Syllabus

Environmental History
11:374:312:01
Mondays and Wednesdays, MW4
2:15PM – 3:35PM
Hickman 202
Spring, 2013

For the course website: go to https://sakai.rutgers.edu/portal. You should have access to the site.

Instructor: Tom Rudel
Office: Cook Office Building 214
Office Hours: Mondays 10:00-11:30AM.
and by appointment.
Phone: 732-848-9238
Email: rudel@aesop.rutgers.edu

This course examines environmental problems from a historical perspective. We will begin with the dawn of agriculture, but most of the course focuses on our two centuries-long experiment with industrial civilization. The first two-thirds of the course sketches out the broad historical patterns in the ways that people have used natural resources. The last third of the course looks at the history of pollution generated by industry and considers important historical features of the American environmental movement, in particular the way that the movement has changed in response to changes in environmental problems. Throughout the course we will consider the following question: to what extent are individuals, households, and local communities contributing to our, as yet largely unsuccessful, collective efforts to control and stabilize the global environment? This question will lead us into an historical examination of sustainable development in both developed and developing countries.

Requirements: To complete this course successfully, you will have to take and receive a passing grade on two essay exams, write one term paper, and deliver an oral report on your term paper topic. The term paper should involve a history of an environmentally significant event or events that have occurred in your hometown. You should talk to me about possible topics and the related methods of research during the first month of class. Right after the mid-term (in early March) you will have to give a short oral report to the class about your paper topic. The papers will be due April 17th. Active participation in class discussions will help you in the computation of final grades. The relative weights of each exercise in the computation of final grades will be as follows: the term paper - 33%, two exams (30% each) - 60%, oral report - 7%. Class participation will count in the computation of final grades in the following manner: If your numerical grade is close to the cutoff point for a particular grade (a high C+, for example) and you have been an active participant in class discussions, your overall grade will be pushed up one grade, from, say, a C+ to a B. The final exam is scheduled for May 14th, 12:00-3:00PM.
Readings and Powerpoints: The readings in the course provide both conceptual and empirical points of departure for discussions in class. To appreciate the significance of our discussions and participate in them, you will have to have done the readings for that particular day. The readings are either from books to be purchased or from a set of readings on reserve and electronic reserve at the Chang library. I will post the powerpoints on the course website the day before the class. You will find our class discussions easier to follow if you have access to the powerpoint (printed out or online) during class. The powerpoints are interrogatory; they ask questions. To answer these questions (and the questions on exams), you will have to come to class. Texting is a wonderful way to communicate with other people, but it has no place in our class discussions, so, if I see you doing so in class (it is obvious when someone is texting or reading texts), I will have to ask you to leave the room.

Questions, Problems, Concerns: I have an office in the Department of Human Ecology (Rm. 214). My office hours are listed above. If these times are not workable for you, you could see me after class, or we could arrange another time to meet. You can also contact me via email; I check it every day. In addition to the syllabus and the powerpoints, I will put the instructions for assignments and old exams on the course website.

Books to be purchased (available at Jersey Books): While these books are going to be on reserve (e.g. copies will be in the Chang library), there is so much reading in each one of them, that it is much more efficient to just purchase them.

Ruddiman, Wm. F.  *Plows, Plagues, and Petroleum: How Humans Took Control of the Climate.*
Langston, N. *Forest Dreams, Forest Nightmares: the Paradox of Old Growth in the Inland West*

Readings on Reserve (at the Chang Library and on Chang’s electronic reserve list - under Rudel)
J. Aron, ‘The Art of Using Leftovers’
B. Bailyn, *The Barbarous Years*
J. Dixon, *From the imperial to the empty calorie: how nutrition relations underpin food regime Transitions* - electronic
E. Humes, ‘Katrina in Slow Motion’ – electronic.
Simone Pulver, Nathan Hultman, Leticia Guimaraes, ‘Carbon market participation by sugar mills in Brazil’ – electronic.
W. Ruddiman, Plows, Plagues, and Petroleum: How Humans Took Control of Climate
E.A. Wrigley, Population and History – electronic.

**Schedule of Classes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 23</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 28</td>
<td>Plows, Plagues, and Petroleum</td>
<td>Ruddiman, Parts I, II, and III</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 30</td>
<td>Plows, Plagues, and Petroleum</td>
<td>Ruddiman Part IV</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 4</td>
<td>Globalization, I: Amerindians and Colonists</td>
<td>White</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 6</td>
<td>Globalization, II: Amerindians and Colonists</td>
<td>Bailyn</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 11</td>
<td>Globalization, III: Agricultural Frontiers</td>
<td>Dean, pp. 1-118</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 18</td>
<td>Dust Bowls &amp; Invasive Species: Farmers, Foresters and the Historical Roots of Adaptive Management</td>
<td>Langston, pp. 3-200</td>
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<td>Feb. 20</td>
<td>Re-Greening: How has it worked?</td>
<td>Langston, pp. 247-306; Bilger</td>
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<td>Feb. 25</td>
<td>The Ghost Map: Disease, Water, and Refuse Collection</td>
<td>Wrigley</td>
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<td>Feb. 27</td>
<td>Food Production and Consumption: the Nutrition Transition</td>
<td>Dixon, Aron</td>
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March 4  Mid-term Exam
March 6  Student Reports
March 11  Student Reports
March 13  Student Reports
March 25  Oil Patches: Offshore and Elsewhere  Freudenburg and Gramling, pp. 1-112
March 27  Tight Coupling and Normal Accidents  Freudenburg and Gramling, pp. 113-190
April 1  A History of Heat Waves  Ruddiman, Part V
April 3  Sprawl, I  Botshon, I
April 8  Sprawl, II  Botshon, II
April 10  Ecological Modernization: the Pace of Innovation  Pulver et al.
April 15  Population Declines: the Pace of Change  Mace
April 17  The Rise of Defensive Environmentalism  (Term Papers due)
April 22  Environmental Wake-Up Calls: When Do They Occur?  When WalMart Went Green.  Humes, pp. 97-106
April 24  Disasters: Droughts, Floods, and Fires  Frerichs
April 29  The Environmental Movement  Guthman
May 1  The Historical Roots of the Sustainable Development State
May 6  Review