

Environment & Society
ENVS 3330
Spring Semester 2005

MEETINGS: T, Th, 12:00-1:15, Technology 107

INSTRUCTORS:

Dale Blahna

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DESCRIPTION:

This course takes a historical and global look at the relationship between natural resources and human society. It explores three interrelated themes: 1) the relationship between geography, natural resources, and the rise and fall of human civilizations; 2) natural resource wealth and the relationship to modern competition and conflict on a global scale; and 3) contemporary international natural resource problems, debates, and solutions. We will integrate information from geography, history, anthropology, human ecology, and environmental science, and discuss social and political factors for addressing international natural resource problems.

READINGS:

Course texts:

Diamond, Jared. 1999. *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies*. NY: WW Norton.

Klare, Michael T. 2001. *Resource Wars: The New Landscape of Global Conflict*. NY: Henry Holt & Co.

Rischar, J.S. 2002. *High Noon: 20 Global Problems, 20 Years to Solve Them*. NY: Basic Books.

Electronic reserve:

Additional required readings will be handed out in class or placed on electronic reserve in the Sci Tech Library (PW: BLA3330). ***The readings are a critical part of this class.*** Lectures and class discussions often focus on ideas in the readings, so you need to look at them **before** the class for which they are listed.

COURSE GRADING:

Three group projects/presentations (~30%)

Three quizzes (~30%)

Final exam (~20%)

Participation (~20%)

Grading will be based on a total of 1,000 points, with a heavy emphasis on group projects and presentations. The presentations will be Power Point presentations summarizing a portion of the course readings with class members evaluating the quality of the presentations, group members evaluating individual efforts within the groups, and instructors assigning points for those evaluations. Quizzes will be approximately 25 multiple choice and short answer questions based on readings and class presentations and discussion. The final exam will be cumulative, but most of the questions will be taken directly from the quizzes with a few additional “big picture” (i.e., overall course) questions.

COURSE OUTLINE:

Part 1. The Past: NR/E factors in the Rise and Fall of Civilizations

1. Why is history like an onion? (And so what?)
1. Determinants of human societies
2. Ultimate factors (geography and environmental determinants of food production)
3. Proximate factors (germs, writing, technology, bureaucracy)
4. Regional case studies:
 - Australia and New Guinea
 - Asia
 - Pacific Islands
 - Europe & North America
 - Sub-Saharan Africa
5. Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West
6. General Principles about the Nature of Human Society

Part 2. The Present: Natural Resource Competition and Conflict

7. Wealth, resources, and power
8. Oil, geography, and war
9. Regional case studies
 - Oil conflicts (Persian Gulf, South China Sea)
 - Energy conflicts (Caspian Sea Basin)
 - Water conflicts (Nile Basin, Jordan River, Tigris-Euphrates, Indus)
 - Minerals, timber (New Guinea, Sierra Leone, Borneo, Congo, Cambodia, Liberia)
10. The new geography of conflict
11. Expanding the geography of conflict concept: Economic domination

Part 3. The Future: Global Natural Resource Problems, Debates, and ASolutions@

12. NR/E impacts and debates
13. Role of science in NR/E debates
14. Population, health, and food
15. Impact issues
 - Global warming
 - Fisheries decline
 - Deforestation
 - Biodiversity protection
 - Water deficits
 - Ocean safety and pollution
16. Implications for sustainability

DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER:

The university is required by law to help disabled students participate fully in all programs, activities, and services. If you have a disability documented by the Disability Resource Center that requires note-takers, interpreters for the deaf, extended testing time, etc., let me know as soon as possible. The Disability Resource Center may also help provide course material in alternative formats like large print, Braille, and diskette.

NOTE ON CHEATING:

The College of Natural Resources has adopted a **Azero tolerance@** policy for cheating and plagiarism on tests, homework, and paper assignments. The *least* that can happen to someone who cheats is to *fail the entire course*. Due to the relatively unique subject matter of this course, it is quite easy to identify both plagiarism and cheating.

DETAILED OUTLINE AND ASSIGNMENTS:

Jan. 11 **Course Introduction**

Part 1. The Past: NR/E factors in the Rise and Fall of Civilizations

Jan. 13 **Why is History Like an Onion? (And so what?)**
Diamond: Preface “Why is history like an onion?”
Diamond: Prologue: “Yali’s questions”

Jan. 18 **Ultimate Causes: Geographic and NR/E factors in Food Production**
Diamond: Ch. 4, 5, and 6

Jan. 20 Diamond: Ch. 7 (skim) and 8

Jan. 25 Diamond: Ch. 9 & 10

Jan. 27 **Proximate Factors: Germs, Writing, Technology, Bureaucracy**
Diamond: Ch. 11, 13 (skim Ch. 12)

Feb. 1 Group assignment #1 and class work

Feb. 3 Diamond: C 14

Feb. 8 **Regional Case Study Presentations**
Diamond: Australia and New Guinea (Ch. 15)
Diamond: Asia (Ch. 16)
Diamond: Pacific Islands (Ch. 17)
Diamond: Europe & North America (Ch 18)
Diamond: Sub-Saharan Africa (Ch 19)

Feb 10 **Nature’s Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West**
Cronon Ch. 2: Water and transportation

Feb. 15 **Summary: General Principles about the Nature of Human Society**
Diamond: Epilogue
Perlin: “Mycenean Greece”
Redman: “Lessons from a prehistoric ‘Eden’”

Feb. 17 **Quiz 1**

Feb. 22 ***NO CLASS: ATTEND MONDAY CLASSES***

Part 2. The Present: Natural Resource Competition and Conflict

Feb. 24 **Wealth, Resources, and Power**
Klare: Ch. 1

March 1 **Oil, Geography, and War**
Klare: C.2

March 3 Group assignment #2 and class work

- March 8 Regional Case Study Presentations**
 Klare: Oil conflict in the Persian Gulf (Ch. 3)
 Klare: Energy conflict in the Caspian Sea (Ch. 4)
 Klare: Oil wars in the South China Sea (Ch. 5)
 Klare: Water conflict in the Nile Basin (Ch. 6)
- March 10 Regional Case Study Presentations**
 Klare: Water conflict in the Jordan, Tigris-Euphrates, Indus R. Basins (Ch. 7)
 Klare: Fighting . . . internal wars over minerals and timber (Ch 8)
- The New Geography of Conflict**
 Klare: The new geography of conflict (Ch. 9)
- March 15-17 NO CLASS: SPRING BREAK**
- March 22 Expanding the Geography of NR Conflict: Economic Domination**
 Harmon: (“Cultural diversity, human subsistence and the national park ideal”)
 Food and hunger reading TBA
- March 24 Quiz 2**
- Part 3. The Future: Global Natural Resource Problems, Debates, and ASolutions@**
- March 29 NR/E Impacts and Debates**
 Rischar: TBA
- March 31 Role of Science in NR/E Debates**
 Lomborg: “Things are getting better”
 Bailey: “Prologue: Environmentalism for the 21st Century”
 Film: “Scientific Spin Doctors”
 Group assignment #3
- April 5 Population Debate**
 Eberstadt: “Population, food, and income: Global trends in the 20th Century”
 Lomborg: “Food and hunger”
- April 7 Impact Case Studies: Global Warming, Fisheries**
 Selections from Rischar, Bailey, Lomborg and others
- April 12 Impact Case Studies: Deforestation, Biodiversity Protection**
 Selections from Rischar, Bailey, Lomborg and others
- April 14 Impact Case Studies: Water Deficits, Maritime Safety and Pollution**
 Selections from Rischar, Bailey, Lomborg and others
- April 19 Quiz 3**
- April 21 Implications for Sustainability**

Redman: "The past as prologue"
Sustainability reading, TBA

April 28 ***FINAL EXAM: 9:30-11:30, TECH 107***

ADDITIONAL READINGS:

Bailey, R (ed.). 1995. *The True State of the Planet*. NY: The Free Press.

Eberstadt, N. 1995. Population, food, and income. Ch. 1 in Bailey, R (ed.). 1995. *The True State of the Planet*. NY: The Free Press.

Harmon, D. 1987. Cultural diversity, human subsistence, and the national park ideal.
Environmental Ethics 9: 147-158.

Lomborg, B. 2001. *The Skeptical Environmentalist: Measuring the Real State of the World*.
Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press. (Ch. 1 "Things are getting better," and Ch.5
"Food and hunger.")

Perlin, J. 1989. *A Forest Journey: The Role of Wood in the Development of Civilization*.
Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. (Ch. 4 "Mycenean Greece").

Redman, C.L. 1999. *Human Impact on Ancient Environments*. Tucson, AZ: The University of
Arizona Press. (Ch. 1 "Lessons from a prehistoric 'Eden'" and Ch. 8 "The past as prologue.")