

ENVS 4980/6800/7800 – Environment and Society Departmental Seminar

Spring 2016

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Days and Time: Monday 3:30pm – 4:20pm
Room: ENGR 203

Prerequisites: None

Description

The departmental seminar serves as an open and constructive venue where students in the Department of Environment and Society will have an opportunity to learn about each other's research and their interest in uncovering new information about how humans affect and respond to environmental change. The seminar also provides an opportunity for students within the department to explore common themes and topics that affect how they conduct and disseminate their research.

Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Speak conversantly about research that is being conducted by students and faculty in the department outside of their core discipline.
- Clearly articulate how this research is influenced and affected by broad cultural, social, economic and political trends.

Course Structure

For Spring 2016, the departmental seminar will focus on the theme of *Place, People and Policy*. Through a common reading, open discussions with ENVS faculty, guest lectures from faculty outside of ENVS, and several field visits, the course provides an opportunity for students to 'step-back' from the theoretical and methodological details driving their research and to better understand how broad cultural, social, economic and political trends affect what they are studying and how they are studying it.

Recommended Books

The seminar has one recommended book, directly related to the course's theme *Place, People and Policy*. This book is:

- Williams, T. T. (1991). *Refuge: An unnatural history of family and place*. Vintage.

Grading Schedule for Class Participation, Assignments and Exams

Weekly Participation (14 @ 1 point each = 14 points). Students will be required to be in attendance for the entirety of scheduled class time and participate fully by constructively contributing to reading discussions asking informed questions of guest presenters.

Critical Reflections on Guest Lectures (4 @ 1 points each = 4 points). The seminar will involve four guest lectures. Students will be required to write critical reflective essays on the material and information presented by the guest lecturer. The reflective essays should: 1) carefully describe the content and importance of the material and information presented and; 2) describe how the challenges and issues presented could be encountered in the students' own research.

Unless otherwise modified and announced, the following grading schedule will be in effect:

Exam or Assignment	Date Due (end of day)	Points Possible
Weekly Participation	Weekly	14 @ 1 each = 14
Critical reflections on Guest Lectures	2/8, 2/29, 3/28 and 4/18	4 @ 1.5 each = 6
		20

PASS: > 15 points
FAIL: < 15 points

Other Policies and University Regulations

Attendance and Participation Policy

Full participation in all seminar discussions, collaborative projects and guest lectures is expected of all students. Failure to participate will result in not receiving weekly participation credit. Students shall receive excused absences for a reasonable number of anticipated absences as well as for emergencies.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with verifiable disabilities. Utah State University policies regarding accommodations for students with disabilities can be found [here](#).

Utah State University Policies, Regulations, and Rules

Students are responsible for reviewing the [Academic Policies and Procedures](#) pertaining to their rights and responsibilities.

Course Schedule*

<i>SECTION 1 – PLACE</i>			
Week	Date	Topic	Readings / Project / Guest
1	1/11	Course overview and in-class exercise	Mind mapping exercise (part 1)
2	1/18	No Class (Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday)	
3	1/25	Open discussion with ENVS faculty member	ENVS Faculty TBD
4	2/1	Guest lecture	Dr. Chris Conte, Associate Professor in the Department of History at Utah State University
5	2/8	Field visit	Field visit to American West Heritage Center
<i>SECTION 2 – PEOPLE</i>			
Week	Date	Topic	Readings
6	2/16 (Tuesday!)	Reading discussion	Be prepared to discuss <i>Refuge</i> through ‘Killdeer’
7	2/22	Guest lecture	Dr. Robert Schmidt, Associate Professor in the Department of Environment and Society at Utah State University
8	2/29	Open discussion with ENVS faculty member	ENVS Faculty TBD
9	3/7	No Class (Spring Break)	
10	3/14	Reading discussion	Be prepared to discuss remainder of <i>Refuge</i>
11	3/21	Guest lecture	Dr. Carla Koons Trentelman, Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Weber State University
<i>SECTION 3 – POLICY</i>			
Week	Date	Topic	Readings
12	3/28	Field visit	Field visit to Hardware Ranch Wildlife Management Area
13	4/4	Open discussion with ENVS faculty member	ENVS Faculty TBD
14	4/11	Guest lecture	Dr. Hollie M. Smith, Assistant Professor in the Harrington School of Communication and Media at the University of Rhode Island
15	4/18	Open discussion with ENVS faculty member	ENVS Faculty TBD
16	4/25	In-class exercise	Mind mapping exercise (part 2)
* This syllabus is subject to revisions over the course of the semester. Students will be notified during class or via email of any changes. Updates will also be posted on the course website.			