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Syllabus

**ANTH 210. INTRODUCTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL  
ANTHROPOLOGY****Winter Quarter 2002**

## Syllabus

**CLASS MEETINGS:** MWThF 130-220 p.m. (Kane 210), plus the required Tuesday sections.

**INSTRUCTOR:** *Professor Devon G. Peña.*

**OFFICE:** Denny Hall M-42; 543-1507;

**OFFICE HOURS:** W 10 am-12 noon or by appointment.

**TEACHING ASSOCIATES**

*Sue Johnston*

**OFFICE:** Denny Hall 418, 543-6825;

**Office Hours:** T 10-11am or by appointment.

*Linda Storm*

**OFFICE:** Denny Hall 433, 206-953-0419;

**Office Hours:** T 930-11am or by appointment.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION.**

Introduction to human/environmental interactions from various anthropological perspectives. Intellectual history of anthropological approaches to environment, emphasizing the mutual interconnectedness of people and nature. Survey of evolutionary models, cultural ecology, systems approaches, indigenous knowledge, ethnoecology, nature and the state, political ecology, ecofeminism, environmentalism, and environmental justice.

What is nature? In what manner is it meaningful to say nature is culturally constructed? Does the biophysical world cease to exist because people can't agree on a definition of nature? How do different cultures and societies vary in their definitions of nature? Are human cultures uniformly destructive in their relationships with the natural environment? Have some cultures developed strategies to inhabit places without degrading the environment? Can biotechnology create an environmentally sustainable form of agriculture? What is the "patenting of life?" Does it threaten the traditional lifestyles of indigenous communities and farmers? What is environmental justice? How do race and other social and cultural differences affect human experience of ecological degradation? The course will focus on two interconnected problems: (1) the study of the biophysical environment as a factor interacting with human inhabitation of places and (2) the ecological politics that emerge when different groups clash over the definition, organization, and control of the natural environment.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS.**

1. Mid-term exam. 10 conceptual definitions (50-100 words each) and three (3) one page essays. This will be a take-home exam with open books and open notes. You are encouraged to form peer study groups, but all writing must be done independently. The mid-term exam will count for 35 percent of your final course grade. **The mid-term exam will be assigned on Fri., Feb 15 and is due on Wed., Feb 20.**

2. Final exam. 10 conceptual definitions (50-100 words each) and three (3) one page essays. This will be a take-home exam with open books and open notes. You are encouraged to form peer study groups, but all writing must be done independently. The mid-term exam will count for 35 percent of your final course grade. **The final exam will be assigned on Fri., Mar. 15 and is due on Wed., Mar. 20.**

3. Group poster presentation and briefing. The class will be organized into 20 research groups, each with 5 students. The groups will conduct research in the library and the World Wide Web on a topic selected from the attached list (see [Instructional Handout #1](#)). Each group will be responsible for a poster presentation during the last week of class and a 5-7 page brief on the research topic. The group project will count for 30 percent of your final course grade. **The poster presentations will be scheduled for the week of Mar 11.** Posters and briefs are due on the day of the group presentations, and the order of presentations will be determined by lottery later.

**COURSE TEXTBOOKS.**

1. Bullard, Robert D. (Ed.). 1993. *Confronting environmental racism: Voices from the grassroots*. Boston: South End Press.

2. Hunn, Eugene. 1991. *Nch'I-Wana The Big River: Mid-Columbia Indians and their land*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

3. Peña, Devon G. 1998. *Chicano culture, ecology, politics: Subversive kin*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.

4. Shiva, Vandana. 1997. *Biopiracy: The plunder of nature and knowledge*. Boston: South End Press.

5. Teitel, Martin and Kimberly Wilson. 1999. *Genetically-engineered food: Changing the nature of nature*. Rochester, VT: Park Street Press.

6. Townsend, Patricia K. 2000. *Environmental anthropology*. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press.

Additional readings are on electronic reserve as indicated in the course calendar.

**COURSE CALENDAR.**

**JANUARY**WEEK 1

M-7 Review of syllabus, course requirements, objectives, and procedures. Introductory lecture on "culture, place, and nature."

**Overview of the Intellectual History of Environmental Anthropology**

W-9 Cultural ecology.

Readings: Townsend, pp. 1-18.

Th-10 The ecosystem concept in anthropology. Ethnoecology.

Readings: Townsend, pp. 27-52.

F-11 Environmental problems and social movements.

Readings: Townsend, pp. 54-103.

**Ecological Adaptation and Deep History**WEEK 2

M-14 Prehistoric environmental change and human adaptation. Guest lecture: Professor Don Grayson.

Readings: *Electronic reserve 1a* - Jared Diamond, "The Golden Age That Never Was 9," and *Electronic reserve 1b* - Jared Diamond, "Blitzkrieg and Thanksgiving in the New World."

W-16 The battle for the commons.

Readings: *Electronic reserve 3* - Hardin, Garrett. 1968. "The Tragedy of the Commons," *Science*, 162:1243-48. *Electronic reserve 4* - Goldman, Michael. 1998. "Inventing the commons: Theories and practices of the commons' professional," in *Privatizing Nature: Political Struggles for the Global Commons*, ed. Michael Goldman. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, pp. 20-53.

Th-17 Ecological anthropology. Natural resource conservation theory and culture. Guest lecture: Professor Eric A. Smith.

Readings: *Electronic reserve 2* - Smith, Eric A. and Mark Wishnie. 2000. "Conservation and subsistence in small-scale societies," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 29:493-524.

**Ethnoecology: Place-Based Environmental Knowledge**

F-18 Place-based environmental knowledge. Guest lecture: Professor Gene

Hunn.

Readings: Townsend, pp. 19-26. *Electronic reserve 5* - Hunn, Eugene. 1999. "The Value of Subsistence to the World," in *Ethnoecology: Situated Knowledge/Located Lives*, ed. Virginia Nazarea. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, pp. 3-20.

WEEK 3

M-21                    **No class. MLK Jr.**

W-23                    Cognitive maps. Sense of place.

Readings: Hunn, pp. 89-137.

Th-24 Indigenous and scientific knowledge. Guest lecture: Sasala Chao, Rukai doctoral student in cultural anthropology (UW) and aboriginal rights activist.

Readings: *Electronic reserve 6* - Agrawal, Arun. 1995. "Dismantling the divide between indigenous and scientific knowledge," *Development and Change* 26:413-439.

**Anthropogenic Environmental Change**

F-25 Deep history revisited: The riddle of the "Mima Mounds." Guest lecture: Linda Storm, EPA staff member and doctoral student in environmental anthropology (UW).

Readings: *Electronic reserve 7* - Anderson, M. Kat. 1996. "Tending the Wilderness," *Restoration and Management Notes* 14:154-166.

WEEK 4

M-28 Human cultures as keystone communities.

Readings: *Electronic reserve 8* - Peña, Devon G. 1999. "Cultural Landscapes and Biodiversity: The Ethnoecology of a Watershed Commons in the Upper Rio Grande," in *La Gente: Hispano History and Life in Colorado*, ed. Vincent Cabeza de Baca. Denver: Colorado Historical Society, pp.

W-30 Anthropogenesis from a bioregional vantage point.

Readings: Peña, pp. 3-19 and 25-56.

Th-31 Environmental history and ecological politics.

Readings: Peña, pp. 141-175.

**FEBRUARY**

F-1 Land, water, culture, place, and ecological politics.

Readings: Peña, p. 234 ("Pasture Poacher" poem) and pp. 235-277.

Film: *Sin agua no hay vida*

WEEK 5

**Political Ecology of "Development"**

M-4 The sustainable development discourse.

Readings: *Electronic reserve 10* - Redclift, Michael. 1995. "Sustainable Development and Popular Participation: A Framework for Analysis," in *Grassroots Environmental Action: People's Participation in Sustainable Development*, ed. Dharam Ghai and Jessica Vivian. London: Routledge, pp. 23-49.

W-6 Sustainable development and new social movements.

Readings: *Electronic reserve 11* - Peet, Richard and Michael Watts. 1996. "Liberation Ecology: Development, Sustainability, and Environment in the Age of Market Triumphalism," in *Liberation Ecologies: Environment, Development, Social Movements*, ed. Richard Peet and Michael Watts. London: Routledge, pp. 1-39.

Th-7 The politics of science in modern forestry. Guest lecture: K. Sivaramakrishnan.

Readings: *Electronic reserve 9* - Sivaramakrishnan, K. 1999. "Nature's Science: Fire and Forest Regeneration," in *Modern Forests: Statemaking and Environmental Change in Colonial Eastern India*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

F-8 Cultures and narratives of nature in ecological politics. Guest lecture: Professor Celia Lowe.

Readings: *Electronic reserve 12* - Kahn, Miriam. 2000. "Tahiti Intertwined: Ancestral Land, Tourist Postcard, and Nuclear Test Site," *American Anthropologist*; *Electronic reserve 13* - Lowe, Celia. 2000. "Global Markets, Local Injustice in Southeast Asia Seas: The Live Fish Trade and Local Fishers in the Togean Islands of Sulawesi," in *People, Plants, and Justice: The Politics of Nature Conservation*, ed. Charles Zermer. New York: Columbia University Press.

WEEK 6

**Biological and Cultural Diversity in Conservation**

M-11 Natural resource management and local cultures.

Readings: *Electronic reserve 13* - Nabhan, Gary. 1991, Selections from

*Enduring Seeds: Native American Agriculture and Wild Plant Conservation.*  
San Francisco: Northpoint Press.

T-12 Assignment note: Sections hold review sessions for mid-term exam.

W-13 Natural resource management - Linking cultural and biological diversity, II.

Readings: **Electronic reserve 14** - Nabhan, Gary. 1991, Selections from *Enduring Seeds: Native American Agriculture and Wild Plant Conservation.* San Francisco: Northpoint Press.

Th-14 The agroecology revolution.

Readings: **Electronic reserve 15** - Altieri, Miguel. 1995. "Traditional Agriculture," in *Agroecology: The Science of Sustainable Agriculture.* Boulder: Westview Press, pp. 107-144. **Electronic reserve 16** - Liebman, Matt. 1995. "Polyculture Cropping Systems," in *Agroecology: The Science of Sustainable Agriculture,* pp. 205-218.

F-15 Film: TBA.

Assignment note: Mid-Term Exam assigned and distributed.

#### WEEK 7

M-18 **No class. Presidents' Day.**

#### **Science and Politics of Biotechnology**

W-20 Biotechnology, I: The science and politics of genetically-engineered organisms (GEOs).

Readings: Teitel and Wilson, pp. 1-78.

Assignment note: Mid-term exam is due at the beginning of class.

Th-21 Biotechnology, II: Survey of environmental, cultural, and economic impacts.

Readings: Teitel and Wilson, pp. 79-162.

F-22 **No class.**

#### WEEK 8

M-25 Biocolonialism: Patents on Life. Biosafety and the Precautionary Principle. Guest lecture: Professor Phil Bereano.

Readings: Shiva, pp. 1-41.

W-27 History of science: from the Green Revolution to biotechnology.

Readings: Shiva, pp. 43-64.

Th-28 Biopiracy and new social movements.

Readings: Shiva, pp. 65-126.

### **Environmental Justice, Sustainability and Equity**

#### **MARCH**

F-1 Film: *Not for Sale* (Guest - Melissa Young )

Environmental justice I: The political ecology of class, race, and gender.

Readings: Bullard, pp. 1-52.

#### WEEK 9

M-4 Environmental justice II: African American and Native American communities.

Readings: Bullard, pp. 53-122.

W-6 Environmental justice III: Chicano land and water rights struggles. Biodiversity, sense of place, and human health. Guest lecture: Sue Johnston, doctoral student in environmental anthropology (UW) and registered nurse.

Readings: Bullard, pp. 123-178.

Th-7 Environmental justice IV: Changes between Summit I and II. From the critique of environmental racism to the creation of just sustainability.

F-8 **No class.** Work on poster presentations and briefs.

### **Poster Presentations and Briefs**

#### WEEK 10

M-11 Poster presentations and briefs: **Groups 1-5.**

T-12 Assignment note: Sections hold review sessions for final exam.

W-13 Poster presentations and briefs: **Groups 6-10.**

Th-14 Poster presentations and briefs: **Groups 11-15.**

F-15 Poster presentations and briefs: **Groups 16-20.**

Assignment note: Final take-home exam assigned and distributed (due Mar.

20).

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Contact the instructor at: [yourname@u.washington.edu](mailto:yourname@u.washington.edu)