

HIST 641 / HIST 642
Global Environmental History

Monday 6:30 – 9:20
UNIV 319

Instructor:	Frederick R. Davis
Office:	University Hall 123
Office Hours:	Monday 11:30 – 12:20 and by appointment
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Course Description:

Global Environmental History provides an introduction to the changing relationships between human beings and the natural world in various places and various time periods around the world. The explores how nature has helped to shape culture as well as how humans have modified the natural world and transformed the land in the process of extracting resources, building structures, producing pollution, and importing exotic species. At the same time, *Global Environmental History* contextualizes differing values and ideas associated with the non-human world. A primary concern of Environmental History is to provide graduate students with tools and approaches that they can apply to historical cases regardless of geographical region and / or time period.

Course Objectives:

- Analyze the close relationship between humans and nature around the globe from prehistory to the present.
- Understand how humans shape landscapes for their use and how nature shapes culture.
- Assess narratives of environmental history and relate them to general themes of Global History.
- Develop the skills to research and write a formal, publishable essay in Environmental History.

Course Format:

Class consists group discussions of assigned readings, led by a participant and the instructor. Students will complete the research and writing for a major historiographical paper (HIST642) or research paper (HIST641).

Student Responsibilities:

1. attending class sessions
2. reading assigned material (~ 200 pages per week) on time
3. actively participating in class discussions
4. leading 1 discussion
5. maintaining respect for others despite clashing views on controversial subjects
6. completing final paper and presentation

Required Reading (available at the University Bookstore, Amazon, and Library Reserve):

William Cronon, *Changes in the Land*
Alfred Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism*
Shepard Krech III, *The Ecological Indian: Myth and History*
John McNeill, *Mosquito Empires: Ecology and War in the Greater Caribbean, 1620-1914*
Carolyn Merchant, *The Death of Nature*
Donald Worster, *Nature's Economy*

Edmund Russell, *Evolutionary History*

James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How certain schemes to improve the human condition have failed*

Gregory Cushman, *Guano and the Opening of the Pacific World*

Judith Shapiro, *Mao's War Against Nature: Politics and Environment in Revolutionary China*

Articles as assigned in Syllabus (available on Blackboard)

Assignments and Grading:

Research Paper	400
Discussion Leadership	200
Individual Presentation	200
Attendance and Participation	200
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Total	1000

Discussion Leadership (200 points): Everyone will lead a discussion for the first 30 minutes of one session. This is a challenging but valuable exercise for everyone in the class. Note: it is your responsibility to pose questions and guide the discussion. You should not present your synopsis and analysis of the readings.

Research Paper (400 points total): As graduate seminar, you will need to write a formal research paper of approximately 5000 words that demonstrates your ability to conduct historical research and marshal your research to produce a thoughtful and cogent essay on a subject relevant to Environmental History. I will provide a list of potential topics, but I welcome additional ideas. This is your opportunity to reflect on the course material, marshal your sources, analyze what you have learned, and develop a reasoned argument based on your findings. Everyone will present his/her thesis and major findings in an individual presentation during the last week of class. There will be time to discuss your thesis, outline, and rough draft later in the semester. *Note: you will submit your research paper via SafeAssign.

Individual Presentation (200 points): Presentations should last no more than 10 minutes with 3 minutes afterwards for discussion and should include visual material. Remember, this is an opportunity to share your work with the class so you should make every effort to develop an interesting presentation.

Attendance and Participation (200 points): There is no better way to clarify your ideas and sharpen your opinions regarding a new subject than to discuss them with fellow students and the instructor. It is vital that you attend class and be prepared to engage each other. Starting Week 2, I will take attendance. After one unexcused absence, I will deduct 20 points for each subsequent unexcused absence. See below for the University Attendance Policy and a description of excused absences.

University Attendance Policy:

Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness.

Academic Honor Policy:

Purdue University is committed to maintaining a community which recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters tolerance, sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among

its members; and encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her own potential. In pursuit of its goal of academic excellence, the University seeks to develop and nurture diversity. The University believes that diversity among its many members strengthens the institution, stimulates creativity, promotes the exchange of ideas, and enriches campus life. Purdue's nondiscrimination policy can be found at: http://www.purdue.edu/purdue/ea_eou_statement.html.

Academic integrity is one of the highest values that Purdue University holds. Individuals are encouraged to alert university officials to potential breaches of this value by either emailing integrity@purdue.edu or by calling 765-494-8778. While information may be submitted anonymously, the more information that is submitted provides the greatest opportunity for the university to investigate the concern.

“As a boilermaker pursuing academic excellence, I pledge to be honest and true in all that I do. Accountable together - we are Purdue.” For more information, see: [Purdue's Honor Pledge](#).

Academic Dishonesty

Purdue prohibits “dishonesty in connection with any University activity. Cheating, plagiarism, or knowingly furnishing false information to the University are examples of dishonesty.” [Part 5, Section III-B-2-a, [Student Regulations](#)] Furthermore, the University Senate has stipulated that “the commitment of acts of cheating, lying, and deceit in any of their diverse forms (such as the use of substitutes for taking examinations, the use of illegal cribs, plagiarism, and copying during examinations) is dishonest and must not be tolerated. Moreover, knowingly to aid and abet, directly or indirectly, other parties in committing dishonest acts is in itself dishonest.” [*University Senate Document 72-18*, December 15, 1972]

For additional details, see Purdue's student guide for academic integrity: <https://www.purdue.edu/odos/academic-integrity/>

Disability Resource Center

The Disability Resource Center (DRC) is a resource for students and instructors. Students may present a “Letter of Accommodation” to the professor at any point in the semester. If you have questions, please contact the DRC at: 765 494-1247. You may also visit the DRC at drc@purdue.edu.

CAPS Information:

Purdue University is committed to advancing the mental health and well-being of its students. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, services are available. For help, such individuals should contact Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at (765) 494-6995 and <http://www.purdue.edu/caps/> during and after hours, on weekends and holidays, or through its counselors physically located in the Purdue University Student Health Center (PUSH) during business hours.

Syllabus Change Policy

“Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.”

Website

The Syllabus, assignments, style guides, term sheets, and other information relevant to *Science and Society II* can be found at <https://mycourses.purdue.edu> You will need to use your Purdue ID and Password to access the site via <https://mycourses.purdue.edu>. If you do not have a PUID or experience trouble logging in, contact IT Support for assistance.

Course Schedule (*Subject to Change*)

Class meets on Mondays at 6:30

- 1/08 Introduction to *Global Environmental History* (HIST 641 / HIST 642)
- 1/15 Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday: No class meeting
- 1/22 Biological Invasion
Reading: William Cronon, *Changes in the Land*
- 1/29 NeoEuropes
Reading: Alfred Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900-1900*
- 2/05 Anthropology
Reading: Shepard Krech III, *The Ecological Indian: Myth and History*
- 2/12 Mosquitos and Trans Atlantic Trade
Reading: John McNeill, *Mosquito Empires*
- 2/19 History of Ecological Ideas
Reading: Donald Worster, *Nature's Economy*
- 2/26 Gender and Nature
Reading: Carolyn Merchant, *Death of Nature*
- 3/05 Evolutionary History
Reading: Edmund Russell, *Evolutionary History*
 Discussion of Research Topics
- 3/12 Spring Break: No class meeting
- 3/19 Doing Environmental History
Reading: Worster, Cronon (esp. <http://www.williamcronon.net>), Merchant, Steinberg, White on
 "Doing Environmental History"
- 3/26 Visions of the State
Reading: James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State*
- 4/02 The Pacific World
Reading: Gregory Cushman, *Guano and the Opening of the Pacific World*
- 4/09 China and the Environment
Reading: Judith Shapiro, *Mao's War Against Nature: Politics and the Environment in Revolutionary China*
 Lynn White, "The Historical Roots of our Ecological Crisis," *Science*
- 4/16 Independent Research on Paper - No Class Rough Draft due (optional)
- 4/23 Environmental History and the Future Final Paper due
 Individual Presentations