Course Description and Rationale

Evidence is mounting that unprecedented economic growth experienced by human societies has induced a state of crisis for the Earth’s ecological systems. Many of the public goods provided by them – fresh water, clean air, abundant fisheries, nutritious soils, low sea levels, and moderate weather, to name a few – are increasingly at risk. Their failure poses existential threats to the societies humans have collectively built over millennia, and heightens the risk of violent conflict. This course will critically examine the three legs of the proverbial sustainable development stool: environment, economy, and peace. We will explore specific issues in an applied, place-based framework, focusing on ways of understanding larger challenges as they manifest themselves in the San Diego region. We will also ask fundamental questions about environmental sustainability: How do current development paradigms create environmental conflicts? What role can we expect technology to play in offsetting our ecological impact or solving our conflicts over scarce resources? What does environmental justice look like? And ultimately, what are our prospects for peace and progress in the face of environmental peril?

This course will be ambitious in its themes, teaching modality, and course elements. The latter will include a community partnership with the Montgomery Middle School’s Community Garden. Another course element is that of my ongoing book project, tentatively entitled The Fifth World: Prospects for Peace and Progress in an Age of Environmental Devastation, which will both structure and benefit from the content of this course and student reflections.
Class time will be spent on a combination of exploratory field trips, discussions, debates, and participatory community engagement. Students will be asked to monitor, diagnose, and prescribe solutions for an environmental problem of their choosing. Deliverables will include reflective journal-keeping, an issue brief, a policy memo, and a final project.

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:
1. Develop a place-based awareness of their relationship with the natural world;
2. Interrogate their own senses of environmental anxiety and responsibility in the context of existing scientific evidence and theories of human progress;
3. Understand the basic ideas and histories of conservationist and environmental justice approaches to natural resource governance;
4. Analyze environmental conflicts from multiple theoretical points of view, including structuralism and constructivism;
5. Interpret peace and conflict dynamics in environmental and developmental terms, and vice versa;
6. Apply the principles of effective writing and organization in policy memos and grant applications; and
7. Develop both a theoretical and practical appreciation for the dynamics of community-based sustainability initiatives.

Course Requirement and Grading

Please Note: This syllabus is a road map to get us started, not a final contract carved in stone! The instructor reserves the right to alter requirements and/or course content throughout the semester based on his assessment of student needs and attainment of learning objectives.

All required readings will be uploaded to the course Blackboard site. I will also use the Blackboard announcement function to share notable news stories and host discussion forums.

We will meet once per week. The structure of each session will differ depending on the material being presented, but most sessions will involve some sort of off-site visit, walking discussion, or community engagement. Our course will attempt to generate several bridges to other, similarly oriented initiatives, including the community garden project at Montgomery Middle School, my current book project entitled The Fifth World: Prospects for Peace and Progress in an Age of Environmental Devastation, and Prof. Andrew Tirrell’s concomitant undergraduate course on “Politics and the Environment”.

The following components will make up your final grade:
- **Class Participation.** Discussion-heavy classes depend for their effectiveness on the active engagement of all participants. That’s you. Please come prepared to discuss the reading, to wrestle with the ideas out loud (< 80 db, please), and to use the richness of your own experience to gauge how convincing the ideas are.
- **Journaling.** You will be asked to keep a weekly journal. Each week, you will be expected to provide at least 2 written pages of reflection on a personal experience of the natural world you have had, tying it to (and illuminating, grounding, and enriching) the themes that we are exploring in that week’s readings and discussions.
- **Two 5-page current events memos:**
  - **Environmental Issue Brief.** You will be required to write one brief on a current situation in which the use, degradation, or (re)distribution of environmental resources is either a major factor in, or outcome of, an ongoing conflict.
  - **Environmental Policy Memo.** You will write a policy memo, which will briefly summarize your chosen environmental conflict, its drivers, 2-5 possible policy solutions (with their attendant pros and cons), and (optionally) your suggested course of action and rationale.
- **Group Project.** We will be working together to promote the sustainability of and efficacy of the Montgomery Middle School’s Community Garden. This project is still in flux and will take shape in conversation with our class.

Grades will be calculated out of the point maximums below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class discussion / exercises / debates</td>
<td>Throughout</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal entries</td>
<td>Throughout (2 pts x 14)</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Issue Brief</td>
<td>10 October</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant Writing Project</td>
<td>14 November</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Policy Memo</td>
<td>13 December</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All deliverables must be uploaded to Blackboard by the corresponding deadlines listed herein and on the course website. The format of the brief, memo, and final project should be in Microsoft Word format to facilitate redlining by the instructor (not a PDF or Google docs link). All deliverables, including the final project, turned in after the deadline will be docked by 1 point per day. Journal entries should be scanned or photographed and uploaded before class time the following week (e.g., Week 1’s journal entry should be scanned and uploaded before 9:15 AM on the day of the Week 2 session).

**Conduct**

There is a zero-tolerance policy for breaches of academic integrity in this class. Serious instances of plagiarism will result, at minimum, in a zero for that assignment – and possibly for the course. It is incumbent upon you, the student, to familiarize yourself with university policy and abide by it.
This is a professional degree program, and you are expected to treat your classmates and professors professionally – after all, they will shortly be your colleagues in the Peace & Conflict field. Nowhere will this be more important than in our discussions. The latter are intended to be daring, honest, creative, both to follow and to forge paths of critical and creative inquiry. As fellow travellers on these roads, we will want to develop trust amongst us. That process must begin by giving each other the benefit of the doubt; if someone’s word or phrase or expressed idea leaves open its interpretation, please assume the best intentions.

### Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wk</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Guest / Host</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>09-05</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td></td>
<td>USD Campus and Tecolote Canyon Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>09-12</td>
<td>The Anthropocene, Conservation, and the State of “Nature”</td>
<td>Jamie Harris</td>
<td>Old Mission Dam, Lake Kumeyaay, and the Sycamore Landfill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>09-19</td>
<td>Ecological Overshoot and Cornucopianism</td>
<td>Diana Bentley, Sarah Trueblood</td>
<td>Montgomery Middle School Emalyn Leppard Community Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>09-26</td>
<td>Solastalgia and Modern Environmental Anxiety</td>
<td></td>
<td>KIPJ 247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>10-03</td>
<td>Markets, Market Failures, and Collectivism</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>KIPJ 247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>10-10</td>
<td>The Notion of Environmental Justice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>10-17</td>
<td>Rewilding and Re-Creativity</td>
<td>James T. Hubbell</td>
<td>Ilan-Lael Foundation, Wynola, CA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>10-24</td>
<td>The Resource Curse and the Geography of Resource Conflicts</td>
<td></td>
<td>KIPJ 247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09</td>
<td>10-31</td>
<td>Climate Change and Climate Justice</td>
<td>Ruth Buffalo (Mandan / Hidatsa / Arikara)</td>
<td>KIPJ 247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>11-07</td>
<td>Sustainable Energy</td>
<td>Tammy Bauer</td>
<td>San Onofre Nuclear Station (arrive by 8:30am)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>11-14</td>
<td>Indigenous Resurgence and Resource Stewardship</td>
<td>Steve Newcomb (Shawnee / Lenape)</td>
<td>Sycuan Cultural Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>11-21</td>
<td>Land Sovereignty, Food Sovereignty</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11-28</td>
<td>THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY - NO CLASS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>12-05</td>
<td>Collective Action</td>
<td>Diana Bentley</td>
<td>Montgomery Middle School Emalyn Leppard Community Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>12-12</td>
<td>Alternative Visions for a Sustainable Economy</td>
<td>Diana Bentley</td>
<td>Montgomery Middle School Emalyn Leppard Community Garden</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Weekly Readings

Week 1: Introduction

Poem: William Butler Yeats’ “The Lake Isle of Innisfree”
Perambulation: USD Campus and Tecolote Canyon
Assembly Point: KIPJ 247
Required Readings

Week 2: The Anthropocene, Conservation, and the State of “Nature”

Poem: Gary Snyder’s “In the Santa Clarita Valley”
Perambulation: Lake Kumeyaay area (see the Mission Trails map) and Sycamore Landfill
Assembly Point: Lake Kumeyaay parking lot (pin)
Required Readings

Recommended Readings (Skim)

Week 3: Ecological Overshoot and Cornucopianism

Poem: Joy Harjo’s “A Map to the Next World”
Perambulation: N/A
Assembly Point: Montgomery Middle School Emalyn Leppard Community Garden (pin)

Required Readings

Week 4: Solastalgia and Modern Environmental Anxiety

Poem: Charlotte Mew’s “Hurt Not the Trees”
Perambulation: San Diego River
Assembly Point: KIPJ 247

Required Readings
- Schlanger, Zoe (2017). “We need to talk about ‘eco-anxiety’: Climate change is causing PTSD, anxiety, and depression on a mass scale.” Quartz, 3 April.

Week 5: Markets, Market Failures, and Collectivism

Poem: Robert Frost’s “Mending Wall”
Perambulation: N/A
Assembly Point: KIPJ 247
Key Questions

- What are externalities, and how do they help explain when individual and group welfare might be at odds?
- What are transactions costs, and why do they make institutions necessary to coordinate group welfare?
- What do transactions costs have to do with institutions?

Required Readings


Recommended Readings


Week 6: The Notion of Environmental Justice

Poem: Margaret Walker’s “Sorrow Home”
Perambulation:
Assembly Point: KIPJ 247
Required Readings


Week 7: Rewilding and Re-Creativity

Poem: James T. Hubbell’s “From Trees, From Mountains”
Perambulation: Ilan-Lael Foundation, Wynola, CA
Assembly Point: Garden of the Sun Fountain, Kroc School of Peace Studies
Required Readings


**Recommended Readings (not uploaded -- consult the Copley Library if interested)**


---

**Week 8: The Resource Curse and the Geography of Resource Conflicts**

**Poem:** Mahmoud Darwash’s “To our land”

**Perambulation:** N/A

**Assembly Point:** KIPJ 247

**Required Readings**


**Recommended Readings**


---

**Week 9: Climate Change and Climate Justice**

**Poem:** Eliza Griswold’s “Ovid on Climate Change”

**Perambulation:** N/A

**Assembly Point:** N/A

**Required Readings**


**Recommended Readings**
- The Guardian (2013). “Carbon tax v cap-and-trade: which is better?”

**Week 10: Sustainable Energy**

**Poem:** John Dickson’s “Fossil Fuel”

**Perambulation:** San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station

**Assembly Point:** Garden of the Sun Fountain, Kroc School @ 7am

**Required Readings**

**Week 11: Indigenous Resurgence and Resource Stewardship**

**Poem:** Layli Long Soldier’s “Resolution (6)”

**Perambulation:** Sycuan Cultural Center

**Assembly Point:** Sycuan Cultural Center @ 9:15am

**Required Readings**


● [To watch]: Pihana, Leonie (2017), Keynote Address to the World Women Conference 2017. Available at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DfVl06fH2Kc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DfVl06fH2Kc).

### Week 12: Land Sovereignty, Food Sovereignty

**Poem:**

**Perambulation:** N/A

**Assembly Point:** N/A

**Required Readings**


**Recommended Readings**


### Week 13: Collective Action

**Required Readings**


Week 14: Alternative Visions for a Sustainable Economy

Required Readings


- [Explore] “Jubilee Year” (2019), Economics of Compassion. Available at: https://www.econofcompassion.org/jubilee-year