

Geography/EnvSt 339: Environmental Conservation Discussion Section Syllabus – Spring 2013

YOUR TEACHING ASSISTANTS

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POINT DISTRIBUTION

150 Total Points

Participation/Attendance – 50
Writing Assignment 1 – 50
Writing Assignment 2 – 50

ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION: Discussion section is designed to help you more actively engage the themes of environmental conservation as discussed in this class. Participation in discussion is extremely important, and section attendance is mandatory. If you know ahead of time that you cannot make it to a section, let us know in advance and make arrangements to attend another section. It is your responsibility to obtain any material and information if you miss a discussion section.

In addition to showing up, points will be awarded for in-class exercises, active and constructive participation in section discussions, and all the other things that lead to effective learning. To earn the entire sum of these 50 points, you should demonstrate full critical engagement and thoughtfulness. Ask yourself: “How can I contribute to a rich section experience for everybody?” Keep in mind that discussion section will not simply be a review of lectures; we will usually be working with distinct but closely related material. Participation points are not difficult to earn as long as you 1) keep up with the readings, 2) speak up during class, 3) respect others in section, and 4) make an honest effort to engage with the material. If you ever need help, just ask!

CONDUCT DURING DISCUSSIONS: To maximize the value of discussions for everyone present, you should come prepared to listen to your classmates and show them respect. All serious questions and points of view are considered valid. Any disrespectful or disparaging remarks and behavior that either stifle participation or detract from our engagement with the course material will at the very least have a negative impact on your participation grade.

GETTING IN TOUCH WITH US: Professors appreciate having contact with you, when appropriate, but your TAs will be the first point of contact for questions you think we can answer. Email is the best way to get in touch with us. We check our email frequently, and will respond to your requests and questions as soon as we can. That said, please do not count on our immediate response, especially at busy times of the year; avoid waiting until the very last minute to ask us important questions regarding assignments.

DEADLINES: Late work will be penalized three points per day for one week, after which time the assignment will no longer be accepted.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT: In the words of the UW-Madison Student Academic Misconduct Policy, academic misconduct is an act in which a student:

- seeks to claim credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization or citation;
- uses unauthorized materials or fabricated data in any academic exercise;
- forges or falsifies academic documents or records;
- intentionally impedes or damages the academic work of others;
- engages in conduct aimed at making false representation of a student's academic performance;
- assists other students in any of these acts.

Examples include but are not limited to: cutting and pasting text from the web without quotation marks or proper citation; paraphrasing from the web without crediting the source; using notes or electronic devices in an exam when such use is not allowed; using another person's ideas, words, or research and presenting it as one's own by not properly crediting the originator; stealing examinations or course materials; ; signing another person's name to an attendance sheet; hiding a book knowing that another student needs it to prepare an assignment; collaboration that is contrary to the stated rules of the course, or

See Student Assistance and Judicial Affairs at <http://students.wisc.edu/saja/index.html> for more information, and if you'd like more clarification on proper citation and what constitutes plagiarism, please ask us.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION/RESOURCES:

Writing: We highly recommend the Writing Center's services. They can assist you in all stages of writing from initial brainstorming to polishing. You can reach the Writing Center at 263-1992, or on the web at <http://www.wisc.edu/writing>.

Web Resources: Course readings for the first half are available in PDF format under the Library/Reserves tab on the course page at Learn@UW. Lecture slides will also appear there on the Friday after they are given in lecture.

Geography Library (2nd floor of Science Hall): Both of your paper assignments will require additional research. Please utilize all the resources available to you in our libraries. It is nearly impossible to do well on an assignment with research gathered exclusively from the Internet. Librarians are very eager to help you, so please ask them questions and they can help point you to pertinent resources for your papers.

McBurney Resource Center: It is University policy to provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact your TA and the McBurney Resource Center located at 702 W. Johnson Street, Suite 2104 to discuss individual needs for accommodations. See <http://www.mcburney.wisc.edu> or call 608-263-2741 for more information.

Brief Q & A with your TA

Q: I'm confused about material in the lecture—what should I do?

A: First off, don't feel embarrassed—few scholars, whether undergraduates or tenured professors, understand everything completely the first time! Please bring your questions to discussion sections. If you are confused, it's likely that your classmates are, too. If you bring us questions, it helps us to evaluate how best to help you learn the material. If you are still confused, please come to our office hours. We are glad to help!

Q: What will be on the test?

A: The brief answer is that I do not know, as I may not see the exam before you do. We will be preparing you for the exam throughout the lectures and the discussions. The lecturers will offer review sessions before the exams.

Q: I have to miss lecture/discussion for a family/personal/medical emergency. What should I do?

A: As soon as possible, get in touch with your TA, and, if the absence will be more than one week, the instructor as well. Remember that if the absence is due to a University-sponsored activity, you need to let me know within the first two weeks of the semester. In addition to alerting me ahead of time and finding out what you need to do, I recommend getting notes from a classmate (for lecture and/or discussion, depending on what you have missed).

Q: I'm not happy about my exam/paper grade. Will you change it?

A: For regrades on exams, I reserve the right to either increase *or* decrease your grade depending on what I find in regrading your exam. For a regrade, wait 24 hours to think over your grade, then schedule a meeting with me and bring a *written* description of why you deserve a better grade. A regrade may also go to the instructor for grading.