

IS 150 - Sec. 88  
thru Cont. Ed.

## HUMANITY & THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT

IS 150 – Fall 2016 – Hannah Nyala West, Ph.D.

Online Office Hours: W 2:30 – 3:30 p.m. and by appointment

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Welcome!

You have chosen a course in which we will query the relationships among ourselves, our species, and the global environment (which includes other beings, plants, and the core physical structures of the planet). The field is vast—reckoning with the past, present, and near future—so we will make no attempts at summary or even overview coverage. Instead we will consider particular case studies that will provide insights on how humanity and the global environment function. Although I will provide some historical background for you, our main focus will be the history of the twentieth century—in whose wake we now exist. I look forward to working with you.

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### REQUIRED MATERIALS

You will read one book for this course, and rely upon another for excerpts and shorter essays. They can be purchased or rented through the University Store and will be available by the dates listed below. All other materials can be accessed online (via D2L E-Reserve or links that I provide).

J. Donald Hughes, *An Environmental History of the World: Humankind's Changing Role in the Community of Life*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Routledge, 2009). ISBN 13: 978-0-415-48150-2 (paper).

RENTAL – free to students at University Store by Week 3 of the course.

Mark Kurlansky, *Cod: A Biography of the Fish that Changed the World* (Penguin, 2010). ISBN 13: 978-0140275018 (paper). PURCHASE – at University Store by Week 4 of the course.

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### INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

In this course you will learn to:

- Describe events from past cultures, societies, or civilizations as they relate to the natural environment

- Recognize and begin to work with the different kinds of evidence that historians use to offer diverse perspectives on the meanings and interpretations of the many pasts that make up this society's present(s)
- Identify and consider the role of human agency in shaping events and historical change
- Reflect critically on the practices of historical causality as it relates to human interactions with the global environment
- Evaluate competing historical claims that frequently inform the present
- Serve as a colleague in a non-hierarchical space devoted to learning, ferreting out and analyzing historical resources, finding sources in the society where excellent historical information is regularly provided, and engaging in lively conversations with timely candor.

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### **SPINE OF THE COURSE**

This *Syllabus* is your map for this course. Listen to the welcome lecture first, and then print out and read through the entire document carefully, making notes of any questions you have. There is a dedicated discussion topic on D2L for those questions, should you need my help. Then complete the required syllabus quiz on D2L *no later than midnight on Friday of Week 1*, so that you are ready for Week 2 to begin on Monday morning. If you receive a score of less than 90%, please review your answers and the syllabus again and retake the quiz. Your ability to do well in this course relies on your understanding of the requirements and due dates and being able to open all materials on your computer.

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**Weekly Agendas**, which appear as weekly modules on D2L, will include links to your core assignments: for examples, setup and content lectures in PowerPoint or other video formats, discussions, quizzes, and links to any additional materials. Everything you need for each week will thus appear under the week's heading on D2L.

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**Readings and Film Viewings** have been calibrated to be manageable and available online when possible. They are critical to your success in the course.

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**Lectures** will occur in two formats: a brief weekly 'setup' lecture—in PowerPoint, pdf, and/or video format—that focuses your reading and studies; and periodic short topical multimedia presentations or guest lectures that provide more in-depth coverage of particular topics. All materials will be uploaded to the weekly agenda by the Monday of the week with which they are associated.

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**Fieldnotes & Queries** (F&Qs) will be produced in lieu of quizzes and exams. You will prepare these as journal entries and share them on each week's discussion board: your peers and I will respond to them, and our intellectual community will revolve around these interactions. In some weeks I will provide leading questions for you to consider in advance; in others, I will ask you to come up with the key questions for your posts. In the F&Qs, I expect you to demonstrate thoughtful interaction with the assignments and issues at hand.

Please see the Guidelines & Resources (G&R) module for advice on how to prepare for and participate in effective, collegial discussions. I will expect you to speak from evidence gleaned during your readings and prep—*not opinion or hazy recollection of having read/viewed something somewhere that's sort of flying off the top of your head just to get this requirement out of the way*, but well-organized notes: properly attributed to the sources from which you got the information and meaningfully relevant to the discussion at hand. You cannot do this at the last minute, so please develop a practice of diligent note-taking and organization before you enter the second week of the course.

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**ADDITIONAL SECTIONS on D2L –**

You are required to check into the following sections of this syllabus no later than noon on Friday of the first week of class.

**EQUITY OF EDUCATIONAL ACCESS  
CONNECTIONS – PROTOCOLS  
POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM  
POLICY ON NON-ATTENDANCE AND NON-PARTICIPATION**

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**Office Hours:** My online office hours for this semester are Wednesdays 2:30 – 3:30 p.m. and by appointment. To avoid any of you having to wait, I've outlined a procedure in my Virtual Office (on D2L) for scheduling. The discussion space effectively allows you to sign up for particular slots, so that other people can see what is already taken that week. If you want an appointment, please sign up for one and email me with a phone number at which I can reach you in our scheduled time slot. I will confirm via email.

If you make an appointment to meet with me, please be available and on time. I understand that internet access can sometimes fail—mine does so on occasion—and in those instances we simply have to accept the limitations of these technologies and reschedule as soon as we're able to reconnect. But it is important that we each do our best to make any appointments scheduled.

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**Email** allows us the magic of being in touch at any time of the day or night, which is convenient but unrealistic: none of us should try to be available at all hours! I will not ask this of you; you should not expect it of me. Please feel free to send me an email at any time, and know that I will respond as soon as I can. You should know, however, that I do not respond to or send emails about the course after hours or on weekends, so not hearing from me in those periods is no cause for concern. You should also know that I only check email twice a day and that I send out very few course emails. If you get one from me, please check to see if I have requested a response: if I have, please reply as soon as you can.

*Please do not send me emails with general questions about the course or requirements.* If you have a question, some of your peers almost certainly do as well, and therefore your post should show up on a discussion board so that everyone can benefit from it (in my online office space on D2L: Discussions/HNW Office/Questions about the Course/Requirements). If you need to contact me about a personal matter specific to you and no one else, feel free to use email. *However, if you do send me an email, the subject line should always include HIST 177 and your last name.* This helps me keep my inbox and folders organized and allows faster responses.



## REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION

Here is the rubric for grades and evaluation that I will use for your work. A complete description of each component can be found on D2L under the module titled Guidelines and Resources.

A. Professional Skills – Fieldnotes & Queries	75
Preparation, Analysis, Collegial Participation, Timeliness	
Each week (of 15 weeks) @ 5 pts.	
C. Focused Report -	25
In-depth book report on topic of choosing	
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>100</b>

**Grading scale:**

A	93–100%	C	73–76.9%
A-	90–92.9%	C-	70–72.9%
B+	87–89.9%	D+	67–69.9%
B	83–86.9%	D	63–66.9%
B-	80–82.9%	D-	60–62.9%
C+	77–79.9%	F	59.9 and below



**DEADLINES:** Due dates are always Fridays at noon unless otherwise specified (as with the syllabus quiz in Week 1). Your final focused report will be due on Friday of the 14<sup>th</sup> week of the course. Unless you have a verified medical or family emergency, your assignments must be submitted by their due dates or your grade will drop by one full letter grade per day.

Meeting due dates shows respect for yourself and your work. It also shows that you respect yourself, me, and my time and schedule, and it is a skill you must master for any career you pursue. In cases of illness, accidents, or deaths (of family or friends), please contact me via email *as soon as you can*. Any extensions require documentation and will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.



## WEEKLY AGENDAS – AN OVERVIEW

*Important Note:* Everything you need for each week—links and page assignments, guiding questions—will be available by Monday morning of the week itself. These will appear under the given week’s agenda in consecutive order. Some will be recommended or optional and marked as such; others (e.g. setup and content lectures) will be required. Weekly topics are provided in this table.

<b>Weekly Topics</b>
1: 9/7 Welcome and Introductions
2: 9/14 Extending Our Queries
3: 9/21 The Global Environment, Near and Far
4: 9/28 Human Histories on the Environment
5: 10/5 Culture   Nature and the Environment
6: 10/12 Ideas and Impacts
7: 10/19 The Middle Ages
8: 10/26 The Transformation of the Biosphere
9: 11/2 Begin Prep on <i>Cod</i>
10: 11/9 Exploitation and Conservation
11: 11/16 Mull and Share Notes on <i>Cod</i> / Prep Essays
12: 11/23 <b>NO CLASS</b> - Holiday!
13: 11/30 Modern Environmental Problems
14: 12/7 Present and Future: A General Conclusion
15: 12/14 Facing the Future: Wrap up

