

ENVS 190 - CAPSTONE: ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEM SOLVING – Winter 2009

Prof: Dr. Karen Holl

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Course description: This course serves as one of the exit requirements for the Environmental Studies major. As such, this is a synthetic course that draws on the knowledge and skills students bring from other courses in the major. The course will focus on individual and group projects on which students must take the initiative, and there will be minimal lecture material. Emphasis will be placed on developing skills critical for students in their future careers. This will be a fast-paced class with assignments due at a majority of class meetings. It is critical that students organize their time and keep up with the schedule.

Course components and grading: Class/section participation - 90 pt; Final Paper - 120 pt; Short writing assignments - 100 pt; Oral assignments – 75 pt; Review of peers' papers and presentations – 15 pt = 400 pt total. Completion of all assignments is necessary to pass the class.

Class participation: The class will consist of one 2-hr lecture (Tuesdays) and one 2-hr section (Thursdays) each week. Attendance at both lecture and section is required (3 pt per lecture, 6 pt per section). The preparation and participation of all students is critical for the success of lecture and sections.

Required reading: The only readings required of all students are the notes for the class and a few articles which will be posted on electronic reserves. Students should print out the notes for class lectures and review them in advance of lectures. Students will be doing extensive individualized reading as background for the project/paper.

Written assignments: Students are expected to complete four writing assignments: a short critique of an academic seminar (25 pt), a resume and cover letter (25 pt), a short grant proposal (50 pt), and a final paper of 8-10 pages (120 pt). All assignments should be typed 1.5 or double-spaced in 12-point font and standard margins. You are welcome to print the assignments on paper that has been used on the reverse side or to print double sided. Students will write multiple drafts of all assignments. Students will receive peer feedback in section on the two shorter writing assignments, and written feedback on draft of the grant proposal and final paper. All final writing assignments should include 1. a rough draft with comments, 2. a final draft, and 3. a cover letter briefly addressing how reviewer comments were addressed.

Oral assignments: Students are expected to complete two oral assignments: a project proposal presentation (20 pt) and a final group presentation (55 pt). Students will be given the opportunity to comment on the level of participation of themselves and their peers.

Class web page: Class notes, assignments, and links for additional resources will be posted on the class web page - <http://ic.ucsc.edu/~kholl/envs190> – by 2 pm Friday preceding each Tuesday lecture. The web page can also be accessed through electronic reserves (password is “capstone”). Please read the notes in advance of the lecture.

Class conduct:

1. Assignments are due at the beginning of class or section on the due date. Late assignments will receive a deduction of 25% per day. If extenuating circumstances occur, contact Dr. Holl before the due date to discuss an alternate schedule.
2. Students are expected to adhere to the UCSC policy on academic integrity - http://www.ucsc.edu/academics/academic_integrity/. All written assignments should be written individually and be original works for this class. All academic integrity violations (e.g. plagiarism, cheating, multiple submissions, facilitating dishonesty) will be prosecuted.
3. I aim to provide a conducive learning environment for all students. When students arrive late or talk to their neighbors, it is distracting to both the instructors and other students. Therefore, students are requested to arrive on time and share comments or questions with the entire class. If a student repeatedly chooses not to respect this request they will receive reduced class participation scores and this will be noted in their evaluations.

Return of assignments: Due to the Educational Right to Privacy Act papers cannot be left outside offices. Please pick up your assignments in section or during office hours. If you want final assignments returned please give your grader a self-addressed, stamped envelope or an intercampus addressed envelope and we will send you your assignments.

Short Writing Assignments

Cover letter and resume - The goal of this assignment is to prepare a cover letter and resume that can be modified for different jobs. Please find an actual job that you would want to apply for and prepare a cover letter (no more than 250 words) and a resume/curriculum vita (no more than 2 pages) for a job of your choosing. Please see the class web site for various job listings. *Drafts (3 copies) are due in section on January 15 (3 pt). The final cover letter and resume are due Tuesday, January 20 at the beginning of class.* The job cover letter and resume will be graded on overall presentation: clarity, organization, conciseness, following formatting guidelines, fit with the job – 16 pt), assignment cover letter and addressing peers' comments (3 pt) and style (3 pt). Please turn in a copy of the job description with the final version.

Seminar critique – The goal of this assignment is to attend and critically analyze an academic seminar with respect to the strengths of the arguments presented and the presentation style. This exercise aims to strengthen your own class presentation. In no more than 750 words address the following questions: 1. What were the 2-4 main points that the seminar speaker tried to convey and were they relevant to environmental problem solving? 2. Were you convinced by the evidence that the speaker presented to support these points? What did you find particularly convincing and/or what sort of data would have made the argument stronger? 3. What were the strengths and weaknesses of the speakers' presentation style? You are encouraged to attend one of the Environmental Studies seminars on Jan. 12, Jan. 26, or Feb. 2 from 12:30-1:40 Mondays in ISB 221. You also may attend a seminar in another department or a public talk related to Environmental Studies. A list of other options will be posted on the class web site. *Drafts (3 copies) are due February 5 in section (3 pt). The final critique is due February 10 at the beginning of class.* The final essay will be graded on content (12 pt); clarity, organization, and conciseness (4 pt); cover letter and addressing peers' comments (3 pt); and style (punctuation, grammar and spelling 3 pt).

COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Assignment	Class Content
Jan. 6 - L		Introduction to class and assignments. Formulating a thesis topic. Interdisciplinary environmental problem solving.
Jan. 8 - S	<i>Bring ideas for project topics.</i>	Select project topics.
Jan. 13 - L	Read lecture notes.	Review of research and writing skills. Writing resumes and cover letters.
Jan. 15 - S	<i>Draft resume and cover letter due.</i> Research to refine project topic.	Peer review of resume and cover letter. Finalize project topics.
Jan. 20 - L	<i>Final resume and cover letter due.</i> Read lecture notes.	Mock interviews and interview tips. Guest: Brent Haddad. Soliciting feedback on project proposals.
Jan. 22 - S	<i>Project proposal outline and reference list due.</i>	Project proposal presentation and feedback.
Jan. 27 - L	Read articles for discussion.	Exercise on critically evaluating the quality of articles. Requesting letters of reference.
Jan. 29 - S	Work on project.	Meet with instructors to get feedback on project and work on project
Feb. 3 - L	Work on project. Read lecture notes.	Giving presentations – tips and example.
Feb. 5 - S	Work on project. <i>Draft seminar critique due.</i>	Peer review of seminar critique. Work on project.
Feb. 10 - L	Work on project. Read lecture notes. <i>Final seminar critique due.</i>	Grant writing.
Feb. 12 - S	Work on paper.	Meet with presentation groups. Schedule presentation dates.
Feb. 17 - L	<i>Draft paper due.</i>	Life after UCSC – tips for finding jobs.
Feb. 19 - S	Think about grant proposal ideas.	Discuss grant ideas in small groups. Work on presentations in computer lab. Sign up for presentation rooms.
Feb. 24 - L	Work on grant proposal and presentation. <i>Draft grant proposal due.</i> <i>Paper reviews due.</i>	Draft papers returned and discussed. Graduate school options in Environmental Studies (optional).
Feb. 26 - S	Work on paper and presentation.	Student presentations.
Mar. 3 - L	Work on paper and presentation.	Student presentations. Grant proposals returned and discussed.
Mar. 5 - S	Work on grant and presentation.	Student presentations.
Mar. 10 - L	<i>Final grant proposal due.</i>	Student presentations.
Mar. 12 - S	Work on paper.	Student presentations and feedback on class.
Mar. 16	<i>Final paper due by noon.</i>	Finals week – no final.

Common Writing Corrections

In order to focus our time on commenting on content, we will use C followed by a number to indicate common corrections in organization, syntax, punctuation and grammar. Please see the list of numbers below so you can interpret the comments on your paper. For example, C3 means “these clauses are not parallel.”

1. Colloquial/conversational phrasing. Rephrase indicated wording to use more formal terminology. For example, “get rid of” would be better phrased as “remove”, or “pretty hairy conditions” might be replaced with “dangerous”.
2. Inconsistent use of tenses. Correct verbs so they are in the same tense.
3. Clauses are not parallel. Not parallel: At the meeting we will review the proposed project, the best strategy will be discussed, and then we will listen to citizen comments. Parallel: At the meeting we will review the proposed project, discuss the best strategy, and listen to citizen comments.
4. Verb/noun agreement. Example: Long-horned beetles *are*... A long-horned beetle *is*...
5. Topic sentence does not introduce the scope of the paragraph. Chose a more accurate topic sentence.
6. This statement would be stronger if references were cited to support it.
7. This quote could be more succinctly stated in your own words, which would improve the sentence flow.
8. Metric units are generally used in scientific writing. Convert your units.
9. It’s = it is. Its is the possessive of it.
10. Use active voice. Passive – California grasslands were frequently burned by the Ohlone. Active – The Ohlone frequently burned California grasslands.
11. When first introducing a term that you wish to later use as an acronym, first introduce the term with the acronym in parenthesis. For example: Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)...then one may use IPCC in later references in the document. If you are not planning on referring to the acronym later then there is no need to introduce it.
12. Do not end sentences in prepositions. *Example*: For the project, ten redwood seedlings are used to start with. → Ten redwood seedlings are used to begin the project.
13. In main parts of text spell out numbers less than ten, or at the beginning of a sentence. For numbers greater than ten within a sentence use digits (22 rather than twenty-two).
14. Contractions are not used in formal writing. Write out full words.
15. Avoid ending a list with *etc*. This suggests you are either lazy or uncertain about what else should be included. Indicate that the list is not comprehensive with statements like “such as”...example: “There are many chemicals that are utilized as pesticides such as...”
16. Try to avoid parenthetical clauses (in other words, putting additional information in parentheses). If the information is sufficiently important to include then incorporate it into the main text of a sentence.
17. Not a complete sentence. Subject or verb missing.
18. Overly wordy and/or vague. Try to condense and focus your writing.
19. Avoid use of the royal “we”. Use of “we” is problematic in papers, because it is often not clear to whom “we” refers (e.g. U.S. citizens, people in your presentation group, or just you). If you are expressing your opinion then use “I”. Otherwise, use a noun rather than the pronoun “we” to refer to the group concerned.
20. The word data is plural. So it is “these data” and “data are”. Datum is singular.
21. Run-on sentence. Divide into two sentences.
22. In most cases, affect is a verb and effect is a noun. Greenhouse gases affect global temperature. Rising global temperature is one effect of increased greenhouse gases. “Effect” as a verb means to “bring about.”
23. Use gender neutral language – e.g. use people or humans rather than man, use one instead of he to refer to an unspecified person.