

*Saving the World in the Era of Climate Change:
Environmental Studies When the Future Does not Resemble the Past*



Introduction to Environmental Studies
Envi. 1301 ♦ Trinity University ♦ Spring 2013
NH 312 ♦ TTH 3:35 - 4:50

COURSE SYLLABUS

Instructor: William Grove-Fanning
E-mail: wgrovefa@trinity.edu
Office: Chapman Center 011
Office Hours: After class or by appointment

REQUIRED MATERIALS

1. McKibben, Bill. *Eaarth: Making a Life on a Tough New Planet*. New York: Times Books, 2010.
2. Weston, Anthony. *Mobilizing the Green Imagination: An Exuberant Manifesto*. Gabriola, BC: New Society Publishers, 2012.
3. Course Handouts, available on Tlearn

DESCRIPTION

Climate change is a game-changer for environmental studies. Not only will the magnitude and vividness of the coming climate crisis dwarf all other environmental issues, but unlike the other issues, climate change challenges the fundamental organization, structure, and legacy of modern society. Even more disturbingly, a solution to the climate change problem will have to be worked out in contexts for which we have little to no experience. Is it possible to diagnose and solve problems when the past does not resemble the future, where previous strategies or approaches to problems may be irrelevant or insufficient?

The overarching goal of this class is to begin answering such questions by looking at how the modern environmental movement has conceptualized and attempted to solve environmental problems, many of which emerged shortly after WWII—pollution, resource scarcity, biodiversity loss, and so forth. Our approach will therefore be largely historical, aimed at bringing out the dialectic of ideas, motifs, and metaphors that has come to define the modern environmental movement. With a historical appreciation in hand, we'll then investigate whether and to what degree local issues or practices reflect this larger conversation, and wrap up by trying to articulate solutions to these issues in light of climate change and recent criticisms of modern-day environmentalism.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Enhance intellectual independence and scholarly discipline about pressing environmental issues
- Gain a historical & theoretical understanding of the central issues and positions in modern environmentalism
- Connect abstract issues to lived practice through intellectual labor and the practice of mindfulness
- Break out of the business-as-usual model of education to meaningfully and personally address YOUR role in the climate crisis.

***No snowflake in
an avalanche ever
feels responsible***
~Voltaire

ASSIGNMENTS & EVALUATION

10%	Class Discussion and Overall Progress over the Course of the Term
10%	Online Discussions (two posts per week minimum)
20%	Reading Reaction Homework, around 8 total
20%	Midterm Exam
20%	Group Project (5% Proposal; 5% Fieldwork; 10% Presentation)
20%	Final Paper (10% Rough Draft; Final Paper 10%)
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100%	

COURSE WEBSITE

The class has a supplemental website through [TLearn](#). I will also post official announcements and additional material here, along with the syllabus and schedule, class readings, and grades.

ONLINE DISCUSSIONS

This class has a required online discussion component. We will be using Facebook groups as our platform (go [here](#) to join the group). If you do not have a Facebook account, you need to create one. The purpose of the group is to provide a casual environment where we can continue chatting about issues or ideas raised in class. Feel free to discuss most anything you stumble onto that you would like to share with your cohorts; I'll use the forum to periodically raise questions about current events, key ideas, and other bits and pieces. You should write at least two postings per week. Unlike the homework assignments, these do not have to be in formal prose. I have no doubt that everyone will surpass the two-post-per-week minimum easily.

REQUIREMENTS & POLICIES

Announcements and Other Business. Make sure that you check your email or Tlearn for official announcements and other business items, as I will not spend the beginning of each class going over such items, reminding you of upcoming deadlines, and so forth.

Attendance Policy It is essential that you attend class regularly. This is the easiest way to make sure that you are fully engaged in the topics we will be covering. Students who regularly miss class *always* struggle. **You get TWO free absences** (one week). Save your absences for legitimate emergencies. If you are absent, I assume that you have a good reason for being gone. Therefore, I do not need doctors' notes or other documentation letting me know why you were absent. For absences three to seven, subtract two percentage points per absence from your final grade. If you miss more than seven classes (one month or more), your final grade will automatically be an "F." If you are absent from class, you are still responsible for the work assigned for that day, as well as any information given out that day. Please attempt to contact fellow classmates to find out what you missed before contacting me.

A record of your attendance is recorded on an attendance sheet passed around at the beginning of each class. It is **entirely** the student's responsibility to sign the sheet; if arriving late it is still the student's responsibility to sign the sheet after class. This is the **only** official attendance record. Alternative methods for verifying attendance (e.g., student's memory, homework assignments, class notes, etc.) are not acceptable.

Technology. While technology is allowed, please use it for legitimate class purposes (e.g., note-taking, looking up pertinent information on the internet, etc.), rather than for playing a video game, surfing the web, etc. At the instructor's discretion, students can be banned from using technology during class. Any use of cell phones, PDAs, laptops, or devices capable of wireless communication are strictly forbidden in exams, and such use (whether attempted or actual) automatically will constitute cheating (and will be dealt with as such).

Arriving Late or Leaving Early. As a common courtesy, please arrive to class on time and do not leave early. Inform me if you know ahead of time that you are going to be late or must leave early.

Missed Deadlines and Exams. Late assignments will not be accepted. If you miss a deadline, move forward and focus on turning in the next assignment on time. Also note that the midterm exam cannot be made up.

Academic Honesty. Cheating is extraordinarily bad. It includes but is not limited to: (a) use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; (b) dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; (c) the acquisition, without permission, of tests, notes or other academic material belonging to a faculty or staff member of the university; or (d) any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage. Any instance of cheating will result in zero percentage points for the assignment, will be reported to the Dean of the College, and will go on your permanent college record. At the instructor's discretion, any instance of cheating may also result in an automatic "F" for the course.

Withdrawal. If you are unable to complete this course due to unforeseen circumstances, it is entirely your responsibility to drop the class. You can withdraw by contacting the Registrar's Office. Failure to do so will result in a final grade of an "F".

Schedule ♦ Trinity University ♦ ENVI 1301 ♦ Environmental Studies ♦ Spring 2013

	Date	Topic	Homework (<i>completed prior to class</i>)
Week 1	January 17	Video: You are Not Special Introductions; Course Overview	<i>Eaarth</i> , xi-xv
Environmentalism in the Age of Climate Change			
Week 2	January 22	Climate Change	<i>Eaarth</i> , 1-101
	January 24	Climate Change	<i>Eaarth</i> , 102-150
Week 3	January 29	Climate Change	<i>Eaarth</i> , 151-212
The Origins of Modern Environmentalism			
	January 31	From Conservation to Environmentalism	Video: Earth Days (parts 1-3) Handout: J. E. de Steiguer, "Post-World War II Socioeconomic Conditions"
Week 4	February 5	SPOTLIGHT: The Pollution/Health Connection The Poison Book (1962)	Handout: Rachel Carson, selections from <i>Silent Spring</i> Video: Earth Days (parts 4-5)
	February 7	The Antitoxics Movement (1978)	Handout: Lois Gibbs, selections from <i>Love Canal – My Story</i> Video: The Poisoned Dream
Week 5	February 12	SPOTLIGHT: Balance of Nature, Self-Sustainable Systems, & the Gospel of Ecology	Video: The Use and Abuse of Vegetational Concepts: Ecology, Technology, and Society Handout: Eugene Odum, selections from <i>Ecology</i>
	February 14	Spaceship Earth (1966)	Handout: Kenneth Boulding, "Economics of the Coming Spaceship Earth"
Week 6	February 19	The Circle of Life (1971)	Handout: Barry Commoner, Selections from <i>The Closing Circle</i>
	February 21	Gaia (1975)	Handout: James Lovelock, "The Quest for Gaia" Video: The Gaia Hypothesis

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Week 7	February 26	SPOTLIGHT: Techno Optimism vs. Techno-Skepticism Lifeboat Ethics (1974) Living on Bread (1975)	Handout: Garrett Hardin, "Living on a Lifeboat" Handout: F. M. Esfandiary, "Homo Sapiens, The Manna Maker"
	February 28	Religion, Technology, & Environment (1967)	Handout: Lynn White Jr., "The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis"
Week 8	March 5	The Population Bomb (1968)	Handout: Paul Ehrlich, selections from <i>The Population Bomb</i> Video: Earth Days (parts 6-7) Handout: Julian Simon, selections from <i>The Ultimate Resource</i>
	March 7	MIDTERM EXAM	
Week 9	March 12	NO CLASS - Spring Break	
	March 14	NO CLASS - Spring Break	
Week 10	March 19	SPOTLIGHT: The Environmental Decade, Citizen Movements, and the Birth of Environmental Policy	Handout: "Yesterday's Agenda and Where it Came From" Video: Earth Days (parts 8-10)
	March 21	Tragedy of the Commons (1968)	Handout: Garrett Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons"
Week 11	March 26	Small is Beautiful (1968/1973)	Handout: E. F. Schumacher, selections from <i>Small is Beautiful</i>
	March 28	Limits to Growth (1972) Steady State Economics (1973) PROJECT PROPOSAL DUE	Handout: The MIT Team, selections from <i>Limits to Growth</i> Handout: Hermann Daly, "The Steady-State Economy" Video: Earth Days (parts 11-12)

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	Date	Topic	Reading (<i>completed prior to class</i>)
Week 12	April 2	SPOTLIGHT: The Rights of Nature & Radicalization of a Movement Deep Ecology (1973)	Handout: Arne Naess, "The Shallow and the Deep, Long-Range Ecology Movement" Video: The Call of the Mountain
	April 4	Animal Liberation (1973)	Handout: Peter Singer, "All Animals are Equal"
Week 13	April 9	Monkeywrenching (1975)	Handout: Edward Abbey, Selections from <i>The Monkey-Wrench Gang</i> Video: Earth Days (parts 13-16)
	April 11	Overflow	
Projects			
Week 14	April 16	Fieldwork	
	April 18	Fieldwork	
Week 15	April 22 (Monday)	Earth Day Activities	
	April 23	Earth Day Activities	
Solving Environmental Problems			
	April 25		<i>Mobilizing the Green Imagination</i> , 1-44
Week 16	April 30	ROUGH DRAFT OF PAPER DUE	<i>Mobilizing the Green Imagination</i> , 45-98
	May 2		<i>Mobilizing the Green Imagination</i> , 99-149
	May 7	Reading Day Course Review	
	May 8	FINAL PAPER DUE, 8:30 AM – 11:00 AM	