

San José State University
Department of Environmental Studies
ENVS 01, Introduction to Environmental Issues, Spring 2020

Course and Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. Carolina Prado
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Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays 10:30am-11:30am
Make sure to sign up beforehand:
<https://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/koitk>
Class Days/Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12-1:15pm
Classroom: Dudley Moorhead Hall (DMH) 164
GE/SJSU Studies
Category: Area D1: Human Behavior



Artwork: "Germination" by Ricardo Levins Morales

Course Description

The relationship between humans and the environments around them are consistently changing. The field of environmental studies is engaged in understanding the causes, dynamics, and solutions to environmental problems. In this course students will learn about a wide array of environmental topics, engage with critical readings and discussions on these issues as well as the scientific research, activism, and policy action that communities in the U.S. and around the world are engaging in to promote environmental justice and sustainability.

Course Format

This is a face-to-face course that includes lectures and class discussions. Students are expected to attend all classes and be prepared for in-class discussion. Reading all assigned materials before class time will help to advance our discussions

Furthermore, class discussions will be extended through out-of-class interaction on Canvas, our interactive learning management system (LMS).

Contacting Professor Prado

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on the Canvas website for this course. You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through Canvas to learn about any updates. If you email me I will respond to you within 24-48 hours. I do not respond to emails on the weekends. When applicable, I will respond to the entire class if I feel your emailed question or concern will benefit everyone (and in this case, you will not receive an individual response).

Learning Outcomes

This course has four main learning objectives, which include, 1) learning about important environmental problems, 2) the relationships between humans and their surrounding

environments, 3) the research around these problems and relationships, and 4) ways in which individual and collective actions can help solve environmental problems and create more sustainable futures.

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.

This course fulfills the following General Education Learning Outcomes (GELO):

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

1. Place contemporary developments in cultural, historical, environmental, and spatial context.
2. 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.
3. Evaluate social science information, draw on different points of view, and formulate applications appropriate to contemporary social issues.
4. Apply multidisciplinary material to a topic relevant to policy and social action at the local, national, and/or international levels.

Required Texts/Readings

Textbook

Miller, G. *Living in the Environment: Principles, Connections, and Solutions*. **19th edition**.

- This book is available at the Spartan Bookstore. *One copy is on reserve at the MLK Library.*
- The book is available for rent at [Amazon](#) for about \$34.00. You can also purchase a hardcover or loose leaf text on Amazon.

Additional readings, if assigned, will be available on Canvas.

Course Requirements and Assignments

SJSU classes are designed such that in order to be successful, it is expected that students will spend a minimum of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours per unit per week), including preparing for class, participating in course activities, completing assignments, and so on. More details about student workload can be found in [University Policy S12-3](#) at sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf.

Please read the following assignment descriptions carefully. Failing to comply with the specific directions given below will result in a loss of credit points for each assignment.

1. In class Participation (20 points total)

Your participation grade is determined by your active participation during class. This means that you participate in the in-class activities by fostering discussion with your classmates and answering questions, participating in class-wide discussions, asking questions, and being present during class time. Your grade will be determined by 2 factors: turning in your completed *activity sheets* during class, and your *in class participation*.

- 50% in class activities (10 points)
- 50% in class discussion participation (10 points) This grade will be determined by a SELF-EVALUATION to be turned in TWICE in the semester, that I will combine with my own evaluation of your in class participation (you can find this evaluation form on Canvas).

2. Two Exams (40 points total)

The midterm exam is worth 20 points and the final exam is worth 20 points.

3. Position Papers (30 points total)

Position papers are based on insights gained from readings, videos, lecture, and discussions. The objective of the position paper is to provide an opportunity for students to discuss different “perspectives” on a given environmental issue. Students will be required to write 3 short papers (2-3 pages double-spaced) based on questions associated with different topics. You will be provided with 10 possible topics, but you will write a paper on **only 3** topics. A grading rubric will also be posted on Canvas. Each paper will:

- use valid science and social science data in the analysis of the issues.
- characterize the environmental issue and how it has occurred.
- provide feasible and necessary solutions to move toward sustainability on this issue.

Additional aspects that each paper will address are as follows:

Paper 1: How individual behavior interacts with the institutions that affect environmental protection

Paper 2: The role of relevant identities, be they ethnic, cultural, gender/sexual, age-based, class, regional, national, transnational, or global; include social and environmental justice aspects

Paper 3: The interplay of resource use, economics and policy with social justice and environmental harms.

4. Weekly Reading Synthesis (10 points total)

Over the course of the semester, weekly writing assignments (~100 words each) will be submitted via Canvas and focus on topics for the week. Your goal is to create a one paragraph (4 sentences MIN, 6 sentences MAX) summary of the main argument in the reading (s). This written assignment needs to answer this question: what is the primary takeaway of this week’s readings?

As a college student, you will be required to practice synthesizing readings many times in your academic career. I want to use the content of our course for you to really practice this skill, remember that writing is your tool for expressing your ideas and your learning. In order for you to earn full points for this assignment, please review the rubric in our files on Canvas.

Classroom as Community

Participation in the classroom will be organized around the “Classroom as Community” guidelines, and the basic agreement that students will actively participate in the classroom through the class polls, group or pair activities, and any other discussion activities.

Throughout the semester we will address and discuss a variety of issues which 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 the comments to the IDEAS and not the person. Our classroom is not a forum for demeaning or threatening language/comments.

Also, I respect and teach to different learning styles, which include the way students participate and interact with each other. I understand that some people are more extroverted and natural talkers, while others are very good at listening. Therefore, depending on which category you may fall into, please be aware of and respect your fellow students, including making an effort to either let others talk (if you notice your speaking more than others) or trying to speak up in class (if you notice you have been listening but not speaking). Remember that all comments, and questions are valid.

Harassment of any kind (sexual, racial, class, sexual preference, gender, 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. While we will agree on community “ground rules” together on our first day of class, here are some basic expectations I have that will help us make the most of our time in class:

- Come prepared to class by thinking seriously about what you have read.
- Do not be hesitant to ask a question.
- Try your best to communicate yourself to classmates.
- Respect confidentiality and privacy in our classroom community.
- For class, please turn off cell phone and technology distractions*
- Refrain from any side-talk, reading non-class material, this is disrespectful.

*All use of cell phones during class time is strictly prohibited. Laptops may not be used during class time. I understand that you may have the required reading on an e-reader, phone, or laptop. Take notes by hand, when reading, and bring them to class with you. Writing rather than typing notes better helps you retain what you read. If you have accessibility concerns with the Laptop Policy, please contact me as soon as possible.

-Failure to meet classroom protocol expectations will result in a loss of participation points-

Grading Information

Assignment	Point Value
In Class Participation	20
Weekly Reading Syntheses	10
Position Papers	30
Midterm Exam	20
Final Exam	20
<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>100</i>

The late penalty for assignments is one letter grade for every day late.

Grade Scale

A+ = 100%	A = 99-95%	A- = 94-90%
B+ = 89-87%	B = 86-83%	B- = 82-80%
C+ = 79-77%	C = 76-73%	C- = 72-70%
D+ = 69-67%	D = 66-63%	D- = 62-60%
F = 59-0%		

NOTE that Attendance is not part of your grade evaluation per [University policy F69-24](https://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F69-24.pdf) at [sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F69-24.pdf](https://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/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.”

Tips for Success

- ✓ Read the syllabus carefully, and write down the exam dates and the due dates for assignments in your calendar.
- ✓ Take good notes in lecture and discussion.
- ✓ Keep up with the readings. Lecture and discussion will not make sense unless you have done the readings. You should expect to spend about 3-4 hours outside of class each week on required reading, ideally in a couple of uninterrupted sessions.
- ✓ Use a dictionary and an encyclopedia when you need them. You can find free dictionaries and encyclopedias online.
- ✓ Consider forming a study group. Students who study together do better and have more fun.
- ✓ Take advantage of my office hours. I am there to help and love talking to students!

Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. [Presidential Directive 97-03](https://www.sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf) at [sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf](https://www.sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf) requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the [Accessible Education Center](https://www.sjsu.edu/aec) (AEC) at [sjsu.edu/aec](https://www.sjsu.edu/aec) to establish a record of their disability.

University Policies and Student Resources pages at the end of the syllabus, please read these in full.

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Course Schedule

The schedule is subject to change with fair notice and the notice will be made available.

Class Week	Date	Topics	Readings	Assignments Due
1	1/24	Introductions, expectations, and syllabus		
2	1/28	Environmental Problems, Their Causes and Sustainability	By 1/28 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chapter 1 ○ Chapter 2, section 2.1 only 	Online Discussion: Your Ecological Footprint (Mon)
	1/30	Environmental Worldviews and Ethics	No reading	
3	2/4 and 2/6	Politics, Environment, and Sustainability	By 2/4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chapter 24, 24-1 & 24.4 only ○ Article: Maniates 2002 "Individualization: Plant a Tree, Buy a Bike, Save the World?" 	Weekly Reading Synthesis (Due Mon at noon)
4	2/11 and 2/13	Ecosystems: What are they and how do they work?	By 2/11 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chapter 3 	Position Paper 1 (Thurs)
5	2/18 and 2/20	Biodiversity and Evolution	By 2/18 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chapter 4 	Weekly Reading Synthesis (Due Mon at noon)
6	2/25 and 2/27	Sustaining Biodiversity	By 2/25 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chapter 9 ○ Chapter 10, Section 10.2 only ○ Chapter 11, Section 11.1 and 11.2 only 	Weekly Reading Synthesis (Due Mon at noon)
7	3/3 and 3/5	Air Pollution and Ozone Depletion	By 3/3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chapter 18 	Position Paper 2 (Thurs)

8	3/10 and 3/12	Climate Change	By 3/10 ○ Chapter 19 ○ Chapter 7 ○ Section 7.3 only	Weekly Reading Synthesis (Due Mon at noon)
9	3/17	Midterm Review (Participation Log is Due)		
	3/19	Midterm Exam (On Canvas)		
10	3/24 and 3/26	Nonrenewable and Renewable Energy	By 3/24 ○ Chapter 15, ○ Sections 15.1 and 15.2 only ○ Chapter 16	Weekly Reading Synthesis (Due Mon at noon)
	3/31 and 4/2	SPRING BREAK		
11	4/7 and 4/9	Food Production and the Environment I	By 4/7 ○ Chapter 12	Weekly Reading Synthesis (Due Mon at noon)
12	4/14	Food Production and the Environment II	-	Weekly Reading Synthesis (Due Mon at noon)
	4/16	Human population	By 4/16 ○ Chapter 6 ○ Sasser, "From Darkness into Light"	
13	4/21 and 4/23	Water Resources and Water Pollution	By 4/21 ○ Chapter 13 ○ Chapter 20 ○ Sections 20.1 & 20.3 only	Position Paper 3 (Due Thurs at midnight)
14	4/28 and 4/30	Solid and Hazardous Waste	By 4/28 ○ Chapter 21	Weekly Reading Synthesis (Due Mon at noon)
15	5/5	Urbanization and Sustainability	By 5/5 ○ Article: Steffen, et al. 2011.	In Class Reading Quiz
	5/7	Final Exam Review (Participation Log is Due)		
		<u>Final Exam (On Canvas)</u>		

University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant information to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. is available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>".

Make sure to visit this page, review and be familiar with these university policies and resources.

Student Resources

University Writing Center

The San José State University Writing Center offers a variety of resources to help students become better writers, and all of their services are free for SJSU students. They offer tutoring appointments, writing workshops, and online tutorials and services.

They have drop-in tutoring sessions in **Clark Hall, Suite 126, and** regularly scheduled tutoring sessions on the **second floor in the MLK Library. Contact them at:** 408-924-2308, writingcenter@sjsu.edu.

Student Technology Resources

Computer labs for student use are available in the [Academic Success Center](http://www.sjsu.edu/at/asc) at [sjsu.edu/at/asc](http://www.sjsu.edu/at/asc) located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and in the Associated Students Lab on the 2nd floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library. A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include DV and HD digital camcorders; digital still cameras; video, slide and overhead projectors; DVD, CD, and audiotape players; sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

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.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

APA: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

Chicago: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/01/>

For more detailed information on academic integrity, the University of Indiana has very helpful writing hints for students, including some on how to cite sources. Please visit <http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets.shtml> for more information.

University Health and Healing Resources

Being a full time student, working, participating in extracurricular activities, providing support to our loved ones, can all take a pricey toll on our mental and physical health. Please take advantage of the many health and healing resources available at San Jose State University to foster your wellness.

- **SJSU Student Health Center:** (408) 924-6122 or online through the SHCPatient Portal at https://shcpatient.sjsu.edu/login_directory.aspx.
- **SJSU Counseling and Psychological Services:** (408) 924-5910 or at counseling.services@sjsu.edu. If you are experiencing a crisis, reach out to *The County Suicide & Crisis Line* at (855) 278-4204 or the *National Suicide Prevention Lifeline* at (800) 273-8255, both are available toll-free, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.