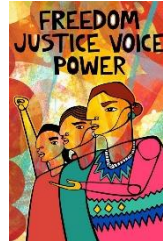
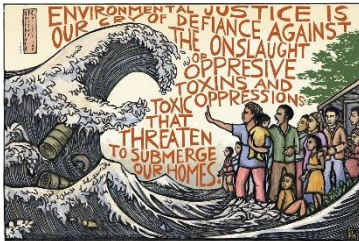


ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE IN THEORY & PRACTICE

Instructor: Chris Diehm



“Environmental Justice” is a catch-all term covering a wide variety of issues related to the environment, pollution, race, poverty, social justice, and conservation. It is in important ways primarily a social and political movement, but it also has many theoretical aspects that have been explored by academics and activists since the late 1960’s and early 1970’s. While many people are familiar with the language of environmental justice, few are familiar with the details of what it is, why people are advocating for it, and how it might relate to broader environmental concerns like climate change or biodiversity conservation. What, exactly, does environmental justice entail, and how might concerns about justice shape and inform approaches to environmental problems?

Objectives

This course explores a broad range of questions about environmental justice. It begins with readings designed to expose you to some of the core issues taken up by environmental justice advocates, and then proceeds to examine in detail the theoretical aspects of “justice” employed and developed by authors working in this area. The more theoretical portion of the course includes readings by American Indians and eco-feminists whose work intersects with environmental justice concerns, and adds unique considerations to the conversations about justice and the environment. The course then reviews some of the social science relevant to this area before turning to the topics of climate justice, sustainability and environmental ethics, and biodiversity conservation. On the whole, therefore, the course is both thematic and topical, as well as strongly inter-disciplinary, including readings by philosophers, scientists, social scientists, and on-the-ground environmental justice advocates.

Upon completing this course, you will have learned to:

- Define and identify “distributive,” “participatory,” and “recognition” aspects of environmental justice as they relate to contemporary environmental problems.
- Analyze points of potential convergence and divergence between environmental justice and contemporary conservation or environmental protection efforts.
- Formulate an original thesis, conduct research, and summarize and integrate relevant information as part of an extended research paper.
- Apply philosophical standards of oral and written communication to grammatically correct and organized verbal and written presentations.
- Critique your own and others’ work to provide useful feedback and improve communication skills.

Beyond these more academic objectives, we have the goal of completing our work in a manner befitting an advanced-level “capstone” course. I hope to accomplish this by following a seminar format, where the emphasis is on being a part of a community of learning that allows each of us to share the unique insights that we all bring into the classroom, to learn from each other, and to develop as deep as possible an appreciation of the relevance and importance of the issues we will be addressing.

Requirements

Quizzes

Quizzes will be given on the assigned readings at the beginnings of some classes. Missed quizzes cannot be made up (this includes quizzes missed due to lateness). Quizzes will not be announced, and there will be an *average* of about one per week. As long as you have read you should be able to do fairly well on quizzes even if you have not completely understood all of the material. I will drop your lowest score before calculating your quiz grade. Quizzes will be graded on the following 5-point scale: 5=excellent/all information is correct and answer is detailed; 4=very good/information is correct but detail is somewhat thin; 3= good/information is mostly correct but not detailed or overly vague; 2=poor/information is mostly incorrect and there is little or no detail; 1=very poor/information is almost entirely incorrect and there is no detail; 0=complete failure. Cumulatively, quizzes are worth 20% of your grade.

Short Reaction Papers

Everyone is required to submit two approximately 2-page typewritten reactions to or commentaries about the readings. You must do one of these no later than March 2nd, and the other between March 4th and April 20th. These assignments are each worth 5% of the final grade, making these worth a total of 10% of your overall grade. If you are taking this course for graduate credit (Phil 680) you will be required to submit four of these, and each individual assignment will be worth 2.5%, making this requirement worth a total of 10% of your overall grade.

Scheduled Homework Assignments

Three times throughout the semester (see reading list) you will be given homework assignments that are designed to complement the schedule of readings and help you with the research for your research paper (see below). These should be one page long, typed and double-spaces, and will be explained in more detail as the due dates approach. The first two of these assignments are worth 2.5% of your grade. The final one will require you to work in small teams and is worth 5%, making homework collectively worth 10% of your final grade.

Research Paper

You are required to write a substantial research paper for this course, which will involve several stages and two distinct grades. First, you will submit a paper proposal by April 6th, approximately 1-2 pages long, in which you sketch the topic you would like to research and your initial thoughts on how you might construct your argument. Next, we will set up a short meeting to discuss your proposal, talk about possible sources, etc. No later than April 27th, you will have to submit a *complete* draft of your paper (full-length, with notes, properly formatted), suitable for me to read and comment upon. *This draft will be graded*, and is worth 10% of your final grade. Your final draft is due no later than May 11th (our scheduled exam date). It should be between 10 and 12 pages long, typed and double-spaced, and is worth 40% of your overall grade. Specific information about what is expected of a research paper can be found in the research paper handouts.

**Research Paper Alternative*

As an alternative to the paper described above, you have the option of writing an extended book review. To do this, you will have to read a substantial amount of extra-curricular material (i.e. the book), and then follow the steps described above (paper proposal, draft, etc.). This paper could take the form of a lengthy book review, or a traditional thesis-based commentary on the book. Your choice of book needs to be approved through the proposal process.

Class Conduct and Participation

While you are in class, my expectation is that you will conduct yourself appropriately. This includes being generally attentive, and having cell phones turned off and put away. There is nothing appropriate to a college course about texting friends, going over materials from other classes, or sleeping, and if you

are doing any of these things, I will ask you to leave the room for the remainder of the class period (that is, if you are asked to leave, you should not return until the next class period, since coming back into the room only creates a further disruption).

Moreover, given that this is a seminar course, it is very important that everyone participate actively. This means, first, that your *attendance is absolutely crucial and therefore mandatory*—anyone who misses more than the equivalent of three weeks of class will automatically receive an “F” for the course. The reason for this is that your role in a philosophy class is not simply to receive information passively; it is to contribute actively to the classroom environment, and this cannot happen if you miss between 20 and 25% of the class meetings.

Second, *verbal participation is required*. This is because in philosophy it is expected that you engage in conversations, answer questions that are posed, and ask questions of your own. It is also expected that you learn to do these things appropriately even when I am not doing obvious sorts of things intended to facilitate discussion.

I will keep a record of how much you participate in class in this way, and your active participation is worth 10% of your grade.

Academic Integrity Policy

I adhere to a strict policy on academic integrity (plagiarism, cheating, etc.). All questions you have regarding academic integrity should be resolved before you turn course materials in to me. Information can be found in UWSP Chapter 14, available at: “<http://www.uwsp.edu/admin/stuaffairs/rights/rightsChap14.pdf>”. The minimum penalty for a violation of academic integrity is a failure (zero) for the assignment. In addition, all infractions will be reported to the university.

Missed/Late Work

Missed work usually can be made up on the condition that you either inform me beforehand of an upcoming absence, or provide me with a formal written excuse. If you have not made arrangements with me beforehand, your late work may or may not be accepted. If I do accept an assignment that has been turned in later than we have agreed, the highest grade you will be able to receive will be no higher than the lowest grade received by someone who turned the assignment in on time.

Texts

David Schlosberg, *Defining Environmental Justice: Theories, Movements, and Nature* (Oxford UP)

Reserve Reading

Many readings for this course are on Canvas. These are marked as “(R)” on the reading list. It is your responsibility to get all assignments on time and to be aware of when they are being read.

Grading

Unless otherwise indicated, all grades will be calculated according to the following scale:

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

General Degree and Program Requirements

This course satisfies the Communication in the Major and Capstone Course requirements of the general education program (GEP). It also counts as an elective towards the Environmental Ethics Certificate.

Other Information

Students with disabilities should contact the Office of Disability Services as soon as possible. Religious beliefs will be accommodated according to UWS 22.03 provided that you have notified me of any possible conflicts with the class.

Personal Information

Office—Collins Classroom Center (CCC) #416

Phone—715-346-4948

Office Hours— Monday and Wednesday 12:30-2:00 p.m.; Tuesday, and Thursday 3:15-4:00 p.m. Other days and times by appointment.

E-mail—cdiehm@uwsp.edu