

**House Course: Global Environmental Justice**  
**Fall 2021**

**Instructors:**

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**Acknowledgements:**

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**Faculty Sponsor:**

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Director, Duke Environmental Leadership (DEL) Program, Duke Environmental Leadership Master of Environmental Management, Master of Forestry

**Class Location and Time**

Location: TBD

Time: 7:00 PM

Day: Wednesdays

**Course Description:**

The house course aims to provide students with a strong understanding of the connections between environmental justice globally and within the United States. This course is set up as a series of guest lectures given by prominent academics and environmental justice advocates as well as small group discussions. It is a deep dive into the relationship between people, culture, justice, and the environment. It touches upon environmental racism in infrastructure, agriculture, health, and imperialism in the hope to amplify the voices and experiences of the diverse cultures, races, and identities fighting on the front lines to address these issues globally.

**Class Policies:**

Attendance: Students are required to attend at least 11 classes. If you only attend 10 classes in total, you will receive a grade of unsatisfactory. This policy will be strictly enforced.

### **Objectives:**

- Be able to define environmental justice and intersectionality
  - Be aware of the overlaps in the environment and other fields
- Understand the connections between environmental justice globally and within the US
  - Utilizing case studies to compare and contrast differing experiences
- Understand that environmental issues cannot be addressed without *first* centering environmental justice issues
- Understanding solutions to environmental injustices + environmental issues
  - Climate policy must consider and center equity + racial justice
  - Climate change disproportionately impacts marginalized communities
- Be able to define environmental justice and intersectionality
  - Be aware of the overlaps in the environment and other fields
- Understand the connections between various justice issues and the systems that create these conditions across the world
- Connect students with on-campus organizations that do work related to course topics
- Empower students to join grassroots organizations and community centers working towards fighting for environmental justice

### **Grading & Assessment:**

All house courses are half-credit and graded on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis. This means students must, on a satisfactory basis, complete participation requirements, as well as the semester project and weekly assignments. A grade of satisfactory in this course requires satisfactory completion of all assignments of this course including written and oral assignments, attendance, and participation.

### **Grading Breakdown:**

- Class Participation and attendance- 30%
- Final Presentations- 30%
- Research Papers- 40% total
  - 10% Paper 1
  - 15% Paper 2
  - 15% Paper 3

### **Readings:**

Each week a set of readings are assigned for the class session. Students will be required to read at least a total of 50 pages of articles of their choosing from the reading list for that

class. Some articles from the set of readings will be mandatory. You are required to do these readings and be familiar with them when we meet for class so you can contribute meaningfully to the class discussion. Participation is a significant part of your grade and assessment, thus you need to have read the material to be able to make positive contributions to the class discussions.

### Discussions:

Discussions will be organized in the following way:

- Students will go into breakout rooms to discuss articles that they read the past week, first with others who read the same article
- The students will then go into a breakout room to discuss their articles with students who read different pieces. This will allow students to “share mastery” and learn about varying topics from their peers.

### Participation:

After each class with a speaker, there will be a discussion class where students will speak on the readings assigned for that week as well as the information and insight shared by that topic’s speaker(s). Student participation in these discussions will be graded.

### Semester Final Project:

- Final project
  - Pick at least one global topic from this course and explore how it relates to a domestic environmental justice issue. Also discuss why this topic is important to you, how it will impact you/your perspective after this class, and why you selected it for this project.
    - Examples
      - Health: Cancer alley in USA & air pollution in India
  - There are many ways you can present your final project
    - Video
    - Art piece
    - Flow chart showing connection between topics
    - Slideshow
    - Paper
    - Other
  - This will be a group project. You can have up to 3 people in your group. Groups will be determined based on the interest of students (students who are interested in the same topic will work on the same project)
  - Presentations will be on the last day of class

### Research Papers:

Students will be required to submit three short scholarly papers in response to topics covered in class. The first paper must be one page in length double spaced and the last two papers must be two pages double spaced in length. Due dates for the papers are outlined in the course schedule below.

### **Course Schedule:**

**Week 1: August 25** (*faculty sponsor in attendance*)

#### **Syllabus & Introductions**

#### **Questions:**

- Syllabus and Course Goals
- Assignments:
  - Environmental Racism  
[Dumping in Dixie: Race, Class, and Environmental Quality](#) (5 pg.)
  - Global Food Insecurity Model  
[Global Food Security Modelling: A Review of Approaches and Results](#)(56 pg.)
  - Climate Migration  
[Migration as a human affair: Integrating individual stress thresholds into quantitative models of climate migration](#)(10 pg.)
  - Immigration and Climate Change  
[Of Borders, Fences, and Global Environmentalism](#) (9 pg.)
  - Transgender Rights and Environmental Pollution  
<https://grist.org/article/transgender-rights-climate-intersectionality/> (5 pg.)
  - What is a Resource Curse?-- Energy Presentation by Dr. Andrew Curley  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=1982&v=bzzIshFvDvE&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1982&v=bzzIshFvDvE&feature=emb_logo) (67 min.)

**Week 2: Sep. 1** (*faculty sponsor in attendance*)

#### **Introduction to Environmental Justice**

**Questions:** What is environmental justice? What are some environmental justice issues? Why should we learn about environmental justice? How is it similar and different from other social justice and environmental movements?

#### **Assignments:**

- [Principles of EJ](#) (1 page)
- [EJAtlas | Mapping Environmental Justice](#) (1 page)
- [A Brief History of Environmental Justice](#) (15 pages)
- [Environmental Justice Timeline](#) (15 pages)

- [Toward a Critical Environmental Justice Studies](#) (20 pages)

### **Week 3: Sep 8th (Labor Day Mon, Rosh Hashanah on Tues)**

#### **Infrastructure Speaker**

**Questions:** How does infrastructure shape the social structures of communities and contribute to structural inequities? How does one's built environment impact their relationship with nature?

**Speakers:** **Dr. Erika Weinthal (Duke Professor of Environmental Policy and Public Policy)** and **Dr. Jeannie Sowers (University of New Hampshire Associate Professor of Political Science and International Affairs Program Director)**

#### **Assignments:**

- US-Centric:
  - Coal ash map for US: <https://earthjustice.org/features/map-coal-ash-contaminated-sites> (2 pages)
- Global:
  - Creation/development of new infrastructure (energy, water systems)
    - [Hydropolitics: The Itaipu Dam, Sovereignty, and the Engineering of Modern South America](#) (Introduction: 30 pages)
    - Bass Connections Paper: <https://itaipupost2023.com/white-paper/> (approx 14 pages)
  - [Distribution of green space/green infrastructure in AU](#) (8 pages)
    - Connection to Durham: [Durham's Plan To Plant 1,500 Trees a Year May Face Funding, Development Challenges](#) (3 pages)
  - [The quest for environmental justice in China: citizen participation and the rural-urban network against Panguanying's waste incinerator](#) (14 pages)
  - [Emigration from Japan: Environmental Justice of the Fukushima Nuclear Disaster Ryota Wakamatsu](#) (3 pages)
  - [Energy in Lebanon: A Chance for Regrowth](#) (3 pages)

### **Week 4: Sep. 15 (Yom Kippur on Thur)**

#### **Paper 1 Due (1 Page)**

#### **Infrastructure Discussion**

**Questions:** How does infrastructure shape the social structures of communities and contribute to structural inequities? How does one's built environment impact their

relationship with nature? How did the speakers from last class change or reinforce your ideas about environmental justice and infrastructure?

**Assignments:**

- [Unearthing Australia's toxic coal ash legacy](#) (54 pages)
- [The toxic legacy of coal ash waste in Australia](#) (2 pages)

**Week 5: Sep. 22nd**

**Agriculture and Food Systems Presentation**

**Questions:** What is a food system? How does food and agriculture relate to justice? How are our local food systems connected to global food systems?

**Speaker: Dr. Saskia Cornes (Director of Duke Campus Farm and Professor of the Practice, Franklin Humanities Institute)**

**Assignments:**

- US-Centric:
  - Agricultural + migrant farmworkers in US (immigration rights)
    - [Wildfires + COVID for farm workers in Oxnard, CA](#) [Migrant Farmworkers Face Twin Risks: Wildfires And COVID-19](#) (5 min podcast; 7 pages)
    - [Harvest of shame: Farmworkers face coronavirus disaster](#) (7 pages)
  - Food policy and environmental justice
    - [Food Policy Councils: Integrating Food Justice and Environmental Justice](#) (24 pages)
  - Prisons + food justice:
    - [Op-ed: Overthrowing the Food System's Plantation Paradigm](#) (3 pages)
  - Food deserts & EJ:
    - [The Meaning of Urban Environmental Justice](#) (17 pages)
- Global:
  - Production + food systems (imports of foods from Global South/countries)
    - [Sustainable food systems: Concept and framework](#) (8 pages)
    - [Puerto Rico's Struggle for Agricultural Sovereignty](#) (7 pages)

**Week 6: Sep. 29th**

**Agriculture Discussion**

**Questions:** What is a food system? How does food and agriculture relate to justice? How are our local food systems connected to global food systems? How has your perspective on agriculture and EJ changed as a result of last week's class?

**Assignments:**

- Global:
  - [Meet the Farmers Reclaiming Puerto Rico's Agricultural History](#) (8 pages)
  - [New country, same oppression: It's time to bolster farmworkers' rights](#) (3 pages)
  - [Pesticides Use and Exposure Extensive Worldwide](#) (10 pages)
  - Australia:
    - [Farmers sun exposure, skin protection and public health campaigns: An Australian perspective](#) (13 pages)
  - [Papua tribe moves to block clearing of its ancestral forest for palm oil](#) (1 page)
  - [Fishing, Colonialism, and EJ](#) (2 pages)
  - [How are seafood and EJ related?](#) (12 pages)
  - [Injustice in France's former colonies](#) (2 pages)

**Week 7: Oct. 6th (no class until Wed the 6th for Fall break)**

**Cultural + Spiritual Environmentalism Speaker**

**Questions:** What is cultural and spiritual environmentalism? How does people's spiritual ties to land affect the way they are impacted by environmental justice? What's the relationship between environmentalism and feminism?

**Speakers: Nicola Rivers and Elizabeth McKinnon (CEOs of Environmental Justice Australia Law Firm)**

**Assignment(s):**

- US-centric:
  - [Study about "Alternative Religiosity and Environmentalism" \]](#) (19 pages)
- Global:
  - [Extractivism and resistance in Latin America and the Caribbean](#) (12 pages)
  - [Reading about the relationship between spirituality and the natural world](#) (25 pages)
- [Contemporary environmentalism as a current of spiritual post-secular practice](#) (14 pages)
- [Eco/feminism, non-violence, and the Future of Feminism by Niamh Moore](#) (18 pg)
- Condor and the Eagle movie (2 hours)

**Week 8: October 13th (Indigenous Peoples Day on Mon)**

**Paper 2 Due (2 pages)**

**Cultural + Spiritual Environmentalism Discussion**

**Questions:** What is cultural and spiritual environmentalism? How does people's spiritual ties to land affect the way they are impacted by environmental justice? What's the relationship between environmentalism and feminism?

**Assignments:**

- Global:
  - EJ in New Zealand
    - [Access to Environmental Justice for Maori by Catherine J. Iorns Magallanes](#) (42 pages)
    - [Climate Change and the Right to Health for Māori in Aotearoa/New Zealand](#) (4 pages)
  - [Indigenous peoples defend Earth's biodiversity—but they're in danger](#) (8 pages)
  - [Biodiversity and Indigenous Peoples](#) (1 page)

**Week 9: October 20th**

**Environmental Health Speaker**

**Questions:** What is the relationship between environmental justice and health? How are environmental factors social determinants of health? How can healthcare professionals address environmental justice in their work?

**Speaker: Dr. William Pan (Duke Associate Professor of Global Environmental Health), Diana McCaulay (Director of Jamaica Environment Trust)**

**Assignment(s):**

- US-Centric:
  - Cancer Alley
    - [Welcome to "Cancer Alley," Where Toxic Air Is About to Get Worse](#) (12 pages)
    - [In 'Cancer Alley,' a renewed focus on systemic racism is too late](#) (4 pages)
- Global:
  - Health impacts from mineral mining
    - [River transport of mercury from artisanal and small-scale gold mining and risks for dietary mercury exposure in Madre de Dios, Peru.](#) (10 pages)
    - ["Environmental justice and large-scale mining"](#), (17 pages)
    - [Dimensions of environmental justice in anti-gold mining movements in Latin America](#) (13 pages)
    - Executive Summary of [Red Dirt: A Multidisciplinary Review of the Bauxite-Alumina Industry in Jamaica](#) (36 pages)

## Week 10: Oct. 27th

### Start final project here

#### Environmental Health Discussion, 30 minutes for project

**Questions:** What environmental factors impact health? Do you think these factors disproportionately impact certain racial or ethnic groups?

#### Assignments:

- US-Centric:
  - Breast Cancer + Air Pollution
    - [Air pollution linked to breast cancer, study suggests](#) (1 page)
    - [Air pollution and Breast Cancer: A Review](#) (15 pages)
  - [NYTimes Visualization of Pollution in Different Cities](#) (5 pages)
  - [Wuhan, China and Pittsburgh, USA: Urban Environmental Health Past, Present, and Future](#) (8 pages)
- Global:
  - Health impacts in MENA
    - [Environmental Justice in MENA](#) (Powerpoint; 7 pages)
  - South and Southeast Asia:
    - [Children's Environmental Health in South and Southeast Asia: Networking for Better Child Health Outcomes](#) (11 pages)
  - [Occupational Health, Mercury Exposure, and Environmental Justice: Learning from Experiences in Tanzania](#) (9 pages)

## Week 11: Nov. 3 (Diwali on Thurs)

### Eco-Fascism/Eco-Imperialism Speaker

**Questions:** What is eco-facism? What is the connection between xenophobia/white supremacy and eco-facism?

**Speaker:** Jaskiran Dhillon (Associate Professor of Global Studies at The New School of Public Engagement)

#### Assignments:

- US-Centric:
  - [Decolonization is not a metaphor](#) (40 pages)
  - [Baseline article about eco-facism on Teen Vogue](#) (2 pages)
  - [The Dark Side of Environmentalism: Ecofascism and COVID-19](#) (3 pages)
    - “The Coronavirus and Ecofascism”, episode 3 from *The Yikes podcast* (30 mins)
- Global:
  - [Eco-Imperialism](#) (14 pages)

## Week 12: Nov. 10th

### Paper 3 Due (2 pages)

#### Eco-Fascism/Eco-Imperialism Discussion, 30 minutes for project

**Questions:** What is eco-imperialism? How do historical power dynamics relating to colonialism and imperialism continue to shape environmental discussions around conservation and foreign involvement?

#### Assignments:

- US Centric (General)
  - [Humans Are Not The Virus—Don't Be An Eco-Fascist](#) (3 pages)
  - [Eco-imperialism: governance, resistance, hierarchy](#) (5 pages)
  - [Why Conservation is Not Condescension: A Case Against Eco-imperialism](#) (1 page)
  - [Overpopulation Discourse: Patriarchy, Racism, and the Specter of Ecofascism](#) (20 pages)
- Global: MENA, Africa, South East/East Asia
  - [Reparative and Climate Justice for the Caribbean Talk](#) (1 hour; 25 pages)
  - [Environmental groups sue over permit for Virgin Islands Refinery](#) (1 page)

## Week 13: Nov 17th

### General Discussion/Reflection Class , 30 minutes for project

**Questions:** How are so-called “developing” countries uniquely impacted by environmental issues?

#### Assignments:

- General:
  - [The climate crisis, migration, and refugees - Brookings Institution](#) (6 pages)
  - [Confronting the Rise of Eco-Fascism Means Grappling with Complex Systems](#) (31 pages)
- Global: MENA, Africa, South East/East Asia
  - MENA:
    - [Environmental Justice in MENA](#) (Powerpoint; 7 pages)
    - [Saudi version of climate justice rejected by developing countries](#) (2 pages)
    - [Iran, Islamic Rep.](#) (1 page)
    - [Environmental Justice in Syria](#) (2 pages)
    - [Energy in Lebanon: A Chance for Regrowth](#) (2 pages)
    - [The Power of Youth for Environmental Justice](#) (2 pages)
  - Africa:
    - [Environmental Issues in Eritrea](#) (1 pages)

- [Environmental Justice and Peace Building Practices in Ethiopia](#) (4 pages)
  - Latin America:
    - [Environmental Legacies of Colonialism in the Caribbean, Central America, and Venezuela](#) (3 pages)
  - Asia
    - [India's Environmental Justice Movements](#) (3 pages)
    - [The Environment in Southeast Asia: Injustice, Conflict and Activism](#) (18 pages)

**Week 14: Week of Nov 24 (no class 24-28 for Thanksgiving)**

**No Class**

**Week 15: Dec. 1st ( Hanukkah on Monday & LDOC on Friday)** (faculty sponsor in attendance)

Final class with presentations and wrap-up!

**Questions:** What have you learned about environmental justice and injustice that you will take with you? How will you engage with environmental justice or get involved with justice advocacy moving forward? What are the parallels and differences between environmental justice globally and domestically?

**Assignments**

- US-Centric:
  - Inefficiencies of recycling
    - [Recycling in the US Is Broken. How Do We Fix It?](#) (4 pages)
    - [U.S. Recycling Industry Is Struggling To Figure Out A Future Without China](#) (3 pages)
    - EPA Report: [The US Recycling System](#) (2 pages)
    - [The future of recycling in the United States](#) (3 pages)
    - [The Era Of Easy Recycling May Be Coming To An End](#) (6 pages)
- Global:
  - Global waste trade
    - [Nearly all countries agree to stem flow of plastic waste into poor nations](#) (1 page)
    - [By exporting trash, rich countries put their waste out of sight and out of mind](#) from *CNN* (1 page)
    - [Garbage Politics](#) (5 pages)
    - [Why plastic pollution is an environmental justice issue](#) (2 pages)

- [Limited climate benefits of global recycling of pulp and paper](#) (11 pages)
- [The World's Recycling Is in Chaos. Here's What Has to Happen](#) (5 pages)