

ENV 210 / ENG 110, section C
Fall 2016
TR 3:05-4:20PM, Chambers 3068
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Office: Carnegie B 18
Office hours: MWF 10:30-12:00
(and by appointment)

Introduction to Global Environmental Literature

This course satisfies the LTRQ distribution requirement and the depth or breadth requirement in the Humanities track of the Environmental Studies major or interdisciplinary minor.

Course description: This course covers a range of global environmental literature from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The novels, histories, and essays in this course address such topics as environmental racism, waste, toxicity, political ecology, the global South, and the environmentalism of the poor. Throughout the semester we will return to the questions: What are the effects of globalization upon the environment? How does world literature help us think about the ecological dimensions of social justice? And in what ways might ecological problems affect certain ethnic, national, and economic populations in radically unequal ways? We will consider the nature and scope of these disparities primarily through literature. This course thus introduces students to the humanities as an avenue for substantive thought about environmental harm.

Writers outside the United States, with only a few exceptions, will be the authors of the fiction considered in this course. This global scope will help us consider the ways in which issues of environmental justice cross national borders and regional boundaries. Even as we find that waste and toxicity have a “transnational” character, contemporary global fiction will also help us think substantively about ecology and the experience of impoverished and displaced communities.

Learning Outcomes:

- Read texts closely and critically within global and historical conditions
- Make effective use of the general history of modern environmentalism when interpreting cultural phenomena
- Employ key terminology in ecocriticism and the environmental humanities
- Evaluate the cultural, global, and political stakes of environmental activism

Required Texts:

Ramachandra Guha, *Environmentalism: A Global History* (ISBN 978-0321011695)
Mohsin Hamid, *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia: A Novel* (ISBN 978-1594632334)
Helon Habila, *Oil on Water* (ISBN 978-0393339642)
Amitav Ghosh, *The Hungry Tide* (ISBN 978-0618711666)
Indra Sinha, *Animal's People* (ISBN 978-0-743-25920-0)
Helena María Viramontes, *Under the Feet of Jesus* (ISBN 0-452-27387-0)
Margaret Atwood, *Oryx and Crake* (ISBN 978-0385721677)

(Additional readings will be posted to Moodle. Kindle or other electronic versions of these texts are not allowed in the classroom. I strongly discourage you from buying digital copies of the course texts.)

Honor Code: All work for ENG 110 / ENV 210 is subject to the Davidson College Honor Code and must be pledged. All ideas, quotations, and paraphrases that are not your own must be documented in MLA format. If you are ever unsure about what might constitute an Honor Code violation, please contact me. I am very happy to consult and advise on murky matters.

| Course Assignments | % | Due Date |
|---------------------------------------|----|---------------|
| Group Presentation on Guha | 15 | 9/6 – 9/15 |
| Short Final Writing Assignment | 5 | November 22 |
| Midterm Review | 20 | 9/29 |
| Close Reading Paper (1000-1250 words) | 20 | Self-selected |
| Participation | 20 | |
| Final Exam | 20 | Begins 12/9 |

Forum Posts:

To prompt our class discussions, I will assign you to discussion groups. Each member of the discussion group will be responsible for **posting two questions, interpretive problems, or “intellectual struggles” to Moodle’s forums**. Each group will post in a rotation (see the course schedule below). The point of these posts is not to police whether you’ve read. Instead, in these posts you should:

1. Identify at least two passages from the readings for that day that you’d like to discuss.
2. Then, state interpretive problems posed by the two passages. You could also tease out wider intellectual questions prompted by these readings. (No fluff, B.S., or evasions.)

The members of the discussion group are responsible for reading each other’s posts and raising your individual questions during the class meetings. Individual posts must be submitted **by 11:00 a.m. on the day we discuss the assigned reading in class**.

Close Reading Paper:

You will select one of the novels read during the course of the semester and write a “close reading” paper in 1000-1250 words. The paper will be due one week *following* the last day of assigned reading for your chosen book. For example, if you decide to write on *Under the Feet of Jesus*, the last assigned day for this book is September 1, which means that your paper would be due on September 8. *Oryx and Crake* is the last novel of the course, so the latest you can complete this assignment is November 22. Note that there is also a short writing assignment due on November 22, so it would be a good idea not to procrastinate on this assignment.

The paper gives you the opportunity to practice literary analysis through “close reading.” This assignment should help you in future literature courses. I am happy to read and provide feedback on drafts in advance of the due date for your chosen book / paper. In order to complete this assignment satisfactorily, you should (a) formulate a clear thesis or arguable interpretation about one novel and (b) support that position by analyzing salient passages, ideas, images, language, or the literary form of the text. **Summary and paraphrase should be kept to a minimum.** “Superb” papers will offer a thesis and close readings that are innovative, compelling, and sophisticated.

You will be graded according to the following criteria: thesis and introduction of argument (30%); analysis and close reading (30%); prose (30%); organization / topic sentences (10%).

Group Presentation on Guha’s *Environmentalism*:

Each group will be responsible for presenting approximately two chapters in Guha’s *Environmentalism: A Global History*. I will assign the groups and chapters on August 30, although your suggestions for groups are welcome via email. Each group will have approximately twenty minutes at the start of their assigned class to teach the most important elements from Guha’s book. Groups should be creative in the ways they introduce this material to their peers. Dry lecture from a PowerPoint is not preferable. Maybe plan a game like Jeopardy or create a short film. The format is up to your group, but make sure to be creative. In addition to synthesizing and presenting the material, the presentation should spend the last three minutes or so discussing the relevance of the assigned chapters for present-day environmental issues.

Why am I asking you to do these presentations? If I lecture on the important material covered in Guha’s book, it will put you to sleep. More importantly, while students are still required to read all chapters from Guha’s book, these presentations encourage active learning. You will be responsible not only for your own work but also the learning of others. This assignment will (a) allow you space to be creative in your presentation of historical material, (b) put the pedagogical ball in your court for approximately twenty minutes of a class period, (c) give you practice teaching and public speaking, and (d) prompt you to think about ways of applying Guha’s history to contemporary environmental problems.

You will be graded according to the following criteria: rigor and depth of synopsis (40%); interactive engagement from classmates (20%); creativity (20%); clarity and organization of presentation (20%).

Day-by-Day Schedule:

| | Monday | Friday |
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| Week 1 | August 23 Syllabus, introductions, etc. | August 25 <i>Under the Feet of Jesus</i> , ch. 1 (pp. 3-46); Gonzalez, “Hazardous Cargo” (Moodle) |
| Week 2 | August 30 – Group 1 <i>Under the Feet of Jesus</i> , chs. 2-3 (pp. 49-130) | September 1 – Group 2 <i>Under the Feet of Jesus</i> , chs. 4-5 (pp. 133-176); in-class work to prepare for group presentations |
| Week 3 | September 6 – Group 3 Habiba, <i>Oil on Water</i> , chs.1-7 (pp.3-93) Presentation on Guha, <i>Environmentalism</i> , chs. 1-2 (pp.1-24) AND “Who is Guha?” | September 8 – Group 1 Habiba, <i>Oil on Water</i> , chs.8-12 (pp.94-145) Presentation on Guha, <i>Environmentalism</i> , chs. 3, 4, and Part I Afterword (pp.25-62) |
| Week 4 | September 13 – Group 2 Habiba, <i>Oil on Water</i> , chs.13-21 (pp.149-239) Presentation on Guha, <i>Environmentalism</i> , Part II Prologue and ch. 5 (pp.63-97) | September 15 – Group 3 Farmer, <i>Infections and Inequalities</i> , ch. 2 (Moodle) Presentation on Guha, <i>Environmentalism</i> , chs. 6-8 (pp.98-145) |
| Week 5 | September 20 – Group 1 <i>Animal’s People</i> , editor’s note - Tape Eight (pp. 1-114) | September 22 – Group 2 <i>Animal’s People</i> , Tape Nine - Tape Fifteen (pp.115-244) |
| Week 6 | September 27 – Group 3 <i>Animal’s People</i> , Tape 16 - Tape 23 (pp.245-366) | September 29 Midterm Review due by 5pm on Friday, Sept 30 |

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| Week 7 | October 4 – Group 1 Hamid, <i>How to Get Filthy Rich</i> , chs.1-4 (pp.3-74) | October 6 – Group 2 Hamid, <i>How to Get Filthy Rich</i> , chs.5-8 (pp.77-156) |
| Week 8 | October 11 Fall Break – No class | October 13 – Group 3 Hamid, <i>How to Get Filthy Rich</i> , chs.9-12 (pp.159-222) |
| Week 9 | October 18 – Group 1 Ghosh, <i>The Hungry Tide</i> , The Tide Country - Moyna (pp.3-113) | October 20 – Group 2 Ghosh, <i>The Hungry Tide</i> , Crabs – Words (pp.113-215) |
| Week 10 | October 25 – Group 3 Ghosh, <i>The Hungry Tide</i> , Crimes – Epilogue (pp.215-329) | October 27 – Group 1 Marx, from <i>Capital</i> (Moodle); Steve Chimombo, “The Rubbish Dump” (Moodle); Abdul Rasheed Na’Allah, “Multinational Corporations” (Moodle) |
| Week 11 | November 1 – Group 2 Roger Sedarat, poems (Moodle); “The Universal Declaration of Human Rights” (Moodle); “Principles of Environmental Justice” (Moodle) | November 3 – Group 3 Atwood, <i>Oryx and Crake</i> , chs. 1-4 (pp.3-92) |
| Week 12 | November 8 – Group 1 Election Day <i>Atwood, Oryx and Crake</i> , chs. 5-8 (pp.95-218) | November 10 – Group 2 <i>Atwood, Oryx and Crake</i> , chs. 9-11 (pp.221-280) |
| Week 13 | November 15 – Group 3 <i>Atwood, Oryx and Crake</i> , chs.12-15 (pp.283-374) | November 17 No Class – Prof. M in Pasadena for a Conference |
| Week 14 | November 22 Alarcon, “Reclaiming Ourselves” (Moodle); Kincaid, “In History” (Moodle) Short writing assignment due (Instructions on Moodle) | November 24 Thanksgiving Break |
| Week 15 | November 29 Course evaluations; preparation for final exam | December 1 TBD |
| Week 16 | December 6 No class | Exam period begins at 8:40am on Friday, December 9 |