Syllabus

Envi 101
Nature and Society: An Introduction to Environmental Studies
Fall 2010

27 September 2010

Instructor
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Environmental Studies
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Time and Location
The course has two sections.
• Section 01 meets on Tuesday and Thursday, 08:30 to 09:45 am in Griffin 5
• Section 02 meets on Tuesday and Thursday, 11:20 am to 12:35 pm in Bronfman 105

Office Hours and Lunch Meetings
• Office hours are held Tuesday and Thursday from 02:30 to 04:00 pm on a first come, 
  first served basis.
• I also hold lunch meetings as needed. These are open to everyone, and are scheduled 
  on Tuesday and Thursday, from 01:00 to 02:00 pm, in one of the dinning halls.

Description
Environmental studies is the interdisciplinary study of the environment. Drawing 
knowledge and insight from the natural sciences, social sciences and humanities, the 
field examines the complex interactions between people, animals and nature.

As humanity grapples with environmental challenges of global proportion, the field has 
never been more important. A short list of these challenges include climate change, the 
loss of biodiversity, the degradation of wild landscapes, divergent paths to 
sustainability, growing disparities of power and wealth, food and resource insecurity, 
and refashioning the human relationship to wild and domestic animals. Environmental 
Studies is therefore indispensable to understanding and resolving many of the 
challenges facing our world.
With this in mind, we begin by exploring some of the common theoretical approaches to environmental studies drawn from such fields such as economics, policy, ecology and ethics. We then examine a selection of environmental issues of the day as they are informed by these approaches — agriculture, biodiversity, oceans, climate change, and energy. While these are not the only approaches or issues relevant to environmental studies, they are excellent points of departure from which to understand the field. We end with a set of reflections on the meaning of sustainability, and the place of environmental studies in a liberal arts education.

The format is lecture and discussion, and enrollment is limited to 35 students per section.

The course satisfies one semester of the Division II requirement, AMST Space and Place Electives, and INST Urbanizing World Electives. It is also a core course for the ENVI concentration, the ENVP major, and the ENVS major.

If you have an interest in concentrating or majoring in Environmental Studies, please talk with me!

**Texts**


**Course Email and Website**

Please check your email each morning and evening, before and after classes, for course relevant email.

The syllabus, course policies, assignments, style guide, and additional readings are available online through Glow ([http://glow.williams.edu](http://glow.williams.edu)). The course identification number is 11F-Envi-101-Meta.

In the interests of sustainability, I encourage you to read pdfs of the articles and chapters on your computer. Take notes on the thesis/purpose, main points, core facts, and conclusion(s). Save a tree, and print out only those articles or chapters you believe essential.

Other readings, as well as audio and visual programs are assigned from blogs, websites, podcasts and movies. Movies are available through iTunes, Netflix or the Library. Occasionally, some readings will be on reserve at the Library. Please ensure you have access to these resources before classes begin.
Grades
I assess learning through papers, projects, exercises and/or tests. Final grades are assigned using the A+/ system. Attendance at all classes and assigned events is required. Please see my Course Policies for further information on grading.

In this course, the assignments are weighted as follows.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essay 1</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<td>Test 1</td>
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<td>Test 2</td>
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<td>Test 3</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentations</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essay 2</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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Nota Bene
I update my syllabi and course content throughout the semester, and required resources may be added throughout the term. Revisions are announced in class or via email.

AGENDA

Week 01   Introduction
Monday is the Labour Day holiday.
September 8th is the first day of classes.

Wednesday, 08 September

Cutter and Renwick (text)
1. Natural Resources: Thoughts, Words, and Deeds

Read your Syllabus and Course Policies, and bring them to class.
Week 02 Approaches to Environmental Studies: Economics
Guest speaker: Roger Bolton (Economics, Williams College)

Tuesday, 14 September
Cutter and Renwick (text)
2. Economics of Natural Resources


Read your Essays Assignments and Style Guide, and bring them to class.

Thursday, 16 September


Week 03 Approaches to Environmental Studies: Policy

Essay 1

Tuesday, 21 September
Cutter and Renwick (text)
3. Environmental History, Politics and Decision Making


Overview of the Tests.
Thursday, 23 September


Friday, 24 September
Essay 1 is due on Friday at midnight.

Week 04  Approaches to Environmental Studies: Ecology
Guest speaker: Andrew Jones (Hopkins Memorial Forest, Williams College)

Tuesday, 28 September
Cutter and Renwick (text)
  4. Ecologic Perspectives on Natural Resources
  5. The Human Population

Read your Presentation Assignment, and bring it to class.

Thursday, 30 September

[You pick up this booklet at the Center for Environmental Studies office at Hopkins House. The booklet will be treated like a reading packet, and a small charge of $5.00 will be made to your account.]
Week 05 Approaches to Environmental Studies: Ethics

Tuesday, 05 October


Thursday, 07 October


Week 06 Fall Reading Period
Test 1

Fall Reading Period. There are no classes on Monday or Tuesday.

Thursday, 14 October
Test 1 is taken in class. Closed book and notes.
Week 07  Environmental Issues: Oceans  

Guest speaker: James Carlton (Director, Maritime Studies, Williams College)  

Student Presentations  

Tuesday, 19 October  
Cutter and Renwick (text)  
   9. Marine Resources: Common Property Dilemmas  


Thursday, 21 October  


Williams Mystic: The Maritime Studies Program of Williams College and Mystic Seaport, http://www.williams.edu/williamsmystic/Home.html. [Peruse this website.]  

Week 08  Environmental Issues: Biodiversity  

Student Presentations  

Tuesday, 26 October  
Cutter and Renwick (text)  
   8. Biodiversity and Habitat  

Thursday, 28 October


Institute for Cetacean Research website, [http://www.icrwhale.org/eng-index.htm](http://www.icrwhale.org/eng-index.htm). [Read the ‘Human & Whales’ page. Peruse the rest of the website.]


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**Week 09 Environmental Issues: Agriculture**

*Guest speaker: Katharine Millonzi (Manager, Sustainable Food and Agriculture Program, Williams College)*

*Student Presentations*

**Tuesday, 02 November**

Cutter and Renwick (text)

6. Agriculture and Food Production


**Thursday, 04 November**


Tudge, Colin. 2005. Feeding people is easy: but we have to re-think the world from first principles. *Public Health Nutrition* 8 (6A): 716-723.

SlowFood USA, [www.slowfoodusa.org](http://www.slowfoodusa.org). [Peruse the website.]

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**Week 10 Environmental Issues: Climate Change**
Guest speaker: David Orr (Environmental Studies, Oberlin College)
Student Presentations and Evening Speaker
No class on Thursday

**Tuesday, 09 November**
Cutter and Renwick (text)

12. Regional and Global Atmospheric Change


**Wednesday, 10 November**

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**Week 11**  
**Environmental Issues: Energy**

*Test 2*

*Student Presentations*

**Tuesday, 16 November**
Cutter and Renwick (text)

14 Energy Resources


**Thursday, 18 November**
Test 2 is taken in class. Closed book and notes.

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**Week 12**  
**Reflections: Wind and Energy**

*Guest speaker: David Dethier (Geoscience, Williams College)*

*Thanksgiving Recess begins on Wednesday. No class on Thursday.*

**Tuesday, 23 November**
Alliance to Protect Nantucket Sound. Save Our Sound website, [http://www.saveoursound.org](http://www.saveoursound.org). [Peruse this website]


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**Week 13  Reflections: Sustainability**  
*Guest speaker: Stephanie Boyd (Director, Zilka Center for Sustainability, Williams College)*

**Tuesday, 30 November**  
Cutter and Renwick (text)  
15. The Transition to a Global Sustainable Society


**Thursday, 02 December**  
Week 14  Reflections: Environmental Studies and the Liberal Arts

Guest speaker: Jennifer French (Chair, Environmental Studies, Williams College)

Test 3

December 10th is the last day of classes.

Tuesday, 07 December


Thursday, 09 December

Test 3 is taken in class. Closed book and notes.

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Week 15  Reading Period; Finals

No classes

Essay 2 is due on Friday, 17 December, at midnight.
Envi 101 Nature and Society

Week 16      Finals (cont.)
No classes