Instructors/Facilitators
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Teaching Assistants:
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Lecture: 3:30 – 5:25, Thursdays, 1800 Engineering Hall

Readings: Environmental Science Foundations and Applications, Friedland, Relyea, and Courard-Hauri (available at bookstores, Amazon, etc., and on reserve at Steenbock Library).

Office hours: Office hours are a time to discuss questions, concerns, or comments you have about the course. You are welcome to talk to anyone from the teaching team before or after class or set up an appointment to meet at a time that is convenient.

Course Overview:
Forum on the Environment is a 2-credit seminar designed to explore current environmental issues. The course will address concerns such as global change, sustainability, and environmental quality. Students will examine critical current issues rooted in environmental sciences by participating in lectures, discussions, group work, and a small group project. The course is designed as a sampling of a wide range of topics rather than attempting to be comprehensive in scope. We will encourage you to ask questions about the environment, seek sources of information to answer these questions, evaluate information sources to understand the quality of evidence provided, and explore how to implement what we have learned in our individual career paths and as a community.

Course Learning Goals:
Rather than focusing on memorizing facts, in this class we hope that you will focus on ideas and questions. After taking this course, you should be able to:
1. Understand the breadth of environmental sciences, including the characteristics of interdisciplinary education and research.
2. Be able provide examples of the relationships between science, people, and society.
3. Evaluate the reliability of information sources and utilize critical reading skills.
4. Learn how to pursue your interests within environmental issues within and outside of the classroom.

Class format:
*Note that your grade depends on attending lectures and discussions (both parts of class), and you will be responsible for work from both.

Lecture 3:30 – 4:25pm
The first half of the class will be a guest lecture on a “hot topic” in environmental studies. Part of what we hope makes this class interesting is the variety of guests and instructors. Many of them will be people you might take a class with in the future. Please be aware that this class is somewhat unusual in this regard. The lectures or topics may not always flow smoothly from one to the next. We encourage you to ask questions and consider how the various topics relate to one another.
Discussion/Activity ~4:30 – 5:25pm
During the second half of class you will work in small groups to discuss the lectures and related readings. In addition the discussion time will be used to work on assignments and group projects. You will be assigned to a group in the second week of classes. For most groups, these will be the people you work with throughout the semester, so get to know them (because of adding and dropping, we may shuffle a few into different groups to maintain group sizes around five or six).

Attendance policy:
We work very hard to try and bring in interesting and engaging guests, and one of our goals is to challenge you and expose you to a wide range of topics and ideas. You will not benefit if you do not attend class. Therefore a large part of your grade is based on your participation and attendance in class. Much of what you learn will come from your discussions with your classmates and engaging with the instructors and guest speakers. Your participation matters! Attendance and in-class work counts for about one-third of your grade.

We also understand that life is more than just classes and you may occasionally miss a class. In most cases, you should still be able to complete and turn in the weekly “out-of-class” work (reading questions and article reviews). We will provide an opportunity for extra credit to make up for the in-class work of up to two missed classes (see Extra Credit section below).

Grading:
1) Weekly attendance and in-class work (group and individual worksheets) = 35%
2) Weekly out-of-class work (reading questions and assignments) = 35%
3) Semester Environmental Issue Project (small group project) = 20%
4) Final Reflection Paper (observation on lessons throughout the semester) = 10%

Exams:
There are none; you will do a final reflection paper in lieu of an exam. Note that the UW system may send you an email reminder about your final exams – remember that you will NOT need to attend a final exam for this class, even though you may receive a room location and time.

Respect:
All are welcome in this course regardless of age, race, gender, background, political affiliation, or sexual orientation. This course is based on respect and any disrespect will not be tolerated. We are all, including the teaching team, both learners and teachers in this class. Your ideas will be received with the utmost respect even when in conflict with other’s opinions. We want you to feel comfortable in sharing your thoughts, comments, and questions even if they turn out to be misconceptions. If you ever feel you are not being respected by anyone that is a part of this class, please contact us via phone, email, letter, or in person. Also, please be respectful of our guest speakers and fellow students – cell phones off. Computers and tablets should be used ONLY for note-taking during lectures.

Accommodation:
We recognize that not everyone is equally able in terms of vision, mobility, hearing, or learning. If you need to request an accommodation to aid your participation in the class, please feel free to contact Professor Ventura.
COURSE COMPONENTS

A) Weekly preparation and assignments

Class preparation:
1. You will be given short readings to do before class and will need to be prepared to answer questions on Learn@UW each week related to the assigned reading.
2. Some weeks you will have work toward your final project to complete prior to coming to class. Please note the due dates for various stages of the group project work.

Weekly assignments

1. Attendance and In-Class Work – **Due at end of class each Thursday**
   Each week, in the second half of class, you will fill out an *individual worksheet* worth 5 points that covers material presented by the lecturer(s). Pick up this sheet at the beginning of class. If you can double-task, you can begin completing this sheet as the lecturer is presenting; we will provide 5 – 10 minutes after the lecture to finish this.
   After the lecture section of the class, you will work in a small group and contribute answers to the *group activity sheet* worth 10 points. Group problems will be distributed in a folder when everyone in your group has completed their individual sheet. Make sure your name is on the group sheet in order to obtain credit for this portion.

2. Out of Class Work – **Due by 3pm each Thursday (before class)**
   Each week there will be 10 points of weekly homework, which will include:
   - answering reading questions *(posted on Learn@UW)*
   - reflecting on your learning *(included with the reading questions on Learn@UW)*
   - finding and analyzing articles or stories about an environmental issue *(details below)*

Reading assignment and questions

You will fill in answers to the questions using the quiz function on Learn@UW, but it may be helpful to write down your answers and analyses in another document and then simply copy-paste the answers into the boxes in the quiz. You may take the quiz as many times as you like; we will look at the last one posted. Responses will be due by 3pm before Thursday class. For more detailed information, please refer to the “How to Complete your Weekly Homework” document on Learn@UW. In many weeks, we will include a *learning reflection* question to help you think about what the implications of the topic might be in your own education or life.

Article analysis

At the beginning of the semester, pick an environmental topic that interests you. This can be quite broad, such as wildlife extinction or global climate change, or quite specific, such as how polar bears are adapting to shrinking artic ice cover or how California almond growers are dealing with honey bee colony collapse disorder. You will find articles and stories about this topic throughout the semester (if part way through, you feel you’ve exhausted a topic or have found something more interesting, you can switch once).

- Each week, locate a story or short article about your environmental issue that interests you. You can find articles in newspapers with environmental reporters (e.g. New York Times, Washington Post, Capital Times), in broad scientific journals (e.g. Science, Nature, New Scientist), scientific journals in particular fields, popular press magazines (e.g. National Geographic, Smithsonian), in environmental group magazines or newsletters
B) Semester Project: Explaining an Environmental Issue
Due Thursday May 7 (with milestones along the way)
With this assignment, we want you to have a chance to explore an environmental topic within your group and then create a project that teaches others about the issue. You will work in your small group to create a final product that accurately, persuasively, and creatively portrays information on an environmental issue. Your final project could take on the form of a video, website, radio segment, business proposal, poster, grant, invention, poster, PowerPoint presentation, or any other creative and collaborative product. Any presentation style is acceptable as long as you are able to effectively communicate your ideas. Your group will create it based on your mutual interests and backgrounds and modify it as you learn more about environmental topics. We hope that the work will allow you to practice problem solving and critical thinking in a group setting.

During our last class, you will present your project to the teaching team and your peers. This may entail developing a poster or other means to provide an overview of what you accomplished.

There are several parts of this project. Note, you will TURN IN written plans at steps 2 and 4. See the environmental group project handout found on learn@uw for a complete rubric of the assignment.

1. Fill out individual questionnaires about environmental topics (in class work, January 22)
2. Group decides which topic area will be chosen and create initial work plan (by Feb. 26)
   Complete and turn in the group work plan document that will be included in your folder the previous week. This is the project at an idea/concept stage. Also see the resources and ideas for final group projects document on learn@uw.
3. Meet with a member of the teaching team during the discussion part of class to propose your project topic and obtain approval (by Feb. 26.)
4. Finalize written overview of project goals and activities/components (by April 2.) This should be a one to two page single spaced formal project proposal with details of activities and anticipated products.
5. Presentation day (May 7)

Detailed descriptions and reminders of these pieces will be given throughout the semester.

C) Learning Reflection and Group Project Assessment – Due end of the day, Friday May 8
At the end of the course, you will hand in a short reflection about what you learned through the semester. Follow the directions in the learning reflection guide found on learn@UW to complete this assignment. This is an opportunity for you to look back over the course and
articulate what has been most valuable for you, and what we can improve upon. We will use your comments and thoughts to help improve the course in the future. This will also include a synopsis of your contribution to the group project, your assessment of the project and its effectiveness (information and presentation style), and a peer review of your group members.

D) Extra Credit
We work hard to bring in interesting and memorable speakers each week and value attendance. For this reason, each class is worth 15 points. If you know you will be missing class it will be important to work to gain credit by participating in one of the extra credit opportunities. Each week we will list various lectures, screenings, or volunteer activities that students can participate in and then write a one-page reflection. You can find these opportunities in the News Feed section of the home page for Learn@UW. Extra credit activities will typically be 5 or 10 points, so you may need to do a few to entirely make up a missed class.
SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS TO PREPARE FOR FIRST HALF OF CLASS  
(NOTE – SOME SPEAKERS AND TOPICS ARE TENTATIVE)


Reading for today: Chapter 1 (Environmental Science: Studying the State of Our Earth) pages 1-22.

Assignment (10 points, due in class): Complete the student background and survey during class. This is also available at Learn@UW.

January 29 – The Importance of Sustainability and How We Are Focusing UW Efforts. Sabrina Bradshaw, Outreach Coordinator, Office of Sustainability

Personal Impact Calculators. Jady Carmichael and Nico Galleguillos, Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies

Reading for today: Chapter 20 (Working Toward Sustainability: Environmental Economics, Equity and Policy) pages 548-568

Assignment (10 points, due Jan 29 by 3pm): To be uploaded on Learn@UW

February 5 – Wildlife and the public trust. Adrian Treves, Professor, Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies

Reading for today: Chapter 18 (Conservation of Biodiversity: Protection of Earth’s Species and Ecosystems) pages 494-513

Assignment (10 points, due February 5 by 3pm): To be uploaded on Learn@UW

February 12 – XXX Water. Meghan Salmon, Post-doctoral Researcher, Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies

Reading for today: Chapter 9 (Water Resources: Supply, Distribution, and Use) pages 234-252

Assignment (10 points, due February 12 by 3pm): To be uploaded on Learn@UW

February 19 – The ocean carbon cycle and its role in global climate change. Galen McKinley, Professor, Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences

Reading for today: Chapter 4 (Global Climates and Biomes: Geographic Variations in Temperature and Precipitation) pages 87-114.

Assignment (10 points, due February 19 by 3pm): To be uploaded on Learn@UW

February 26 – Using the recent geological past to understand biotic responses to large climate changes. Jack Williams, Professor, Geography

Reading for today: Chapter 19 (Global Change: Climate Alterations and Global Warming) pages 516-545

Assignment (10 points, due February 26 by 3pm): To be uploaded on Learn@UW
March 5 – Renewable Energy Options and Practices, Jim Tinjum, Professor, Engineering Professional Development

Reading for today: Chapter 13 (Renewable Energy: Innovative Uses of Earth, Sun, Wind, and Water) pages 342-372

Assignment (10 points, due March 5 by 3pm): To be uploaded on Learn@UW

March 12 – TBA,

Reading for today: TBA

Assignment (10 points, due March 12 by 3pm): To be uploaded on Learn@UW

March 19 – Toxicants in the Environment, Joel Pedersen, Professor, Soil Science

Reading for today: Chapter 16 (Waste: Solid Waste Generation and Disposal Systems) pages 436-459

Assignment (10 points, due March 19 by 3pm): To be uploaded on Learn@UW

March 26 – TBA,

Reading for today: TBA

Assignment (10 points, due March 26 by 3pm): To be uploaded on Learn@UW

April 2 – Spring Break

April 9 – Lead in the Urban Environment, Janean Dilworth-Bart, Associate Professor, Human Development and Family Studies

Reading for today: Chapter 17 (Human Health and Toxicology: Environmental Sources of Health Risk) pages 462-486

Assignment (10 points, due April 9 by 3pm): To be uploaded on Learn@UW

April 16 – Environmental Humanities – People and the Environment, Gregg Mitman, Professor, History of Science, Medical History, and Environmental Studies

Reading for today: Chapter 10 (Land: Public and Private) pages 260-279

Assignment (10 points, due April 16 by 3pm): To be uploaded on Learn@UW

April 23 - TBA,

Reading for today: Chapter

Assignment (10 points, due April 23 by 3pm): To be uploaded on Learn@UW

April 30 – TBA,

Reading for today: Chapter

Assignment (10 points, due April 30 by 3pm): To be uploaded on Learn@UW

May 6 – Group presentations