SJSU SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY

College of Social Sciences · Environmental Studies

Introduction to Environmental Issues Section 01

ENVS 1

Summer 2023   3 Unit(s)   07/10/2023 to 07/28/2023   Modified 07/06/2023

👤 Contact Information

Instructor:	Amy Petersen
Email:	amy.petersen@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	M/W 5:00pm - 6:00pm via Zoom (https://sjsu.zoom.us/j/81179233686) or by appointment
Class Days/Time:	M-Th 9:00am - 12:00pm
Class Location:	BBC 225

🖥 Course Description and Requisites

What effects are human activities having on the natural environment and our quality of life? Discover the technical and social causes of environmental degradation; learn how your personal and career choices can protect the environment for current and future generations.

GE Area(s): A3. Critical Thinking and Writing

Letter Graded

☰ Program Information

Welcome to this General Education course.

SJSU's General Education Program establishes a strong foundation of versatile skills, fosters curiosity about the world, promotes ethical judgment, and prepares students to engage and contribute responsibly and cooperatively in a multicultural, information-rich society. General education classes integrate areas of study and encourage progressively more complex and creative analysis, expression, and problem solving.

The General Education Program has three goals:

Goal 1: To develop students' core competencies for academic, personal, creative, and professional pursuits.
Goal 2: To enact the university's commitment to diversity, inclusion, and justice by ensuring that students have the knowledge and skills to serve and contribute to the well-being of local and global communities and the environment.
Goal 3: To offer students integrated, multidisciplinary, and innovative study in which they pose challenging questions, address complex issues, and develop cooperative and creative responses.

More information about the General Education Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) can be found on the GE website (https://sjsu.edu/general-education/ge-requirements/overview/learning-outcomes.php).

◎ Course Goals

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Understand and explain key environmental issues.

2. Analyze the interrelationships between resource use, economics, politics,

   social justice, and environmental degradation.

3. Identify social, political, and technical solutions that will guide change towards

   more sustainable communities today, and in the years to come.

📊 Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

GE Area A3: Critical Thinking and Writing

Area A3 courses develop students' understanding of the relationship of language to logic. By engaging students in complex issues requiring critical thinking and effective argumentation, A3 courses develop students' abilities to research and analyze important topics and to construct their own arguments on issues that generate meaningful public debate and deliberation. Courses include explicit instruction and practice in inductive and deductive reasoning as well as identification of formal and informal fallacies of language and thought. Completion of Area A2 (Written Communication I) with a minimum grade of C- is a prerequisite for enrollment in Area A3. Completion of Area A3 with a grade of C- or better is a CSU graduation requirement.

GE Area A3 Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of an Area A3 course, students should be able to:

1. locate, interpret, evaluate, and synthesize evidence in a comprehensive way, including through library research; and integrate research findings into oral and written arguments through appropriate citation and quotation;
2. use a range of rhetorical and logical strategies to articulate and explain their positions on complex issues in dialogue with other points of view;
3. identify and critically evaluate the assumptions in and the contexts of arguments; and
4. use inductive and deductive logic to construct valid, evidence-supported arguments and draw valid conclusions.

Writing Practice: Students will write a minimum of 6,000 words, at least 4,000 of which must be in revised final draft form.

📘 Course Materials

Required Textbook

Miller, G., and Spoolman, S. *Living in the Environment*. **20th edition**.

Other Readings and Resources

All other course reading material will be available in the daily modules on Canvas.

Technology

To view the daily modules, you will need access to a computer with an Internet connection. You should be using the latest version of Chrome, Firefox, Edge, or Safari, and can view a complete list of supported browsers through Canvas.

Please note that I do not provide technical help beside instructions on how to access or utilize a particular application. If you need computer or technical help, please utilize the following resources:

- Student Canvas Help Guide
- SJSU IT Service Desk
- In Canvas, click the "Help" button in the left-side menu for further options.

Library Liaison

Peggy Cabrera (peggy.cabrera@sjsu.edu or 408-808-2034) is the Library Liaison for the Department of Environmental Studies. She is a great resource. Contact her for research help via email or to set up a Zoom appointment.

≔ Course Requirements and Assignments

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course on assignments, preparation/studying, or course related activities. Other course components will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.

Please read the following assignment descriptions carefully. Failing to comply with the specific directions given below may result in a loss of credit points for each assignment. This course requires at least 6,000 words of writing; the writing assignments and number of words for each assignment are given below.

1. **Midterm (CLO2, CLO3)** There will be one midterm exam. The exam will be multiple choice and will be evaluated based on demonstrated understanding of valid scientific information relevant to environmental issues and ability to evaluate social, political, and technical solutions to today's environmental problems.

2. **Reading Review Questions (CLO3)** Beginning on day two, there will be a textbook reading review most days (see the course schedule). The daily review questions are intended to encourage you to do the reading as well as to check your comprehension of key terms and concepts. In general, review questions cannot be made up unless you have a documented circumstance and you reach out to me in advance.

3. **Daily Article Submission and Summary (GELO1, CLO3) (8 @ 250 words each = 2,000 words)** Each morning prior to class, you will be required to submit an article of your choice that pertains to the topic we are discussing in class that particular day. Please use credible sources only: peer-reviewed literature from a scientific journal, reputable news sources (New York Times, Washington Post, The Mercury News, etc.), and National Geographic are all great places to look. If you are unsure of the validity of the source, be sure to check with me in advance. During class, students will be chosen to present a brief overview of their article for the class and discuss why they found it interesting and/or relevant to that day's topic. Following the class discussion, you will be required to write a brief summary of your article, which will be due on Canvas by the end of the day.

4. **Critical Thinking Essays (GELO 1 – 4; CLO 1-4) (2 @ 500 words each = 1,000 words)** Twice during the session, students will compose an essay of 450-500 words in which they acquire, synthesize, and logically analyze information in response to a given topic and then present the information and their conclusion in a well-constructed essay. Student work will be assessed based on the essay's demonstrated completeness of the following: locating and appropriately citing quality sources of information on environmental topics (GELO1, CLO1); correct application of rhetorical or logical arguments using high quality evidence on environmental issues (GELO2, CLO2), written synthesis of information from two or more sources, addressing contrary or multiples sides of an argument about an environmental issue (GELO3, CLO3); and effectively showing how a main take-home point is the logical conclusion for the essay based on evidence presented earlier in the piece in the context of the environment and sustainability (GELO4, CLO4).

5. **Research Paper (GELO1-GELO 4) (2 drafts @ 1,500 words each)** The final assignment for this course is an opportunity for you to demonstrate that you have learned to think about environmental issues more carefully, objectively, creatively, and analytically as a participant in this course. This is a critical skill for professionals in environmental, as well as other, professions. Indeed, it is a critical skill for anyone interested in making informed choices about issues that affect their lives. This assignment will be completed in the following sequence:

   ○ STEP 1: Topic: Submit your proposed topic based on a current environmental issue. Topics must receive instructor approval. The proposal should be a one paragraph description of the topic and why it interests you.

   ○ STEP 2: Draft: Each student will submit a completed draft for peer review. You will exchange papers with another student (assigned by the instructor). Class time will be set aside for students to review their peer's paper and provide feedback.

   ○ STEP 3: Final: The final paper will be due on the last day of class. The paper must be a minimum of 1,500 words and not more than 1,800 words (this does not include the reference page). The upper limit of 1,800 words is intended to encourage you to

think carefully about what you want to say and present your arguments concisely and clearly. Try to keep your word count close to 1,500 words. Papers must be correctly formatted and cited according to one of the 3 citation formats listed below.

- ○ STEP 4: Assessment: Student work will be assessed based on the essay's demonstrated completeness of the following: locating and appropriately citing quality sources of information on environmental topics (GELO1); correct application of rhetorical or logical arguments using high-quality evidence on environmental issues (GELO2), written synthesis of information, including contrary or multiple sides of an argument about an environmental issue (GELO3); and effectively showing how a main take-home point is the logical conclusion for the essay based on evidence presented earlier in the piece in the context of the environment and sustainability (GELO4). The content and depth of analysis for the Research Paper should be substantially more comprehensive than the Critical Thinking Essays.

6. **Final Presentation (GELO2, CELO3-CELO4)** Final presentations will cover the information addressed in your research paper and will be scheduled for the last two days of class.

Assignment	Word Count Requirement	Weight Percentage %
Reading Review Questions	N/A	15
Midterm Exam	N/A	20
Article Evaluation Summaries	8 @ 250 words each	Incorporated into Module Assignments
Critical Thinking Essays	2 @ 500 words each	15
Research Paper (first draft = 10 pts; final draft = 15 pts)	2 @ 1,500 words	25
Oral Presentation	N/A	10
Module Assignments/Participation	Varies by assignment	15

Online Citation Resources

For this class, you will be able to use whichever citation style you prefer, as long as you are consistent throughout your papers. Here are some links to useful citation guides for three different citation styles.

MLA:
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_formatting_and_style_guide.html (https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_formatting_and_style_guide.html)

APA: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/general_format.html (https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/general_format.html)

CHICAGO:
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/chicago_manual_17th_edition/cmos_formatting_and_style_guide/chicago_manual_

of_style_17th_edition.html
(https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/chicago_manual_17th_edition/cmos_formatting_and_style_guide/chicago_manual
_of_style_17th_edition.html)

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism, intentional or not, will not be tolerated in this course. This course is designed to provoke critical thought and writing, and plagiarism will not help you to become a better thinker or writer. For an extensive read of the University guidelines for dealing with plagiarism, see the University Academic Integrity Policy F15-7 at sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F15-7.pdf (https://sjsu.campusconcourse.com/sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F15-7.pdf). The first incidence of plagiarism will result in a zero (0) for the assignment and a report filed with the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development as required by SJSU. A second incidence of plagiarism may result in a failing grade for the course and a second report filed. Cite the source for any fact not understood to be common knowledge.

Here is an idea of what plagiarism looks like – this does not replace the definition of plagiarism found at the above link to the Academic Integrity Policy:

You are plagiarizing or cheating if you:

- For written work, copy anything from a book, article, or website and add or paste it into your paper without using quotation marks and/or without providing the full reference for the quotation.

- For written work, summarize/paraphrase in your own words ideas you got from a book, article, or the web without providing the full reference for the source.

- For an oral presentation, copy anything from a book, article, or website and present it orally as if it were your own words. You must summarize and paraphrase in your own words and bring a list of references in case the professor asks to see it.

- Use visuals or graphs you got from a book, article, or website without providing the full reference for the picture or table.

- Recycle a paper you wrote for another class.

- Copy from a classmate or use someone else's work as if it were your own.

- Use technology or smuggle in documents to obtain or check information in an exam situation.

- Use artificial intelligence (AI) to write any part of your paper.

In writing a paper, it is always better to include too many references than not enough. When in doubt, always err on the side of caution. If you have any question or uncertainty about what is or is not cheating, it is your responsibility to ask your instructor.

In addition to the guidelines above, I also want you to be aware that your papers will automatically be scanned for plagiarism using Turnitin.com and will be analyzed for use of artificial intelligence using AI detection software.

✔ Grading Information

Grading Policy

Your grade will be based on your assessments, assignments, and class participation. All assignments are to be turned in through Canvas before the specified due date and time.

Grade Scale

97%-100% = A+   93% - 96% = A   90% - 92% = A-

87% - 89% = B+   83% - 86% = B   80% - 82% = B-

77% - 79% = C+   73% - 76% = C   70% - 72% = C-

60% - 69% = D   less than 60% = F

Late Work

All assignments are due BEFORE 11:59pm on the due date listed on the course calendar.

Please Note: One exception to this rule is the daily article submissions, which are due prior to the start of class each day. Daily article submissions must be turned in by 8:30am to avoid being marked late.

A 10% deduction is taken for each day an assignment is late.

Extra Credit

Students are responsible for recording the details of any offered extra credit assignments.

🏛 University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9 (PDF) (http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on the Syllabus Information (https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php) web page. Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.