

Environmental Issues in Society (ENST 150)

University of Southern California

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Spring 2019

MWF 11-11:50

Location: SOS, Room B46

Office Hours: Wednesdays 3:30 to 5:30 and by appointment

Course Description:

This course is an interdisciplinary study of environmental issues and challenges, examining their social, economic, cultural, political, scientific and ethical aspects. Throughout the semester, numerous dimensions of the subject will be explored: environmental and social consequences of modern industries and lifestyles; the role of different actors and institutions; policy debates on such topics as fracking, nuclear energy, waste management, water, renewable energies, etc. Moreover, institutional and social barriers to environmental and social policies will be scrutinized. Strategies for environmental regulation both at the national and global levels will be examined. Equally important, our personal responsibilities and roles in environmental and social problems will be evaluated. *A number of guest speakers will also be invited to address the students throughout the semester.*

Course Objectives:

To use theoretical perspectives to identify and explain national and global environmental problems and their possible linkages;

To understand complex environmental problems through stakeholders, agendas, policy processes and public debates;

To develop the ability to critically evaluate the policy and societal ramifications of diverse energy portfolios on air and water quality, climate, pollution, population, urbanization and economic sustainability;

To be able to write effectively about complex environmental problems and do so for both specialist and general audiences;

To become familiar with environmental policies in California including water and energy needs, air quality, marine and coastal issues;

To develop the skill to critically apply and analyze both quantitative and qualitative data in reasoning and evaluation of environmental problems, in consideration of the student's own potential solutions and/or management of the issues.

Lectures and Discussion Sections:

This course is based both on lectures and discussion/debates. Students are expected to study the required text assignment before lectures. Other than the textbook, additional reading materials will be posted on the Blackboard in the folder "Readings." Each student must attend one discussion section per week. In discussion sections, students will talk in detail about the week's reading assignment. Discussions are highly interactive and include debates, group presentations, individual presentations, and small group activities. Students will also be asked to prepare group presentations on major issues discussed in the course. Attendance of lectures and discussion sections is required. Please be on time. Texting, surfing social media and chatting are discourteous. Laptops/iPads may be used only for lecture notes and class-related activities. If you are absent in class for one of the reasons listed in the university policies (e.g., documented illness), please notify the instructor and provide the documentation about your absence.

Requirements:

There will be **two quizzes**: one on **February 11** and another on **April 8**, accounting for 10% of the total grade (5% each). A mid-term examination (**March 4th**) and the final exam (**May 1, 11am to 1pm**), each will count 25% of the final grade. Another 25% of the grade will be based on a final research paper per USC GE requirements of about 15 pages (citations excluded). Please use a 12-point font; 1-inch margins; double-spaced. Required number of sources: 20 per paper. There will be detailed discussion in class regarding the final paper followed with written instructions. Each student will present his/her major research points during discussion sections. Please use the MLA format of citations (author, year, page – in text, with full references on the last pages). Cite all the sources you use. When you submit a paper, you need to give a hard copy to the instructor AND to upload the paper on the Blackboard in "Assignments." The paper will be due on **April 22nd**. The final 15% of the grade will be based on performance in the discussion sections. This is how the breakdown of the grade will look like: **Two exams 50%** (25% each), **25% for the research paper**, **two quizzes 10%** (5% each) and **15% for participation, assignments in the discussion section including a 5% for group presentation.**

Grading scale: A: 93-100, 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: 59 and below.

Required Reading:

•Withgott, Jay *et al. Environment: The Science behind the Stories*. 5th Edition. ISBN: 9780321897428. Other editions of the textbook are OK to use.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems:

Statement for Students with Disabilities
Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

Academic Conduct

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, *Behavior Violating University Standards* <https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* <http://equity.usc.edu> or to the *Department of Public Safety* <http://adminopsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety>. This is important for the safety of the whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. *The Center for Women and Men* <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage <http://sarc.usc.edu> describes reporting options and other resources.

Support Systems

A number of USC's schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. *The Office of Disability Services and Programs* http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* <http://emergency.usc.edu> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology. *Student Counseling Services (SCS)* - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call. Additional sources are:

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling/>
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1-800-273-8255

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org>

Relationship & Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 - 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp/>

Sexual Assault Resource Center

For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: <http://sarc.usc.edu/>

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX compliance – (213) 740-5086

Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. <https://equity.usc.edu/>

Bias Assessment Response and Support

Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support/>

Student Support & Advocacy – (213) 821-4710

Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa/>

Diversity at USC – <https://diversity.usc.edu/>

Tab for Events, Programs and Training, Task Force (including representatives for each school), Chronology, Participate, Resources for Students

USC Department of Public Safety UPC: (213) 740-4321 24-hour emergency or to report a crime.

Provides overall safety to USC community. dps.usc.edu

Course Schedule:

Week	Topic	Readings
<p>Week 1: January 7</p> <p>Introduction to Environmental Issues</p> <p>Environmental Norms What is “Sustainability?”</p> <p>Disc: What are the most important environmental issues?</p>	<p><i>Norms in the international system and in domestic politics.</i></p>	<p>Withgott: Ch. 1-2</p> <p>Withgott: Ch. 6</p>
<p>Week 2: January 14</p> <p>Relationship between Economics and the Environment</p> <p>Environmental Negotiation Regimes</p> <p>Disc: The evolution of cooperation on environmental protection</p>	<p><i>Principles of international political economy and Economic Development.</i></p> <p><i>How are environmental negotiation regimes and issues framed and advanced?</i></p>	<p>Chasek et al on</p> <p>On Blackboard</p>
<p>Week 3: January 23</p> <p>Introduction to the Sustainable Development Goals</p> <p>Disc: Sustainable development goals</p>	<p><i>Global action on environmental protection and the relationship between economic development and environmental protection</i></p> <p><i>Millennium Developmental Goals</i></p>	<p>Kamau, Chasek and O’Connor, pages 1-46.</p> <p>On Blackboard</p>
<p>Week 4: January 28</p> <p>The Causes and Effects of Climate Change</p> <p>From Kyoto to Paris</p>	<p><i>Climate change and global action.</i></p>	<p>Withgott: Ch. 18</p> <p>Withgott: Ch. 17</p>

<p>Disc: Public diplomacy and climate change</p>		<p>Chasek and Wagner. From Kyoto to Paris</p> <p>On Blackboard</p>
<p>Week 5: February 4</p> <p>Traditional Energy Sources</p> <p>Alternative Energy Sources</p> <p>Disc: Energy Sources: Pros and Cons</p>	<p><i>Energy sources and infrastructures: Pros and cons of each energy source available.</i></p>	<p>Withgott: Ch. 19</p> <p>Withgott: Ch. 20-21</p>
<p>Week 6: February 11: QUIZ ONE</p> <p>Mining and Drilling</p> <p>Arctic Drilling</p> <p>Disc: Arctic Council</p>	<p><i>The environmental hazards of mining and drilling operations and the governmental reactions.</i></p>	<p>Withgott: Ch. 23</p> <p>Articles on Arctic Drilling</p> <p>On Blackboard</p>
<p>Week 7: February 20</p> <p>Desertification</p> <p>Ecological Security</p> <p>Disc: Resource Conflicts in an age of environmental degradation</p>	<p><i>The goals of sustainable development.</i></p>	<p>Stringer, and Hendrix</p> <p>On Blackboard</p>
<p>Week 8: February 25</p> <p>Endangered Species</p> <p>Disc: The future of the SDGs and mainstreaming sustainability in economic development</p>	<p><i>Protection of endangered species</i></p>	<p>Reeve, On Blackboard</p>
<p>Week 9: March 4 Mid-Term</p>	<p><i>Population, urbanization, use of resources, and the environmental challenges of the developing world.</i></p>	<p>Withgott: Ch. 3 and 8</p> <p>Wittgott: Ch.13</p>

<p>Population and Overpopulation</p> <p>Urbanization</p> <p>Disc: China's one child policy</p>		
<p>Week 10: March 18</p> <p>Air Pollution</p> <p>Deforestation</p> <p>Disc: Acid rain negotiations</p>	<p><i>Air pollution, transnational pollution, deforestation, and collective action.</i></p>	<p>Wittgott: Ch. 17</p> <p>Withgott: Ch. 5, 12</p>
<p>Week 11 March 25</p> <p>Agriculture</p> <p>GMOs</p> <p>Disc: Media and Environmental Issue</p>	<p><i>The food we eat.</i></p>	<p>Withgott: Ch. 9-10</p> <p>Armoudian on Media and Environment</p> <p>On Blackboard</p>
<p>Week 12: April 1</p> <p>Oceans</p> <p>Freshwater</p> <p>Disc: Fresh water resources</p>	<p><i>Pollution and sustainable development and utilization of ocean and water resources.</i></p>	<p>Withgott: Ch. 16</p> <p>Withgott: Ch. 15</p>
<p>Week 13 April 8: QUIZ TWO</p> <p>Trash</p> <p>Toxicity in Consumer Products</p> <p>Disc: Toxicity</p>	<p><i>Landfills, recycling, impact of trash, and toxicity in plastics and in the cosmetic industry.</i></p>	<p>Withgott: Ch. 22</p> <p>Withgott: Ch. 14</p>
<p>Week 14: April 15</p> <p>Biodiversity</p> <p>Disc: Biodiversity</p>	<p><i>Promotion of biodiversity and the impact of the Biodiversity Treaty.</i></p>	<p>Withgott: Ch. 16</p> <p>The Greening of Walmart on Blackboard</p>

<p>Week 15: April 22: PAPER DUE DATE</p> <p>The Future of Sustainability</p> <p>The Value of Small Actions</p> <p>Disc: Final review</p>	<p><i>Where do we go from here?</i> <i>Can small actions lead to decisive</i> <i>results?</i></p>	<p>Withgott: Ch. 24</p>
<p>Final Exam May 1, 11am-1pm</p>		