**CASCADIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE**



**Winter 2009**

***Swimming Upstream?***

The Environment, Power and Democracy in the United States

**ENVS 150  Themes & Methods in the Environ. Sciences (5CR)
with
POLI 202  U.S. Politics and Government (5CR)**

**Faculty**

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**by appointment online or by appointment**

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Please read this syllabus carefully and consult it regularly during the quarter.  Let us know if you have any questions about any aspect of the syllabus or the course.  We have plenty of copies should you need a replacement!

**Please Note**

If you have or suspect you have a disability and need an accommodation please contact Disability Support Services by calling 352-8383,or sending an email to rloftis@cascadia.ctc.edu, or visit the DSS office in Library room 205 until January 28th, to schedule an appointment. Services and accommodations through DSS are not retroactive.

**Inclement Weather**

In the event of inclement weather affecting classes, there will be notification on the local media by 5:30 a.m. You may also call the main campus number: **425-352-8000** to hear a message that will be updated with the latest Cascadia closure information. You may also go online to http://www.cascadia.ctc.edu/CampusInformation/inclement.asp and click on Cascadia Community College to get the latest report.

**Course Objectives**

This learning community will focus on how U.S. political, economic, social, and cultural developments have altered the natural world in which we live. The class will address attitudes toward environmental quality and how individuals view their relationship with the environment. We will examine the national picture as well as local examples within the state of Washington. For comparative purposes the course will also offer a global perspective on environmental issues and politics. Several activities are planned as well as a service project designed to actively involve students in improving our regional environmental quality while learning more about the intricacies of politics and social change.

The discussion of United States politics and government will also introduce students to the fundamentals of American government and politics. These include the core values of American political culture, the Constitution, the branches of governments, federalism, campaigns and elections, interest groups, protest movements and foreign policy. We will be studying the American political experience from a variety of perspectives including political theory, social history, political economy, comparative politics and ethics. Furthermore, this course will encourage the development of writing and analytical skills as well as broad familiarity with many of the concepts and issues central to the discipline of Political Science.

The environment science component of the course will combine an intensive study of the global environmental science concepts along with the associated history, politics and economics. Students will explore such topics as biodiversity, water resources, energy resources and global warming, as well as the impacts of human use and abuse. These scientific studies will be seamlessly intertwined with an exploration of historical practices, legislation, controversy and confrontation. In the end, students will emerge with a broad and deep reservoir of knowledge and tools which can be used to make decisions about the future of the planet’s valuable resources.

The course is not limited to a mere description of issues central to and politics and environmental science. Rather, it will continuously challenge the ways we are accustomed to thinking about politics and the environment by debating and critically appraising the merit of different perspectives and conceptual frameworks. Through comparing and contrasting these perspectives, the course aims to encourage students to think critically about politics and the environment. At a minimum this involves distinguishing among various arguments and modes of analysis, evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of different explanations, and ultimately developing one’s own independent perspective on various problems encountered in environmental and political issues.

**Course Organization**

The course is structured to encourage maximum independent thinking and critical analysis of theories and issues central to the discipline of Political Science.  To this end, the instructor will discuss material assigned for each session, identify key issues and events, and offer insights into various ways of analyzing problems in politics.  Discussions will typically go considerably beyond the assigned readings therefore it is imperative that students take excellent notes and ask questions when clarification is needed.  Furthermore, much of class time will be devoted to student discussion of issues raised in the readings and lectures.  All students are expected to come to class having read the material assigned for that day, and prepared to participate in classroom discussions.  In this class you will be responsible for your own and your peers’ learning.  As instructors, our role in the class will be to encourage you to learn, to assist you in expanding your ability to think independently, to critique what you read, to write thoughtful papers, and to encourage well-informed participation.

**Learning Outcomes:**

This course will facilitate the development of the following learning outcomes:

* Understand key concepts and issues in the disciplines of political science and environmental science, and effectively communicate these both verbally and in writing (*Learn Actively, Communicate with Clarity and Originality*)
* Understand and critically appraise various perspectives in politics and environmental science (*Think Critically, Creatively and Reflectively*)
* Critically assess media and popular discourse on politics and the environment, and engage in independent assessment of political and environmental issues (*Interact in Diverse and Complex Environments and Think Critically, Creatively and Reflectively*)
* To locate and access information about politics and the environment, and to take an active role in your own ongoing education (*Learn Actively*)

**Required Readings**

Texts:

The following text may be purchased at the University of Washington-Bothell Bookstore. These readings are intended to facilitate imaginative thinking and dialogue about specific themes discussed in class.

* Blaine Harden, *A River Lost: The Life and Death of the Columbia*
* Jay Withgott and Scott Brennan, *Environment: The Science Behind the Stories*
* Edward Sidlow and Beth Henschen, *America at Odds*
* George McKenna and Stanley Feingold, *Clashing Views on Controversial Political Issues*

Please remember to bring your books to the class!

Internet Resources:

* The text *America at Odds is* accompanied by online companion website. Instructions for accessing this site can be found within the text. Here you will find interesting articles and exercises and useful links to other sites. Please access this site regularly. It will assist you in the writing of your papers, classroom discussions and presentations.
* Course Website:<http://faculty.cascadia.edu/jvanleer/WWD/ENVS%20150%20Index.htm>
* Companion Blackboard: To login, go to http://blackboard.cascadia.ctc.edu/

Daily News:

Students are also encouraged to keep current with the latest developments in the world of politics by reading *The* *New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal,* the *Christian Science Monitor, The Guardian* and *The Independent,* among other sources

**Academic Honesty**

The College regards acts of academic dishonesty, including such activities as plagiarism, cheating and/or/violations of integrity in information technology, as very serious offenses.  In the event that cheating, plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty are discovered, each incident will be handled as deemed appropriate.  A description of all such incidents shall be forwarded to the Vice President for Student Success, where a file of such occurrences will be maintained.  The vice president may institute action against a student according to the college’s disciplinary policies and procedures as described in the *Student Handbook* (http://www.cascadia.ctc.edu/StudentHandbook.)

Hallmarks of Academic Integrity include:

* Submitting work that reflects original thoughts and ideas
* Clearly citing other people’s work when using it to inform your own
* Seeking permission to use other people’s creative work
* Fully contributing to group work and projects

Students who choose not to uphold the hallmarks of integrity are therefore considered engaging in academic dishonesty.

Academic dishonesty is defined as any act of course-related dishonesty, including but not limited to cheating or plagiarism.

1. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, using, or attempting to use, any material, assistance, or source which has not been authorized by the instructor to satisfy any expectation or requirements in an instructional course, or obtaining, without authorization, test questions or answers or other academic material that belong to another.
2. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, using another person’s ideas, words, or other work in an instructional course without properly crediting that person.
3. Academic dishonesty also includes, but is not limited to, submitting in an instructional course either information that is known to be false (while concealing that falsity) or work that is substantially the same as that previously submitted in another course (without the current instructor’s approval).
4. Academic dishonesty also includes taking credit for the work of others when working in groups.

**Assessment Criteria**

**Assessments and Grading:** Students will be assessed in a variety of ways. These will include reflection papers, scientific inquiries, quizzes, a final project and presentation. These are outlined below. Additional information will be made available at the appropriate time.

All assignments will be graded on a scale of 0 – 100%. However, they will be weighted individually for calculation of the final grade.

Your grade for this course will be based on the following:

Assignment Date % of Final Grade

 Reflections variable 20

 In class assignments variable 20

 Midterm week 6 10

 Final week 11 10

 Portfolio week ten 15

Final Project week eleven 15

Participation regular 10

**Cascadia’s grading policy is detailed on page 40 of the catalog. This equates to a 100 point scale as follows:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 100% - 96% = 4.0  | 83% = 2.8 | 71% = 1.6 |
| 95% - 94% = 3.9 | 82% = 2.7 | 70% = 1.5 |
| 93% = 3.8 | 81% = 2.6 | 69% - 68% = 1.4 |
| 92% = 3.7 | 80% = 2.5 | 67% - 66% = 1.3 |
| 91% = 3.6 | 79% = 2.4 | 65% = 1.2 |
| 90% = 3.5 | 78% = 2.3 | 64% = 1.1 |
| 89% = 3.4 | 77% = 2.2 | 63% = 1.0 |
| 88% = 3.3 | 76% = 2.1 | 62% = 0.9 |
| 87% = 3.2 | 75% = 2.0 | 61% = 0.8 |
| 86% = 3.1 | 74% = 1.9 | 60% = 0.7 |
| 85% = 3.0 | 73% = 1.8 | <60% = 0 |
| 84% = 2.9 | 72% = 1.7 |  |

**Explanation of Assignments**

**Please note:**

**All work must be submitted on time as specified in instructions, and must be submitted at the start of class on the day that it is due. Late work will be tolerated.  However, there is a penalty for late work.  I will reduce your score by 25% for every hour that your work is late.  For example, assuming that the deadline for an assignment is 11 AM, you have submitted it at 11:30 AM, and you have received 100 points, I will record a score of 75 points.  If you are two hours late, I will record 50 points.  As I am sure you can appreciate, I have to ensure that all students have an equal amount of time to complete their assignments.  It would be very unfair if one student submits a work on time, and another has two additional hours to work on it!**

**Please do not email your assignments!**

**If you cannot submit work due to mitigating circumstances beyond your control, please discuss this matter with me as soon as possible, preferably before an assignment is due. In such cases written documentation will be required to explain the circumstances that prevented you from completing your work in a timely manner. Every effort must be made to let me know of your absence before the due date for the assignment.**

The following is a brief explanation of the various assignments for this class. More detailed explanations will be provided at the appropriate time. All written assignments are due on the dates identified in class and in the various handouts associated with the assignments.

Reflection Exercises (20%) Reflections will take various forms including short essays and online exercises. These are take home exercises. Typically, reflections should be typed, double-spaced and stapled. All sources must be cited appropriately (please include page numbers.) 10 percent of your grade will be based on correct grammar, spelling and proper citation of sources. There will be about 6 reflection exercises throughout the quarter.

In class assignments (20%) These will take numerous forms including tests, essays, online exercises, presentations and debates. When appropriate, 10 percent of your grade will be based on correct grammar, spelling and proper citation of sources. There will be about 6 in class exercises throughout the quarter.

Mid-term (10%) The mid-term examination will be multiple-choice and will be designed to test knowledge and conceptual understanding of material covered in the first half of the course.

Final exam (10%) The final examination will be multiple-choice and will be designed to test knowledge and conceptual understanding of material covered in the second half of the course.

Portfolio (15%) Scientific inquiries are investigations, using scientific methodologies, of phenomena related to topics studied during the course. The inquiries vary in nature, as do the products which will be assessed. Products may include graphs, data sets, analyses of data, diagrams, maps, etc. All products will be posted in your portfolio, and will be assessed near the end of the quarter.

Final project (15%) This group project will involve collaboration, research and presentation to the class. Detailed instructions will be made available in class.

Participation (10%) This class is largely discussion-based therefore you should arrive in class having read the material assigned for that day, and having reflected on topics for question in preparation for classroom discussions.  You should strive to articulate your opinions in a clear and coherent fashion, and to explain and defend your position in the context of discussions with your peers. Note that if you do not attend class, you cannot participate!   Participation will be assessed on a regular basis. After the first “none-participation,” .5 points will be deducted from your participation grade of 4.0 for every “none-participation.”

**Films**

A number of movies and documentaries will be shown throughout the term.  The purpose of these films is to shed light on important environmental and political issues, and to facilitate discussion of various issues raised in the readings and the classroom.  As these films are considered an integral part of the learning process, students are expected to actively take notes when films are being shown, to think about them in light of the readings and lectures, and to be prepared to discuss the films in class.

**Schedule of Readings and Discussion**

The following is a schedule of lectures and readings for each week that we meet.  The instructors will specify before hand the reading that will be discussed for each class meeting.  The schedule will be modified if warranted.

Week One

*America at Odds*, Ch. 1

*Clashing Views*, Issue 1

Instructor Provided Readings – "The Tragedy of the Commons," Garrett Hardin, *Science*, 162(1968):1243-1248.

*Environment –* Chapter 1

*A River Lost -*- Introduction

Week Two

*America at Odds*, Ch. 16

*Clashing Views*, Issues 20, 21

*Environment –* Chapters 2&3

*A River Lost –* Chapters 1 and 2

Week Three

*America at Odds*, Ch. 2, Appendix A

*Environment –* Chapters 4&5

*A River Lost –* Chapters 3 and 4

Week Four

*America at Odds*, Ch. 4, 5

*Clashing Views*, Issues 10, 11

*Environment –* Chapters 8&9

*A River Lost –* Chapters 5 and 6

Week Five

*America at Odds*, Ch. 6

*Environment –* Chapters12&13

*A River Lost –* Chapter 7

Week Six

*America at Odds*, Ch. 10

*Clashing Views*, Issue 4

*Environment --* Chapter *1*4

*A River Lost –* Chapter 8

MIDTERM EXAM

Week Seven

*America at Odds*, Ch. 7

*Environment –* Chapters 15&16

*A River Lost –* Chapter 9

Week Eight

*America at Odds*, Ch. 9

*Clashing Views*, Issues 3, 5

*Environment –* Chapters 17&18

*A River Lost –* Chapters 10 & 11

Week Nine

*America at Odds*, Ch. 11

*Environment –* Chapters 19&20

Week Ten

*America at Odds*, Ch. 12

*Clashing Views*, Issue 8

*Environment –* Chapters 21&23

PORTFOLIOS DUE THURSDAY

Week Eleven

FINAL PROJECTS

FINAL EXAM

