



Introduction to Environmental Studies

Instructors: Dr. Monalisa Chatterjee (She/her/hers)
Email: monalisc@usc.edu Office: CAS 110
Office hours: Mondays and Thursdays Noon-1.30pm
(Make an appointment at calendly.com/monalisa-chatterjee)

Class meeting time: MW 8.30-9.50 am PST
(Zoom Link provided on blackboard)

Text: *Essentials of Environmental Science*
<https://www.amazon.com/Essentials-Environmental-Science-Andrew-Friedland/dp/131906566X>

Supplemental reading: will be provided on Blackboard throughout semester

Course description:

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

Course Goals:

- Gain knowledge of the physical, chemical, 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

Broader Learning objectives:

- Understanding an interdisciplinary approach to complex environmental problems using basic tools of natural and social sciences;
- The ability to work effectively as a member of an interdisciplinary team on complex problems involving multiple competing stakeholders and agendas;
- The ability to critically evaluate the economic and policy ramifications of diverse energy portfolios on air and water quality, climate;
- An experience-based understanding of economic policies in California including water and energy needs, air quality, marine and coastal issues;
- The ability to write effectively about complex environmental problems and do so for both specialist and general audiences with equal facility;

- And the ability to apply quantitative reasoning skills to environmental problems including basic calculations related to sustainability issues and the use of quantitative methods in data analysis and argumentation.

Please refer to <https://dornsife.usc.edu/environmental-studies/learning-objectives/> for more information.

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 or in breakout groups with you.
- Understand that there are different approaches to solving problems.

Class attendance and participation

Students located in time zones considered as reasonable learning hours (**7:00am to 10:00pm** in the student’s time zone) are expected to maintain normal attendance and participation. If the class falls outside those hours, accommodations will be extended but you must let me know at the beginning of the semester. Live sessions will be recorded and shared on blackboard for students who cannot attend these sessions and they must keep up with the lectures and the schedule of the class.

Class dynamics are substantially compromised without the ability to see the people in class. It is expected in this class that students will have their cameras on during synchronous online sessions. Students are encouraged to use virtual backgrounds to eliminate privacy concerns, and earphones or headsets to improve audio quality. However, if required accommodations are available for the camera-on policy. Email me.

Students are expected to responsibly handle Zoom recordings, asynchronous activities, or other academic materials existing under SCampus policies. Students are not permitted to create their own class recordings or share recorded sessions and other material with anyone without the instructor’s permission. Violations of these policies will be met with the appropriate disciplinary sanction.

We will use Blackboard for communication, information and turning in assignments. I will make lecture slides available after the lecture is given, as well as post and accept assignments there. Some additional readings will be assigned periodically throughout the semester, and these will be announced in class, posted on Blackboard. You are expected to check blackboard often for any updates/announcements.

Grading:

Midterm	75 pts
Final exam	75 pts
Poster assignment	40 pts
Letter to congress	40 pts

Grading Scale

Course final grades will be determined using the following scale

A	93-100
A-	90-92

In class presentations	40 pts	B+	87-89
Class assignments	30 pts	B	83-86
Total Points	300 pts	B-	80-82
		C+	77-79
		C	73-76
		C-	70-72

Both midterm and final exams will cover material in that segment. (The final exam will be a midterm.) Exams will focus on lecture, class activities, discussions and reading and other material provided. Failure to comply with exam policies will automatically result in a grade of “0” for that particular exam. Exams will be conducted via blackboard and additional details will be provided separately.

Late/make-up policy:

If there is a conflict with an exam, you must email the instructor *2 weeks in advance* to see if arrangements can be made (under reasonable circumstances). Otherwise, make-up exams will not be given except in extreme emergencies. Make-up exams can also be in a different format graded more strictly, so it is in your best interest to take the exam on the day it is scheduled. If you have an emergency on exam day, you must get in touch with us before the exam if possible. Assignments will not be accepted late but under unusual circumstances you can check with the instructor to submit with a late grade.

Academic and Student Support Systems

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

Research Support: Need to do research but don't know where to start? Not sure how to cite a source in your bibliography? Ask a librarian! <http://libguides.usc.edu/> General Academic Support: The Kortschak Center for Learning and Creativity provides customized support services to help students transition into college and achieve their academic goals. <https://kortschakcenter.usc.edu/> 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/day, 7 days/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-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.

Office of the Ombuds - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC) ombuds.usc.edu A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will

Lecture Schedule (tentative)

Week	Topic	Reading and assignments
Week 1 January 18 th (Monday – holiday)	Introduction Studying the state of our earth; what is science?	Chapter 1 Introduction questionnaire
Week 2 January 25 th	Matter, energy and change Ecosystem ecology	Chapter 2 Chapter 3
Week 3 February 1 st	Global climates and biomes Evolution and biodiversity	Chapter 3 Chapter 4
Week 4 February 8 th	Population and community ecology Conservation	Chapter 4 & 13

		Endangered species blog due on blackboard
Week 5 February 15 th (Monday – Holiday)	Population growth	Chapter 5
Week 6 February 22 nd	Water resources and pollution	Chapter 9
Week 7 March 1 st	Food and agriculture	Chapter 7
Week 8 March 8 th (Friday – Wellness day)	Midterm March 8th Natural resources and land use	Chapter 6 &7
Week 9 March 15 th	Natural resources and land use Renewable energy	Chapter 8
Week 10 March 22 nd (Wednesday – wellness day)	Nonrenewable energy	Chapter 8
Week 11 March 29 th	Air pollution Presentation on ‘Air quality in California’	Chapter 10
Week 12 April 5 th (Wednesday – wellness day)	Waste Sustainability Presentation on ‘Native plants in USC campus’	Chapter 11
Week 13 April 12 th	Climate change	Chapter 14
Week 14 April 19 th (Thursday – wellness day)	TBD	
Week 15 th April 26 th (Friday- Wellness day)	Presentations	
Final	Monday, May 10 th	11 a.m.-1 p.m.