Purpose and Rationale

This course introduces students to the theoretical and historical foundations of environmental racism and environmental inequality. We will examine and interrogate both the social scientific evidence concerning these phenomena and the efforts by community residents, activists, workers, and governments to combat it. We will consider the social forces that create environmental inequalities so that we may understand their causes, consequences, and the possibilities for achieving environmental justice. Students will be expected to master social scientific theories and concepts related to the subject matter. In particular, we pay close attention to the ways in which concepts like nature, race, gender, class, sexuality, citizenship, indigeneity, nation, and species intersect and shape one another in order to better understand how systems of power and inequality are constructed, reinforced, and challenged. Questions we will pursue include: how are relationships with the “natural” world implicated in the way we construct social categories of difference like race, gender, sexuality, class, and species? To what degree is environmental harm linked to social systems and power struggles among humans? How can we link theories of social inequality to theories of environmental studies? How can we imagine and enact change and justice in our lives and in the world in ways that are attentive to hierarchy, inequalities, flows of power, vastly different worldviews, and complexity and contradiction?

Environmental inequality is the term used to describe the widespread unequal exposure to environmental (especially industrial and technological) hazards across racial, class, gender, and national groups. In that regard, it is fundamentally an ethical issue and a matter of shared responsibility because it reveals the ways that our everyday activities and the public policies our elected officials enact have real consequences for the health of humans and ecosystems. We will consider and debate evidence and perspectives from the social sciences and sciences on this matter with an eye toward inculcating the importance of students acting as historical agents of change in the quest for improvements in knowledge, scholarship, and action toward sustainability and environmental justice. In that regard, the class will place particular emphasis on connecting knowledge and practice by requiring students to 1) complete writing assignments and in-class exercises that demonstrate an understanding of the links between the articulation and application of theories and major intellectual ideas in the field of environmental studies; and 2) complete a major class project that allows you the freedom to apply your knowledge in the form of an Analytical paper, Strategy Paper, Community Engagement Project, or an Artistic Project.
This course centrally considers issues of diversity and social justice. Understanding the diversity of the United States and the world and the complex ways in which diversity can be both an asset and a source of social tensions is integral to an informed, responsible and ethical citizenry. The course promotes understanding of how social differences (such as race, ethnicity, class, gender, religion and sexual orientation) have shaped social, political and cross-cultural relationships in the United States and globally. We also critically investigate issues of power and privilege in economic, political and other institutions.

Required Text:

The book is available at the University bookstore and is on reserve at Davidson library. The rest of the readings are on GauchoSpace (GS).

This syllabus, all assignments, a number of articles (required reading), and other important course information are all available on the course GauchoSpace site. Note: GauchoSpace will be used for posting course information and messages, discussion forums, and readings. Most assignments will be turned in via GauchoSpace as well.

Evaluation:
- Participation and attendance (including event analysis)……….10%
- Pop Quizzes (3)........................................................................10%
- Midterm Test...........................................................................30%
- Final Test .............................................................................30%
- Final Project .........................................................................20%

As the above figures indicate, a significant portion of your grade is based on participation and attendance. The class participation grade will be calculated based on your regular involvement in class and outside of class. You are responsible for staying abreast of the reading materials each week so that you can fully participate. Please read all materials for the week before the first class meeting (Tuesday). The professor will facilitate class participation, clarify questions you may have about class materials, and evaluate your participation. Every student is required to attend 2 events outside of class that relate to the course topic in some way (event analysis). This can be a film, a conference or symposium, a visiting speaker on campus or in the community, a student organization meeting or any gathering that is relevant to the course. You will need to produce a 1 page, single spaced summary and analysis of the event, linking what you observed and heard (and perhaps what you did) to the course topic. Each paper will count for 2 of the overall 10 participation points. Note: you must complete all course requirements in order to earn a passing grade for the course.
Quizzes will be administered from time to time during class lectures. As always, pop quizzes are intended to provide a motivation for you to stay abreast of the readings and lectures. They are also a means of encouraging your attendance.

**Final Project.** Below are four options for your Final Project. You must choose one.

**Analytical Paper:** This assignment will require you to (1) bring to life a topic related to the environmental justice with your own voice and analysis of primary and/or secondary sources and (2) draw on concepts and theories used in class and the readings. Specifically, you will be expected to produce an original analysis of work that others have done on a topic of your choosing. This can include an examination of: A) scholarly writings from the social sciences, humanities, or sciences or B) literature, art, music, or films relevant to your topic. Your grade will be based on analytical depth, supporting evidence, creativity, and indication of time and effort devoted to the project. Length of analytical paper: 12-15 double-spaced pages (not including bibliography). Further details concerning this assignment will be made available by week 3.

**Strategy Paper:** This assignment gives you the opportunity to have a direct impact on an organization working on environmental justice, sustainability, or a related challenge. Your charge is to write a strategy document that offers guidance, advice, and direction to an organization (non-governmental, business, or government agency) that will advance their goals, offering new ideas, tactics, strategy, and direction that you believe will increase their impact and improve outcomes. This paper is totally unsolicited advice but you are expected to send it to a staff member, manager, or director at the end of the quarter. You are free to choose whatever organization you like and you must base your writing on careful and detailed research on the organization, their past and current work, and on the specific issue you are focused on. For example, you could write a strategy document advising Greenpeace, the USEPA, or Tesla on how to address gender equity and environmental justice goals in their operations. Length of strategy paper: 12-15 double-spaced pages (not including bibliography). Further details concerning this assignment will be made available by week 4.

**Community Engagement Project:** The goals of the CEP are 1) to ensure that your education is multifaceted and that your overall understanding of theoretical concepts improves and 2) to offer you the opportunity to practice community building and leadership that go beyond the classroom. You will be required to spend time volunteering for a relevant organization on campus or in the Santa Barbara County area working on a range of tasks assigned by that organization in consultation with the instructor. Another option would be to launch your own organization focused on environmental justice issues. You will be asked to reflect on your experiences in written form. Questions you might reflect on could include: what are the opportunities and limitations that grassroots organizations experience when confronting environmental politics?; how can universities and grassroots organizations better address problems of environmental conflict and
inequality?; to what extent is your understanding of the course shaped by your experience working with a grassroots organization?; how has this experience helped you critique and question academic concepts and theories concerning environmental inequality?; how has the reading and in-class experience assisted you in offering productive critiques of the organization you have worked with? Length of CEP paper: 12-15 double-spaced pages.

Artistic Project: The goal of the AP is to have you engage ideas and materials from the class in an original, innovative fashion that expresses your creative perspective on the subject matter. This can involve a range of approaches, including but not limited to, composing songs, poetry or spoken word, a film, dramatic theatrical sketches, a short novel or short story, a board game, painting, photography, a blog or website, etc. The idea is to move beyond the traditional boundaries and requirements of a typical written class assignment while encouraging you to express your views on the topic in an informed, constructive, and imaginative way.

Midterm and Final Tests: The midterm and final will be take home essay tests requiring the use of course readings, lectures, discussions, and films to answer questions.

Technology: Unless you have documented special needs that require the use of a computer in the classroom, I do not allow computer usage during class time, other than my own. I know that many students like to take notes on their laptops and electronic notebooks and tablets, etc., but the availability of chat functions, email, and the web have compromised this otherwise noble pursuit. Furthermore, all other electronic products with a screen of any size should be turned off during class at all times (cell phones, PDAs, iPads, and any other hand held device). Usage of such devices during class time will be grounds for your removal. Instead, please bring a paper notebook, ballpoint pen, and the week’s reading materials (yes, bring the book or printout or electronic version—for use during discussions only), and take lots of notes—it is the best way to keep up with, and absorb all the readings, lectures, discussions, and films. It helps you to remember and to think. Studies have shown that note taking is even better than an energy drink to keep your mind alert! If you read them closely, the words, images, and meanings from the course readings will stay with you forever. If you are ever unclear or confused about any of the instructor’s policies, class materials, subject matter, or assignments, please visit me after class or during office hours for assistance.

Academic Integrity vs. Misconduct: It is expected that all UCSB students will support the ideal of academic integrity and that you will be responsible for the integrity of your work. The strictest disciplinary action will be pursued in all instances of academic misconduct. Academic misconduct includes (among other things): cheating on assignments or tests; plagiarizing any part of work done by someone else; and submitting the same (or substantially similar) work for two courses without the professor’s consent. For more information, see the Office of Judicial Affairs page on “Academic Integrity”:
Ground Rules: The number one ground rule to which we will all adhere is to engage in respectful and considerate debate and discussion in the classroom. By the very nature of the course topic, there will likely be a wide range of opinions among students, many of which may be rooted in your personal and perhaps painful experiences. This is what a good classroom environment is supposed to do: stimulate you to think for yourselves and raise critical questions. However, if you feel the need to do this in a manner that offends and insults your peers or otherwise disrupts the learning process, you should find somewhere else to engage in such behavior. Abusive and harsh language will not be tolerated in this classroom. We are all responsible for keeping discrimination, harassment, and intimidation out of the classroom.

Regarding Trigger Warnings: Per the 2014 UCSB A.S. “Resolution to Mandate Warnings For Triggering Content in Academic Settings,” students are hereby informed that some course materials may include references to, descriptions of, and/or presentations of content that could conceivably trigger post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms for persons who have experienced severe trauma. This includes rape, sexual assault, abuse, graphic violence, and kidnapping. As the instructor of record, I will do my best to warn students ahead of time if there are videos that will be shown in class that might fall within the parameters of this Resolution. Students can opt out of viewing such material with no penalty.

Resources

- The Writing Lab at the Campus Learning Assistance Services helps students with many aspects of writing, including getting started, making revisions, organizing ideas for papers, proofreading, editing, and general writing skills. To schedule an appointment, come to Student Resource Building (SRB) 3231 or visit my.sa.ucsb.edu/clas

- The Mental Health Peer Program (MHPP) is a UCSB campus resource offering guidance with regard to stress management, anxiety, depression and other related challenges. They offer a range of resources, including psychological counseling services and the Test Anxiety Program (for students experiencing mild to moderate anxiety before and/or during an exam). MHPP is located in Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), Building 599. Phone consultations are available 24 hours: (805) 893-4411.

- Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the Disabled Students Program to get documentation of needs and to generate suggestions for reasonable accommodation (room 2120 Student Resources Building, phone: 805.893.2668; email: DSP.Help@sa.ucsb.edu). Requests for accommodation via Disabled Students Program will be granted.
Course Schedule
[Note: this schedule and its content are subject to change]

Week 1 (January 10 and 12): Introduction to the Course
Reading: Robert Bullard, “Environmentalism and Social Justice” (GS)

First week Assignment (due in class on January 12):

In 1 page or so, write about how you think social inequality might intersect with and/or impact (even indirectly) our planet’s ecosystems, natural habitats, and environmental quality. This is something I’d like you to be comfortable sharing in class. Perhaps you might write about how your social location (e.g., your nationality, economic status, gender, ethnic/racial background, age, education, faith community, etc.) shapes your relationship to the nonhuman world and how that might speak to how power, privilege, inequality, hierarchy, advantage, and disadvantage might play a role in influencing access to healthy environments for different populations. Maybe you’ve noticed how uneven social terrains in your community or in places you’ve visited reveal vastly different environmental experiences across social groups and geography. Perhaps you’ve come across this phenomenon in literature, art, or film? Maybe this is the first time you’ve thought about this. If so, what are your thoughts on this subject and what do you hope to learn and contribute? The purpose of this assignment is to get you to think openly, analytically, and critically about how our relationships to the ecosystems that sustain us have significance for your life and for the lives of others (both human and non-human), and how these relationships are contingent, malleable, and reflect choices that we have made and choices that have been made for us.

Please bring your assignment on a printed sheet of paper and be prepared to share your thoughts in class on Thursday, January 12.

Week 2 (January 17 and 19): Environmental Injustice/Inequality/Racism
Cole and Foster, “A History of the Environmental Justice Movement” (GS)

Readings: Raymond Williams, “Ideas of Nature” (GS)
Noel Castree, “Nature” (GS)
Alan Rudy and Damian White, “Hybridity” (GS)
Mei Mei Evans, “‘Nature’ and Environmental Justice” (GS)

Ramachandra Guha, “Radical American Environmentalism and Wilderness Preservation: A Third World Critique” (GS)


Week 4 (January 31 & February 2): Global Inequalities in a Toxic World
Readings: Rachel Stein—Introduction and Parts One and Two
Final Project proposals due February 2

Week 5 (February 7 & 9): Theorizing Inequality, Confronting Environmental Injustice
Readings: Rachel Stein—Parts Three and Four
Midterm Test assigned February 7

Note: if you have not turned in an event analysis yet, this would be a good time to work on it.

Week 6 (February 14 & 16): Theories and Politics of Food Justice and Sovereignty
Readings: Charles Levkoe, “Learning Democracy through Food Justice Movements” (GS)

Zoey Makoul, “The Fight for Fruits & Veggies: How are gardens and distributors improving produce access on the South Side [of Chicago]?” (GS)

Joni Adamson, “Medicine Food: Critical Environmental Justice Studies, Native North American Literature, and the Movement for Food Sovereignty” (GS)

Matthew Binnington et al. “Evaluating the Effectiveness of Fish Consumption Advisories: Modeling Prenatal, Postnatal, and Childhood Exposures to Persistent Organic Pollutants.” Environmental Health Perspectives. (GS)

Charles Ellison, “Gentrification and food deserts got you down? There’s an app for that” (GS)

Robert Gottlieb and Anupama Joshi, “Growing Justice” (GS)
Midterm tests due February 14

Week 7 (February 21 & 23) Indigenous Peoples and Environmental (In)justice
Readings: Andrea Smith—Introduction, Chapter 1 (“Sexual Violence as a Tool of Genocide”) and 3 (“Rape of the Land”) (GS)

Chih-Tung Huang, “One Park, Two EJ’s: When Two Environmental Justices Collide Head-on in Taiwanese National Parks” (GS)

Sarah Krakoff, “Radical Adaptation, Justice, and American Indian Nations” (GS)

Week 8 (February 28 & March 2) Indigenous Peoples, EJ, and Climate Justice Struggles
Readings: Kyle Powys Whyte, “The Dakota Access Pipeline, Environmental Injustice, and U.S. Colonialism” (GS)

CrimethInc, “Report Back from the Battle for Sacred Ground” (GS)

Ben Lorber. “Keren Kayemet Le Yisrael and Environmental Racism in Palestine.”

Naomi Klein, “Dancing the World into Being: A Conversation with Idle No More’s Leanne Simpson” (GS)

Week 9: (March 7 & 9): Climate Change vs. Climate Justice and System Change

David Pellow, “Climate Disruption in the Global South and African American Communities” (GS)

Cecilia Martinez and Shalini Gupta, “Climate Inequality: Forgotten History” (GS)

Geraldine Terry, “No Climate Justice without Gender Justice” (GS)

Bani Amor, “Climate Change and White Supremacy” (GS)

Black Lives Matter, posted by John Foran, “The Radical Intersectionality of Black Lives
Matter” (GS)

**Week 10 (March 14 & 16) Reflections**
This week we will have short presentations from students on their Final Projects
*Final Test assigned, March 14; Final Test due on Wednesday, March 22, 2017 at 3pm on GauchoSpace.*

*All event analyses are due by March 16*

*Final Projects due on March 17 by noon on GauchoSpace if project is in digital/electronic form or in the Environmental Studies Main Office (4312 Bren Hall) if project is not in digital form.*