

**San José State University**  
**School of Social Sciences, Department of Environmental Studies**  
**ENVS 01, Introduction to Environmental Issues, Section 81, Fall 2021**

**Course and Contact Information**

Instructor: Ada E. Márquez  
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Office Hours: Zoom-Thursdays 12:00 p.m. noon to 1:00 p.m.  
Class Days/Time: Tuesday/Thursday 10:45 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.  
Classroom: Fully Online Synchronous via Zoom  
GE/SJSU Studies Category: Satisfies D1 : Social Sciences

**Course Description**

What effects are human activities having on the natural environment and our quality of life? We will analyze the technical and social causes of environmental degradation, environmental, and health impacts. The environment we depend upon is being damaged by a range of problems, including increasing economic disparities, overexploitation of natural resources, depletion of non-renewable resources, and climate change.

Effectively addressing environmental impacts and debates require understanding of the basic facts, using critical thinking skills, and applying an interdisciplinary approach towards short-term and long-term sustainable solutions. Thus, by understanding the causes and solutions of environmental problems, we can move society in a direction that will sustain the earth and all its species. Moreover, we will learn how our personal and career choices can protect the environment for current and future generations.

**Grading:** Letter Graded

**Course Format**

**Technology Intensive, Online, Synchronous Course**

My course adopts an online synchronous format with lectures and break out rooms twice per week, Tuesday/Thursday 10:45 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Students must have reliable internet connectivity and technology such as a computer to access the Zoom lectures, in class activities, discussions, and Canvas. Zoom lectures will not require students to have a camera, but it is highly encouraged to strengthen our community. Office hours with the instructor will be virtual via Zoom.

Students can borrow laptops, iPads, and other technology at no charge from SJSU [Student Computing Services | Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Library \(sjsu.edu\)](#). For student study and workspace with wifi and outlets, SJSU has numerous locations on campus [Student Study and Workspace Resources | Learn Anywhere \(sjsu.edu\)](#).

Students need the following:

- Internet connectivity or Wi-Fi, and technology such as a computer/laptop to access Zoom and Canvas
- Ensure your device meets Zoom system requirements [System requirements for Windows, macOS, and Linux – Zoom Help Center](#)

- Access to Canvas Learning Management system which is located at <https://sjsu.instructure.com/>
  - [Canvas Student Resources | eCampus \(sjsu.edu\)](#)
- Free access to software [Software Installation Instructions | Information Technology \(sjsu.edu\)](#)
  - Please have Adobe software installed [Adobe Creative Cloud for Students | eCampus \(sjsu.edu\)](#)
  - Microsoft Office Suite and/or the Google Apps "G-Suite" (Google Docs, Sheets, etc.). Visit [Microsoft Office 365 Portal](#). You can access the Office 365 Portal with your SJSU email address and SJSUOne password

Other student technology resources:

- [Associated Students Print & Technology Center](#) at [as.sjsu.edu/asptc/index.jsp](http://as.sjsu.edu/asptc/index.jsp) on the Student Union (East Wing 2nd floor Suite 2600)
- [The Spartan Floor](#) at the MLK Library at [library.sjsu.edu/services/services](http://library.sjsu.edu/services/services) (Fourth floor)
- [Student Computing Services](#) at [library.sjsu.edu/student-computing-services/student-computing-services-center](http://library.sjsu.edu/student-computing-services/student-computing-services-center)

## Course Goals

D1: Students shall be able to identify and analyze the social dimension of society as a context for human life, the processes of social change and social continuity, the role of human agency in those social processes, and the forces that engender social cohesion and fragmentation.

## GE Learning Objectives (GELO)

This course meets the requirements of GE Category D1, Social Sciences. Thus, this course will include material that addresses these learning objectives:

Learning Objective 1: Students will be able to place contemporary developments in cultural, historical, environmental, and spatial contexts.

Learning Objective 2: Students will be able to identify the dynamics of ethnic, cultural, gender/sexual, age-based, class, regional, national, transnational and global identities and the similarities, differences, linkages, and interactions between them.

Learning Objective 3: Students will be able to evaluate social science information, draw on different points of view, and formulate applications appropriate to contemporary social issues.

Learning Objective 4: Students will be able to recognize the interaction of social institutions, culture and the environment with the behavior of individuals.

In addition, this course to meet GE goals will emphasize good writing, in both style and content.

## Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

This course is designed to provide you with the following CLO's:

- 1) Understand environmental issues;
- 2) Learn the relationships among resource use, economics, politics, and environmental degradation;
- 3) Analyze controversial issues, and
- 4) Identify social, political, technological, and personal approaches to creating a sustainable, more peaceful world.

## Texts/Readings

### Textbook

Students will need to rent or buy one book: Miller, G. *Living in the Environment: Principles, Connections, and Solutions*. **19th edition**. The cost to rent the eTextbook is about \$39.00 [Living in the Environment 019, Miller, G. Tyler, Spoolman, Scott - Amazon.com](#)

ISBN-13: 978-1337094153

ISBN-10: 1337094153

Other readings are included with web links via Canvas.

### Citation Required

Formal papers are required to use the general APA Guidelines: 12 font typed, double-spaced with 1 inch margins on all sides. [General Format // Purdue Writing Lab](#) Additional instructions provided via Canvas.

### Library Liaison

Ms. Peggy Cabrera is the library liaison for Environmental Studies. Students may email ([Peggy.Cabrera@sjsu.edu](mailto:Peggy.Cabrera@sjsu.edu)) or set up a zoom research meeting [Getting Started - Environmental Studies - SJSU Research Guides at San José State University Library](#).

### Course Requirements and Assignments

The exams and assignments are designed to help you learn the course material and analyze issues. The written assignments will help you develop skills to evaluate, analyze, and express solutions to environmental issues. Good writing is essential to conveying your ideas.

- 1. In-Class Participation (100 points):** During our synchronous class on Zoom, students will submit various types of activities during breakout sessions or at the end of lectures. Students are expected to actively participate in learning. Attend each class on time, as the lectures will contain material that is not in your book. To do well you in this course you must complete the assigned readings before class, take good notes, ask questions, turn assignments in on time, and participate in class. Active participation in the classroom is required to receive participation points. In-class assignments cannot be made up.
- 2. Weekly Mini-Briefs: Analysis of Environmental Issues (100 points):** Each week, students are responsible for the readings from the textbook, posted articles, and/or videos posted via Canvas. To strengthen analytical skills, a weekly mini brief based on the readings will be submitted and/or shared during class discussions. The mini briefs will be about one to two paragraphs or answer posted questions; further instructions posted on Canvas.
- 3. Critical Thinking and Writing Papers:** Detailed instructions and a rubric for each paper will be provided during class and on Canvas. A portion of the grade includes formal academic writing requirements such as, in-text citations, grammar, spelling, and logic of ideas. The course schedule shows the dates for each paper assigned and submissions. All research requires peer-reviewed journals, government publications, white papers, and credible internet sources. Each paper will be about 2 to 3 pages, double spaced, and APA format.

**Paper 1 (125 points): The Science vs. Pseudoscience vs. Inaccurate Media** will apply critical thinking and analytical techniques to evaluate the credibility of on-line articles for a current controversial scientific environmental issue.

**Paper 2 (125 points): The Environmental Justice (EJ) Policy Brief** is a concise argument summarizing the issue and solutions to a current environment issue in a disproportionately impacted community, city, or country.

**Paper 3 (150 points): The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Concept Paper** will analyze the environmental impacts of a project, government policy, or other types of government decisions and provide recommendations for sustainability strategies. Students will share their work by creating a web page via Adobe Spark. No prior experience creating web pages is required; the instructor will provide guidance. SJSU provides free access to [Adobe Creative Cloud for Students | eCampus \(sjsu.edu\)](#) or use [Make Images, Videos and Web Stories for Free in Minutes | Adobe Spark](#)

4. **Two Exams (midterm and the final exam) (400 points):** The midterm exam and the final exam are each worth 200 points. The exams will include multiple choices questions, short answer questions, and short essay questions. Each exam will cover lectures, in-class discussions, activities, readings, and videos. The final exam is not comprehensive.
5. **Extra Credit Opportunities- 2 total allowed (30 points each, 60 points maximum)**

#### [University Policy S16-9,](#)

“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 (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.”

#### **Academic Integrity Policy**

Originality and honesty: It is appropriate to cite others’ work extensively, with attribution. **It is never appropriate to use other authors’ language or ideas, from the web or from written documents, as though they were your own.** If you have any questions about appropriate citation, please talk to me personally or email me a note. Misuse of written material can result in course failure. If you need help or have any questions, contact the instructor. [University Academic Integrity Policy F15-7 \[pdf\]](#) [Student Conduct and Ethical Development](#)

#### **Late Assignment Policy**

Written papers turned in the following day of the posted due date will receive a 10% grade reduction. Those turned in the day after that will lose another 10%. Papers later than that will not be accepted. Make-up exams will be considered for legitimate circumstances, when arranged in advance, or with a doctor’s memo.

#### **Zoom Office Visits**

We are experiencing ongoing changes with uncertainties, and communication with the instructor is important. Please do not wait for an insurmountable problem before considering an office visit. If you would like to discuss an issue, an assignment, or a personal problem, please speak to me during on-line office hours.

#### **Grading Information**

The course grade will be determined based on a total 1000 possible points. Accumulated points that fall within the grade scale below determine your semester grade.

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Points</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>A plus</i>	<i>960 to 1000</i>	<i>96 to 100%</i>
<i>A</i>	<i>930 to 959</i>	<i>93 to 95%</i>
<i>A minus</i>	<i>900 to 929</i>	<i>90 to 92%</i>
<i>B plus</i>	<i>860 to 899</i>	<i>86 to 89 %</i>
<i>B</i>	<i>830 to 859</i>	<i>83 to 85%</i>
<i>B minus</i>	<i>800 to 829</i>	<i>80 to 82%</i>
<i>C plus</i>	<i>760 to 799</i>	<i>76 to 79%</i>
<i>C</i>	<i>730 to 759</i>	<i>73 to 75%</i>
<i>C minus</i>	<i>700 to 729</i>	<i>70 to 72%</i>
<i>D plus</i>	<i>660 to 699</i>	<i>66 to 69%</i>
<i>D</i>	<i>630 to 659</i>	<i>63 to 65%</i>
<i>D minus</i>	<i>600 to 629</i>	<i>60 to 62%</i>

**University Policies**  
**Classroom Protocol**

**Inclusive Learning Community**

We are here to learn and support each other. Please be respectful, mindful, patient, and compassionate with yourself, classmates, and instructors. Students are expected to be professionals and be punctual to on-line class lectures. Questions and comments about lectures or class materials are welcome anytime. Please use my Zoom office hours for assistance or personal concerns. For other SJSU’s policies pertaining to Students Expectations, Rights, and Responsibilities, please read University Policy [S16-15 \[pdf\]](#)

**Use of Camera in Class**

Students are not required to have their camera on during the synchronous Zoom class, but I strongly encourage your appearance on-screen. Students have permission to use an appropriate virtual background and mute their microphone. I expect all students to participate during in-class lectures, the breakout room activities, and discussions. If you have any concerns, please notify me as soon as possible for accommodations.

**Recording of Zoom Classes**

University Policy [S12-7 \[pdf\]](#) requires students to obtain instructor’s permission to record the course. This course or portions of this course (i.e., lectures, discussions, student presentations) will be recorded for instructional or educational purposes. The recordings will only be shared with students enrolled in the class through Canvas. The recordings will be deleted at the end of the semester. If, however, you would prefer to remain anonymous during these recordings, then please speak with the instructor about possible accommodations (e.g., temporarily turning off identifying information from the Zoom session, including student name and picture, prior to recording).

Note: The instructor cannot guarantee that all classes will be recorded and available for review. Unforeseen circumstances due to inadequate internet connectivity or outages may hinder recording of all synchronous classes.

**Students are not allowed to record without instructor permission**

Students are prohibited from recording class activities (including class lectures, office hours, advising sessions, etc.), distributing class recordings, or posting class recordings. Materials created by the instructor for the course (syllabi, lectures and lecture notes, presentations, deliverables, etc.) are copyrighted by the instructor. This

University policy ([S12-7](#)) is in place to protect the privacy of students in the course, as well as to maintain academic integrity through reducing the instances of cheating. Students who record, distribute, or post these materials will be referred to the Student Conduct and Ethical Development office. Unauthorized recording may violate University and State law. It is the responsibility of students that require special accommodations or assistive technology due to a disability to notify the instructor.

### **Zoom Classroom Etiquette**

- **Mute Your Microphone:** To help keep background noise to a minimum, make sure you mute your microphone when you are not speaking.
- **Be Mindful of Background Noise and Distractions:** Find a quiet place to “attend” class, to the greatest extent possible.
  - Avoid video setups and learning spaces where people may be walking behind you, people talking/ making noise, etc.
  - Avoid activities that could create additional noise, such as shuffling papers, listening to music or tv in the background, etc.
- **Position Your Camera Properly:** Be sure your webcam is in a stable position and focused at eye level.
- **Limit Your Distractions/Avoid Multitasking:** You can make it easier to focus on the meeting by turning off notifications, closing or minimizing running apps, and putting your smartphone away (unless you are using it to access Zoom).
- **Use Appropriate Virtual Backgrounds:** If using a virtual background, it should be appropriate and professional and should NOT suggest or include content that is objectively offensive or demeaning.

\*Note that all federal, state, CSU system, and campus regulations on conduct including harassment and discrimination against other students or faculty apply to the online environment, just as in face-to-face instruction.

### **Additional Information**

#### **Dropping and Adding Classes**

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drop. Add/drop deadlines can be found on the current academic year calendars document on the [Academic Calendars webpage](#). Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for dropping classes ([Late Drop Information](#)). Information about the latest changes and news is available at the [Advising Hub](#).

Tuesday, Aug. 31, 2021: Last Day to Drop Classes without a "W" Grade

#### **University Resources for Students**

**Writing Center** The SJSU Writing Center has two in-person locations: Clark Hall, Suite 126 and MLK Library, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. Workshops and tutoring are also available through online platforms. To make an appointment, visit the Writing Center website at [sjsu.edu/writingcenter](https://sjsu.edu/writingcenter).

#### **Accessible Education Center**

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. [Presidential Directive 97-03 \[pdf\]](#) requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations register with the [Accessible Education Center](#) (AEC) to establish a record of their disability.

**Counseling and Psychological Services** The SJSU Counseling and Psychological Services is located on the corner of 7th Street and San Carlos in the new Student Wellness Center, Room 300B. To schedule an appointment or learn more information, visit the Counseling and Psychological Services website at [sjsu.edu/counseling](https://sjsu.edu/counseling).

**SJSU Cares** Students experiencing challenges meeting their basic needs including, but not limited to, access to food, shelter, and a safe space are encouraged to contact [SJSU Cares](#). Students who feel that their class performance may be affected by these challenges are encouraged to notify their professors, if comfortable doing so. Faculty members may be able to provide flexibility within the course for students working with a case manager.

### **Land Acknowledgement**

San José State University and Surrounding Region  
Thámien Ancestral Muwekma Ohlone Territory

The San José State University community recognizes that the present-day Muwekma Ohlone Tribe, with an enrolled Bureau of Indian Affairs documented membership of over 550, is comprised of all of the known surviving American Indian lineages aboriginal to the San Francisco Bay region who trace their ancestry through the Missions Santa Clara, San José, and Dolores, during the advent of the Hispano-European empire into Alta California; and who are the successors and living members of the sovereign, historic, previously Federally Recognized Verona Band of Alameda County.

Furthermore, the San José State University community recognizes that the university is established within the Thámien Ohlone-speaking tribal ethnohistoric territory, which based upon the unratified federal treaties of 1851-1852, includes the unceded ancestral lands of the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe of the San Francisco Bay Area. Some of the enrolled Muwekma lineages are descended from direct ancestors from the Thámien Ohlone tribal territory whose ancestors had affiliation with Mission Santa Clara.

The San José State University community also recognizes the importance of this land to the indigenous Muwekma Ohlone people of this region, and consistent with our principles of community and diversity strives to be good stewards on behalf of the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe whose land we occupy.

# ENVS 01 Introduction to Environmental Issues, Fall 2021

## Course Schedule

This schedule is subject to change with fair notice which students will be notified via Canvas and in class. I will provide at least one week notice if I need to move the topics or readings. With the rapid changes of environmental and health events, flexibility and adaptability is important.

### Course Schedule

Week/ Module	Date	Topics	Textbook Readings	Assignments (Mini-Briefs due before class)
1	8/19	Introductions and Syllabus: What is Environmental Studies?		
2	8/24 and 8/26	Concepts of Sustainability Big issues facing us today? Urbanization and Sustainability Ecosystems: How do they work?	Chapter 1 Chapter 22	8/26 Mini-Brief
3	8/31 and 9/2	(CA and SF Bay Area) Climate and Biodiversity: Protect the trees please! Climate Change: Can humans adapt?	Chapter 7 Chapter 19	9/2 Mini-Brief
4	9/7 and 9/9	Environmental Studies (and Science) Writing and Research (APA style) Guest: Librarian Peggy Cabrera (9/7)	Chapter 19	<b>9/7 Provide Paper 1 Science vs. Pseudoscience</b> 9/9 Mini-Brief
5	9/14 and 9/16	(CA and SF Bay Area) Air Pollution: Is our air getting cleaner?	Chapter 18	9/16 Mini-Brief
6	9/21 and 9/23	Human Population Dynamics What is the planet's carrying capacity? Economics and Sustainability Reduce poverty to help the environment?	Chapter 6 Chapter 23	<b>Due 9/21 Paper 1 Draft In-Class Peer Review and Discussion</b> 9/23 Mini-Brief
7	9/28 and 9/30	Food Resources: Can we feed the world? (CA and SF Bay Area) Biodiversity and Evolution: Why are butterflies vanishing?	Chapter 12 Chapter 4	Mini-Brief <b>Due 9/28 Paper 1 Final Draft</b>
8	10/5 and 10/7	(CA and SF Bay Area) Biodiversity and Species Extinction: Where are the honeybees? Biodiversity and Saving Ecosystems: Did someone say more wildfires?	Chapter 9 Chapter 10	10/7 Mini-Brief
9	10/12 and 10/14	Curriculum catch-up and review Midterm 10/14 on Canvas (Modules 1 to 8)		

<b>Week/ Module</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Textbook Readings</b>	<b>Assignments (Mini-Briefs due before class)</b>
10	10/19 and 10/21	Environmental Justice (EJ), Income, and Race Environmental Hazards and Human Health	EJ Article on Canvas Chapter 17	<b>10/19 Provide Paper 2 EJ</b>
11	10/26 and 10/28	(CA and SF Bay Area) Environmental Law, Policies, and Politics: A complex and controversial process?	Chapter 24	10/28 Mini-Brief
12	11/2 and 11/4	Non-renewable Energy Resources: Where is all that CO <sub>2</sub> coming from? Energy Efficiency and Renewable Resources	Chapter 15 Chapter 16	<b>Due 11/2 Paper 2 EJ</b> 11/4 Mini-Brief
13	11/9	Intro to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) <b>(11/11 campus closed)</b>	Article/Video posted on Canvas	<b>11/9 Provide Paper 3 EIA</b>
14	11/16 and 11/18	Continue: EIA (CA and SF Bay Area) Water Resources and Scarcity Where does your water come from?	Chapter 13	11/18 Mini-Brief
15	11/23	Aquatic Biodiversity and Ecosystems In-class create Adobe web page (No classes from 11/24 to 11/26)	Chapter 8 Chapter 11	<b>Due 11/23 Paper 3 EIA Draft via Canvas</b>
16	11/30 and 12/2	(CA and SF Bay Area) Water Pollution: Causes and effects? Conclusion and review	Chapter 20	Mini-Brief <b>Due 12/3 Paper 3 EIA via Adobe web page</b>
Final Exam		Exam (Modules 10 to 16) on Canvas, Thursday, December 9, From 9:45 AM to 12:00 PM Noon		