



University of  
New Haven

## *Intro to Environmental Studies*

### SECTION I: Course Overview

**Course Code:** EVST110  
**Subject Areas:** Environmental Studies  
**Prerequisites:** None  
**Language of Instruction:** English  
**Total Contact Hours:** 45  
**Recommended Credits:** 3

#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course introduces students to a scientific and sociological lens that we can view the diverse environments that are inhabited by humankind and nature.

We will use readings, lectures, and in-class discussions to comprehend the environmental impacts all global citizens are facing. Students will learn the impact of climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution, and some potential solutions available to counteract the influences these have on our planet and ever-changing societies. Environmental issues that are facing us today are much more than scientific. Exploring environmental policy, funding, and technological advancements will grant students the tools to properly engage in critical conversations in and outside of the classroom.

#### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

- Identify some of the main environmental issues of our times.
- Discuss the impact environmental studies have on society
- Explain the interconnection of scientific and sociological concepts of environmental studies.
- Describe how environmental changes have differing impacts on the human and non-human global population.

### SECTION II: Instructor & Course Details

#### **INSTRUCTOR DETAILS**

**Name:** TBD  
**Contact Information:** TBD  
**Class Schedule:** TBD  
**Term:** TBD

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

This class will meet once weekly for 180 minutes each time for a total of 14 class sessions. All students are expected to arrive on time and be prepared for the day's class session.

CEA enforces a mandatory attendance policy. You are therefore expected to attend all regularly scheduled class sessions, including any field trips, site visits, guest lectures, etc. that are assigned by the instructor. The table below shows the number of class sessions you may miss before receiving a grade penalty.

ALLOWED ABSENCES – SEMESTERS		
Courses Meeting X day(s) Per Week	Allowed Absence(s)	Automatic Failing Grade at X <sup>th</sup> Absence
Courses meeting 1 day(s) per week	1 Absences	4 <sup>th</sup> Absence

For every additional absence beyond the allowed number, your final course grade will drop down to the subsequent letter grade (ex: A+ to A). As a student, you should understand that the grade penalties will apply if you are marked absent due to tardiness or leaving class early. In the table below, you will find the grade penalty associated with each excessive absence up to and including automatic course failure.

ATTENDANCE DOCKING PENALTIES				
Absence	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
Penalty	No Penalty	0.5 Grade Docked	1 Grade Docked	Automatic Failure
HIGHEST POSSIBLE GRADE AFTER ATTENDANCE PENALTIES				
Grade	A+	A	A-	F

CEA does not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. As such, no documentation is required for missing class. Similarly, excessive absences, and the grade penalty associated with each, will not be excused even if you are able to provide documentation that shows the absence was beyond your control. You should therefore only miss class when truly needed as illness or other unavoidable factors may force you to miss a class session later on in the term.

## GRADING & ASSESSMENT

The instructor will assess your progress towards the above-listed learning objectives by using the forms of assessment below. Each of these assessments is weighted and will count towards your final grade. The following section (Assessment Overview) will provide further details for each.

**Class Participation** **10%**

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<b>Class Discussions and Reflections</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Midterm Exam</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Individual Research Paper</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Final Exam</b>	<b>25%</b>

The instructor will calculate your course grades using the CEA Grading Scale shown below. As a CEA student, you should understand that credit transfer decisions—including earned grades for courses taken abroad—are ultimately made by your home institution.

CEA GRADING SCALE			
Letter Grade	Numerical Grade	Percentage Range	Quality Points
A+	9.70 – 10.0	97.0 – 100%	4.00
A	9.40 – 9.69	94.0 – 96.9%	4.00
A-	9.00 – 9.39	90.0 – 93.9%	3.70
B+	8.70 – 8.99	87.0 – 89.9%	3.30
B	8.40 – 8.69	84.0 – 86.9%	3.00
B-	8.00 – 8.39	80.0 – 83.9%	2.70
C+	7.70 – 7.99	77.0 – 79.9%	2.30
C	7.40 – 7.69	74.0 – 76.9%	2.00
C-	7.00 – 7.39	70.0 – 73.9%	1.70
D	6.00 – 6.99	60.0 – 69.9%	1.00
F	0.00 – 5.99	0.00 – 59.9%	0.00
W	Withdrawal	N/A	0.00
INC	Incomplete	N/A	0.00

## ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

This section provides a brief description of each form of assessment listed above. Your course instructor will provide further details and instructions during class time.

**Class Participation (10%):** Student participation is mandatory for all courses taken at a CEA Study Center. The instructor will use the rubric below when determining your participation grade. All students should understand that attendance and punctuality are expected and will not count positively toward the participation grade.

CLASS PARTICIPATION GRADING RUBRIC	
Student Participation Level	Grade
You make major & original contributions that spark discussion, offering critical comments clearly based on readings, research, & theoretical course topics.	<b>A+</b> (10.0 – 9.70)
You make significant contributions that demonstrate insight as well as knowledge of required readings & independent research.	<b>A/A-</b> (9.69 – 9.00)

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You participate voluntarily and make useful contributions that are usually based upon some reflection and familiarity with required readings.	<b>B+/B</b> (8.99 – 8.40)
You make voluntary but infrequent comments that generally reiterate the basic points of the required readings.	<b>B-/C+</b> (8.39 – 7.70)
You make limited comments only when prompted and do not initiate debate or show a clear awareness of the importance of the readings.	<b>C/C-</b> (7.69 – 7.00)
You very rarely make comments and resist engagement with the subject. You are not prepared for class and/or discussion of course readings.	<b>D</b> (6.99 – 6.00)
You make irrelevant and tangential comments disruptive to class discussion. You are consistently unprepared for class and/or discussion of the course readings.	<b>F</b> (5.99 – 0.00)

**Class Discussions & Reflections (20%)**: Students are required to read weekly materials in advance and reflect on them in preparation for an in-class discussion. In these discussions, students are expected to describe an understanding of the ecological and sociological impact of environmental studies.

**Grading rubric for class discussion:**

0 – 5 points – no comments or limited general comments

6 – 7 points – contributes to the course discussions with general/average comments

8 – 9 points – regularly contribute to the course discussions by referencing the readings, asking critical questions, making astute observations, and/or discussing relevant current events

10 – truly outstanding course contributions that enhance the overall depth and breadth of class discussions

**Midterm Exam (20%)**: The midterm exam is designed to establish and communicate to you the progress you are making towards meeting the course’s learning objectives. The exam will be a series of short essay questions.

**Individual Paper (25%)**: Students will write individual 1500 words essays on topics covered or touched upon during the course. The instructor will provide a list of prompts for students to choose from.

**Final exam (25%)**: The final exam is designed to establish and communicate to you the progress you are making towards meeting the course’s learning objectives. The exam will be a series of short essay questions.

**REQUIRED READINGS**

Reading assignments for this course will come from the required textbook and the selected readings listed below. All required readings – whether assigned from the text or assigned as a selected reading – must be completed according to the due date assigned by the course instructor.

All required readings will be available to students on the Moodle Platform or online. They are listed below:

Christensen, Norm, and Lisa Lege (2016). *The Environment and You* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition) – Pearson, pp. 632.

Steffen, Will et al. (2011). “The Anthropocene”, *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of Sciences*, vol. 36, nr. 1938: 842-867

Oppenheimer, Michael et al. (2019). *Discerning Experts. The Practice of Scientific Assessment for Environmental Policy*.

University of Chicago Press, pp. 304.

## RECOMMENDED READINGS

The recommended reading(s) and/or text(s) for this course are listed below. These recommended readings are not mandatory, but they will assist you with research and understanding course content. Most are available at the CEA Resource Center for short-term loans.

Thiele, Leslie Paul (2018). *Sustainability*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Polity Press, pp. 256

UN-Habitat (2018). *The Quito Papers and the New Urban Agenda*. New York: Routledge, pp. 195.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

In order to ensure your success abroad, CEA has provided the academic resources listed below. In addition to these resources, each CEA Study Center provides students with a physical library and study areas for group work. The Academic Affairs Office at each CEA Study Center also compiles a bank of detailed information regarding libraries, documentation centers, research institutes, and archival materials located in the host city.

- **UNH Online Library:** As a CEA student, you will be given access to the online library of CEA's School of Record, the University of New Haven (UNH). You can use this online library to access databases and additional resources while performing research abroad. You may access the UNH online library [here](#) or through your MyCEA Account. You must comply with UNH Policies regarding library usage.
- **CEAClassroom – Moodle:** CEA instructors use Moodle, an interactive virtual learning environment. This web-based platform provides you with constant and direct access to the course syllabus, daily schedule of class lectures and assignments, non-textbook required readings, and additional resources. Moodle includes the normal array of forums, up loadable and downloadable databases, wikis, and related academic support designed for helping you achieve the learning objectives listed in this syllabus.

During the first week of class, CEA academic staff and/or faculty will help you navigate through the many functions and resources Moodle provides. While you may print a hard copy version of the syllabus, you should always check Moodle for the most up-to-date information regarding this course. The instructor will use Moodle to make announcements and updates to the course and/or syllabus. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have access to all Moodle materials and that you monitor Moodle on a daily basis in case there are any changes made to course assignments or scheduling.

To access Moodle: Please log-in to your MyCEA account using your normal username and password. Click on the "While You're Abroad Tab" and make sure you are under the "Academics" sub-menu. There you will see a link above your schedule that says "View Online Courses" select this link to be taken to your Moodle environment.

**COURSE CALENDAR**  
*Environmental Ethics: Humans, Culture & Sustainability*

SESSION	TOPICS	ACTIVITY	READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS
1	<b>Views of nature and the challenges of scientific explanation</b>	<b>Course Introduction:</b> Review Syllabus & Study Material, Classroom Policies, Statement of expected results	Christensen pp. 1-60
2	<b>Climate</b>	<b>Lecture &amp; Discussion</b>	Christensen pp. 196-232
3	<b>Pollution</b>	<b>Lecture &amp; Discussion</b>	Christensen pp. 307-333
4	<b>Water and Forests</b>	<b>Lecture &amp; Discussion</b>	Christensen pp. 334-445
5	<b>Ecosystems</b>	<b>Lecture &amp; Discussion</b>	Christensen pp. 184-223
6	<b>Biodiversity</b>	<b>Lecture &amp; Discussion</b>	Christensen pp. 224-261
7	<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b>	<b>In-class Test</b>	Review readings and class content
8	<b>Food Systems</b>	<b>Lecture &amp; Discussion</b>	Christensen pp. 374-419

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9	Energy	Lecture & Discussion	Christensen, pp. 450-515
10	Scientific Expertise and the Environment	Lecture & Discussion <b>INSTRUCTOR DELIVERS PAPER PROMPTS</b>	Oppenheimer <i>et al.</i> , chapters 1, 5, 6
11	The Anthropocene	Lecture & Discussion <b>PAPER PROPOSALS (WRITTEN – HAND IN)</b>	Steffen et al., pp. 842-867
12	<b>PAPER PROPOSALS FEEDBACKS</b>	Individual meetings with students	Review and work on final paper
13	<b>READING AND WRITING WEEK</b>	In-class Recap	<b>Submit Individual Research Paper</b> <u>Review readings and class content</u>
14			
15	<b>FINAL EXAM</b>		

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## SECTION III: CEA Academic Policies

The policies listed in this section outline general expectations for CEA students. You should carefully review these policies to ensure success in your courses and during your time abroad. Furthermore, as a participant in the CEA program, you are expected to review and understand all CEA Student Policies, including the academic policies outlined on our website. CEA reserves the right to change, update, revise, or amend existing policies and/or procedures at any time. For the most up to date policies, please review the policies on our website.

Class & Instructor Policies can be found [here](#)

General Academic Policies can be found [here](#)