ENST 230H.01: Nature and Society (in Western Society)

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NATURE AND SOCIETY [IN WESTERN SOCIETY]
SPRING 2015

ENST 230H_01
Dr. Dan Spencer
Spring, 2015; UH 210
Rankin Hall 103, Tel. 243-6111
MWF 10:10-11:00 am Office Hours: MWF 11:10 am -- 12 pm. Tu 10 am – 12 pm
CRN: 31773 e-mail: daniel.spencer@umontana.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course explores how the relationship between human societies and the natural world has been influenced throughout history by various thinkers and ideas. We also consider how nature itself and our interactions with it has influenced society, and in turn, environmental thought. Thus, we examine ecological and biogeographical constraints and ways humans have culturally adapted in attempting to surmount those limits. We explore Western (Euro-American) environmental thought from prehistory until today. To help us understand its distinctiveness we also touch on some contrasting nonwestern perspectives. We necessarily are only able to give limited attention to the various ages, even within the western tradition, and thus, environmental thought and developments of many societies and civilizations are not covered.

Nevertheless, we will examine major paradigmatic shifts and strive to understand how environmental thought has affected the way different societies have viewed nature, their place with respect to the natural world, and in turn, their interactions with it. By exploring that theme, we will also see connections between ideas, writers, and thinkers of the past and the current global environmental crisis. We will ponder if the answers to a more sustainable, prosperous, and just society in the future reside in history and its lessons, or whether we will need to forge new ideas, sensibilities, and ways of relating to each other and nature. Students are encouraged to explore their own connections with the past, develop principles and values that have personal meaning, and contemplate their place in nature and society.

OBJECTIVES
Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Articulate the distinctive ideas, and social and historical contexts, of influential thinkers and their writings about the role of humans in relation to the natural world.
2. Think critically about the effects of such views on different societies’ interactions with the natural world.
3. Recognize the importance of other historical factors, particularly scientific advancements, technological developments, and changes in social organization.
4. Synthesize ideas and events that led to several major paradigmatic shifts, from pre-history to the present, regarding dominant societal views of the place of humans in nature.
5. Analyze current environmental issues utilizing historical ideas, thinkers, and events.
6. Articulate their personal perspectives on human-nature interactions in relation to historical ideas, thinkers, and events.
TEACHING ASSISTANTS

Chandra Brown: chandra.brown@umontana.edu; Office: Rankin M-2
Jacob Dyste: jacob.dyeste@umontana.edu; Office: Rankin M-5
Melissa LaFontaine: melissa.lafontaine@umontana.edu; Office: Rankin M-1C

REQUIRED TEXTS

Electronic Reserve Readings on Moodle: (MOODLE)

REQUIREMENTS

- **PLEASE TURN OFF ALL ELECTRONIC DEVICES DURING CLASS**
- Regular class attendance and participation that demonstrates a grasp of the reading assignments
- Short critical response essay on *Ishmael*
- Weekly 2-page response essays to the readings
- Written midterm and final exams
- 5 hours of “ecological immersion” and reflective essay
- Final essay synthesizing learnings from the course

CLASS MEETINGS AND FORMAT

Class meets Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 10:10--11:00 am. On Monday and Wednesday we meet in University Hall 210. Most Fridays the class will be divided into smaller activity sections, which will meet separately with either the instructor or one of the teaching assistants. Your class location and teacher for Friday class will be announced in class the first week. Readings not listed in the course schedule may be assigned for Friday sections by your teacher. Tests, in-class writing and reading, discussion, and other activities will mostly occur on Fridays and will usually, but not always, cover material, ideas, and questions raised during the week. Special assignments for sections can also be expected.

ASSIGNMENTS AND CLASSES

WAM = *Wilderness and the American Mind*; JU = *Journey of the Universe*; MOODLE = readings on Moodle

INTRODUCTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Topic and Assigned Reading</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/26</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>Introduction:</strong> Laying out themes and structure of the course</td>
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</table>
1/28 W 2  Why It Matters: The Cosmological Context and The Planetary Challenge to the Human Race

*Journey of the Universe*, Chs. 1-4 (JU pp. 1-45)

1/30 F 3  Section Meetings: Meeting Each Other and Getting Organized

Edward O. Wilson “The Diversity of Life” pp 193-195 **MOODLE #1**
Anne Ehrlich and Paul Ehrlich “Extinction: Life in Peril” pp 335-342 **MOODLE #2**
Recommended: Larry Rasmussen “Sweet Betsy and Her Avalanche” in *Earth Community, Earth Ethics* pp 38-52 **MOODLE #3**

2/2 M 4  **Journey of the Universe II: The Emergence of Life**

*Journey of the Universe*, Chs. 5-7 (JU pp. 47-79)

2/4 W 5  **Journey of the Universe III: The Origin and Impact of Humans**

*Journey of the Universe*, Chs. 8-11 (JU pp. 81-118)

2/6 F 6  Section Meetings: Locating Ourselves: The Anthropocene

Jeffrey Sachs “The Anthropocene” pp 57-81 **MOODLE #4**

Response essay on *Journey of the Universe* due in class

2/9 M 7  Raising Questions I: The Relation of Culture and Ecology

*Ishmael*: Chs. 1-5 (pp. 3-91)

2/11 W 8  Raising Questions II: Takers, Leavers, and a Crashing Culture?

*Ishmael*: Chs. 6-9 (pp. 95-184)

2/13 F 9  Section Meetings: Discuss *Ishmael*

*Ishmael*: Chs. 10-13 (pp. 187-263)

2/16 M  PRESIDENTS DAY- NO CLASS

I. Setting the Context: From Pre-History to Early Civilization

2/18 W 10  **A Quick History of Our Human Trek: From the Savanna to Planetary Crisis**

John Poggie, et al “Introduction” to *The Evolution of Human Adaptations*”
pp 1-15 MOODLE #5
Jared Diamond “Introduction” and “Up to the Starting Line” from Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies pp 9-25, 35-52 MOODLE #6, 6A
Recommended: E. O. Wilson: “The Riddle of the Human Species” MOODLE #7

Ishmael response essay due in class

2/20 F  11 A Decisive Shift: From Hunting and Gathering to Farming the Earth

Jared Diamond “Farmer Power”, Guns, Germs, and Steel pp 85-92 MOODLE #8
Jared Diamond “History’s Haves and Have-nots”, Guns, Germs, and Steel pp 93-103 MOODLE #9
Jared Diamond “To Farm or Not to Farm”, Guns, Germs, and Steel pp 104-113 MOODLE #10

II. VIEWING EARTH, VIEWING HUMANITY: FOUNDATIONS FOR WESTERN AND NON-WESTERN WORLD VIEWS

2/23 M  12 Urbanism, the Rise of the City, and Climate Change

J. John Palen “Emergence of Cities” from The Urban World pp 21-25; 29-57 MOODLE #11A, 11B, 11C

2/25 W  13 “And It Was Good”: Ancient Hebrew Views and the Biblical Tradition

Daniel Hillel “Environment and Culture: A Premise and Its Implications” and “Perceptions of Humanity’s Role on God’s Earth” from The Natural History of the Bible pp 11-25, 241-246 MOODLE #12
Hebrew Bible selections from This Sacred Earth pp 77-89 MOODLE #13

1st Reading Response essay due in class

2/27 F  14 Section Meetings: Review for 1st Midterm exam

3/2 M  15 Gaia, Telos, and Rational Hierarchy: Classical Views of Nature and the Greek and Roman Imprint

“Early Greece: Gaia” NW pp 62-79 MOODLE #14
“The Romans: The Way of the Soldier” NW pp 80-88 MOODLE #15
Go Over Ecological Immersion Requirements


Victor Ferkiss “To Serve Man or to Serve Nature?” pp 1-17 MOODLE #16
“Old World Roots of Opinion” WAM ch. 1 pp 8-20
Recommended: “Great Chain of Being” in New World Encyclopedia MOODLE #17

- 4 -
(no Reading Response this week)

3/6  F  17  1st Midterm Exam

III. MOVING TOWARD MODERNITY: THE DISENCHANTMENT & DOMINATION OF NATURE

3/9  M  18  Science Rising: Method, Monster, or Savior?

“Philosophers of the Brave New World” NW pp 180-193 MOODLE #19
Rene Descartes “Part 2: The Principal Rules of the Method” pp 10-17 MOODLE #20

3/11  W  19  The Enlightenment, Private Property, and Man’s New Ascendancy

John Locke “Of Property” from The Two Treatises of Government MOODLE #21
“The Enlightenment: The Disenchantment of Nature” NW pp 214-221 MOODLE #22

2nd Reading Response essay due in class

3/13  F  20  Section Meetings: Discuss class readings

Go over Ecological Immersion assignment

3/16  M  21  Wedding Science with Technology: Colonialism, the Industrial Revolution and the New Global Economy

Victor Ferkiss “Technology Triumphs: The Industrial Revolution” pp 47-63 MOODLE #23

3/18  W  22  The Scientific Method Meets Biology: Darwin and Social Darwinism

Charles Darwin The Origin of Species 27-30; 115-121 MOODLE #24
Selections from Elizabeth Kolbert’s The Sixth Extinction MOODLE #25
Recommended: Donald Worster “Scrambling for Place” from Nature’s Economy: The Roots of Ecology” pp 145-169 MOODLE #26

3rd Reading Response essay due in class

3/20  F  23  Section Meetings: Review for 2nd Midterm exam

IV. RESTORING REVERENCE & HARNESING HUMANS: ROMANTICISM, TRANSCENDENTALISM, AND THE BEGINNING OF CONSERVATION & PRESERVATION

3/23  M  24  Early Americans and the Land
3/25 W 25 Romanticism and Transcendentalism: The Legacy of Emerson and Thoreau

“Henry David Thoreau: Philosopher” WAM ch. 5, pp. 84-95
Henry David Thoreau: “Walking” pp 3-32 MOODLE #27
Rebecca Solnit: “The Thoreau Problem” from Orion 2009 MOODLE #28

Guest Speaker: Phil Condon, Director, Environmental Studies
(no Reading Response this week)

3/27 F 26 2nd Midterm Exam

MARCH 30 – APRIL 3: SPRING BREAK

V: THE RISE OF MODERN ENVIRONMENTALISM

4/6 M 27 John Muir: The Rise of the Environmental Movement

“Preserve the Wilderness!” WAM ch. 6, pp. 96-107
“Wilderness Preserved” WAM ch. 7, pp. 108-121
“John Muir: Publicizer” WAM ch. 8, pp.122-140
John Muir: Excerpts from “A Wind-storm in the Forests” MOODLE #29
Recommended: John Muir “The Philosophy of John Muir” from The Wilderness World of John Muir pp 311-323 MOODLE #30

4/8 W 28 Conservation and Preservation Divide

“Hetch Hetchy” WAM ch. 10 pp. 161-181
Recommended: “The Wilderness Cult” WAM ch. 9, pp. 141-160
Recommended: Charles Geisler “A New Kind of Trouble: Evictions in Eden” Pp 69-78 MOODLE #32

4th Reading Response essay due in class

4/10 F 29 Section Meetings: Discuss class readings

4/13 M 30 Ecology and Conservation Biology
Aldo Leopold “Thinking Like a Mountain” from *A Sand County Almanac* pp 137-141

**MOODLE #33**

Aldo Leopold “The Land Ethic” from *A Sand County Almanac* pp 201-226 **MOODLE #34**

“Aldo Leopold: Prophet” **WAM** ch. 11, pp 182-199


Rachel Carson: Excerpts from her writings **MOODLE #36**


“A Fable for Tomorrow” [1962]

“A New Chapter to *Silent Spring*” [1963]

“The Pollution of Our Environment” [1963]

Rachel Carson: “Introduction” by Linda Lair and “The Obligation to Endure,” Chapter 2 from *Silent Spring* **MOODLE #37**

“Rachel Carson” **Dreamers and Defenders: American Conservationists MOODLE #38**

5th Reading Response essay due in class

4/17 F 32 **Section Meetings**: Discuss class readings

4/20 M 33 **Earth Day and Beyond: Institutionalization of the New Environmental Paradigm**

Philip Shabecoff “Saving Ourselves” from *A Fierce Green Fire*” pp 103-119 **MOODLE 39**

Philip Shabecoff “The Environmental Revolution” from *A Fierce Green Fire*” pp 121-139 **MOODLE #40**

**Recommended**: “Decisions for Permanence” **WAM** ch. 12 pp 200-237

4/22 W 34 **Dissenters from the Left: The Emergence of Radical Ecology and the Critique of “Shallow” Ecology**

Arne Naess “Ecology: The Shallow and the Deep” pp 167-172 **MOODLE #41**


6th (Final!) Reading Response essay due in class

4/24 F 35 **Section Meetings**: Discuss the week’s readings

**Go Over Directions for Final Learning Synthesis Essay**

4/27 M 36 **Social Ecology, Environmental Justice, and “Two-Thirds World” Critiques**

“Toxic Turmoil”, Missoulian MOODLE #44

Recommended: Giovanna Di Chiro “Nature as Community: the convergence of Environment and Social Justice” from Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature pp 298-320 MOODLE #45

Speaker: Robin Saha, Associate Professor, Environmental Studies

4/29 W 37 Sacred Time versus Sacred Place: Native American Perspectives

Vine Deloria, “Sacred Lands and Religious Freedom” in For This Land: Writings on Religion in America pp 203-213 MOODLE #46

George Tinker. “Native Americans and the Land: ‘The End of Living and the Beginning of Survival’” in Constructing Christian Theologies from the Underside pp 141-151 MOODLE #47

Speaker: Rosalyn LaPier, Environmental Studies

Ecological Immersion essay due in class

5/1 F 38 Section Meetings: Discuss the week’s readings

(no Reading Response this week)

5/4 M 39 New Directions : Biomimicry, Ecological Design, and Green Economics


Paul Hawken, Amory Lovins, L. Hunter Lovins “The Next Industrial Revolution” from Natural Capitalism: Creating the Next Industrial Revolution pp 1-21 MOODLE #49

Recommended: Paul Hawken, Amory Lovins, L. Hunter Lovins “Human Capitalism” from Natural Capitalism: Creating the Next Industrial Revolution pp 285-308 MOODLE #50

5/6 W 40 Wrap-up and Class Review

Final Learning Synthesis Essay Due in class

5/8 F 41 Section Meetings: Review for Final Exam

Final Exam Period: 10:10 am -- 12:10 pm, Wednesday, May 13, 2015, UH 210
**Grading Policy**

1. *Ishmael* critical response essay: 10%
2. *Journey of the Universe* response essay: 5%
3. Six weekly response essays to the readings: 15%
4. 5 hours of Ecological Immersion and essay: 10%
5. 2 Midterm Exams: 30% (15% each)
7. Final exam: 15%

**Note Re Papers:** Papers are due in class on or before the date listed in the syllabus. Unless you have made a prior agreement with me, I will take off one grade level (A becomes A-) for each class day an assignment is late. **Note: Email submissions will not be accepted; paper copies only.** Papers with an undue number of errors of punctuation, spelling, or grammar will be returned ungraded for correction and the final grade will be marked down one full letter grade. Written work will be evaluated in terms of your depth of critical analysis, thoughtfulness of reflection, clarity of writing, and ability to address issues raised in the text and in class on the topic at hand. Grades given reflect the following criteria of judgment:

- **F:** Failure to meet minimum requirements
- **D:** Unsatisfactory, but some effort to meet minimum requirements
- **C:** Satisfactory; meet minimum requirements of assignment but not much more
- **B:** Good to Very Good: thoughtful reflection, good analysis, clear writing style
- **A:** Excellent depth of critical analysis, thoughtfulness of reflection, and writing style; demonstrate creativity and mature analytical skills in going beyond the primary requirements of the assignment

**Note:** Final Grades will be recorded using pluses and minuses.

**Attendance:** Regular attendance and participation in the class is expected. More than four (4) absences will result in losing any benefit of the doubt on your final grade. More than seven (7) absences will result in one grade reduction. More than ten (10) absences will result in a failing course grade. Late arrivals in class will count as an absence. **(Note: I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences in totaling your number of absences. If you have a valid reason for missing several classes, such as illness or other conflicting commitments, you still must speak with the instructor.)**

**Cellphones & Electronic Devices:** Please turn off all cellphones and electronic devices during class time. *Students who text or use electronic devices during class will be asked to leave and counted as absent for that class.*

**Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism:** All work submitted is expected to be the student's own. Any acts of plagiarism or academic dishonesty will result in automatic failure of the course, and may result in further academic punishment. If you have any doubts about definitions of plagiarism or academic dishonesty, please review the relevant sections of the University Catalog.
WEIGHT AND TIMELINE OF ASSIGNMENTS

The total number of points available for class assignments is 500 points. There are no extra credit points available (so please don’t ask).

In order of due dates, the assignments are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Journey of the Universe response essay</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>February 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Ishmael critical response essay</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>February 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 6 Weekly response essays</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>each Wednesday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. 1st Midterm exam</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>March 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. 2nd Midterm exam</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>March 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Ecological Immersion Essay</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>April 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Final Learning Synthesis essay</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>May 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Final Exam</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>May 13, 10:10 – 12:10</td>
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DESCRIPTION OF WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

1. **Response essay to Journey of the Universe** (5%): This is a 3-page critical response essay to the book and documentary, Journey of the Universe. See the more detailed assignment posted on Moodle for specific instructions. (Paper Due in class: Feb 6)

2. **Ishmael critical response essay** (10%): Write a 5-6 page, typed, double-spaced critical response to Daniel Quinn’s novel, Ishmael. Roughly two-thirds of your essay (4 pages) should be a thoughtful exposition the main points in the book where summarize and explain Quinn’s argument. Then develop your response to the book in the final third of your paper. See the more detailed assignment posted on Moodle for specific instructions. (Note: Your essay must contain specific references to and relevant quotes from the text to support your exposition and argument. Give page numbers for quotes or where you are summarizing from the text. Your audience is someone who has not read the book.) (Paper Due: Feb 18)

3. **Weekly Response Essays**: Your main job to prepare for the participation portion of this course is to do each assigned reading thoughtfully before class and then to help us discuss it in class, particularly the Friday sessions. To help you think critically about what you read, each week you will write a short two-page response essay to the weekly readings. See the more detailed assignment posted on Moodle for specific instructions.

Turn in your essay to your Friday instructor at the beginning of each Wednesday class session starting the week of Wednesday, February 20th. Your essays should be typed and double-spaced and proofread for writing errors. The purpose is to help you do the reading well and to prepare for the Friday discussion sessions where we will all share our ideas about the reading. You should be prepared to speak about your ideas or questions during the class discussion.
3. **Ecological Immersion Exercise and Essay**: Each class member will do a minimum of five hours of "ecological immersion" -- participation with a group or in an organized activity focused on environmental issues. We will discuss various possibilities during the Friday session on March 13; you are also free to choose your own activity (just run it by your session instructor first). Check the Conservation Calendar on the UM Environmental Studies Program website at [http://www.cas.umt.edu/evst/calendars/conservation-cal.php](http://www.cas.umt.edu/evst/calendars/conservation-cal.php) for possibilities. Read the more detailed assignment posted on Moodle for specific instructions. (Due: Wednesday April 29)

**Note**: All ENST 230 students should subscribe to the EVST Undergraduate News listserv for the semester to receive weekly information about EVST activities. To subscribe or unsubscribe send an email with no message to:

- List-Subscribe: mailto: EVSTUNews-subscribe-request@LISTS.UMT.EDU
- List-Unsubscribe: mailto: EVSTUNews-unsubscribe-request@LISTS.UMT.EDU

4. **Final “Learning Synthesis” Essay**: The assignment is designed to help you synthesize what you have learned throughout the semester by reflecting on your own views in light of the course materials. The specific directions will be handed out and discussed in your Friday section on April 24th. The essay itself is due on Wednesday the final week of classes. (Due: Wed, May 6)

5. **Midterm and Final Exams**: These are 50-minute exams that cover material from the first, second and third portions of the semester. The format of the exam will include multiple choice and short answer identifications to cover basic content you should know, as well as essay questions to assess how well you are able to integrate and reflect on what you are learning. Review sessions will take place on February 27, March 20 and May 8. **Midterm exams**: March 6 & March 27; **Final exam**: May 13th 10:10 am – 12:10 pm. **Note**: No makeup tests for these dates will be allowed without signed official documentation and advanced consent of instructor.

**Important University Policies, Dates and Deadlines:**
Students are responsible for being aware of these dates.

- **Credit/No Credit Grade option**: A minimum grade average of D- (60) is required for a CR grade in the CR/NC Grade option.
- **Incomplete Grade**: Please see the criteria that must be met for an Incomplete in the University Catalog. No exceptions will be made for these criteria.

**Learning Disabilities**: The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students (DSS). 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. I will work with you and DSS to provide an appropriate accommodation. For more information, please consult [http://www.umt.edu/disability](http://www.umt.edu/disability).


