

Course Last Updated 12/03/2024



University of
New Haven

Environmental Debates: People, Place and Culture

Section I: Course Overview

Course Code: GEOG355SYD

Subject Areas: Geography

Prerequisites: One 200 level course, or two 100 level courses in Geography or related discipline

Language of Instruction: English

Total Contact Hours: 45

Credits: 3

Course Fees: None

Course Description

This course explores the multi-faceted dimensions of human interaction with diverse environments in Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific to illuminate the origins of environmental concerns and current debates in these regions from pre-European contact to now. From the peopling of the Pacific to the challenge of climate change, this course is broad in its scope while concentrating on selected issues such as the impact of mining, clean energy futures, our vulnerability to “natural” disasters and increasing urbanization. In so doing, the intersection of culture and nature is explored. The course is embedded in the environmental humanities but uses environmental history approaches and insights from science, politics, sociology and cultural studies.

Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students are able to:

- Explain the complex nature of the environment in the Australasian/Pacific region.

- Critically evaluate environmental issues and debates, their origins and their potential impact on the future of the global environment.
- Examine the main issues regarding the intersection of people and place in the Australasian/Pacific region.

Section II: Instructor & Course Details

Instructor Details

Name: TBC

Contact Information: TBC

Term: TBC

Course Day and Time: TBC

Office Hours: By Appointment

Grading & Assessment

The instructor assesses students' mastery of course learning objectives by using the forms of assessment below. Each of these assessments is weighted toward the final grade. The Assessment Overview section provides further details for each.

Engagement - 20%

Quizzes - 15%

Oral Presentation and Leading Discussion - 25%

Research Report - 40%

Assessment Overview

This section provides a brief description of each form of assessment listed above. Forms of assessment may be slightly modified in the term syllabus.

Engagement (20%): Students are expected to be engaged in class, to have read the CEA CAPA Engagement Policy, and to understand the [Class Engagement Rubric](#) that outlines how engagement is graded.

Quizzes (15%): Short, multiple-choice open book tests. These will test the degree to which the student engages with the readings and exercises in preparation for the in-class discussion.

Oral Presentation and Leading Discussion (25%): In groups students lead the discussion in class on a set topic of environmental concern in the region. Students prepare questions and points of discussion for the group based on the readings for their topic and any from their own research. Students are marked on their ability to summarise the main points in the readings and to engage other students in a discussion/debate on the topic. Time: 20-30 minutes.

The presentation should address the following:

1. What is the nature of the problem?
2. Is the problem local, global or both?
3. How does it impact the environment in the region?
4. What solutions have been tried/suggested?

Research Report (40%): Students choose an area of environmental concern. The report should:

- Outline the area of concern, including extent, location, duration
- Explain how government policies/community attitudes have contributed to the issue
- Detail what solutions have been suggested/tried
- Contain an argument to support the measures put forward to mitigate the problem
- Outline the resources/changes needed to enable solutions to be successful
- Explain what obstacles will need to be overcome.

Students will be marked on the clarity of their explanation, the depth of research showing a well-rounded knowledge of the issue, the framing of their argument and their ability to present a convincing solution.

Active Learning

Experiential learning is an essential component of education abroad, and participation in field studies is a required part of coursework. In this course, students explore the city in which they are studying using a variety of methods. This provides the opportunity to gain nuance and perspective on the host context and course content, as well as to collect information and resources for assigned papers, projects, and presentations.

- Surviving Australia Exhibition at the Australian Museum.
- Sustainable House.

Readings and Resources

The below readings and resources are representative of what will be assigned as required in this course, but may vary slightly in the term syllabus. All required media (and OER?) reading materials will be provided by the instructor.

All students are given access to the online library of the University of New Haven (UNH), accessible [here](#), and are expected to comply with [UNH Policies](#) regarding library usage.

Wherever possible, required readings are made accessible through the online library or Canvas.

Each course utilizes Canvas as its LMS. Students are expected to check Canvas regularly for updates and deadlines. Canvas is also the primary platform for contacting your instructor in case of questions or concerns about the course.

Required

Australian Broadcasting Corporation, "Black Summer", *Four Corners*, 2020,

Anderson, Athol, "A fragile plenty: pre-European Maori and the New Zealand Environment", in

Eric Pawson and Tom Brooking, *Making a New Land: Environmental Histories of New Zealand*, Otago University Press, 2013, pp35-51.

ABC News, The Business, "Why nature is the next big asset class", *Australian Broadcasting Corporation*

Bless, Anja, "Regenerative Agriculture is all the rage—but it's not going to fix our food system", *The Conversation*, May 9, 2023,

City of Sydney, "Greening Sydney Strategy", 2021

CNBC International TV, "Urban forests and the transformation of cities", 2020.

CSIRO "Our Future World: global megatrends impacting the way we live over coming decades", July 2022,

Cronon, William, "The Trouble with Wilderness: Or Getting Back to the Wrong Nature", *Environmental History*, Vol. 1, No. 1 Jan., 1996, pp. 7-28

Diesendorf, Mark, "Net zero by 2050 will hit a major timing problem technology can't solve: We need to talk about cutting consumption", *The Conversation*, 2022,

Fairhall, Lydia, "Walter Waia is a Culture Man", *Dumbo Feather*, 61, 2019.

Filkov, Alexander I., Ngo, Tuan, Matthews, Stuart, Telfer, Simeon, Penman, Trent D.,

“Impact of Australia's catastrophic 2019/20 bushfire season on communities and environment. Retrospective analysis and current trends,” *Journal of Safety Science and Resilience*, Vol 1, Iss 1, 2020, pp 44-56.

Flannery, Tim, Episode 1, “Taming the Fire”, *The Future Eaters*, 2019,

Griffiths, Tom, "One hundred years of environmental crisis", *Rangelands Journal*, 23,1, 2001, 5-14.

Logan, Tyne, “Guided by Nature”, ABC News, March 31, 2023,

Madsen, Peter, "Deep Ecology", *Britannica*, 2013

Menzies, Isa, “The brumby debate will never be settled until we face the role horses played in colonisation”, *The Conversation*, October 17, 2023

Regional Australia Institute, *Regional Movers Index March 2022*,

Schmidt, Sussane and Robinson, Nicole, “The case for compost: why recycling food waste is so much better than sending it to landfill”, *The Conversation*, June 13, 2023,

van Tiggelen, John, "Rethinking Lismore in the new era of floods", *The Monthly*, August 2022,

Winton, Tim, “The Island Seen and Felt,” *Places Journal*, March 2017. Accessed 24 Jul 2022.

Xu, Xiaming and Jain, Atul, “Food production generates more than a third of greenhouse gas emissions—a new framework tells us how much comes from crops, countries and regions,” *The Conversation*, September 14, 2021,

Recommended

Campbell, Claire, "River Murray floods are causing havoc but there is a silver lining for the environment", *ABC News*, December 15, 2022,

Climate Council, "Killer Coal. Just how bad are the health effects of coal?", May 22, 2023,

Diesendorf, Mark and Hail, Steven, "Funding the Energy Transition for Monetary Sovereign Countries", *Energies*, 15, 16, 5908, August 2022,

Dinnen, Richard, "Welcome to Right Country—Right Fire", *Firesticks Alliance Indigenous Corporation*, 2018,

Gammage, Bill, "The closest ally", in *The Biggest Estate on Earth: how Aborigines made Australia*, Allen & Unwin, 2011, pp157-186.

Miller, Julia, "Climates of Opinion: La Niña and Permanent Change", in *La Niña and the Making of Climate Optimism: Remembering Rain*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2019, pp247-268.

Ministry for the Environment, "Towards a productive, sustainable and inclusive economy: Aotearoa New Zealand's first emissions reduction plan", 2022,

Monboit, George, "The most damaging farm products? Organic pasture fed beef and lamb," *The Guardian*, August 16, 2022,

Pascoe, Bill, *Dark Emu: Aboriginal Australia and the Birth of Agriculture*, NewSouth Books, 2018.

Rimon, Akka and Tong, Anote, The seas are coming for us in Kiribati. Will Australia rehome us? *The Conversation*, 2021.

Stefen, Will, Bambrick, Hilary, Alexander, David and Rice, Martin, "Risky Business: Health, Climate and Economic Risks of the Carmichael Coalmine", *Climate Council*, 2017.

Trenberth, Kevin, "How not to solve the climate change problem", *The Conversation*, July 20, 2022,

Waitt, Gordon and Rankin, K, 2022, "Towards household sustainability? Experimenting with composting food waste", *Geoforum* 129, pp98-106

Course Calendar

Session 1	
Topics	Mega trends World views Framing Communicating environmental issues Moral systems Accounting for nature
Activity	Lecture

	Discussion Quiz
Readings & Assignments	<p>ABC News, The Business, "Why nature is the next big asset class", <i>Australian Broadcasting Corporation</i>, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jp-2xCZqk_Y (4 mins)</p> <p>CSIRO "Our Future World: global megatrends impacting the way we live over coming decades", July 2022, https://www.csiro.au/en/research/technology-space/data/Our-Future-World</p> <p>Peter Madsen, 2013, "Deep Ecology", <i>Britannica</i>, https://www.britannica.com/topic/deep-ecology</p>

Session 2	
Topics	Sense of Place Wilderness The Nature/Culture Dualism
Activity	Lecture Discussion Quiz
Readings & Assignments	<p>Cronon, William, "The Trouble with Wilderness: Or Getting Back to the Wrong Nature", <i>Environmental History</i>, Vol. 1, No. 1 Jan., 1996, pp. 7-28</p> <p>Winton, Tim, "The Island Seen and Felt," <i>Places Journal</i>, March 2017. Accessed 24 Jul 2022. <https://placesjournal.org/article/the-island-seen-and-felt/></p>

Session 3	
Topics	Invasive species Compassionate conservation
Activity	Lecture Discussion Quiz
Readings & Assignments	<p>Menzies, Isa, "The brumby debate will never be settled until we face the role horses played in colonisation", <i>The Conversation</i>, 17 October 2023, https://theconversation.com/the-brumby-debate-will-never-be-settled-until-we-face-the-role-horses-played-in-colonisation-212961</p>

Session 4	
Topics	Indigenous Impact Cultural land management
Activity	Lecture Discussion Quiz Video clip

Readings & Assignments	<p>Anderson, Athol, "A fragile plenty: pre-European Maori and the New Zealand Environment", in Eric Pawson and Tom Brooking, <i>Making a New Land: Environmental Histories of New Zealand</i>, Otago University Press, 2013, pp35-51.</p> <p>Fairhall, Lydia, "Walter Waia is a Culture Man", <i>Dumbo Feather</i>, 61, 2019.</p> <p>Bill Gammage, "The closest ally", in <i>The Biggest Estate on Earth: how Aborigines made Australia</i>, Allen & Unwin, 2011, pp157-186.</p> <p>Griffiths, Tom, 2001, "One hundred years of environmental crisis", <i>Rangelands Journal</i>, 23,1, 5-14.</p> <p>Pascoe, Bill, <i>Dark Emu: Aboriginal Australia and the Birth of Agriculture</i>, NewSouth Books, 2018.</p>
------------------------	--

Session 5	
Topics	Regenerative Agriculture The Future Eaters Thesis
Activity	Guest Lecture Discussion Quiz
Readings & Assignments	<p>Bless, Anja, "Regenerative Agriculture is all the rage—but it's not going to fix our food system", <i>The Conversation</i>, May 9, 2023, https://theconversation.com/regenerative-agriculture-is-all-the-rage-but-its-not-going-to-fix-our-food-system-203922</p> <p>Flannery, Tim, Episode 1, "Taming the Fire", <i>The Future Eaters</i>, 2019, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YN0ZW8Q_FqU&ab_channel=MartinS 54 mins.</p> <p>Xu, Xiaming and Jain, Atul, "Food production generates more than a third of greenhouse gas emissions—a new framework tells us how much comes from crops, countries and regions," <i>The Conversation</i>, September 14, 2021, https://theconversation.com/food-production-generates-more-than-a-third-of-manmade-greenhouse-gas-emissions-a-new-framework-tells-us-how-much-comes-from-crops-countries-and-regions-167623</p> <p>Monboit, George, "The most damaging farm products? Organic pasture fed beef and lamb," <i>The Guardian</i>, August 16, 2022, https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/aug/16/most-damaging-farm-products-organic-pasture-fed-beef-lamb</p> <p>Research Report Introduction and Outline</p>

Session 6	
Topics	Sustainability Climate Change
Activity	Field Class Discussion
Readings & Assignments	<p>Logan, Tyne, "Guided by Nature", ABC News, March 31, 2023, https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-03-31/indigenous-australian-seasons-guided-by-nature/100919396</p>

Session 7	
Topics	Midterm Break

Session 8	
Topics	Climate Change and Floods Rising Sea Levels Climate refugees Extreme event attribution
Activity	Lecture Discussion Quiz
Readings & Assignments	<p>Campbell, Claire, "River Murray floods are causing havoc but there is a silver lining for the environment", <i>ABC News</i>, 15 December 2022, https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-12-15/environmental-effects-of-sa-riverland-flooding/101773604</p> <p>Miller, Julia, "Climates of Opinion: La Niña and Permanent Change", in <i>La Niña and the Making of Climate Optimism: Remembering Rain</i>, Palgrave Macmillan, 2019, pp247-268.</p> <p>Rimon, Akka and Tong, Anote, The seas are coming for us in Kiribati. Will Australia rehome us? <i>The Conversation</i>, 2021. https://theconversation.com/the-seas-are-coming-for-us-in-kiribati-will-australia-rehome-us-172137</p> <p>van Tiggelen, John, "Rethinking Lismore in the new era of floods", <i>The Monthly</i>, August 2022, https://www.themonthly.com.au/issue/2022/august/john-van-tiggelen/rethinking-lismore-new-era-floods</p>

Session 9	
Topics	Bushfires and communities Bushfires and biodiversity Politics of climate change Cultural burning
Activity	Lecture Discussion Video clips
Readings & Assignments	<p>Australian Broadcasting Corporation, "Black Summer", <i>Four Corners</i>, 2020, https://iview.abc.net.au/show/four-corners/series/2020/video/NC2003H001S00, 48 mins</p> <p>Dinnen, Richard, "Welcome to Right Country—Right Fire", <i>Firesticks Alliance Indigenous Corporation</i>, 2018, https://www.firesticks.org.au/podcasts/</p> <p>Filkov, Alexander I., Ngo, Tuan, Matthews, Stuart, Telfer, Simeon, Penman, Trent D., "Impact of Australia's catastrophic 2019/20 bushfire season on communities and environment. Retrospective analysis and current trends," <i>Journal of Safety Science and Resilience</i>, Vol 1, Issue 1, 2020, pp 44-56.</p>

Session 10	
Topics	Field Study

Session 11	
Topics	The Energy Transition Renewable Energy
Activity	Guest Lecture Discussion
Readings & Assignments	<p>Climate Council, "Killer Coal. Just how bad are the health effects of coal?", May 22, 2023, https://www.climatecouncil.org.au/killer-coal-just-how-bad-are-the-health-effects-of-coal/</p> <p>Diesendorf, Mark, "Net zero by 2050 will hit a major timing problem technology can't solve: We need to talk about cutting consumption", <i>The Conversation</i>, 2022, https://theconversation.com/net-zero-by-2050-will-hit-a-major-timing-problem-technology-cant-solve-we-need-to-talk-about-cutting-consumption-181951</p> <p>Diesendorf, Mark and Hail, Steven, "Funding the Energy Transition for Monetary Sovereign Countries", <i>Energies</i>, 15, 16, 5908, August 2022, https://www.mdpi.com/1996-1073/15/16/5908</p> <p>Ministry for the Environment, "Towards a productive, sustainable and inclusive economy: Aotearoa New Zealand's first emissions reduction plan", 2022, https://environment.govt.nz/publications/aotearoa-new-zealands-first-emissions-reduction-plan/</p> <p>Stefen, Will, Bambrick, Hilary, Alexander, David and Rice, Martin, "Risky Business: Health, Climate and Economic Risks of the Carmichael Coalmine", <i>Climate Council</i>, 2017. https://www.climatecouncil.org.au/uploads/5cb72fc98342cfc149832293a8901466.pdf</p> <p>Trenberth, Kevin, "How not to solve the climate change problem", <i>The Conversation</i>, July 20, 2022, https://theconversation.com/how-not-to-solve-the-climate-change-problem-187222</p>

Session 12	
Topics	Food Waste Sustainability in the City
Activity	Field Class
Readings & Assignments	<p>Schmidt, Sussane and Robinson, Nicole, "The case for compost: why recycling food waste is so much better than sending it to landfill", <i>The Conversation</i>, June 13, 2023, https://theconversation.com/the-case-for-compost-why-recycling-food-waste-is-so-much-better-than-sending-it-to-landfill-205583</p> <p>Gordon Waitt and K. Rankin, 2022, "Towards household sustainability? Experimenting with composting food waste", <i>Geoforum</i> 129, pp98-106 Research Report</p>

Session 13	
Topics	Urban Environments Biophilic Cities
Activity	Lecture Discussion

	Video clip
Readings & Assignments	<p>CNBC International TV, "Urban forests and the transformation of cities", 2020. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k3oRGUpJk1U</p> <p>City of Sydney, "Greening Sydney Strategy", 2021 https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/strategies-action-plans/greening-sydney-strategy</p> <p>Regional Australia Institute, <i>Regional Movers Index March 2022</i>, https://www.regionalaustralia.org.au/Regional-Movers-Index?hkey=6eb5f956-9bf0-4f2d-8ce7-10cca8387a7c</p>

Session 14
Class facilitation presentations.

Session 15
Class facilitation presentations (Continued)

Section III: Academic Policies and Standards

Academic Policies

Students are expected to review and understand all CEA CAPA student policies, including our [Academic Policies](#) and [Engagement Policy](#). CEA CAPA reserves the right to change, update, revise, or amend existing policies and/or procedures at any time. Additional requirements that may be associated with a specific course or program are addressed in the term syllabus.

Student Learning & Development Objectives

CEA CAPA has identified [Student Learning and Development Objectives \(SLDOs\)](#) for all programs in all locations: content in context, navigating differences, power and equity, critical thinking and intellectual curiosity, career and professional development, and sustainability and migration. These are meta-level learning objectives that transcend coursework and are infused across all elements of program delivery, beyond specifics of course offerings, addressing student learning holistically and framing it a larger learning context.