexts we introduce reflect the specializations within the School: ethnoecology, political ecology, and ecological restoration.

Our thematic focus will be food. We’ve chosen food as a focus both because it is an immediate part of our daily lives, and because it is inextricably linked to how we—individually and collectively—interact with our environments. By developing a richer understanding of how our relationships with food have shaped our environments, and how these in turn shape us, you will deepen your understanding of the complexities of environmental problems more generally. You should also leave this course with a good introduction to the curriculum you will encounter should you choose to continue on in Environmental Studies at UVic.

This course seeks to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to research, analyze and communicate about environmental issues. As such, you will be asked to carefully and thoughtfully read and engage a variety of different kinds of texts and lectures, analyzing their central arguments, weighing their evidence, evaluating their arguments, and thinking through their implications. This process should help improve your capacities to:
understand a broad range of environmental concerns, including the inherent uncertainties and synergies involved in environmental and social issues;
constructively analyze environmental issues including ecological, social, historical, and economic dimensions;
understand a variety of mechanisms for environmental and social change;
assess the role of individuals and communities in both causing and resolving environmental problems, and
effectively communicate about environmental issues.

These are the learning objectives that will be assessed in the class.

Course Structure

This course will consist of lectures (including many guest lectures) and weekly tutorials. Both are required. If you are unable to register for a tutorial session, you must drop the course. No exceptions.

Course Requirements and Assessment

*Detailed guidance on assessed work is provided later in this document.*

Tutorials: 30%
Tutorials will be crucial to helping you deepen and refine your understanding of course material in order to meet the learning objectives. At the beginning of select tutorials, you will hand in a copy (always keep a copy for yourself) of your tutorial preparation. This, along with your participation in discussions, will provide the basis for your mark. See later in this document for more detail on student assessment.

Mid-term Exam: 30%
There will be an in-class mid-term exam on Thursday, February 7th. The exam will include short-answer and essay questions, requiring that you draw on and integrate course material in your responses.

Final Exam: 40%
The final exam will be scheduled during the exam period. It will have the same format and be the same length as the mid-term exam. The short answer questions will be drawn from the material in the second part of the course; the essay will be cumulative.

Course Readings

There is one required book for the course, available at the UVic Bookstore:

All other course readings will be available at the Moodle site for the class ([http://moodle.uvic.ca/](http://moodle.uvic.ca/)).

It is extremely important that you do the required reading before class, as the lectures will build on, rather than repeat, the information contained in the readings. The lectures and tutorials are your opportunity to ask questions about anything you find confusing, problematic, or difficult to understand in the readings for the week. You will understand the lectures better, and be able to ask better questions, if you’ve done the readings.
Course Schedule

*Please Note: This schedule, and the listed readings, are subject to change so please pay close attention to announcements in class. Always check the course Moodle site for updated information.

Thursday, January 3rd — Introduction

Monday, January 7th — Food and Environment: Is there a problem?

Required Reading:

Thursday, January 10th — Understanding Contemporary Food Systems

Required Reading:

Monday, January 14th — Why do we have the food systems we do?

**Tutorials start this week**

Required Reading:

Thursday, January 17th — The Ecology of Food Systems

Guest Lecturer: Dr. Trevor Lantz

Required Readings:

Monday, January 21st — Emerging challenges

Required Reading:
Sage, Colin. 2012. “Global challenges for food production” Chapter 4 in *Environment and Food*.

Thursday, January 24th — Local Food Landscapes

Guest Lecturer: Dr. Brenda Beckwith

Required Readings:
http://www.library.uvic.ca/site/archives/featured_collections/changing_face_uvic_campus/default.html

Monday, January 28th — Biodiversity and Food Systems, Part 1

Guest Lecturer: Dr. Brian Starzomski

Required Reading:
Thursday, January 31st – Biodiversity and Food Systems, Part 2  
*Guest Lecturer: Dr. Brian Starzomski*  
*Required Readings:*  

Monday, February 4th – Mid-term preparation lecture

Thursday, February 7th – Mid-term Exam

Monday, February 11th – Family day

Thursday February 14th – Seafood, Aquaculture & The Blue Revolution  
*Guest Lecturer: Dr. John Volpe*  
*Required Reading:*  

Monday, February 18th – Reading Break

Thursday February 21st – Reading Break

Monday, February 25th – Introduction to Permaculture  
*Guest Lecturer: Hannah Roessler*  
*Required Reading:*  

Thursday, February 28th – Focal Practice  
*Guest Lecturer: Dr. Eric Higgs*  
*Required Reading:*  

Monday, March 4th – Our Food is our Medicine  
*Guest Lecturer: Dr. Nancy Turner*  
*Required Reading:*  
Thursday, March 7th – Reframing the Challenges
Required Reading:

Monday, March 11th – Commodification and Strawberry Jam
Guest Lecturer: Dr. Karena Shaw
Required Reading:

Thursday, March 14th – Rules to eat by: Local? Organic? Vegan?
Required Readings:
http://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/20/opinion/20budiansky.html_r=1
Richardson, Jill, “5 Ridiculous Myths People Use to Trash Local Food – And Why They’re Wrong” in Alternet (18 Nov 2011):
http://www.alternet.org/module/printversion/153121
Bittman, Mark, “What’s Wrong with What We Eat” TED Talk (December 2007):
http://www.ted.com/talks/mark_bittman_on_what_s_wrong_with_what_we_eat.html

Required Readings:

Thursday, March 21st — What are the root causes of unsustainable behaviour?
Required Readings:

Monday, March 25th – Mindfulness, Mindful Eating, and Mindful Society
Required Readings:
TBA

Thursday, March 28th – Changemakers and Finding Solutions
Guest Lecturer: Dr. Brenda Beckwith & Guests
Required Readings:
Additional Readings TBA; Please check Moodle.

Monday, April 1st – Easter Monday

Thursday, April 4th – Course Evaluations, Review, and Final Exam Prep
Required Reading:
Tutorial Schedule and Guidelines

Tutorial Assessment
Tutorials will be assessed on the quality of your preparation for and participation in them. For select tutorials you will need to hand in one copy of your preparation. These assignments are due at the beginning of tutorial and should be a maximum of 2 pages in length. Length is much less important than quality. It should demonstrate how well you’ve engaged with course material, and how your own thinking is developing. Your preparation should be word-processed (unless otherwise indicated), and you should always keep a copy for yourself.

Likewise, your contributions to discussions will not be measured in relation to their quantity, but their quality. Constructive participation requires not only having something to say about the issues (being well prepared, having read and thought about the readings), but also listening well to other people’s questions and arguments, responding to them sensitively and effectively, and contributing in a way that advances the group’s understanding of the issues. It is as important to know when not to intervene as when to contribute. For example, constructive participation doesn’t require that you speak in all tutorial meetings, but you should seek to contribute whenever you have insights that would enhance the conversation. If you never feel this way, you may not be preparing adequately for tutorials, and should talk with your TA or Dr. Rowe to get some help with this. Effective preparation may not require more time than you are spending; we may be able to help you use your time more efficiently.

Tutorials will be assessed in the following way. There are a total of seven tutorials. For each, your mark will depend on a combination of written preparation and participation. Participation will be graded out of two for each tutorial. So if you participate constructively but haven’t done the written preparation, you can receive a maximum of 2 marks. The preparation grade depends on the assignment (see below for a breakdown). Note: astute readers will notice there are 31 marks available for tutorials, yet tutorials comprise only 30% of your final mark. Consider the extra mark an opportunity for extra credit...

If you must miss a tutorial, contact your TA with an explanation and submit your preparation as soon as possible, preferably before the missed tutorial. Tutorials missed with a legitimate excuse will not be penalized. If at any time you would like more feedback on your tutorial performance or you have questions about this or any other part of your mark, please feel free to come and see Dr. Rowe or your TA so that we can clarify it.

Tutorial Schedule
*tutorials begin in week 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Tutorial Theme</th>
<th>Preparation (see below for details)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Jan. 14-18</td>
<td>Introduction and Taking Stock</td>
<td>24-Hour Food Journal (3 marks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Jan. 21-25</td>
<td>Knowing where you are: Campus Walkabout</td>
<td>No assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Jan. 28-31</td>
<td>Mid-term Preparation</td>
<td>Midterm Prep Assignment (1 mark)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Feb. 4-8</td>
<td>*No tutorials this week: Mid-term exam</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Feb. 11-15</td>
<td>Communication Skills 1</td>
<td>Summary vs. Analysis (3 marks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Date(s)</td>
<td>Assignment/Activity</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Feb. 18-22</td>
<td>*No tutorials this week: Reading Break</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Feb. 25-28</td>
<td>Communication Skills 2</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Critical Response Rough Draft (1 mark)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Mar. 4-8</td>
<td>*No tutorials this week</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Mar. 11-15</td>
<td>Communication Skills 3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Critical Response Final Draft (8 marks)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Mar. 18-21</td>
<td>*No tutorials this week</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Mar. 25-29</td>
<td>*No tutorials this week</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Apr. 1-5</td>
<td>Course Review</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Final Exam Preparation (1 mark)</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Guidelines on Tutorial Preparation**

Some general notes: The tutorials have two purposes: first, to give you a chance to discuss course themes and readings, and so deepen your understanding of the material we are covering; and second, to help you develop skills that will be vital to your success not only in this course but throughout your university career and beyond. To this end, each tutorial has an assignment that combines a focus on course content and skills development. Since the tutorials are your chance to ask questions about and deepen your understanding of the course readings, in addition to the required preparation *you should always come to tutorials having completed, and ready to discuss, the week’s readings.*

**24-Hour Food Journal**

Keep track of everything you eat for 24 hours, including as much as you know about the food: Where did it come from? Where did you buy it? Who made it? Conclude with a brief (one paragraph) analysis of the wider implications of what you ate. How much do you know about what you consume, and does this matter? How is what you ate impacting the environment, your health, your community, other things you care about? Your tutorial preparation should not be more than 2 pages long.

**Midterm and Final Exam Prep Assignment**

These tutorials will focus on helping you to prepare for the examinations. You should come prepared with a list of questions or themes you think might appear on the short answer section of the exams, and outlines of responses to two of the essay questions.

**Summary vs. Analysis Assignment**

You should come to the discussion with one paragraph summarizing a course reading for the week, and one paragraph analyzing the main argument of that same reading (the selected reading will be announced in class and tutorial). Each paragraph should be no more than 300 words.

**Critical Response Piece**

What the earlier assignments seek to build up to is the critical response piece, a draft of which is due in week 9, with the revised final version due during week 11. This will be a short (no more than 1000 words) constructively critical response to an article or debate discussing course themes. We will distribute the article or articles you can respond to after the midterm exam. The essay will need to demonstrate the analytical and communication skills the class has been emphasizing, as well as your understanding of the course material. The essay will need to include a concise analysis of the article’s...
main argument (or the main issues at stake in a debate), showing that you are able to read critically and analyze effectively, followed by your response to that article. In the latter you will need to draw on course themes and material to support your argument. However, because the essay is very short, you will have to do so concisely. Please feel free to ask questions about the response piece at any time. It will be marked in the same way as your other tutorial preparation, except that since it will require more work it will also carry more weight.

Exams

Both exams will include short answer questions and an essay question. The short answer questions will be drawn from readings and lectures. Sample questions will be distributed ahead of time. Three possible essay questions will also be distributed in advance of the exam. Two will appear on the exam and you will need to write a response to one. Although the questions will be available ahead of time, no notes will be allowed in the exam itself. The essay questions will ask you to critically engage and synthesize the course material, building on the skills we will be emphasizing in the tutorials.

Assignment of Grades:

“A”: An “A” assignment or exam displays a mastery of the topic and its theoretical context. It contains original thought and is written with no significant stylistic or grammatical errors. The argument is sound, substantive, organized; other points of view are introduced where appropriate, and sources are used and cited appropriately.

“B”: A “B” assignment or exam demonstrates familiarity with the topic, is well-written with no serious presentation or grammatical flaws. The argument is above-average in organization and analysis, it competently meets the objective of the assignment, but probably does not contain much original thought.

“C”: Writer has a reasonable grasp of the material and the assignment/exam is logically organized. It is descriptive rather than analytical and the ideas expressed are superficial and undeveloped. Some important themes may be overlooked.

“D”: Writer has a familiarity but not an understanding of the subject. Assignment/exam is disorganized, lacks structure and ideas are undeveloped and superficial. There are serious grammatical and presentation flaws.

Failing grades: Poor writing skills, grammar and spelling errors dominate. There is a lack of organization and the ideas are unrelated to the subject. Fails to meet the requirements of the assignment.

(*Adapted from: A Brief Guide to Teaching at UVic for New Instructors: 3rd edition. Learning and Teaching Centre, University of Victoria.)

Grading Policy: The following correlation of letter grade and numerical score will be used in the class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GP</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Range (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>90-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>85-89</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>80-84</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>73-76</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>70-72</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>65-69</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>60-64</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>50-59</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Coursework not completed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“N” is a failing grade.

**NOTE:** The University of Victoria is committed to promoting, providing and protecting a positive and safe learning and working environment for all its members. Student evaluation forms now include questions on the respect shown by the instructor for students, particularly those of diverse origins, orientation and physical abilities.