SJSU SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY

College of Social Sciences · Environmental Studies

Introduction to Environmental Issues Section 80

ENVS 1

Fall 2023   3 Unit(s)   08/21/2023 to 12/06/2023   Modified 08/17/2023

👤 Contact Information

Dr. Jagruti Vedamati

Email: jagruti.vedamati@sjsu.edu

Please contact me through the course's Canvas Inbox or through email (jagruti.vedamati@sjsu.edu). Please include the course (ENVS- 01) and your name in the email. When applicable, I will post an announcement or send a message to everyone in the class if I feel your question or concern will benefit or affect everyone (and in this case, you will not receive an individual response).

💻 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

✳ Classroom Protocols

Late Work

All assignments are due by the due date and time listed in the course calendar. If you miss the deadline and you haven't contacted me for an extension, the work will not receive a grade. Exceptions may be considered in rare circumstances for legitimate and documented circumstances (medical emergency, death in the family).

Extra Credit

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

Classroom Guidelines

Throughout the semester we will address and discuss a variety of issues that may bring out strong and opposing views. As a community of learners and colleagues, it is critical that we respect one another's thoughts and address comments to the IDEAS and not the person. Our classroom is not a forum for demeaning or threatening language/comments.

Harassment of any kind (sexual, racial, class, sexual preference, gender, gender identity, etc.) between students or towards/from the instructor will not be tolerated. As a community member of this classroom, I expect everyone to act in a respectful and mature manner. Should any problems arise we as a class will promptly take action.

Here are some guidelines for "Netiquette", or the etiquette of cyberspace:

Remember the human: When you communicate electronically, all you see is a computer screen. You don't have the opportunity to use facial expressions, gestures, and tone of voice to communicate your meaning; words – lonely written words – are all you've got. That goes for your correspondence as well. Remember the Prime Directive of Netiquette: Those are real people out there. Ask yourself, "would I say this to the person's face?" If the answer is no, rewrite and reread. Repeat the process until you are sure that you'd feel as comfortable saying these words in person as you would sending them through cyberspace.

Adhere to the same standards of behavior online that you follow in real life:

Be ethical: if you encounter an ethical dilemma in cyberspace consult the code you follow in your life. Chances are good you'll find the answer.

Don't break the law: If you're tempted to do something that's illegal in cyberspace, chances are it's also bad Netiquette.

Know where you are in cyberspace: When you enter a domain of cyberspace that's new to you, take a look around. Spend a while listening to the chat or reading the archives. Get a sense of how the people who are already there act. Then go ahead and participate. In this case, you are in an online classroom, and you should behave the same as you would behave in a live classroom.

Respect other people's time and bandwidth: When you send an email or post to a discussion group, you're taking up other people's time (or hoping to). It's your responsibility to ensure that the time they spend reading your posting isn't wasted. Use correct grammar, spelling, punctuation and make sure your posting is well organized and coherent.

Make yourself look good online: You won't be judged by the color of your skin, eyes, or hair, your weight, your age, or your clothing. You will, however, be judged by the quality of your writing. For most people who choose to communicate online, this is an advantage; if they didn't enjoy using the written word, they wouldn't be there. So, spelling and grammar do count.

Share your expert knowledge: The strength of cyberspace is in its numbers. The reason for asking questions online can be considered credible is that a lot of knowledgeable people are reading the questions. And, if even a few of them offer intelligent answers, the sum total of world knowledge increases. The Internet itself was founded and grew because scientists wanted to share information. Ask questions when you need an answer, and always share what you learn with your classmates or help answer their questions.

Help keep flame wars under control: 'Flaming' is what people do when they express a strongly held opinion without holding back emotion. It's the kind of message that makes people respond, "Oh come on, tell us how you really feel." Tact is not its objective. People are welcome to their opinions and strong emotions. Flame wars result when contrary opinions are argued back and forth in a flaming manner. Agree or disagree professionally, and if you can, support your opinions with facts. Respect the opinions and emotions of your classmates.

Respect other people's privacy: Do not share your classmate's personal information in any open communication in an online classroom. This includes discussions, or group emails. And do not share a classmate's personal information with your instructor unless the classmate has given you permission.

Failure to meet classroom protocol expectations will result in a loss of up to 10% from your final course grade.

Class Access Statement

It is my goal that this class be an accessible and welcoming experience for all students, including those with disabilities that may impact learning in this class. If anyone believes the design of this course poses barriers to effectively participating and/or demonstrating learning in this course, please meet with me (with or without an Accessible Education Center accommodation letter) to discuss reasonable options or adjustments. During our discussion, I may suggest the possibility/necessity of your contacting the Accessible Education Center (408-924-6000; aec-info@sjsu.edu) to talk about academic accommodations. You are welcome to talk to me at any point in the semester about course design concerns, but it is always best if we can talk at least one week prior to the need for any modifications or accommodations.

▤ 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

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 (GELOs)

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

Writing Practice: Students will write a minimum of 6000 words, at least 4000 of which must be in revised final draft form.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

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

1. Employ credible information sources and information to evaluate environmental issues and formulate effective sustainability
2. Describe the economics, politics, and social processes that have resulted in the environmental injustice and degradation of the natural
3. Demonstrate understanding of valid scientific information relevant to environmental issues and effective natural-resources and environmental
4. Identify social, political, and technical solutions that will guide change towards more sustainable communities today, and in the years to come.

ᴵᴵᴵ Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

GE Area A3: Critical Thinking and Writing

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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 6000 words, at least 4000 of which must be in revised final draft form.

📘 Course Materials

Access to a computer and the Internet are required to participate in this course. Zooming from a phone will not be sufficient to participate during class on collaborative documents and presentations.

A smartphone is used for some assignments.

All readings other than the textbook will be provided.

Living in the Environment

Author: Miller & Spoolman
Publisher: Cengage
Edition: 20th
ISBN: 9780357142202
Availability: Campus Bookstore

The book is also available for rent online and the ebook is also available.

The book is available for rent at Amazon for about $38.00 (hardcover). It is also available on vitalsource.com for about $40 as an eTextbook.

The eBook ISBN is: 9780357705407 also available at the Cengage official site.

☰ Course Requirements and Assignments

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.

1. **Weekly reading Knowledge (CLO3)** Beginning Week 1, there will be a textbook reading Knowledge Check for the upcoming week's topic. You have two opportunities to take the Knowledge Checks, to be completed on Canvas, and only the highest score will count. Answers will be released the day after the due date. The Knowledge Checks are intended to encourage you to read about the topic for the upcoming week as well as to check your comprehension of key terms and concepts. *In general, Knowledge Checks cannot be made up. They are open for an entire week, so if you are dealing with something that will keep you from taking the Knowledge Check, get in touch with me by Sunday of the week it is due. The lowest four knowledge checks scores will be dropped from the final grade.*
2. **Debate and Defend. (CLO1-4, 4; GELO 1-4)** This written and in-class critical thinking activity throughout the semester will assess students' ability to demonstrate understanding of analytical texts; apply rhetorical argument strategies, debunk common logical

fallacies, and defend their position in an oral debate with fellow students. For example, the Debate and Defend assignments on nuclear waste storage debate will help you strengthen the ability to employ different types of logic (CLO1, GELO1, CLO4, GELO 4). The GMO assignment will have you use rhetorical (e.g., pathos, ethos, logos) strategies to make your main points (CLO2, GELO2). The public transportation debate will help you synthesize social, political, and scientific assumptions to formulate an argument (CLO3, GELO 3).

3. **Reflection Entry Essays (CLO4).** Students will compose an essay of 350-400 words in which they reflect on the discussions, readings, and topic of the week and include personal experiences. Students will describe their connection to the topic, revelations based on discussions, research, or reading, culturally significant associations, or other reflective narratives. The information in the reflection entries will remain While it is expected that the writing level remains appropriate for the course, use of first person and personal anecdotes are encouraged.

4. **Case Study (CLO 1-4).** Students will conduct in-class research and present case studies regarding current situations impacting people and biodiversity. Each small group will evaluate the case and articulate facts, analyze stakeholder perspectives, scientific outcomes, consequences, and potential solutions. Each case study will involve break-out sessions and presenting to the class.

5. **App (GLO 1, CLO 4).** Two fun activities will require downloading an app to a smartphone. The iNaturalist app and the EWG app. At-home activities and written components will be defined for each app activity.

6. **Course Research Paper: (GELO1-GELO 4).** The midway 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 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. You will have the opportunity to select and analyze an issue from opposing perspectives. This assignment will be completed in the following sequence:

STEP 1: Topic & AIC: Submit your proposed topic for arguing the same issue pro and con. Topics will be on a controversial environmental issue. Topics must receive instructor approval. The proposal should be a one to two paragraph description of the topic and why it interests you. It should include at least one pro and one con point you will explore. The proposal should also include 2 sources with completed AIC worksheets. Each topic proposal must be reviewed by the writing center. Proof of review must be emailed to me (jagruti.vedamati@sjsu.edu) with the subject as **lastname_yourtopic**.

STEP 2: Outline and Annotated Bibliography The outline will include a revised topic paragraph (if needed) and an outline of your paper with an annotated bibliography of at least 3 primary sources.

STEP 3: Draft: Each student will submit a completed draft for peer review (1000 words). You will exchange drafts with another student (assigned by the instructor) one week in advance of the peer review meeting. One class period will be set aside for each team of students to discuss their papers and each other's peer review. The draft must contain evidence of applying inductive or deductive reasoning and at least one of the main persuasion strategies of logos, pathos, or ethos.

STEP 4: Final: The paper must be a maximum of 1,000 words. Papers must be correctly formatted and cited according to one of the 3 citation formats listed below. At least 10% of your grade will be based on writing in a manner appropriate to a university-level course.

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 from two or more sources, acknowledges and addresses contrary or multiples 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.

7. **"You Teach" & Activity (GELO1-GELO 4)** . The final assignment for this course is an opportunity for you and a classmate to demonstrate that you have learned to think about environmental issues more carefully, objectively, creatively, and analytically by teaching your classmates about the issue. As partners, you have the opportunity to select and analyze an issue from opposing perspectives and teach the class about the topic. The presentation must include an activity or interactive element that engages your classmates, effectively arguing the importance and understanding of the issue. This assignment will be completed in the following sequence:

STEP 1: "You Teach and Activity" Proposal - Topics will be on a controversial environmental issue. The proposal should also include 4 annotated primary sources, correctly formatted, that you intend to use. A rough idea of the interactive element must also be included. One academic peer-reviewed reading is required for your classmates. The reading will be distributed a week prior to your presentation date.

STEP 2: "You Teach and Activity": (GELO2, CELO3-CELO4). The last two weeks of class will be dedicated to your teaching and activities. Each pair will be given 20 minutes to present and conduct the activity.

8. **Final Examination Reflection Essay:** Respond to the following prompt and question (400-500 words): Identify five unifying elements in the course and describe why you chose How might you use the knowledge and skills of this course to further your journey in understanding and analyzing environmental issues?
9. **Midterm:** Midterm will be held midway into the semester (On Canvas) and will assess all reading materials taught till date.

- **Finals:** Comprehensive final (on Canvas) will be held at the end of the semester that will assess all reading materials taught till date.

Online Citation Resources

For this class, you will use APA 7th Edition.

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

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. *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, including page number.

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 (including page number in the humanities).

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.

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.

Classroom as Community

It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength, and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are antiracist and respectful of diversity: gender identity, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, nationality, religion, culture. I am committed to the principle of universal learning. This means that our classroom, other virtual spaces, our practices, and our interactions are antiracist and inclusive. Mutual respect, civility, and the ability to listen and observe others carefully are crucial to universal learning. Active, thoughtful, and respectful participation in all aspects of the course will make our time together this semester as productive and engaging as possible. Your suggestions for accomplishing these goals are encouraged and appreciated.

A significant part of university education is learning about the complexity of various issues; therefore, it is important that we listen and

respect one another but we do not have to agree. A richer discussion will occur when a variety of perspectives are presented in class for discussion. Our conversations may not always be easy; we sometimes will make mistakes in our speaking or writing and listening; sometimes we will need patience or courage or imagination or any number of qualities in combination to engage our texts, our classmates, and our own ideas and experiences. **Regardless of our agreements or disagreements, we will always respect each other.**

✔ Grading Information

Assignment	Total Points	Approx. Max. Word Count	Weight
10 Textbook Knowledge Checks	100	0	5%
Participation	162	0	8%

Case Study Analyses	150	1000	8%
Course Research Paper	250	2300	14%
Midterm	200	100	11%
'You Teach' Presentation & Activity	300	0	16%
Reflection/Activity Essays	200	1500	10%
Debate & Defend	250	2000	14%
Finals	250	100	14%
Total	1862	7000	100%

Grades

Grade	Percentage
A plus	100%
A	95 to 99%

A minus	*90 to 94%*
B plus	*87 to 89%*
B	*83 to 86%*
B minus	*80 to 82%*
C plus	*77 to 79%*
C	*73 to 76%*
C minus	*70 to 72%*
D plus	*67 to 69%*
D	*63 to 66%*
D minus	*60 to 62%*

NOTE: Attendance is not part of your grade evaluation per <u>University policy F69-24</u> at sjsu.edu/senatedocs/F69.24.pdf states that "Students should attend all meetings of their classes, not only because they are responsible for material discussed therein, but because active participation is frequently essential to insure maximum benefit for all members of the class. Attendance per se shall not be used as a criterion for grading.

🏛 University Policies

Per <u>University Policy S16-9 (PDF) (http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf)</u>, 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 <u>Syllabus Information (https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php)</u> web page. Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.