

GEOG 139: Resources and People

Instructor: Dr. Morgan Robertson (mmrobertson@wisc.edu)

Office Hours: 3:30-4:30pm Monday; 1:30-2:30pm Tuesday

Classroom: 145 Birge Hall

Lecture Meeting Times: 2:25 – 3:15, Monday and Wednesday

Section Leaders/TAs: Laura Lawler and Abigail Cook

Section Meetings:

- 301: Monday 3:30 (Lawler)
- 302: Monday 4:30 (Lawler)
- 303: Wednesday 11:00 (Cook)
- 304: Wednesday 12:05 (Cook)
- 305: Wednesday 4:35 (Lawler)
- 306: Wednesday 5:00 (Cook)
- 307: Thursday 11:00 (Lawler)
- 308: Thursday 12:05 (Cook)

This course is an introductory survey of the environmental problems and challenges that face us, which are often explained as “global” even though we each live in our own social groups, spaces and contexts. The overarching theme and goal of this course is to understand these global problems as connected intimately with daily life. People-Environment Geography is the discipline of studying human relationships with the environment, using both the social and natural sciences, and we will cover both the ecological and the social elements of a number of the environmental and resource challenges we face. Geography, as a discipline, is well-suited to complex social and environmental problems because geographers do not separate human from environmental factors, but believe they should be analyzed together – this gives geography a more integrated perspective than, say, political science, economics, or ecology. By the end of this course you will have not only an operational understanding of the environmental processes that lead to climate change, desertification, deforestation, water quality impacts, and toxic hazards, but also of the political and social context in which these environmental issues are discussed, debated, and perhaps resolved.

News headlines in recent years have highlighted the potentially severe aspects of global climate change, the meltdown of the Fukushima nuclear plant, and the passing of the 7 billion mark in global population. It is easy to get overwhelmed, and to understand global environmental issues as, by their very nature, irresolvable and unaddressable by individuals like you and me. This course aims not only to impress upon you the complexity of these problems, but also to show you the ways that these problems have been addressed in the past and to think about our part in them in a way that is more empowering than to see them as unreachably global. We will ask, of each problem: “How does this problem *come to be global?*” Each discussion section will provide opportunities to more fully understand, and to explore solutions to, the problems described in lecture.

Course goals include:

- Understanding the scientific basis of climate change, population growth, desertification, deforestation, water quality and quantity impairments, and the environmental challenges of agriculture and energy production.
- Being able to critically assess the causal factors and drivers associated with these issues.
- Understanding the political context in which these issues are framed as global problems.
- Understanding potential solutions to these problems, and the obstacles to their implementation.
- Understanding your own relationship to these issues, and how “global” issues manifest locally.

There is no required textbook for this class, but you will be expected to do weekly readings, to participate in discussion sections, and to complete the assignments in those sections.

Evaluation

Section Assignments: There will be assignments in most weekly discussion sections, often based on the readings that will be handed out in class. These assignments will usually be given on Monday for you to complete for that week’s section meeting (although they may occasionally be given as in-class exercises in section meetings) – neither I nor the TA will accept assignments in our mailboxes unless there is an excused absence. The work must be your own – any plagiarism (from the internet or from another student) will be dealt with according to the University Rules and Regulations. Completion of the assignments along with meaningful participation in section will total 40% of your grade.

Exams: There will be three exams of equal weight, each worth 20% of your final grade. Exams will consist of multiple choice, true/false, and matching questions, and may include map and short answer questions. Exams will cover material from lectures. I will provide a comprehensive lecture outline for each of the three sections of the course, which you should use as your study guide for each exam, as it draws together in one framework both in-class material (lectures, discussions, videos) and textbook material. You will get a percentage score rather than a grade for each assignment. Grades are only assigned at the end of the semester. The Third Exam will be during Finals Week. It will NOT be a comprehensive exam; it will only cover material in the final third of the course.

Grading Scale: This course is graded on the following scale, where scores are rounded to the nearest whole percentage. Scores falling exactly on the 0.5% mark will be rounded up.

A: 92-100%

AB: 88-91%

B: 82-87%

BC: 78-81%

C: 70-77%

D: 60-69%

F: =/< 59%

The instructor reserves the right to use professional judgment to adjust the scale to make final grades reflect the quality of work performed by the class as a whole.

- The adjustment will only be made in the direction of more generous grading; it will never make the grading scale more strict than what is given above. In other words, an 82% will always be a B, but it is possible that the instructor will expand downwards the numeric range of B grades (or any other grade). This determination will be made only after all assignments have been graded.
- In no case will a student receive a final grade higher than another student who has achieved a higher percentage score.

Class Policies:

- You are expected to attend all classes and to take comprehensive notes on lectures and reading materials. You will not do well in this class if you do not follow that advice.
- You will be expected to help maintain a civil and focused classroom environment. This means no chatting, no cell phone calls, no texting, no surfing the internet, and no reading newspapers. The TA will ensure that these behaviors do not cause disruption.
- There will be no make-up exams as a rule, except for 'excused' absences. Excused absences are those arranged with me **before an exam** and for University-approved reasons (per UW Administrative Code) or those documentable as health- or crisis-related after an exam. You also are entitled to an excused absence for the purpose of observing a religious holiday; but you must notify me of your request for one during the first week of class.
- Note that all exams are in the usual classroom for the course, and that the third exam is scheduled during the class exam period in Finals Week.
- If you find yourself falling behind, or having trouble with any part of this course, please see me sooner rather than later.
- It is assumed that you are familiar with University policy on cheating and plagiarism as set forth in your copy of Student Rights and Responsibilities.
- **LATE WORK WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**
- One more time: **LATE WORK WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

Classroom Civility

You are expected to contribute to an environment of mutual respect and open discussion. Any actions or words which, in the opinion of the instructors, degrade the environment of mutual respect and open discussion may be met with disciplinary action. Efforts to disrupt the classroom environment will be subject to disciplinary action proportional to the severity of the disruption, and may include dismissal for the day and the forfeit of assignment grades.

Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct

It is assumed that you are familiar with University policy on cheating and plagiarism as set forth in UWS 14. UWS 14 is the chapter of the University of Wisconsin System Administrative code

that regulates academic misconduct. UW-Madison implements the rules defined in UWS 14 through our own "Student Academic Misconduct Campus Procedures." UWS 14.03 defines academic misconduct as follows.

Academic misconduct is an act in which a student:

- seeks to claim credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization or citation;
- uses unauthorized materials or fabricated data in any academic exercise;
- forges or falsifies academic documents or records;
- intentionally impedes or damages the academic work of others;
- engages in conduct aimed at making false representation of a student's academic performance;
- assists other students in any of these acts.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- cutting and pasting text from the web without quotation marks or proper citation;
- paraphrasing from the web without crediting the source;
- using notes or a programmable calculator in an exam when such use is not allowed;
- using another person's ideas, words, or research and presenting it as one's own by not properly crediting the originator;
- stealing examinations or course materials;
- changing or creating data in a lab experiment;
- altering a transcript;
- signing another person's name to an attendance sheet;
- hiding a book knowing that another student needs it to prepare an assignment;
- collaboration that is contrary to the stated rules of the course, or tampering with a lab experiment or computer program of another student.

Plagiarism is the use of text from **any source** without attribution. If you repeat **your own words** from an earlier composition, without citation or quotation marks, it is still plagiarism and held to the same standard.

If you are accused of misconduct, you may have questions and concerns about the process. If so, you should feel free to call SAJA at 263-5700 or send an email to dean@studentlife.wisc.edu. *(This section adapted from: <http://students.wisc.edu/doso/samplesyllabus.html>)*

LECTURE WILL NOT MEET Wednesday, September 16. Sections will meet that day as usual.

Course Outline

WEEK	LECTURE	SECTION and READINGS
1	Introduction	NO SECTION MEETINGS
2	Colonization and the Environment	Colonization and the Environment - Mann: <i>1493</i> - Cronon: <i>Riddle of the Apostle Islands</i>
3	Colonization and the Environment NO LECTURE 9/16	Anthropocene - <i>Aral Sea: The end of the world</i> - Economist: <i>The Anthropocene</i>
4	Colonization; Anthropocene	Anthropocene - <i>Extracting Humans from Nature</i> - <i>People vs. Parks</i>
5	Population	Population - Perspectives on 7 Billion from The New Yorker, The Economist, and George Monbiot
6	Population EXAM 10/14	Population and Review - <i>Re-Imagining the Population Debate</i>
7	Climate	Climate - <i>Climate of Man I</i>
8	Climate, Energy	Climate - IPCC Executive Summary 2013 - Bloomberg leaked report
9	Energy	Energy - <i>Death of a Mountain</i>
10	Food and Environment	Food and Environment - National Geographic Food Chain
11	Food and Environment EXAM 11/16	Food and Environment and Review - <i>Behind the Organic-Industrial Complex</i>
12	Environmental Justice; Environmental Laws	Environmental Justice - TBA
13	Environmental Laws	NO MEETING (Thanksgiving)
14	Environmental Laws; Natural Capitalism	Environmental Laws - NYT on New Source Review - Charter St. Brief
15	Natural Capitalism EXAM 12/9	Natural Capitalism and Review - <i>The Value of the World's Ecosystem Services and Natural Capital</i>