“Because we’re told that it’s being done for the sake of the Greater Common Good. That it’s being done in the name of Progress, in the name of National Interest (which, of course, is paramount). Therefore gladly, unquestioningly, almost gratefully, we believe what we’re told. We believe that it benefits us to believe.”

– Arundhati Roy 1999, Greater Common Good

Introduction: Welcome to Environmental Studies Special Topics! This course is focused on development, displacement, and the environment, looking across the world from local to global examples. Millions of people around the world are displaced every year in the name of development, often resulting in loss of land, livelihoods and culturally significant resources, homelessness, political marginalization, physical and mental health impacts, and disruption to subsistence, economic, and social systems. Such development patterns have left affected populations further impoverished and marginalized, and have degraded increasingly fragile ecosystems. In this context, this course addresses the following questions:

What is the relationship between the environment, development and human societies? How does the current, prevailing development paradigm promote or impinge on human rights and social and environmental justice? What are solutions to address these problems?

The first part of the course will look at the historical context of policies and actions by international development agencies and governments, reviewing critiques of the systemic weaknesses and failures, and the impacts on, and resistance by, local communities. The second part of the course will focus on case studies of forced displacement. Finally, we will look at examples from around the world of communities, activists, citizens, and scholars advocating for alternative policies and actions to promote human rights and social and environmental justice. The course will include role-playing and experiential learning.

Readings: You should complete all of the assigned readings before each class meeting as indicated in the course outline below. Please bring that day’s reading to class, so that we can discuss the text together. All articles are available on GauchoSpace in an effort to reduce costs for students. The assigned books are available at the UCSB bookstore and the text reserve copy is available in the Davidson Library.

Required Books


Assignments and Grades
Participation: 30%
“Your home is closed” paper: 15%
Local example of displacement paper: 15%
Opinion/Editorial: 10%
Final project/paper: 30%

***For every 24 hours that any assignment is late, the grade will drop by one letter. That means, for example, an A paper turned in 2 days late will become a C paper.***
Participation (30%)

The success of this course depends on your participation. This means coming to every class prepared to contribute. You are expected to have read all assignments before coming to class. Classes will have a mixture of lectures, discussions, group activities, and guest speakers, so there will be a number of different ways for you to participate.

If you need to miss a class for a personal, medical, or religious reason, you must notify the instructor in advance.

“Your Home is Closed” Paper (15%)

Option 1: Imagine this quarter is over and you are about to go home, or somewhere very important to you, for the summer. You get into your mode of transport and as you start to leave, the transport stops. An announcement comes over a loud-speaker/radio. Stop. Your home/important place is closed. What would this experience feel like? Think of the people you care about in that place. Think of the smells, the sights, the sounds. Think of any particular things you like to do there, places you like to go, memories you have based on that place. You cannot return. Reflecting on what you read in Island of Shame, write a paper on what this experience might feel like, what it would mean to you, and the consequences it would have. Consider what you might do in response.

Option 2: If you know someone (family member, friend) who has experienced displacement, you could interview them and write about their experience and the resulting consequences. Your paper should reflect on how their experience relates to or is different from the consequences of displacement discussed in Island of Shame.

Please print out your typed, 12-point font, double-spaced 3-4-page paper (including references) with page numbers and submit at the beginning of class, Monday, April 30.

Local Example of Displacement (15%)

Visit a local area where people have been displaced due to some sort of development/infrastructure project or process. Describe the area. Consider who lived there, why they were displaced, any information on where they went, and who/what is now there. Also consider how the environment was impacted and what the landscape looks like now. Reflect on what the consequences of displacement might be for the natural environment and the people who were forced to leave. Please print out your typed, 12-point font, double-spaced 3-4-page paper (including references) with page numbers and submit at beginning of class, Monday, May 14.

Opinion/Editorial Paper (10%)

Write a 1-2-page (double-spaced) opinion piece related to issues covered in From Strangers to Neighbors. The paper should be in the form of a letter to the editor of a specific newspaper. Instructions for writing an op-ed will be posted on GS. Submit a hard copy of your op-ed in class on Wednesday, May 30.

Final project (30% of grade)

Select a specific case study on development, displacement, and the environment. Post your chosen case study on GS by Monday, May 21.

Option 1: Write a 10-12 page paper that includes: a brief history of the region, description of the development project, including the project’s history, who the various actors are that are involved in the project (e.g., government agencies, funding agencies, private companies, NGOs), who are the benefiting populations, and who are the affected populations. What have been the positive benefits and negative impacts on both the local population and the environment? Have their been any human rights violations, environmental injustice? Provide proposed recommendations or solutions to overcome these impacts. Include list of references from academic research, as well as drawing from class material, at the end of the paper. Please print out your typed, 12-point font, double-spaced 10-12 page paper (including
references) with page numbers and submit to the instructor at the beginning of class, **Wednesday, June 8**.

**Option 2:** Including the questions covered above in option 1, you could do a project instead of a paper. For example, you could make a short documentary film about your case study. **Projects are due by the beginning of class, Wednesday, June 8.**

**Other policies**

*Electronic devices:* You may use electronic devices in class **only** when we are talking specifically about the readings for that class and you would like to review the readings on your computer. Otherwise, **no electronic devices in class!** If you have questions or concerns about this, please come talk to me.

*Come to class prepared:* Bring the day’s reading materials, paper notebook, and pen with you to class to take notes and to be prepared for any group work and in-class writing assignments.

*Equal Access for All Students:* If you have any learning or medical condition that requires accommodation to complete the course work, please ensure that the Disabled Students Program (DSP) is aware of your disability and that you are familiar with your DSP responsibilities. See [http://dsp.sa.ucsb.edu/Index.aspx](http://dsp.sa.ucsb.edu/Index.aspx). I will work with you and DSP to find the appropriate accommodation.

*Gender and Sex Discrimination Policy and Student Support:* Under Title IX, university students are protected from harassment and discrimination based on gender and sex. If a student feels uncomfortable or in need of support at any time related to their gender, sex, and/or sexual orientation, please contact your TA and/or course instructor immediately. UCSB's Resource Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity is also available to advocate and be of and support to students.

*Plagiarism:* UCSB takes plagiarism and other academic misconduct very seriously. If you turn in any work that fails to acknowledge the contributions of others, it may result in failure of the assignment or the course itself. If you are unsure what constitutes plagiarism, please ask.

*Incomplete Grades:* Incompletes will not be given for this class, except in the most extreme circumstances, such as a debilitating illness.

*Copyright:* All of the materials you receive through this course are subject to federal copyright laws and university policies. Distribution of these materials, such as posting them online or selling them to third party businesses, are strictly prohibited.

*Respectful behavior in the classroom is required:* Respect your instructor and fellow classmates when they are asking questions or speaking to the class. Be open to others with different experiences and opinions, as well as to the cultures and diverse ways of life we are studying. Be prompt for class meetings and do not interrupt the class by leaving unless it is an emergency. Be part of creating a positive learning environment.

**Part I. Introduction: Development, Displacement and the Environment**

M, Apr 2: Introduction to the course.  
In class: Mapping exercise

W, Apr 4: Externalized Costs – *No class meeting*  
**Assignment:** Discussion Forum – Reflection on Externalized Costs (part of Participation grade)
**By 5pm, Wednesday, April 4** Post a 1-page explanation about a product and the externalized costs found of mapping the product through the materials production line.

M, Apr 9: Scope and Policies of Forced Displacement and Resettlement  
Reading:  

**Part II. Different Sectors of Forced Displacement**

W, Apr 11: Development, Displacement and Communication  
Reading:  

M, Apr 16: Hydroelectric Dams  
Reading:  

W, Apr 18: Mining  
Reading:  

M, Apr 23: Military Bases  
In class: Stealing a Nation Film  
Reading:  

W, Apr 25: Military Bases  
In class: Guest speaker, Prof. David Vine, American University  
Reading:  

M, April 30: Conservation  
In class: Film: Make Way! The Kuno Story  
Reading:  
Assignment due: Submit a hard copy of “Your Home is Closed” paper in class on Monday, April 30.

W, May 2: Conservation
In-class: Guest speaker, Jessica Milgroom, Wageningen University
Orphans of the Land
Reading:

M, May 7: Sporting Events
Reading
• Smith, David. 2010. Life in 'Tin Can Town' for the South Africans evicted ahead of World Cup. The Guardian, April 1.

W, May 9: Local Displacement and Evictions
In-class: Guest speaker, Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy (CAUSE)
Reading:
• Protecting Tenants in Santa Barbara. CAUSE Report.
• The Face of Gentrification in Santa Barbara. CAUSE Report.

M, May 14: Oil
In class: Sweet Crude Film
Reading:

Assignment due: Submit a hard copy of your “Local example of displacement” paper in class on Monday, May 14.

W, May 16: Climate Change
In-class: Court case
Reading:

Part III: Taking Action
M, May 21: Community Building
Reading:

Monday, May 21: Final date to post your chosen case study for research project
W, May 23: Community Building
In class: Prof. Ryan Alaniz, guest speaker
Reading:

*Extra credit:* Attend **Monday, May 21** on-campus screening of *Protect: Indigenous Communities on the Frontlines of Climate Change and Fossil Fuel Extraction* film and panel discussion after the film. Write a 2-page reflection, submitted on GS by **Wednesday, May 23 at 2pm**.

M, May 28: No class (Memorial Day)

W, May 30: Climate change
In-class: Film – Can’t Stop the Water
Reading

**Assignment due:** Submit a hard copy of Op/Ed assignment in class on **Wednesday, May 30**.

M, June 4: Taking Action
Reading:

W, Jun 8: Taking Action and Course wrap-up

**Assignment due:** Submit a hard copy of your final paper in class on **Wednesday, June 8** or post your final project to GS before the final class.