

ENST100 Introduction to Environmental Studies

Instructor: Dr. Simonetta Rubol
Email: rubol@usc.edu;
Office hours: Thursdays 1:00 PM to 2:00 PM via Zoom (and by appointment)
Office: TBD

Section: Tu-Thr 9:30-10:50AM

Units: 4.0

Room: THH 119

Prerequisites: none

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 the challenges of environmental degradation are (or are not) being addressed by society and government.

Course Learning Objectives:

Learning objectives in this course are aligned with those of the Environmental Studies Program:
<https://dornsife.usc.edu/environmental-studies/learning-objectives/>

- Describe physical, chemical, and biological aspects of the environment
- Demonstrate the ability to critically think and solve problems in the realm of environmental processes and issues
- Discuss issues facing the environment from a scientific and social perspective
- Examine how environmental issues affect humans, from multiple perspectives
- Examine solutions to environmental degradation through law, policy, science and technology, and human behavior

FREE Course Text & Readings:

- Miller and Spoolman, 2016. Environmental Science. Delmar Cengage Learning, 15th Ed.
FREE ONLINE through USC Libraries (use your proxy server/VPN)
 - <https://www-r2library-com.libproxy1.usc.edu/Resource/Title/1305090446>
 - Also available as a paperback (\$\$) <https://www.cengage.com/c/environmental-science-15e-miller/9781305090446/>
- Additional readings will be assigned and available on Blackboard

Course Requirements & Expectations:

See expanded classroom ground rules and zoom etiquette toward the end of this syllabus

- **Come to class prepared and engage in discussions, individual and group work***
 - Take pair work or small group work seriously.
 - Make an effort to get to know other students.

- Share responsibility for including all voices in the conversation.
- Understand that others will come to these lectures and discussions with different experiences from yours.
- **Leave cell phones off during the lecture and stay engaged**
- **Be respectful of instructors and other students in class***
 - 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.
 - Understand that there are different approaches to solving problems.
- **If you have to miss class make sure to notify the instructor beforehand and watch the lecture recording (when available) and makeup any in-class activities within 48 hours.**

Communication and Contact

Email is the preferred way to reach me outside of class and office hours (please put the course number in the Subject line), and it is my policy to respond to emails within 24/48 hours (barring unforeseen circumstances). Please use your USC email when contacting me, I may not respond to emails sent from non-USC accounts.

Other course information:

This course will use Blackboard for communication and information. I will provide you a summary of the lecture slides in pdf form after the class is given. Some additional readings/videos will be assigned periodically throughout the semester, and these will be announced in class, posted on Blackboard or via email and will be part of the exams. **Slides, snapshots or recordings of the lectures are for personal use only** and cannot be distributed or posted it in social media without the permission of the instructor. Lectures will be in person and via zoom if needed. I will also post and accept assignments on Blackboard unless otherwise specified.

Important note: It is your responsibility to regularly check the course Blackboard site and your USC email for these course announcements. The syllabus is tentative and may be revised. Any revisions will be announced in class; students are responsible for any changes announced in class (even if you are not present in class). In addition, lecture schedule, assignments, in-class activities and exams may be modified depending on the modality used (zoom and/or in person). Please be flexible.

Changes will be promptly communicated via email or Blackboard. During in-person modality, synchronous zoom classes will be available for students with specific needs when requested ahead of time. In general, recorded classes will not be automatically available to students.

Grading:	Points	%
Midterm 1	100 pts	20%
Midterm 2	100 pts	20%
Final	100 pts	20%

Ecological Footprint	5 pts	1%
News Bias analysis	20 pts	4%
Endangered Species assignment	50 pts	10%
Letter to a Leader	35 pts	7%
Participation/in-class activities	50 pts	10%
Debate	40 pts	8%
Extra points	10 pts	2%

Grading scale:

A	89.5-100%
B	79.5-89.4%
C	69.5-79.4%
D	59.5-69.4%
F	<59.5%

All three exams will cover material immediately after the preceding exam (or beginning of class for midterm 1) up to the exam. The final exam will NOT be cumulative. Exams will focus on lecture and reading material. 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.

Late/make-up policy:

Exams Submissions 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**. If you have an emergency on exam day, you must get in touch with us before the exam if possible. If you miss an exam without an excused reason, you will receive a grade of zero.

Policies on Assignments and Class Activities

Unless otherwise specified, all assignments are due by 9:20 AM California time via Blackboard Turnitin (BB). **The penalty for late submissions is 20% per day, with the first 24 hour deduction starting 5 min after the deadline.** No make-up assignments will be allowed without explicit permission. If you miss an assignment, you will receive a zero for that assignment. Instructions for all assignments will be posted to Blackboard (BB). Regarding in-class activities: **If you cannot make it to a class, you will need to make up any associated in-class activities within 48 hrs (due by 1:50 PM).** To know whether an in-class activity occurred, you will need to watch the zoom recording (if applicable) and email me directly. Assignments and activities will be graded and posted on blackboard ~ within two weeks after the due date.

Missed classes

You are responsible for any material covered in class and related discussions, exercises and activities. Participation during regular class time is expected and encouraged.

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 the *SCampus* University Student Conduct Code, 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>. As a member of the Trojan community, plagiarism is beneath you. Don’t do it.

Overview of Assignments: All due by 9:20 AM (California Time) via Turnitin (BB) unless otherwise specified. *Each of the below assignments are described in more detail on blackboard.*

Ecological Footprint Stats and Reflection: Due Jan. 13th

https://www.footprintcalculator.org/?gclid=Cj0KCQjw0YD4BRD2ARIsAHwmKVlnn1g-BFx5LHSIqdJmF9lar3rv7vgo1xzIYu58W77ulCqgPY0kNNsaAu4yEALw_wcB

News Bias Analysis: You will submit a ~1 page analysis on media bias based on articles from three different media outlets covering the same environmental issue. Guidelines for this assignment and the links to the three articles will be posted on BB. **Due Jan 25th**

Letter to a Leader: ~2 page letter to a member of congress or the CEO or head of sustainability at a company expressing your views on a current environmental issue. The letter will be formatted as a formal letter, (with letterhead) and should be as persuasive as possible. Use evidence to support your plea. **Due March. 10th**. Extra credit (3 pts) will be given for actually sending your letter: **Extra Credit Proof of submission due by March 10th.**

Endangered Species Assignment: Involves researching an endangered species and its recovery plan. Culminates in a blog for use in an in-class discussion about choices in funding species recovery. See Blackboard Instructions for more information. **Due Mar. 22th**

Documentary Reflection: You will watch a documentary relating to the science behind climate change, and will submit your answers to the reflection questions. **Due Apr. 12th**

Debates (Apr. 26 and Apr. 28): 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. **You will select your debate topic by Mar. 8th**, otherwise you will be assigned a topic thereafter.

In-Class Activities/Discussions (2-20 pts each): Throughout the course you will be exposed to media, data based activities and in-depth discussions in class. Points are awarded via question worksheets or via activity-based discussions. In-class activity worksheets/reflections will need to be turned in within 48 h.

Lecture Schedule (Please note that the schedule is tentative and may be modified):

Week 1 (Jan 11/13): Introduction (Chapter 1)

Introduction and Goals

Studying the state of our earth; what is science?

Jan 13: Ecological Footprint due

Week 2 (Jan 18/20): Basic Science Principles (Chapter 2 and Chapter 7)

Matter, energy and change

Global climates and biomes

Week 3 (Jan 25/27): Ecosystem ecology and Evolution (Chapter 3, Chapter 4, Chapter 5)

Ecosystem Ecology Genetics and Evolution

Population and community ecology

Jan 25: news article analysis due

Week 4 (Feb 1/3): Population, growth community ecology (Chapter 5 and Chapter 6)

Population and community ecology

Hum. Population growth and Demographics

Week 5 (Feb 8/10): Biodiversity (Chapter 4 and Chapter 8)

Biodiversity and conservation biology

Feb. 8 Endangered species assignment presented

Feb 10: MIDTERM 1

Week 6 (Feb 15/17): Biodiversity and Water Chapter 4, Chapter 8 and Chapter 9

Biodiversity and conservation biology

Natural Resources Water

Week 7 (Feb 22/24): Water and Soil Chapter 9, Chapter 11 and Chapter 12

Natural Resources Water/ Soil

Feb. 24 Debate topics presented

Week 8 (Mar 1/3): Land and Agriculture Chapters 9, Chapter 10 and Chapter 12

Land use

Agriculture, Agroecology and food

March 3: Letter to congress assignment presented

Week 9 (Mar 8/10): Pollution (Chapters 15.1-15.3)

Water and air pollution

Sustainability

March 10: Letter to congress due

SPRING BREAK – MARCH 13-20

Week 10 (Mar 22/24): Pollution & Waste ((Chapters 15.1-15.3 Chapter 16)

Noise and Light Pollution

Waste

Mar 22: Endangered species assignment due

Week 11 (March 28/30): Waste & Energy (Chapter 16 and Chapter 13)

Waste

Non-renewable energy, biofuels

Mar 29: MIDTERM

Week 12 (Apr 5/7): Energy & Documentary (Chapter 13)

Renewable Energy (**Guest speaker Dr. Kelly Sanders, USC**)

Documentary Non in-person lecture

April 7: Debate topic assigned

Week 14 (Apr 12/14): Sustainability and climate change (Chapter 17 and 15.5-15.7)

Climate Change

Apr. 12 Documentary assignment due

Week 15 (Apr 19/21): Sustainability and climate change (Chapter 17 and Chapter 15.4-15.7)

Sustainability

Catch-up lecture

Week 16 (Apr 26/28): Debates

May 10 FINAL EXAM 8:00AM-10:00AM

Expanded ENST classroom ground rules and Etiquette

- **Share responsibility for including all voices in the conversation.** If you tend to have a lot to say, make sure you leave sufficient space to hear from others. If you tend to stay quiet in group discussions, challenge yourself to contribute so others can learn from you.
- **Listen respectfully.** Don't interrupt, turn to technology, or engage in private conversations while others are speaking. Use attentive, courteous body language. Comments that you make (whether asking for clarification, sharing critiques, or expanding on a point) should reflect that you have paid attention to the previous speakers' comments.
- **Be open to changing your perspectives based on what you learn from others.** Try to explore new ideas and possibilities. Think critically about the factors that have shaped your perspectives. Seriously consider points-of-view that differ from your current thinking.
- **Understand that we are bound to make mistakes in this space, as anyone does when approaching complex tasks or learning new skills.** Strive to see your mistakes and

others' as valuable elements of the learning process.

- **Understand that your words have effects on others.** Speak with care. If you learn that something you've said was experienced as disrespectful or marginalizing, listen carefully and try to understand that perspective. Learn how you can do better in the future.
- **Take pair work or small group work seriously.** Remember that your peers' learning is partly dependent upon your engagement.
- **Understand that others will come to these discussions with different experiences from yours.** Be careful about assumptions and generalizations you make based only on your own experience. Be open to hearing and learning from other perspectives.
- **Make an effort to get to know other students.** Introduce yourself to students sitting near you. Refer to classmates by name and make eye contact with other students.
- **Understand that there are different approaches to solving problems.** If you are uncertain about someone else's approach, ask a question to explore areas of uncertainty. Listen respectfully to how and why the approach could work.

IT, 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 work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.