



ENST 500: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Environmental Studies

Units: 4

Fall 2020, Tues 3:30-6:20 pm

Location: ONLINE

Instructor:

Dr. David Ginsburg, Associate Professor (Teaching), ENST

Preferred Pronouns: *he, him, or his*

Office: ONLINE

Office Hours: Mondays, TBA (via Zoom) and by appointment

Email: dginsbur@usc.edu

Course Description

This course will help students to develop advanced skills to address complex environmental issues that society faces today. Different approaches for studying environmental processes and resources will be examined.

Learning Objectives

Student learning objectives for this course are aligned with those of the ENST Program:

<https://dornsife.usc.edu/environmental-studies/learning-objectives/>

Students will:

- Recognize the relationships between physical and human interactions in the environment
- Evaluate scientific data in support of a particular topic or policy initiative
- Understand and assess scholarly articles related to course topics
- Formulate an integrated and interdisciplinary response to environmental problems by completing an individual report and group presentation on a specific conservation management and policy issue

Recommended Preparation

Course is geared towards students enrolled in their first semester of the ENST Masters Degree Program.

Course Overview

This course will be taught online via Zoom. Outside of our regularly scheduled Zoom lectures, we will use Blackboard (Bb) for communicating with one another, information and submitting assignments. PDF copies of lecture slides, links to topics discussed during class, as well as lecture recordings via Zoom will be made available after each lecture is given. Additional readings will be assigned periodically throughout the semester and these will be announced during lecture, posted in the course schedule, on Blackboard and via email messages sent to the class. This is a 4-unit, graduate level course, which requires in-depth reading and critical analysis outside of lecture.

Participating and engaging in courses online can be challenging (for instructors and students!). You are responsible for all notifications and assignments discussed during lecture and posted online via Bb. Nevertheless, I will strive to work with each and everyone of you to the best of my abilities. Please contact me with any issues that are impacting your ability to learn (such as internet connectivity, or other obstacles) and I will do my best to help (or will refer you to someone that can).

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

- Sodhi, N.S. and Ehrlich, P.R. (2011) Conservation Biology for All, 2nd Edition, 358 pp., Oxford University Press. **Available online for free.** Referred to below as CBA. <https://conbio.org/publications/free-textbook/>
- Day, R.A. (and B. Gastel). 4th though 8th Editions are fine. Greenwood Publishing. See USC Libraries.
- Additional 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, as well as in-class participation and discussions. Lecture presentations will be posted on Blackboard for download and subsequent study after a given lecture. Exam questions will be drawn from course readings, assignments, lectures and will include short answer and essay questions.

If there is a conflict with an exam, you must notify me via email at least one-week in advance to see if alternative arrangements can be made. **Otherwise, no make-up exams will be allowed.** If a student misses an exam, assignment or activity they will receive a zero for that portion of the course. Exams will be timed and administered via Blackboard (details will be released closer to the date on the course schedule). Failure to comply with exam policies will result in a zero for that particular exam.

Late Assignments will have 20% deducted each 24 hours, with the first 24 hour deduction starting 15 min after the deadline. Regarding in-class activities: If you cannot make it to a class, you will need to let me know prior to the start of a class. If it is an excused absence (or you live overseas), then I will provide you with an alternative way to obtain the associated in-class activity points outside of class

Grading Breakdown

| Assignment | Points | Grade % |
|--|------------|---------|
| Final exam (take home) | 100 | 40% |
| Oral Presentation (n = 1) | 15 | 6% |
| Article discussion (n = 1) | 15 | 6% |
| Scientific writing assignments (n = 10 x 10 pts) | 100 | 40% |
| In-class participation | 20 | 8% |
| TOTAL | 250 | |

Grading Scale

Your final grade will be determined using the following scale (which may be adjusted depending on the progress of the class):

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

Ground rules for classroom

- Share responsibility for including all voices in the conversation.
- Listen respectfully.
- Be open to changing your perspectives based on what you learn from others.
- Understand that we are bound to make mistakes in this space.
- Understand that your words have effects on others.
- Take pair work or small group work seriously.

Understand that others will come to these discussions with different experiences from yours.
 Make an effort to get to know other students. Introduce yourself to students sitting near you.
 Understand that there are different approaches to solving problems.

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 Course 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 and/or presence in the classroom.

Course Schedule:

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

| Date | Topic | Readings | Assignments |
|---------|---|--------------------------|--|
| Aug 18 | Introduction and course overview | | Complete Bb survey (by Aug 23) What journals to read? (by Aug 23) |
| Aug 25 | Conservation biology | CBFA: Ch. 1 See Bb | Scientific paper structure (by Aug 30) |
| Sept 1 | Biodiversity | CBFA: Ch. 2 See Bb | Developing an introduction (by Sept 6) |
| Sept 8 | Ecosystem functions | CBFA: Ch. 3 See Bb | Study objectives: Presentations 1 (by Sept 13) |
| Sept 15 | Habitat change & fragmentation | CBFA: Ch. 4, 5 See Bb | Study objectives: Presentations 2 (by Sept 20) |
| Sept 22 | Overexploitation & Invasive species | CBFA: Ch. 6, 7 See Bb | Describing the results (by Sept 27) |
| Sept 29 | Endangered species | CBFA: Ch. 12 See Bb | Discussing your findings: Part 1 (by Oct 4) |
| Oct 6 | Sustainable fisheries & Blue economy | See Bb | Discussing your findings: Part 2 (by Oct 11) |
| Oct 13 | Climate change and natural disaster | CBFA: Ch. 8, 9 See Bb | Writing an abstract (by Oct 18) |
| Oct 20 | Extinctions | CBFA: Ch. 10 See Bb | Putting it all together: Part 1 (by Oct 25) |
| Oct 27 | Environmental justice and urban air pollution in LA | See Bb | Putting it all together: Part 2 (by Nov 1) |
| Nov 3 | Human health risk and the environment | See Bb | Submitting for publication |
| Nov 10 | Conservation management | CBFA: Ch. 11 See Bb | |
| TBA | Final Exam: Take Home | | |

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Computer Support

For Zoom or general IT USC Support: Phone: (24/7): 213-740-5555; Email consult@usc.edu

For Blackboard Support: Phone: 213-740-5555 (option 2, assistance 24/7) blackboard@usc.edu

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, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

Student Support Systems

Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call

studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call

suicidepreventionlifeline.org Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press “0” after hours – 24/7

on call studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) - (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298 equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298 [usc-](http://usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care-report)

advocate.symplicity.com/care-report Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity | Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776 dsp.usc.edu

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Campus Support and Intervention - (213) 821-4710 campussupport.usc.edu

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101 diversity.usc.edu

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost’s Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call dps.usc.edu

Non-emergency assistance or information.