University of Montana Course Syllabi, 2021-2025

Fall 9-1-2022

ENST 231H.01: Nature and Society

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NATURE AND SOCIETY
ENST231H
COURSE SYLLABUS
Missoula College – Fall 2022

Course Rubric and Title: ENST231H Nature and Society
Meeting times/location: MC234; TuTh 12:30 – 1:50
Instructor: Ashley Preston
Email: ashley.preston@umontana.edu
Office: Missoula College, Room 405
Office Hours: MW 12:30 – 1:30; or by appointment; face to face or Zoom

Required Texts:

- Quinn (1992). *Ishmael*. Bantam Books. ISBN: 0-553-37540-7 (Any edition will work)
- Nash (2001, 2014). *Wilderness and the American Mind* (4th or 5th ed). Yale University Press.
  ISBN: 0-300-09122-2; 0-300-19038-7
- *Additional Readings posted on MOODLE*

Course Description: This course explores the role and significance of *nature* in human history and examines how this has shaped our contemporary perspectives on environmental issues. Beginning with ancient human societies, we will trace the idea of nature as it develops through the ages and gains complexity from the merging of diverse traditions (primarily Western). Our readings are drawn from multiple disciplines and authors, ranging from influential philosophers and historians to modern scientists and founders of the contemporary environmental movement. Students will consider how different concepts of nature have emerged from diverse cultural settings and belief systems, and how these in turn inform the ways that humans live and interact with nature. Through critical reading, class discussions and written work, students will draw connections between historic ideas of nature and contemporary environmental issues and gain a larger understanding of nature and society.

This course satisfies General Education requirements for Historical Studies (H) as well as for Intermediate College Writing (W).

H designation= GENERAL EDUCATION IN HISTORICAL STUDIES (H) (from UM's website):
The primary purpose of courses in this perspective is to explore the historical contexts and narratives of human behavior, ideas, institutions, and societies through an analysis of their patterns of development or differentiation in the past. These courses are wide-ranging in chronological, geographical, or topical focus. They introduce students to methods of inquiry that enable them to understand and evaluate the causes and significance of events, texts, or artifacts. Upon completing a Historical Studies course, students will be able to:
- Critically analyze and evaluate primary sources – such as texts, pictorial evidence, oral histories, music, and artifacts- within their respective historical contexts.
- Synthesize ideas and information in order to understand the problems, causes, and consequences of historical developments and events.

W designation = GENERAL EDUCATION INTERMEDIATE COLLEGE WRITING (W) (from UM's website):
Upon completing the W-designated course, students should understand writing as means to practice academic inquiry and demonstrate the ability to formulate and express opinions and ideas in writing. More specifically, upon completing the W-designated course, the student should be able to:
- Compose written documents that are appropriate for a given audience or purpose
- Formulate and express opinions and ideas in writing

- Use writing to learn and synthesize new concepts
- Revise written work based on constructive feedback
- Find, evaluate, and use information effectively
- Begin to use discipline-specific writing conventions (largely style conventions like APA or MLA)
- Demonstrate appropriate English language usage

Course Learning Objectives: Students completing this course should be able to:

1. Identify distinct concepts of nature from major historical periods;
2. Explore diverse perspectives concerning texts, ideas, historical events, and environmental issues;
3. Evaluate the effects of ideas on different societal interactions with the natural world;
4. Recognize the importance of historical factors on contemporary environmental thought, particularly scientific advancements, technology, and changes in social organization;
5. Synthesize ideas and events, from prehistory to the present, that led to several major shifts in the dominant societal views of the place of humans in nature;
6. Analyze current environmental issues utilizing historical ideas, thinkers, and events;
7. Articulate their own ideas and opinions about nature and human-nature interactions and relate these to historical ideas, thinkers and events;
8. Use informal writing to develop and learn new concepts, and to formulate opinions and ideas;
9. Compose essays and papers that exhibit appropriate English language usage and writing conventions;
10. Evaluate and revise written work based on constructive feedback.

Additional Learning Objectives as Required by UPWA (see below for further details)
- Compose written documents that are appropriate for a given audience or purpose
- Formulate and express opinions and ideas in writing
- Use writing to learn and synthesize new concepts
- Revise written work based on constructive feedback
- Find, evaluate, and use information effectively
- Begin to use discipline-specific writing conventions (largely style conventions like APA or MLA)
- Demonstrate appropriate English language usage

Course Structure & Expectations

Discussion Seminar. This class is designed to be a **discussion seminar** rather than an exclusively lecture class. That means students are expected to participate regularly in classroom discussions and activities and your grade will reflect your level of participation. We will often begin class by sharing our initial reflections on or questions about the topic and then examine these more closely with the aid of readings or videos. This approach allows us to consider many perspectives but also work together towards a deeper understanding of complex issues and challenging questions. The instructor's role is that of a facilitator, raising questions and offering guidance and resources to keep the discussion focused and productive. The student's role is to participate responsibly and respectfully: come prepared, be willing to share your perspective or questions in class, listen and try to understand your classmates' perspectives, and be open to exploring how the readings inform or challenge our opinions about nature and environmental issues. This **collaborative** style of learning will challenge us to think critically and to develop skills for expressing ourselves clearly, listening well and working with others – essential skills for facing the challenges of responsible citizenship in the 21st century.

Preparation for Class: I will expect you to complete the assigned readings *before* class. Some texts are more challenging than others, so please give yourself enough time. Taking notes as you read will help you remember key

passages or questions to share in class. Also, in the case of online readings, plan ahead in case of internet issues -- this is not an acceptable excuse for being unprepared! If you do not print a hard copy of the internet readings, you will need to bring some sort of electronic device to access those readings in class. The success and quality of our learning experience rests largely on the quality of preparation and positive attitude that you, the students, bring to class. Learning works best as a team effort. Please be on time to avoid causing interruptions or missing important information. You should also have a notebook for recording new ideas along with a copy of the reading so we can examine specific passages.

Participation: Attendance is required. Students are expected to contribute regularly to classroom discussions and activities. These include talking circles, small group activities, break-out sessions and full group discussions. Your voice is vital to our classroom process as well as your own learning process! Your ideas not only enrich and strengthen our collective understanding of challenging texts and issues, but also make the class more interesting and relevant to you personally. Speaking up in class is very challenging for some students, so we need to be mindful and respectful of one another. Students who are comfortable talking need to be aware that others may be waiting for a quiet moment to chime in. I will expect each of you to do your best to contribute to each class and work to improve your skills as the semester progresses.

Mutual Respect: The key to any successful collaboration is **mutual respect**. This includes respecting oneself and others enough to come prepared and take up the work seriously. It also relates to how we deal with disagreement. Our class discussions will explore many questions and issues that do not admit of simple "right answers." At times we may encounter opinions and viewpoints with which you disagree. Some of these may evoke strong emotions. You may even find your own opinions being challenged by others. In these situations, you will need to maintain a civil tone and a friendly attitude. Always be courteous, speak in turns, listen carefully, and respond respectfully. We may not agree on every issue, but we can still work to understand one another and recognize the reasoning behind different viewpoints. And remember: you may disagree with a person's ideas and viewpoints without disrespecting them as a person.

Online Course Components

Course Supplement: This course has an online supplement in Moodle where I will post copies of course documents, online readings and resources, submission links for assignments, discussion forum links as needed, etc.. All assignments will be submitted electronically only.

Electronic Readings: Some of our readings will be posted on Moodle and formatted as PDF files. Please download weekly readings well in advance of class. If you do not have **Adobe Acrobat Reader** on your computer, you can download it for free from this website: http://get.adobe.com/reader/.

Assignments & Grading

- Attendance is required. You need to be in class to be part of the discussion; there is no way to make this up. There is also no opportunity to make up any in-class work you may miss during your absence. If you must miss class, you are still expected to complete readings and assignments on time, unless an extension has been requested and granted *in advance* (it must meet the University requirements for an excusable absence if you expect an extension). Tardiness may count as an absence if it is excessive and/or persistent. In accordance with UM's attendance policy, unavoidable absences will be excused if documentation is provided.
    - On your **5th absence,** your course grade will drop one full letter (A→B; B→C; etc.)
    - On your **6th absence**—excused or unexcused—you will fail the class.

Given the unique circumstances presented by the COVID virus, I encourage you to keep me informed of your situation. We can usually adapt, but only if I am aware, in advance, of any changes to your learning and/or living situation.

- Participation. Your participation in class will be evaluated based on three criteria: (1) being present, (2) being prepared, and (3) participating actively. **Class participation is worth 100 points of your overall grade.**

- Journal/Forum Entries.   These are forum responses to the readings or topics we are discussing in class. Journaling will help you develop your thoughts and process new ideas through exploratory writing.   **Journal/forum entries (10) are worth 20 points each**.   [Original post is worth 15 points; responses to classmates' posts worth 5 points]

- Reflective Essay**:** This 4-page essay will consider how different historical conditions or cultural beliefs have influenced ideas of nature. Using *Ishmael* as a foundation, you will examine a specific author and idea of nature from history and consider how different features of the author's setting may have influenced this way of thinking. **Reflective essay worth 100 points (one revision*).**

- Comparative/Evaluative Paper. In this 5-6 page paper you will compare two distinct perspectives on nature and the human-nature relationship from different historical periods (including a historic text and a more recent text from one of the 19th, 20th, or 21st century authors on our reading list), and then evaluate their impact on contemporary environmental thought. **Comparative/evaluative essay worth 100 points (one revision*).**

> **Each essay is completed in stages or parts, including:**
> - A working thesis statement (10 points)
> - A working bibliography or list of references in APA format (20 points)
> - An outline (20 points)
> - A rough/first draft (100 points)
> - A final/revised draft (grade replaces rough/first draft grade)

*You must submit an original paper or "rough/first draft" to be eligible to submit a revision; your final/revised paper grade replaces the grade on the rough/first draft. Paper conferences are required if you intend to submit a revised draft.

- Quizzes/Other Work as assigned**.** This category expands or contracts as needed to ensure concepts are understood and retained, and readings are completed. It may include in-class assignments, homework, pop-quizzes/quizzes, etc. and the **point value will vary**.

- Final Creative Project & Presentation. This project allows you to explore some aspect of the nature-society relationship of interest to you and to develop a creative project (artwork, poetry, video, slide show, interactive project, presentation, discussion, etc.) that expresses your insights and reflections. Students in the past have addressed the impacts of war on the environment, ocean plastics, the role of social media in influencing environmental behaviors, species extinction, the conceptual link between women and nature, environmental racism, biomimicry, and a host of other topics of interest to them. The media (modes of presentation) have varied from PowerPoint to video, from social media sites or campaigns to sculptures and paintings, from interactive group projects to facilitating class discussions. Prior instructor approval of topic and media is required. **This project is worth 100 points.**

Late Work Policy: All assignments/work/essays are **due at the beginning of class (12:30)** **unless otherwise noted** on the date indicated on the Syllabus/Course Schedule/Moodle. **Late work is not accepted for any reason and there is no opportunity to make up work that is missed**. All work is submitted online via Moodle. Plan well ahead. **If you foresee a conflict with an assignment due date/time, you must get with me in advance to arrange for an alternative time (usually BEFORE the deadline) to submit your work.**

Grades

Traditional letter grades (A-F) will be awarded based on each student's earned percentage of the total points possible. A C- or better (70%) is required to pass the class. At current course values, this means you must have 490 or more points to pass the class. A summary of the approximate course points from graded work and the traditional grade percentages are shown in the following tables (values are tentative and subject to change):

Approximate Point Values		
Participation	=	100 points
Journals/Forums	=	200 points
Reflective Essay	=	100 points
Comparative Paper	=	100 points
Paper pre-work (@50 x2)	=	100 points
Quizzes/Other Work	=	TBD
Final Project	=	100 points
TOTAL	=	700 points/TBD

GRADING SCALE	
90% - 100%	A- - A
80% - 89.99%	B- - B+
70% - 79.99%	C- - C+
60% - 69.99%	D- - D+
0% - 59%	F

Additional Information

- **Getting Help:** Please let me know if you have any questions. Come by during office hours or by appointment to discuss your progress, assignments, or any special circumstances that may affect your performance in class. Please see me at the end of class or contact me by email to arrange a meeting.

- **Writing Center:** The Writing Center offers free tutoring at several locations across campus to help students become more effective writers. *The Writing and Public Speaking Center provides one-on-one tutoring to students at all levels and at any time in the writing process. Visit now. Visit often. We're ready when you are.* www.umt.edu/writingcenter.

About the UPWA submission requirement

This course requires an electronic submission (via Submittable) of an assignment stripped of your personal information to be used for educational research and assessment of the university's writing program. Your paper will be stored in a database. A random selection of papers will be assessed by a group of faculty and staff using a rubric developed from the following Writing Learning Outcomes:

- *Compose written documents that are appropriate for a given audience or purpose*
- *Formulate and express opinions and ideas in writing*
- *Use writing to learn and synthesize new concepts*
- *Revise written work based on constructive feedback*
- *Find, evaluate, and use information effectively*
- *Begin to use discipline-specific writing conventions (largely style conventions like APA or MLA)*

- ***Demonstrate appropriate English language usage (cont'd on next page)***

  This assessment in no way affects either your course grade or your progression at the university. Here's *the [rubric](#) that will be used to score the papers.*

Course Accommodations Statement (DSS)
Students with disabilities may request reasonable modifications by contacting me. The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and [Disability Services for Students [DSS]](#)*. "Reasonable" means the University permits no fundamental alterations of academic standards or retroactive modifications. If you think you may have a disability adversely affecting your academic performance, and you have not already registered with DSS, please contact DSS in Lommasson 154, call 243-2243 (voice/TDD), or see http://www.umt.edu/dss/. I will work with you and DSS to provide an appropriate modification.*

Make an appointment or stop by (via Zoom) during office hours to talk about your accommodations and how to use them for this course. If you plan on using an accommodation for an assignment, you must let me know in advance. I will do my best to grant the accommodation if it does not undermine the objectives of the assignment. However, you must contact me prior to the due date—even better, prior to the start of the assignment—to let me know if you will need to use an accommodation that allows for an extension on the deadline. I cannot grant a deadline extension retroactively.

Important Dates and Deadlines (Registrar's Office)
Click on https://www.umt.edu/registrar/calendar.php to see the calendar for important dates and deadlines about adding, dropping, payment, withdrawals, etc.

Student Conduct Code
In an effort to ensure that students are informed about the consequences of academic misconduct, the Academic Officers of The University of Montana have determined that the following statement must be present on every course syllabus. You will be held to these standards in this course.

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the [Student Conduct Code](#).

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. The U of M's student Conduct Code defines plagiarism as "Representing another person's words, ideas, data, or materials as one's own or the student's own previous work as if it were the student's own original work." Students may be asked for their research or sources at any time. Plagiarism will be handled in strict accordance with the University of Montana Student Conduct Code.

Email policy at UM
According to the University email policy effective on 1 July 2007, an "employee must use *only* UMM assigned student email accounts for all email exchanges with students, since such communication typically involves private student information." This means that you *must* send any correspondence through your official UM student email account. For more information on setting up and using your official UM student email account contact tech support.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity
Missoula College values the diversity of its students, faculty, and staff as an essential strength that contributes to our shared educational mission. Students of all backgrounds and perspectives are recognized and respected in this class. Course content and activities are intended to honor diversity of gender, sexuality, ethnicity, race, culture, religion, age, disability, socioeconomic status, and all dimensions of diverse human experiences and their intersection. Please notify your instructor if components of this course present barriers to your inclusion. Students can also reach out to Dr. Salena Beaumont Hill in the [Office of Inclusive Excellence for Student Success](#), which provides student support for BIPOC and

LGBTQ+ students and student groups. To explore making a formal report about discrimination or harassment, please visit the Equal Opportunity / Title IX office. For counseling or advocacy related to discrimination, please visit SARC.