

ANTH 37500 – 01: Environmental Anthropology  
Spring, 2011, Syllabus  
TR 10:50am – 12:05pm, Gannett 110  
David Turkon: 274-1782; [dturkon@ithaca.edu](mailto:dturkon@ithaca.edu)  
Office: G12. Hours: MW. 10:00-11:00; R 1:00 - 2:00pm.

**Note:** *I reserve the right to change aspects of the course content, including the nature of assignments and grading standards. In the unlikely event that I do so I will notify you in class.*

Note: Late work will be penalized by 10% (ten-percent) for each class meeting period it is late.

Environmental anthropology is the study of the relationships between human populations and environments. In this course we will pay particular attention to ways that human groups have adjusted to the environments they reside in, cultural and environmental changes (both natural and human-induced), and problems and controversies that stem out of these changes. We will also examine how environments that some populations have been restricted to limit their ability to live a healthy lifestyle by using their traditional strategies, and explore strategies that may provide alternatives.

Issues that we will visit include the environmental and socioeconomic impacts of international trade, globalization, transnational processes, sustainability, global warming, tourism and health, to name a few. Central to our approach will be the core concept of anthropology, culture. In cases that we consider we will always try to understand the cultural values that motivate people to behave as they do, variations that lead to competition for alternative behaviors, and conflicts that result from different “cultures” coming into contact. “Global culture,” of course, goes well beyond the local, and we will look at how aspects of global culture are negotiated and manipulated by different interest groups, such as environmental organizations, development agencies, policymakers and indigenous peoples.

### **REGULAR PARTICIPATION – DISCUSSIONS – ATTENDANCE**

**ATTENDANCE:** I expect you to be present and contribute to class discussions. Twenty percent of your grade is based on attendance, preparedness for class, and participation in discussions. I also expect you to **arrive on time**. You have ten minutes between classes and that is more than enough time to get across campus. It’s disruptive to have people wandering in once we have begun. Also, unless it is an emergency, avoid getting up and leaving during the middle of class. If you are late more than a two times it may hurt your final grade.

**GROUP DISCUSSIONS:** An important component of this class is discussion of readings. Come to class prepared with questions or observations about the readings for that day or week. If I find that the majority of you are ill-prepared, I reserve the right to require each of you to submit weekly summaries and questions for the readings. Should this become the case (and I hope it doesn’t) I’ll provide specific guidelines and factor these assignments into your final grade.

To facilitate discussions, each of you will be assigned to a “conservation group.” Groups will meet regularly to discuss readings and choose questions for discussion on that day. I’ll also have groups come together occasionally during class time to discuss some idea or issue and then formulate an opinion about it, which you’ll then contribute to a discussion.

Each group will be responsible for summarizing the readings of at least one day during the semester. See the syllabus for your groups assigned days.

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### **TEST, TEAM PROJECT AND RESEARCH PAPER**

**TEST:** There is an in-class mid-term exam, which will give you the opportunity to critically apply concepts from the course toward analyzing or formulating positions on specific issues. I will

not grade you on your opinions, only on your ability to apply concepts and ideas in logically. I'll prepare you well for this test so don't be too worried about it. Your grade will be based in large part on your ability to use concepts from the class and readings to make sense of ideas or situations.

**TEAM PROJECT:** You will participate in a **team project** that will help you and the rest of the class (me included) better appreciate the complexity of the processes that lead to the things we expect out of life being readily available to us, and the consequences of this for the environment and for people who make sure we get our stuff. This will be your commodity project. Each team will take a commodity and determine the sources of its origin (materials used, assembly, shipping, etc.), the effects that its manufacture has on the environment, and the human component in its production (labor for resources, production, transport and so on). Your team will report on these in detail using powerpoint presentations with images and graphics.

**RESEARCH PAPER:** You will conduct a substantial **research project** on your own. For your project you will choose a topic that interests you, and which can be analyzed from an anthropological perspective. Your report on that topic will explicitly state how anthropological perspectives can help us to better understand the problem and perhaps contribute toward resolving it or at least shedding light on it. For your project you may certainly do web research, but I also expect that at least half of your sources will be scholarly (anthropological journal articles and anthropological books). You can access most major anthropological journals online, through our library (Anthrosource and JSTOR). Your final write-up is due during our final exam slot (see end of syllabus).

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**FIELDTRIP:** We will take a fieldtrip to Eco-Village to witness what it is like to live in an "intentional community" founded on ideals of environmental sustainability and cooperative living. The trip is scheduled for Saturday, April 9. If you work on that day please try and arrange to get it off. Let me know early on if you anticipate a problem with this. There is a fee of \$7.50 per person for the tour, all of which goes to Eco-Village.

### **COMPETANCIES:**

Some of the goals for this class are for you to gain understandings of the following:

- Cultural constructions of environments and environmental policy
- Cognitive models of the environment
- Human adaptive strategies and their consequences on the environment
- Cultural ecology
- Political ecology, symbolic ecology and historic ecology
- Regimes of nature (techno, capitalist and organic)
- Globalization, modernization and environmental issues
- Conservation – the Yellowstone model
- Interfaces between transnational environmental movements, global economic policies and indigenous environmental priorities
- Environmentalism vs environmental justice
- Sustainable development

### **GRADING:**

Commodity presentation	20 points
Midterm exam	30 points
Research project	30 points
Participation, attendance & reading presentations	<u>20 points</u>
Total	100 points

The scale for calculating your grade is:

A	95 and above	A -	91 – 94		
B+	87 – 90	B	84 – 86	B-	81 – 83
C+	77 – 80	C	74 – 76	C-	71 – 73
D+	67 – 70	D	64 – 66	D-	60 – 63
F	00 – 59				

## READINGS:

We will use two textbooks for this class. There are also assigned articles, and I will probably provide others as the class progresses. I'll make these available through Blackboard. Reading assignments for each week are clearly marked on the syllabus. Be familiar with readings so that we can discuss them. If I hand out additional articles I will always give you a good lead time, and I will not overburden you with unreasonable amounts of reading or with ones that are dense and laden with jargon. Our texts are:

## BOOKS

Bates, Daniel G.

2005 *Human Adaptive Strategies: Ecology, Culture and Politics*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Boston: Pearson. ISBN 9780205418152

Moran, Emilio F.

2006 *People and Nature: An Introduction to Human Ecological Relations*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing. ISBN 9781405105729

Townsend, Patricia K.

2009 *Environmental Anthropology: From Pigs to Policies*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Long Grove, IL: Waveland. ISBN 9781577665816

Vivanco, Luis A.

2006 *Green Encounters: Shaping and Contesting Environmentalism in Rural Costa Rica*. NY: Berghahn Books. ISBN 9781845455040

## ARTICLES (Available on Blackboard)

Bury, Jeff

Transnational Corporations and Livelihood Transformations in the Peruvian Andes: An Actor-Oriented Political Ecology. Available on Blackboard.

Biersack, Aletta

Introduction: From the "New Ecology" to the New Ecologies. Available on Blackboard.

Chatterjee, Pratap and Matthias Finger

Promoting Big Business at Rio. Available on Blackboard.

Doane, Molly

The Political Economy of the Ecological Native. Available on Blackboard.

Escobar, Arturo

After Nature: Steps to an Antiessentialist Political Ecology.

Greer, Jack

A Life Among the Watermen

Kottak, Conrad  
The New Ecological Anthropology. Available on Blackboard.

Naben, Gary et. al.  
Safeguarding Species, Languages and Cultures in the Time of Diversity Loss: From the Colorado Plateau to Global Hotspots.

Ostrom, Elinor et. al.  
Revisiting the Commons: Local Lessons, Global Challenges. Available on Blackboard.

Reed, Richard  
Two Rights Make a Wrong: Indigenous Peoples Versus Environmental Protection Agencies.

Tyrrell, Martina  
Nunavik Inuit Perspectives on Beluga Whale Management in the Canadian Arctic. Available on Blackboard.

### Class Schedule

In the following schedule, **Bates** refers to Human Adaptive Strategies, while **Moran** refers to People and Nature. Articles are listed by title, and available on Blackboard where they are listed by title.

#### Week 1:

1/25 Introduction.

1/27 A history of environmental anthropology.  
**Readings: Townsend** Chapters. 1 - 9.

#### Week 2:

2/1 A history of environmental anthropology, continued.  
**Readings: Moran** Ch. 1; **Bates** Chapter 1; **Townsend** Chapters 10 – 13.

2/3 Cognitive models of the environment and their implications for action.  
**Video and discussion:** First Storytellers.

#### Week 3:

2/8 Cognitive models, continued.  
**Readings: Moran** Ch. 2 and 3; **Bates** Chapter 2.  
**In class exercise – Card Sorting: Domains in Nature**

2/10 From cultural ecology to political ecology..  
**Readings: Introduction:** From the “New Ecology” to the New Ecologies (on Blackboard); **The New Ecological Anthropology (optional reading)** on Blackboard).

#### Week 4:

2/15 Political ecology.  
**Readings:**  
**Slides** and discussion: The political ecology of southern Africa.

- 2/17 Ecosystems: culturally constructed or empirically grounded?  
**Readings:** **Escobar**, After Nature: Steps to an Anti-Essentialist Political Ecology;  
**Greer**, A Life Among the Watermen.  
**READING SUMMARY by TEAM 1**

**Week 5:**

- 2/22 Foraging societies in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.  
**Readings:** Bates, Ch. 3; **Nunavik Inuit** Perspectives on Beluga Whale Management in the Canadian Arctic (on Blackboard).  
**READING SUMMARY by TEAM 2**

- 2/24 Horticultural societies.  
**Readings:** **Bates** Chapter 4;  
**Video and Discussion:** Hungry for Help: Niger's Food Crisis.

**Week 6:**

- 3/1 Pastoralists.  
**Readings:** <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=73231> & **Bates** Ch. 5.  
**Slides:** Agro-pastoral strategies in Lesotho.
- 3/3 Industrial Society: Are "commons" possible?  
**Readings:** **Bates** Chapter 6; **Moran** Ch. 4; Commons (Revisiting the Commons: Local Lessons, Global Challenges); A Life Among Watermen (again).  
**READING SUMMARY by TEAM 3**

**Week 7:**

- 3/8 Industrial Society:  
**Readings:** **Bates** Chapter 7; **Moran** Ch. 5; **Promoting** Big Business at Rio (on Blackboard); Transnational Corporations and Livelihood Transformations in the Peruvian Andes: An Actor-Oriented Political Ecology.  
**READING SUMMARY by TEAM 4**  
**Video and discussion:** The Goddess and the Computer.

- 3/10 **MID-TERM EXAM.**

**Week 8:**

- 3/15 & 3/17 **Spring Break, no classes.\**

**Week 9:**

- 3/22 Globalization and Development – Cognitive models of the environment, revisited.  
**Readings:** **Bates** Chapter 8.  
**Video and discussion:** NOW, God and Global Warming.

- 3/24 Political Ecology revisited.  
**Video:** The Dammed.

**Week 10:**

- 3/29 **Turkon away at Applied Anthropology Meetings**  
3/31 **NCUR meetings at IC, no classroom based activities.**

**Attend and report on all papers or posters from at least one full session that deals with human interactions with environments.**

**Week 11:**

4/5 Globalization and Development

**Video and Discussion:** NOW, Who Killed Sister Dorothy?

**Research Project Topic Summary Due**

4/7 Intentional communities.

**Tentative Guest Speaker:** lecturer from Eco-village.

**Readings:** Moran Chs. 6, 7 and 8; <http://www.ic.org/>

**Fieldtrip to Eco-village on Saturday, April 9.**

**Week 12:**

4/12 Globalization and Development Revisited, Fostering Community through Development.

**Readings:** Moran Ch. 6, again;

**Slides** from Lesotho – Homestead Gardening and Conservation agriculture.

4/14 Ecotourism and environmentalism.

**Tentative Guest Lecture:** David Himmelfreen on tourism, diet and health in Costa Rica.

**Readings:** Green Encounters: Shaping and Contesting Environmentalism in Rural Costa Rica.

**Week 13:**

4/19 The Environmental Justice Movement – Critical Theory.

**Readings:** The Political Economy of the Ecological Native (again); Two Rights Make a Wrong: Indigenous Peoples Versus Environmental Protection Agencies; Safeguarding Diversity on the Colorado Plateau (on Blackboard)

**Powerpoint presentation on Environmental Justice**

**Research Project Outline and Partial Bibliography Due**

4/21 Environmental Justice, continued.

**Video and discussion: Justice for Sale**

**Week 14:**

4/26 & 4/28 “Stuff” - Commodity presentations.

**Week 15:** Final Exam Week – **Final Research Projects Due** during allotted final exam time – Tuesday May 5, 7:30 – 10:00am. I will be available to meet and go over grades. Since this is final exam week, I will not accept late papers.