

**GY 453/553: Environment & Society**

**Fall 2019** (may be subject to minor changes)

**Instructor: Dr. Wanyun Shao**

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**Time: 3:00 pm – 5:50 pm T                                                              Location: Bevill Energy Bldg 0048**

**Office hours: 11:30 am – 12:30 pm TR** or by appointment

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**Course Description**

In the Anthropocene, the relationship between environment and human society has become increasingly interwoven, complex and complicated. A close examination of this relationship is warranted. This seminar first surveys various perspectives, theories, and approaches from different disciplines. Specifically, Malthus’s theory on population, the Coase theorem on managing the environment through contracts and bargaining, Hardin’s perspective on the tragedy of the commons, and Ostrom’s polycentric framework among others are examined and critiqued. The seminar then delves into specific environmental problems facing society. From carbon dioxide to bottled water, from earthquakes to flooding, the theories, perspectives, and approaches covered earlier in the seminar are applied into each specific problem.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

1. Students have working knowledge of the dominant modes of thinking about socio-environmental (SE) relations

2. Students critically assess current approaches to current environmental problems facing society

3. Students apply the working knowledge and their independent and critical thinking to a particular object of concern

**Course Materials:**

**Textbook**: Environment and Society: A Critical Introduction (Paul Robbins, John Hintz, and Sarah A. Moore; Wiley and Sons, 2nd ed., 2014).

Additional material will be posted on Blackboard or disseminated in class.

**Grading:**

As seminar participants are a mixture of undergraduate and graduate students, each class has its own assignments and grading rubrics.

For undergraduate students (GY453)

* One final paper due at the end of the course (November 26): worth 100 point (5-7 pages including references)
  + Proposal of the final paper due by mid-term (October 4) : worth 50 points (2-3 pages including references)
  + Presentation of the final paper: worth 30 points (15 minutes)
* Participation (attendance, seminar contributions, discussion): worth 30 points
* Weekly assignments/reflections on the readings: worth 90 points with each worth 10 points

For graduate students (GY553)

* One final paper due at the end of the course (November 26): worth 100 point (7-10 pages including references)
  + Proposal of the final paper due by mid-term (October 4) : worth 50 points (3-4 pages including references)
  + Presentation of the final paper: worth 30 points (15 minutes)
* Participation (attendance, seminar contributions, discussion): worth 30 points
* Weekly assignments/reflections on the readings: worth 90 points with each worth 10 points
* Book review of students’ (approved) choices: 50 points

**Semester Grades Are Determined Using This Scale**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Numerical Grade | Letter Grade | Equivalent on  4.0 scale |
| ≥ 96.7 | A+ | 4 |
| ≥ 93.3 | A | > 3.7 |
| ≥ 90.0 | A- | > 3.3 |
| ≥ 86.7 | B+ | > 3.0 |
| ≥ 83.3 | B | > 2.7 |
| ≥ 80.0 | B- | > 2.3 |
| ≥ 76.7 | C+ | > 2.0 |
| ≥ 73.3 | C | > 1.7 |
| ≥ 70.0 | C- | > 1.3 |
| ≥ 66.7 | D+ | > 1.0 |
| ≥ 63.3 | D | > 0.7 |
| ≥ 60.0 | D- | > 0.0 |
| < 60.0 | E/F (Fail) | 0 |

**Note:**students are required to submit all the work on time. Late assignments will be accepted only for university-approved reasons and with proper documentation.

**Attendance Policy**

Students must attend every class. Attendance will be taken every class. Participation in classroom activities and demonstration of preparedness will boost your attendance and participation grade.

**Communication with the Instructor outside the Class**

Communication with the instructor outside the class is equally important given that this is an upper level class. Throughout this course, students are encouraged to discuss their research projects with the instructor during her office hours or upon appointment.

**Email Policy**

I WILL NOT respond to messages sent by any email service other than UA E-mail. AND ALWAYS PUT the course number on the subject line.

**Notification of Changes**

The instructor will make every effort to follow the guidelines of this syllabus as listed; however, the instructor reserves the right to amend this document as the need arises. In such instances, the instructor will notify students in class and/or via email and will provide reasonable time for students to adjust to any changes.

*Plagiarism:* Plagiarism is a serious offense that is relatively easy to trace and determine. I have various means of identifying and tracing plagiarism. If you have questions about plagiarism, please contact me for further details and/or view official university websites. In addition, we have the Turnitin Policy.

*Turnitin Policy:* The University of Alabama is committed to helping students uphold the ethical standards of academic integrity in all areas of study. Students agree that their enrollment in this course allows the instructor the right to use electronic devices to help prevent plagiarism. All course materials are subject to submission to Turnitin.com for the purpose of detecting textual similarities. Assignments submitted to Turnitin.com will be included as source documents in Turnitin.com’s restricted access database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents. Turnitin.com will be used as a source document to help students avoid plagiarism in written documents.

*The UAct*

The University of Alabama is committed to an ethical, inclusive community defined by respect and civility. The UAct website (www.ua.edu/uact) provides a list of reporting channels that can be used to report incidences of illegal discrimination, harassment, sexual assault, sexual violence, retaliation, threat assessment or fraud UA's primary communication tool for sending out information is through its web site at www.ua.edu. In the event of an emergency, students should consult this site for further directions. Additional course information will be posted using Blackboard.

*Severe Weather Guidelines*

The guiding principle at The University of Alabama is to promote the personal safety of our students, faculty and staff during severe weather events. It is impossible to develop policies that anticipate every weather-related emergency. These guidelines are intended to provide additional assistance for responding to severe weather on campus.

UA is a residential campus with many students living on or near campus. In general classes will remain in session until the National Weather Service issues safety warnings for the city of Tuscaloosa. Clearly, some students and faculty commute from adjacent counties. These counties may experience weather related problems not encountered in Tuscaloosa. Individuals should follow the advice of the National Weather Service for that area taking the necessary precautions to ensure personal safety. Whenever the National Weather Service and the Emergency Management Agency issue a warning, people in the path of the storm (tornado or severe thunderstorm) should take immediate lifesaving actions. When West Alabama is under a

severe weather advisory, conditions can change rapidly. It is imperative to get to where you can receive information from the National Weather Service and to follow the instructions provided. Personal safety should dictate the actions that faculty, staff and students take.

The Office of University Relations will disseminate the latest information regarding conditions on campus in the following ways:

Weather advisory posted on the UA homepage

Weather advisory sent out through UA Alerts to faculty, staff and students

Weather advisory broadcast over WVUA at 90.7 FM

Weather advisory broadcast over Alabama Public Radio (WUAL) at 91.5 FM

Weather advisory broadcast over WVUA-TV/WUOA-TV, and on the website

at http://wvuatv.com/content/weather. WVUA-TV Home Team Weather provides a free service you can subscribe to which allows you to receive weather warnings for Tuscaloosa via e-mail or cell phone.

Check http://wvuatv.com/content/free-email-weather-alerts for more details and to sign up for weather alerts.

In the case of a tornado warning (tornado has been sighted or detected by radar; sirens activated), all university activities are automatically suspended, including all classes and laboratories. If you are in a building, please move immediately to the lowest level and toward the center of the building away from windows (interior classrooms, offices, or corridors) and remain there until the tornado warning has expired.

Classes in session when the tornado warning is issued can resume immediately after the warning has expired at the discretion of the instructor. Classes that have not yet begun will resume 30 minutes after the tornado warning has expired provided at least half of the class period remains.

*Policy on Academic Misconduct*

All students in attendance at The University of Alabama are expected to be honorable and to observe standards of conduct appropriate to a community of scholars. The University of Alabama expects from its students a higher standard of conduct than the minimum required to avoid discipline. At the beginning of each semester and on examinations and projects, the professor, department, or division may require that each student sign the following Academic Honor Pledge: “I promise or affirm that I will not at any time be involved with cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, or misrepresentation while enrolled as a student at The University of Alabama. I have read the Academic Honor Code, which explains disciplinary procedure

resulting from the aforementioned. I understand that violation of this code will result in penalties as severe as indefinite suspension from the University.” See the Code of Student Conduct for more information.

**Disability Accommodations**

Students who need accommodations are asked to arrange a meeting during office hours to discuss your accommodations. If you have a conflict with my office hours, an alternate time can be arranged. To set up this meeting, please contact me by e-mail. If you have not registered for accommodation services through the Office for Disability Services (ODS), but need accommodations, make an appointment with ODS, Houser Hall, Room 1000, or call 205-348-4285 or email ODS at ods@ua.edu.