HIST 3540 AMERICAN ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY
Spring 2015
Instructor: Dr. Helen Rozwadowski
Teaching Assistant: Mr. Adam Hill

Class hours:
Tuesdays & Thursdays
12:30 p.m. – 1:45 p.m.
At Avery Point: ACD 309
At Storrs: Rowe 321

Office hours for Prof. Roz.:
At Avery Point, Room ACD 101-D: Tuesdays, 11:00 am – 12:00 pm
At Storrs, Wood Hall, Room 306: Thursdays, 11:00 am – 12:00 pm
And, by appointment – please email.

Office Hours for T.A. Adam Hill:
Storrs, Wood Hall, Room 208: Thursdays, 11:00 am – 12:00 pm
And, by appointment – please email.

Email addresses:
helen.rozwadowski@uconn.edu
adam.hill@uconn.edu

PURPOSE: This course analyzes the transformation of the North American environment from
the sixteenth through the twentieth centuries, paying special attention to the effects of human
practices and attitudes, including different notions of nature (e.g. Native American and Euro-
American, male and female); the romantic response to wilderness in an industrializing society;
the rise of the conservation/preservation movements; the development of environmental science;
the growth of the environmental movement; and the implications of recent environmental policy.

CLASS FORMAT: In order to serve the needs of Environmental Studies, History, and Maritime
Studies majors, this class will be held simultaneously at the Avery Point and Storrs campuses. In
most cases, the instructor will be at Avery Point on Tuesdays and at Storrs on Thursdays, so that
all students will have direct access and the ability to meet face-to-face.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
In this course, you will:
• Understand the importance of including the natural world in history.
• Gain an overview of North American environmental history from the time before
  European contact to the present.
• Learn about environmental history’s development as an area of specialization in history
  (historiography).
• Become acquainted with the discipline of history, including its questions and methods.
• Practice analyzing primary sources.
• Improve reading, critical thinking, communication and analytical skills.

READINGS (books available at the Coop):
• Richard White, Organic Machine: The Remaking of the Columbia River
• Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Herland
• Ted Steinberg, Down to Earth: Nature’s Role in American History (Oxford University Press, 2002).

Always consult the syllabus FIRST to find the reading assignment. Most readings other than the books are available on electronic reserve via the course’s HuskyCT site (use the Course Reserves button). A few readings and some additional course materials are available through the Course Materials button, and a few readings are available online with the url/link provided in the syllabus.

BRING TO EVERY CLASS MEETING:
• Copy of book(s) and/or readings (or a device to access online readings) & your notes from reading them.
• Paper and pen/pencil (or device) to take notes in class.
• Syllabus (current version is always available on HuskyCT).
• Copy of any assignment due before the start of class, for your reference during class discussions.

REQUIREMENTS:
Class Participation (30% of your grade)
Students are expected to attend class unless there is a valid excuse and the instructor has been contacted ahead of time by email. Your participation grade will be based on:
• Evidence that you have done the reading carefully before class time.
• Active participation in class discussions and small group discussions.
• Short written assignments of four types (listed on the SYLLABUS; NOT accepted after the deadline; CANNOT be made up; lowest grade of these will be dropped) including:
  • On-line Open Book Reading Quizzes
  • One-page Reading Responses -- Often you will write one-page responses to the readings. Questions/topics are available on HuskyCT (use Reading Response button) and on the syllabus. These Reading Responses must be submitted via HuskyCT before class and will not be accepted or graded after that time.
• **In-Class Writing** -- A few times during the semester we will devote class time to informal writing, which you will revise and turn in via HuskyCT within 24 hours of class. Questions/topics are available on HuskyCT and on the syllabus.

• **Campus Engagement Responses** -- During the semester you must attend, and write a one-page response to, TWO campus (or community) events related to the environment. See Course Materials folder for suggestions. Any Avery Point/Storrs or other UConn event related to environmental themes is fine (if in doubt, ask ahead of time). You must seek approval in advance if you wish to attend off-campus/community events. The Teale Environment and Nature Lectures are especially appropriate for this class (held at Storrs and live streamed at AP), as are the AP Coastal Perspectives lectures for Avery Point students. In each of your two responses, discuss some aspect of the relevance of the event to the course, **making specific reference to a reading or readings, a theme or topic, and/or an issue covered in class.** DUE DATES: The FIRST Response is due Friday, March 6\(^{th}\) by 5:00 p.m. The SECOND Response is due Friday, April 24\(^{th}\), 5:00 p.m. These responses will NOT be accepted after that time.

**Essays (30% of your grade)**

Three times during the term you will write a 2-3 page essay (topics are available on HuskyCT at the Essay Assignments button). These papers are based on assigned course readings and are due the day after a class meeting, so you can take advantage of class discussion. Essays must be double-spaced and must be handed in via HuskyCT. Deadlines for these are:
- Wednesday, February 4\(^{th}\), 5 p.m.
- Wednesday, February 25\(^{th}\), 5 p.m.
- Friday, April 10\(^{th}\), 5 p.m.

**Midterm Exam (20% of your grade)**

**Final Exam (20% of your grade)**

**SYLLABUS & COURSE SCHEDULE**
The schedule of readings and assignments in this syllabus is subject to change. Students must check the course HuskyCT site and their UConn email often to get timely information about revisions, cancellations, etc.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**
As a student at the University of Connecticut, you act in accordance with its guidelines for academic integrity, available at [http://www.ossa.uconn.edu/](http://www.ossa.uconn.edu/) under “Student Resources.” Cheating, plagiarizing, or otherwise taking credit for work not your own constitutes academic misconduct, and in this class I will prosecute it with consequences that include, but are not limited to, a zero on the assignment or failure in the course. If you have any questions about whether a particular behavior constitutes cheating, please come see me or a tutor or staff member in the Academic Center (Avery Point) or Writing Center (Storrs).
STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
If you have a documented disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact your instructor and the appropriate staff person in Student Services as soon as possible.

GRADE CONVERSIONS ARE AS FOLLOWS:
A   93-100
A-  90-92
B+  87-89
B   83-86
B-  80-82
C+  77-79
C   73-76
C-  70-72
D+  67-69
D   63-66
D-  60-62
F   59 and lower
CLASS TOPICS AND READING ASSIGNMENTS:

WEEK 1

Tues., Jan 20        Introduction to course and course format
                    Creation Narratives
READING: (in-class readings provided; copies on HuskyCT, Course Materials)

Thurs. Jan. 22      What is Environmental History?
READING:
                    ▪ Steinberg, *Down to Earth*, Prologue & ch 1, pp. 3-21.
                    ▪ Jim O’Brien, “A Beaver’s Perspective on North American History,” in
                      Carolyn Merchant, ed., *Major Problems in American Environmental History*
                      (DC Heath and Company), pp. 78-83.

WEEK 2

Tues. Jan 27        Native American Land Use
READING:
ASSIGNMENT due by 12:30 p.m. before class (on HuskyCT)
                    • Week 2 Online Reading Quiz

Thurs. Jan. 29      European Approaches to the New World
READING:
                    ▪ Steinberg, *Down to Earth*, ch 2, pp. 22-39.
ASSIGNMENT due by 12:30 p.m. before class, posted to HuskyCT
                    • One-page Reading Response
                      Topic: Based on course readings and materials, comment on the widely-held
                      belief that native Americans lived in harmony with nature. Use evidence from
                      the readings & lectures in your answer.

WEEK 3

Tues. Feb. 3        Economy and Environment: Wood and Waste
READING:
                    ▪ Steinberg, *Down to Earth*, ch 3, pp. 40-54.

ASSIGNMENT
*Essay 1 due Wednesday, February 4th, 5:00 p.m.*
Thurs. Feb. 5  Economy and Environment: Apples
READING:
- Steinberg, *Down to Earth*, ch 4, pp. 57-71.
- View YouTube material on Johnny Appleseed (list of links at Course Materials button)

**WEEK 4**

Tues. Feb. 10  Industrialization
READING:
- Steinberg, *Down to Earth*, chs 5-7. pp. 72-115.

Thurs. Feb. 12  Economy and Environment: The Ocean
READING (NOTE: everyone reads Jackson; choose one of other two):
AND
OR

**ASSIGNMENT** due by 12:30 p.m. before class, posted to HuskyCT
- One-page Reading Response. Topic: Drawing from the readings for today’s class and relevant Steinberg chapters, was industrialization (the subject of last class meeting) responsible for declines in fisheries? Employ specific examples and arguments from the readings to support your answer.

**WEEK 5**

Tues. Feb. 17  The Romanticization of the Landscape
READING:

VIEW ONLINE BEFORE CLASS:
- "The Splendour and Misery of Urban Life,” McCord Museum of Canadian History (3 minute video)
ASSIGNMENT due Wednesday, February 18th by 12:30 p.m., turned in via HuskyCT. IN-CLASS WRITING: The landscape paintings of the Hudson River School of painters reveal conflicts within the emerging industrial-capitalist society of the nineteenth century. Analyze the Frederick Church painting, “Icebergs” (1861). How might the treatment of the natural environment versus the human-made objects represent romantic comments on industrialization and urbanization? Submit a typed, one-page response based on your in-class writing via HuskyCT within 24 hours of class.

Thurs. Feb. 19 City and Country: Chicago
READING:
- Steinberg, *Down to Earth*, ch 12, pp. 187-202
ASSIGNMENT due by 12:30 p.m. before class (on HuskyCT)
- Week 5 Online Reading Quiz

WEEK 6

Tues. Feb. 24 Alternative Visions
READING:

ASSIGNMENT
*Essay 2 due Wednesday, February 25th, 5:00 p.m.*

Thurs. Feb. 26 Westward Expansion(ism)
READING:
- Steinberg, *Down to Earth*, chs 8 & 11, pp. 116-135; 173-186.

WEEK 7

Tues. Mar. 3 MIDTERM EXAM (Material from Weeks 1-6)

Thurs. Mar. 5 Resource Conservation, Wilderness Preservation?
READING:
- Steinberg, *Down to Earth*, ch 9, pp. 136-154.
- Stradling, ed., *Conservation in the Progressive Era*, pp. 3-41

ASSIGNMENT
*First Campus Engagement Assignment due Friday, March 6th, 5:00 p.m.*
WEEK 8

Tues. Mar. 10  Resource Conservation, Wilderness Preservation?

READING:
- Stradling, ed., Conservation in the Progressive Era, pp. 43-63
- Steinberg, Down to Earth, ch 13, pp. 203-224.

ASSIGNMENT due by 12:30 p.m. before class, posted to HuskyCT.
- One-page Reading Response.
  Based on your readings of the primary sources from March 10 & 12, identify one objection that opponents of Conservation voiced to Progressive conservationist ideas, and explain how a pro-Conservationist would try to address/argue against that objection.


READING:
- Steinberg, Down to Earth, ch 10, pp. 155-169

ASSIGNMENT due Friday, March 13th by 12:30 p.m., turned in via HuskyCT.
- IN-CLASS DISCUSSION & WRITING EXERCISE: Drawing from at least three of the readings from Stadling, ed., Conservation in the Progressive Era, Parts 3 and 4, explore similarities between concerns related to cities and people, on the one hand, and more traditional environmental concerns, on the other.
- Submit a typed, one-page response based on your in-class discussion and writing within 24 hours of class.

SPRING BREAK  MARCH 16 - 20

WEEK 9

Tues. Mar. 24  Hetch-Hetchy Controversy
In class: view “The Wilderness Idea” film.

READING:
- White, Organic Machine, to 58.

Thurs. Mar. 26  Whose Rivers?

READING:
- White, Organic Machine, 59 to end.

ASSIGNMENT due by 12:30 p.m. before class, posted to HuskyCT.
- One-page Reading Response. Topic: Comparing this book to *Changes in the Land* by Cronon, identify and discuss a contribution White made to the field and/or methods of environmental history.

**WEEK 10**

**Tues. Mar. 31** Consuming Nature: Tourism

**READING:**
- Steinberg, *Down to Earth*, ch 14, pp. 225-239.
- Stradling, ed., *The Environmental Moment*, pp. 3-34.

**Thurs. Apr. 2** Aldo Leopold and the Land Ethic

**READING:**
- Optional: *Green Fire* – film available on Course Reserves

**ASSIGNMENT** due by 12:30 p.m. before class (on HuskyCT)
- Week 10 Online Reading Quiz

**WEEK 11**

**Tues. Mar. 7** Ecology, Environmental Science, and Rachel Carson

**READING:**

**Thurs. Apr. 9** View in class: CBS TV Special on Carson's Silent Spring, April 1963

**READING:**
- Stradling, ed., *The Environmental Moment*, pp. 35-58

**ASSIGNMENT**
*Essay 3 due Friday, April 10th, 5:00 p.m.*

**WEEK 12**

**Tues. Apr. 14** The Environmental Movement

**READING:**
- Steinberg, *Down to Earth*, ch 15, pp. 240-268.

**Thurs. Apr. 16** The Environmental Movement

NO CLASS; view on your own the film *Soylent Green* (available through HuskyCT Course Reserves)
READING:
- Stradling, ed., *The Environmental Moment*, pp. 87-105

WEEK 13

Tues. Apr. 21  Environmental Movement – Discussion of all related readings & films

READING:

ASSIGNMENT due by 12:30 p.m. before class, posted to HuskyCT.
- One-page Reading Response. Topic: Using any class sources thus far, discuss evidence in *Soylent Green* that this film was produced as a reaction to the environmental movement.

Thurs. Apr. 23  (Un)natural Disasters

READING:
- Stradling, ed., *The Environmental Moment*, pp. 139-160
- Steinberg, *Down to Earth*, ch 16, pp. 269-300.

ASSIGNMENT
*Second Campus Engagement Assignment due Friday, April 24th, 5:00 p.m.*

WEEK 14

Tues. Apr. 28  Environmental Crisis of the Oceans

READING:
- Rozwadowski, “Epilogue” to *Fathoming the Ocean*.

ASSIGNMENT due by 12:30 p.m. before class (on HuskyCT)
- Week 14 Online Reading Quiz

Thurs. Apr. 30  REVIEW
FINAL EXAM, Per University Final Exam Schedule, Week of May 4-9:
At Avery Point: TBD
At Storrs: TBD