



ENST 100: Introduction to Environmental Studies

Units: 4

Fall 2019, MW 2:00-3:20 pm

Location: VKC 156

Instructor:

Dr. David Ginsburg

Associate Professor (Teaching)

Office: CAS 116c

Office Hours: TBA

Email: dginsbur@usc.edu

Phone: 213-740-8576 (office)

Course Description/Rationale

This course will give you an overview of how the natural world works, the ways in which humans are perturbing the natural world, and the ways in which governments and society are (or are not) addressing environmental degradation.

Learning Objectives

- Gain knowledge of the physical, chemical, and biological aspects of the environment
- Understand issues facing the environment from a scientific and social perspective
- Explore how environmental issues affect humans from multiple perspectives
- Discuss solutions to environmental degradation through law, policy and human behavior
- Learning objectives in this course are aligned with those of the Environmental Studies Program: <https://dornsife.usc.edu/environmental-studies/learning-objectives/>

Recommended preparation: ENST 100

Course Notes

We will use Blackboard for communication, information and turning in assignments. Lecture slides will be made available after the lecture is given. Additional readings may be assigned periodically throughout the semester and these will be announced in class, posted on Blackboard and via email messages sent to the class. Sometimes computers will be used in class to work with real life data in excel and run simple simulations – students will be notified when computers are needed. This course involves a lot of in depth reading and critical analysis outside of lecture, as it is a four unit, general education course.

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

- Friedland, Relyea, & Courard-Hauri. Environmental Science: Foundations and Applications. W.H. Freeman & Co., 2011 ISBN-13: 978-1429283311
OR
- Friedland and Relyea. Essentials of Environmental Science. W.H. Freeman & Co., 2016 ISBN-13: 978-1-319-06566-9
- Readings will be assigned throughout the semester and will be available on Blackboard

Description and Assessment of Assignments

You will be graded on the basis of your performance on exams, written assignments, group presentations and class participation. Lecture presentations will be posted on Blackboard after the lectures. Exam questions will be drawn from course readings, lecture materials and discussions. All three exams will cover the lecture and reading material immediately after the preceding exam (or starting on the first day of class for midterm 1). The final exam will carry the same weight as a midterm. (100 pts each; 300 pts total)

If there is a conflict with an exam, you must email the instructor (DG) 2-weeks in advance to see if alternative arrangements can be made (under reasonable circumstances). Otherwise, **make-up exams will not be given, except in extreme emergencies**. If a student misses an exam and/or assignment due to an unexcused absence, they may receive a zero for that portion of the course. If a student misses an exam and/or assignment, they will receive a zero for that portion of the course. During exams, students will NOT be allowed to have notes, books, cell phones, etc. Only pens/pencils and a calculator are required. Failure to comply with exam policies will automatically result in a grade of "0" for that particular exam.

The endangered species research assignment will involve researching an endangered species and its recovery plan and doing a write up of your research for use in an in-class discussion about choices in funding species recovery. Your research should cover the cause of your species endangerment, the details and cost of the recovery plan, the potential for recovery, and whether or not you think the cost is worth it. This research should be annotated with references for all information, and will be graded on the completeness of the content. (30 pts total)

Students also will write a letter (2-pages max) to a member of congress expressing their views on a particular environmental issue. The letter will be formatted as a formal letter and should be as persuasive as possible using evidence to support your views. Extra credit will be given for actually sending your letter. (25 pts total)

Groups of 6-8 students will be assigned to research specific environmental issues that we did not cover in class and then debate the issue in front of their peers. Students will be told ahead of time their topic and position. (40 pts total)

The news article analysis is a ~2-page analysis of bias and truth in news articles related to topics covered in class. Students will use a guide (given by the instructor) on how to look for bias and facts in the news for this assignment. Students will discuss their findings during class on the day each assignment is due. (15 pts total)

Grading Breakdown

Assignment	Points	Grade %
Midterm 1	100	23%
Midterm 2	100	23%
Final	100	23%
Endangered Species Report	50	12%
Congress Letter	25	6%
News Article Analysis (3 x 5pts)	15	4%
Group Debate	40	9%

Grading Scale

Your final grade in ENST 100 will be determined using the grading scale below. Note, however, this scale may be adjusted depending on the progress of the class.

A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	59 and below

Additional Policies

Routine attendance and active participation are an important part of each class session. For the best learning experience, you are expected to have read the course materials (see schedule, below) by the date it is discussed in class. Roll will be taken periodically in the form of thought exercises, reading assignments, and in-class questions. You are responsible for information, announcements, date changes, and any other course material presented, regardless of your participation in the classroom.

As mentioned above, if there is a conflict with an exam, you must email the instructor (DG) 2 *weeks in advance* to see if arrangements can be made. Make-up exams will be more difficult (because the instructors will need to rewrite the exam specifically for you!), so it is in your best interest to take the exam on the day it is scheduled. If you have an emergency on an exam day, you must get in touch with the instructor before the exam. Assignments will not be accepted late.

Additionally:

- Come to class prepared
- Be respectful of the instructors and other students in class
- Please leave cell phones outside the classroom or turned off
- If you have to miss class make sure you arrange to get notes and announcements

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

For the best learning experience, you are expected to have read assigned material by the date it is discussed in class. Article and supplemental readings will be posted online. The readings and schedule of topics may be adjusted throughout the semester depending on progress of the class.

	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings	Assignments
Aug 26	Course introduction		
Aug 28	What is science?	Ch. 1 (FR 1)	
Sept 2	LABOR DAY HOLIDAY		
Sept 4	Environ health measures & understanding data	Ch. 1 (FR 1)	
Sept 9	Earth systems science	Ch. 2, 3 (FR 2, 3)	
Sept 11	Climate & biomes <i>Artice discussion #1</i>	Ch. 4 (FR 3)	News article analysis #1
Sept 16	Evolution & biodiversity	Ch. 5 (FR 4), see Bb	
Sept 18	Evolution & biodiversity	Ch. 5 (FR 4)	
Sept 23	Population & community ecology	Ch. 6, 7 (FR 4, 5)	
Sept 25	Midterm 2		
Sept 30	Conservation biology	Ch 18 (FR 13)	
Oct 2	Conservation biology	Ch 18 (FR 13)	ESA report due
Sep 27	Natural resources	Ch. 9, 10 (FR 7, 9)	
Oct 2	Land use <i>Article discussion #2</i>	Ch. 9, 10 (FR 7, 9)	News article analysis #2
Oct 7	Agriculture & food	Ch. 11 (FR 7), see Bb	
Oct 9	Agriculture & food	Ch. 11 (FR 7)	
Oct 14	Energy: non-renewable	Ch. 12 (FR 8)	
Oct 16	Energy: renewable	Ch. 13 (FR 8)	
Oct 21	Energy: biofuels	See Bb	
Oct 23	MIDTERM 2		
Oct 28	Air pollution	Ch. 15 (FR 10)	
Oct 30	Water pollution <i>Article discussion #3</i>	Ch. 14 (FR 9)	News article analysis #2
Nov 4	Waste	Ch. 16 (FR 11)	
Nov 6	Waste	Ch. 19 (FR 14), see Bb	
Nov 11	Climate & science	Ch. 19 (FR 14)	Congress letter due
Nov 13	Climate & people	Ch. 20 (FR 15)	
Nov 18	Sustainability	Ch. 20 (FR 15)	
Nov 20	Sustainability	Ch. 21 (FR 16)	
Nov 25	Course review		
Nov 27	THANKSGIVING: NO CLASS		
Dec 2	Debate presentations		Group debates
Dec 4	Debate presentations		Group debates
Dec 13	**FINAL EXAM 2:00-4:00 PM, VKC 156**		

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

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 Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. 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>.

Support Systems:

Student Counseling Services (SCS) – (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. 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. www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Relationship and 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. 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: 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. 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. studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support

The Office of Disability Services and Programs

Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. dsp.usc.edu

Student Support and Advocacy – (213) 821-4710

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

Diversity at USC

Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. diversity.usc.edu

USC Emergency Information

Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible. emergency.usc.edu

USC Department of Public Safety – UPC: (213) 740-4321 – HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24-hour emergency or to report a crime.

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