



ENST 500: Interdisciplinary Approaches to

Fall 2024, Tues 3:30-6:20 pm

Section: 33072: 4 units

Location: SOS B37

Instructor: Dr. David Ginsburg, Professor (Teaching), ENST

Preferred Pronouns: he/him

Office: CAS 116

Office hours: Weds, 10:30 am to 12:00 pm or by appointment

Email: dginsbur@usc.edu

Course description

ENST 500 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. *Recommended Preparation:* Course is geared towards students enrolled in their first semester of the ENST Masters Degree Program.

Classroom ground rules

- Share responsibility for including all voices in a conversation
- Listen respectfully to your classmate's and your instructor's viewpoints
- Be open to changing your perspectives based on what you learn from others
- Understand that we are bound to make mistakes in this space
- Take group work during class and outside of lecture seriously
- Understand that your classmates may have different experiences from your own
- Make an effort to get to know your classmates
- Understand there are different approaches to solving problems

Learning objectives

Student learning objectives are aligned with those of the ENST Program in which students will:

- Recognize 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 a written assignment and group presentation on a specific conservation management and policy issue

Course modality

ENST 500 will be taught as a synchronous, in-person course and you are expected to be present for each lecture section. Recorded lectures will not be provided to students via Zoom (or any other platform) unless accommodations have been requested via [OSAS](#). Students that miss class are expected to get notes from their classmates.

This course will primarily use Brightspace (**Referred to below as Bsp**) for communication, information and turning in assignments. PDF copies of lecture slides and links to topics discussed during class will be made available on Bsp after each lecture is completed

Readings from the primary and secondary literature will be assigned throughout the semester and will be announced in class, posted on Bsp and/or via email. This is a 4-unit, graduate level course, which requires in-depth reading and critical analysis outside of lecture.

Textbook and Readings

- Conservation Biology: Foundations, Concepts, Applications (2020) Fred Van Dyke and Rachel L. Lamb, Cham: Springer Nature, 3rd Edition, 613 pp. **Available online via USC Libraries.** Referred to below as CBFCA.
- Additional readings will be assigned throughout the semester and will be available on Bsp

Description and Assessment of Assignments

You will be graded on the basis of your performance on written assignments, class activities, participation (e.g., article discussions, Bsp assignments, etc.) and a final exam. Exam questions will be drawn from course readings, lecture materials and related assignments, activities and discussions. The final exam will be administered via Bsp (specific details will be posted on Bsp).

If there is a scheduling conflict with an exam, assignment or activity you must notify me via email at least one-week in advance to see if alternative arrangements can be made. If it is an excused absence (official USC travel, medical reasons, religious observation, etc.), I will do my best to provide you with a way to obtain the associated points. Otherwise, no make-ups will be allowed.

All assignments must be submitted by the stated deadlines. Late assignments will have 15% deducted each 24 hours, with the first 24 hr deduction starting 15 min after the deadline. Reminder: USC policy prohibits sharing of any course content outside of the learning environment.

Assignments and Activities

- Article presentation and discussion: Individual students will select and post an article and relevant reading questions (for their classmates) from the primary literature and present-lead a discussion (~20-30 min total) during class. Each presentation is worth 75 points total (60 pts presentation plus 15 pts posting article and discussion questions \geq 5-days before presentation date).
- **Article analysis:** Students will read a scholarly article (selected by a classmate; see above) and provide a written summary (500-words max; single spaced) to questions posted online, which they will then submit via Bsp (**Note:** students leading a given discussion are not required to submit a written summary for that particular week). Students will discuss their findings during class on the day each assignment is due. (10 x 10 pts each; 100 pts total).
- **Story Map Article:** Online, image-based story that has been thoughtfully created, given context and provided with supporting information so it becomes a stand-alone resource. It integrates maps, legends, text, photos and provides functionality, such as swipe, pop-ups, and time sliders, that helps users explore the content in either a linear or non-linear fashion. Each student will create two separate story maps over the course of the semester, which will be focused on some aspect of conservation biology. (60 pts each; 50 pts article, 10 pts topic submission). **More details to come during lecture.**

Grading Breakdown

Assignment	Points	Grade %
Final exam	125	26%
Science Story (2 x 60 pts each)	120	26%
Article presentation & discussion	75	16%
Article analysis (10 x 10 pts each)	100	21%
In-class participation	60	13%
TOTAL	480	

Grading scale

Final course grades will be determined based on the percentage of points earned as outlined below. This scale may be adjusted depending on the progress of the class. If course taken as a “Pass” grade, you must earn a letter grade of C- or greater (see above) in course. A final point score at or below a D+ grade will result in a “No Pass”.

A	94-100	C	73-76
A-	90-93	C-	70-72
B+	87-89	D+	67-69
B	83-86	D	63-66
B-	80-82	D-	60-62
C+	77-79	F	59 and below

Additional policies

Routine attendance and active participation are an important part of each class session. Participation will be evaluated via thought exercises, reading assignments, in-class quizzes and questions. You are responsible for all information, announcements, date changes and any other course material presented, regardless of your participation and presence in the classroom.

The use of phones and other devices for text messaging, email, social media use and web-browsing is not permitted in class except where required for in-class work.

Course Schedule

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

Week	Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments
1	Aug 27	Introduction & overview	See Bsp: Bradshaw et al. 2011	
2	Sept 03	Conservation biology	CBFCA: Ch. 1 See Bsp: Ehrlich & Mooney	
3	Sept 10	Biodiversity	CBFCA: Ch. 2 See Bsp: Meyers 2000	Article Analysis & Discussion 1
4	Sept 17	Ecosystem functions	CBFCA: Ch. 2, 3.4 See Bsp: Walker 1992	Article Analysis & Discussion 2
5	Sept 24	Habitat fragmentation	CBFCA: Ch. 5.6, 7.3-7.4 See Bsp: Wilcox 1985	Article Analysis & Discussion 3
6	Oct 01	Shifting baselines	CBFCA: Ch. 4.1-4.2 See Bsp: Papworth et al. 2009	Story Map Article #1 Due Article Analysis & Discussion 4
7	Oct 08	Invasive species	CBFCA: Ch. 3.3-3.4 See Bsp: Simberloff 1999	Article Analysis & Discussion 5
8	Oct 15	Endangered species	CBFCA: Ch. 12.1-12.3 See Bsp: TBA	Article Analysis & Discussion 6
9	Oct 22	Agriculture and biofuels	See Bsp: TBA	Article Analysis & Discussion 7
10	Oct 29	Fisheries & the blue economy	CBFCA: Ch. 8.6-8.8 See Bsp: Pauly 2018	Article Analysis & Discussion 8

11	Nov 05	Extinctions	CBFA*: Ch. 10 See Bsp: Tillman 1994	Article Analysis & Discussion 9
12	Nov 12	Environmental justice	See Bsp: TBA	Story Map Article #2 Due Article Analysis & Discussion 10
13	Nov 19	Conservation ethics & beyond	CBFCA: CH. 10.1-10.4	Article Analysis & Discussion 11
14	Nov 26	Thanksgiving Break – No Class		See Bsp for reading
15	Dec 03	Asynchronous Lecture – No In-Person Class		See Bsp for reading
FINAL EXAM (Take Home): TBA				

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic integrity

Academic dishonesty is far-reaching and is considered a serious offense against the university. All incidences of academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity and could result in outcomes such as failure on the assignment, failure in the course, suspension, or even expulsion from the university. For details, see [the student handbook](#) or the [Office of Academic Integrity's website](#), and university policies on [Research and Scholarship Misconduct](#).

Students and Disability Accommodations

USC welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. [The Office of Student Accessibility Services](#) (OSAS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter disability-related barriers. Once a student has completed the OSAS process and accommodations are determined to be reasonable and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be available to generate for each course. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at osas.usc.edu. You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at osasfrontdesk@usc.edu.

Student Financial Aid and Satisfactory Academic Progress

To be eligible for certain kinds of financial aid, students are required to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) toward their degree objectives. Visit the [Financial Aid Office webpage](#) for [undergraduate](#)- and [graduate-level](#) SAP eligibility requirements and the appeals process.

Support Systems

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

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

[988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline](#) - 988 for both calls and text messages – 24/7 on call

The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States.

The Lifeline consists of a national network of over 200 local crisis centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices. The new, shorter phone number makes it easier

for people to remember and access mental health crisis services (though the previous 1 (800) 273-8255 number will continue to function indefinitely) and represents a continued commitment to those in crisis.

[Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services \(RSVP\)](#) - (213) 740-9355(WELL) – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender- and power-based harm (including sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking).

[Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX \(EEO-TIX\)](#) - (213) 740-5086

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) 740-2500

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

[USC Campus Support and Intervention](#) - (213) 740-0411

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

[Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#) - (213) 740-2101

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

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) 442-1200 – 24/7 on call

Non-emergency assistance or information.

[Office of the Ombuds](#) - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC)

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.

[Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice](#) - (323) 442-2850 or otfp@med.usc.edu

Confidential Lifestyle Redesign services for USC students to support health promoting habits and routines that enhance quality of life and academic performance.