

## Environmental Studies/History 328 Environmental History of Europe, Fall 2014: Syllabus

Tues.-Thur., 1:00-2:15pm, Social Sciences 6102

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Office hours: 7131 Social Sciences, Tues.-Thur., 11:00 am - 12:00pm, and by appointment

**Description:** This class explores a new approach to a part of the world with a very old history, but one that is now as ‘modern’ as any. The changing relations between Europeans and their environments from antiquity to the twenty-first century offer instructive comparison with American and current global environmental concerns. Approaching Western civilizations from an environmental perspective also offers fresh perspective on these enduring cultures. Questions we will consider include: how have Western ideas about nature changed over time? To what extent have Europeans degraded, or managed to live sustainably with, their environments? Did Christianity or the Church encourage domineering or negative attitudes towards (wild) nature? How did the development of capitalism, industrialization, and colonialism affect Europe’s environment? How do modern European conservationism and environmentalism compare with their American analogs?

**Grades:** will be calculated on the standard UW scale: A=93-100%, AB=88-92%, B=83-87%, BC=78-82%, C=70-77%, D=60-69%, F=0-59%. Grades will be determined as follows:

Attendance and participation:	10%
First Response Paper	10%
Midterm exam:	20%
Second Response Paper:	30%
Final exam:	30%

**Attendance:** You are allowed TWO ‘free’ absences, which will not impact your grade. You do not earn points just for attending class, as this is expected, but after the two allowed absences, each additional absence may negatively impact your grade. SIX or more absences constitutes grounds for failing the class. Valid excuses are limited to absences for university-recognized religious observances (concerning which you should inform me within the first two weeks of class), participation by team members in university-sponsored athletic and similar excursions, and for well-documented major illnesses or emergencies in the immediate family.

**Participation:** Everyone should try to speak, and I will also try to call on students who do not seize the opportunity to speak up frequently. But quality of contribution counts more than quantity. Quality contributions reflect a good grasp of the assigned readings and the critical questions you are asking about them—also key for writing the papers ! (See the writing guide by Patrick Rael linked from the History Department’s “Writing History” page, available at: <http://www.bowdoin.edu/writing-guides/>, sections 3c and 3d, on “How to Ask Good Questions,” and “What makes a Question Good?”). Good class participation also means that you listen to others and try to engage seriously but respectfully in the lively conversation that we hope to generate.

**Computers and Electronic Devices:** Due to the potential for distraction, these devices may NOT be used in class and must be turned completely off. Exceptions will be made only for those students who have a medical need to type their notes.

**Reading Notes:** You should always read each weekly assignment carefully, take notes, and prepare a short summary of, response to, and critical questions provoked by the readings as a basis for class discussion (1-2 pages, handwritten or typed). Normally I will not collect these, but if you are having trouble, reviewing such notes is a good place to begin a discussion with me. Such notes are also very helpful in preparing for class discussions, exams, and papers.

**Quizzes, Reading Responses, and Homework Assignments:** To help reinforce what you are learning from the readings, there may be occasional quizzes or short homework assignments (usually of one page or less). I will assess these exercises subjectively and approximately (usually with a check/check-plus/check-minus), and they will help me determine the quality of your participation. However, they will not receive numerical grades and thus will not be used in any mathematical way to determine your grade.

**Papers:** There will be two short, “critical response” papers, in which you will respond to the assigned readings and class discussions by developing your own argument. Detailed topics and guidelines will be given later, one to two weeks before the due dates. Papers must be turned in both as paper copies in class, and as electronic copies to an anti-plagiarism website. Late papers will be heavily penalized: they will be marked down one grade per class day late.

**Midterm and Final Exams:** These will be comprehensive, covering everything studied in the course up to the time of each exam, including both factual material and the broader ideas and themes of the course. The format will include some identification, short-answer essays, as well as one or two longer essays.

**Academic Honesty:** Your written work must reflect your own ideas, and where you draw on others’ words or ideas you need to indicate this clearly with proper quotations and citations. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated, and all appropriate penalties, including failing the course, will be strictly enforced. As the UW website explains, “plagiarism means presenting the words or ideas of others without giving credit. You should know the principles of plagiarism and the correct rules for citing sources....” For this quotation and more information, see: <http://students.wisc.edu/saja/misconduct/UWS14.html#overview> . As this website notes, if you are unsure about the proper ways to give credit to sources, ask your instructor or consult the Writing Center, at 6171 Helen C. White Hall (phone: 608/263-1992, e-mail: [writing@wisc.edu](mailto:writing@wisc.edu)). For a copy of their handout ‘Acknowledging, Paraphrasing, and Quoting Sources,’ please download: [http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/Acknowledging\\_Sources.pdf](http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/Acknowledging_Sources.pdf) .

**Accommodations:** If you need accommodations due to any disability, please let me know within the first two weeks of class, i.e. by Sept. 12. In order to maintain confidentiality, you may do so by coming to my office hours or by emailing me to arrange a meeting. You will need to provide documentation from the McBurney Disability Resource Center, 702 West Johnson St., Suite 2104, tel. 608-263-2741, email: [mcburney@studentlife.wisc.edu](mailto:mcburney@studentlife.wisc.edu).

**Required Books & Course Pack:** You need to acquire the three required books and the Course Pack for this class, and bring them to class on the days when they are assigned. They are listed here below in the order in which they will be assigned. The books are available, among other places, the UW Bookstore: [www.uwbookstore.com](http://www.uwbookstore.com). The Course Pack is available from the Social Sciences Copy Center, in 6120 Social Sciences: <http://copy.ls.wisc.edu/> . Both the books and the Course Pack will also be on reserve at College Library.

Hoffmann, Richard. *An Environmental History of Medieval Europe*. Cambridge University Press, 2014.

Keyser, Richard. *Course Pack for ES/Hist 328*. Social Science Copy Center, 2014.

Mark Cioc. *The Rhine: An Eco-Biography, 1815-2000*. University of Washington Press, 2006.

Bess, Michael. *The Light-Green Society: Ecology and Technological Modernity in France, 1960-2000*.

The University of Chicago Press, 2003.

**Reading Assignments:** you should read each week's assignments in the order they are listed on the syllabus and finish all of them by Tuesday's class. This will enable you to make connections among the readings and to use class time to review, clarify, and ask questions about the week's material. We will often reserve time in Thursday's class to discuss any assigned primary sources (in the Course Pack).

### SCHEDULE

Week 1, Sept. 2-4. Introduction: Nature, Culture, & Environmental History.

Hoffmann, *Environmental History*, Introduction, pp. 1-20; begin ch. 1, pp. 21-29.

Course Pack Primary Source Selections: Ancient Middle East.

Week 2, Sept. 9-11. Classical Mediterranean Civilizations: an Environmental Crisis?

Hoffmann, *Environmental History*, ch. 1, pp. 29-43; ch. 2, pp. 51-56.

Course Pack: Grove and Rackham, *The Nature of Mediterranean Europe*, ch. 1, pp. 8-19; and ch. 11, pp. 167-74 (Greece & Italy), 188-89 (conclusion).

Course Pack Primary Source Selections: Ancient Greece and Rome.

Week 3, Sept. 16-18. Fall of Rome and the Early Middle Ages.

Hoffmann, *Environmental History*, ch. 1, pp. 43-50; ch. 2, pp. 57-71, 78-84.

Begin Course Pack Primary Source Selections: Medieval Europe.

**Sept. 16: Critical Response Paper 1 (Ancient Environmental History) Due (3-4 pages).**

Week 4, Sept. 23-25. The Middle Ages: Culture & Landscape History.

Hoffmann, *Environmental History*, ch. 3, pp. 85-112.

Course Pack: Rackham, *History of the Countryside*, ch. 1-2, pp. 1-24.

Course Pack Primary Source Selections: Medieval Europe.

Week 5, Sept. 30 - Oct. 2. The Formation of European Landscapes (Focus: English Woodlands).

Hoffmann, *Environmental History*, ch. 4, pp. 113-54.

Course Pack: Rackham, *History of the Countryside*, ch. 5, pp. 62-88; & ch. 6, pp. 119-39.

Course Pack Primary Source Selections: Medieval Europe.

Week 6, Oct. 7-9. Sustainability & Resource Management.

Hoffmann, *Env. History*, ch. 5, pp. 155-68; 174-95; ch. 6, pp. 237-40; & ch. 7, pp. 241-78.

Course Pack Primary Source Selections: The Plague.

Week 7, Oct. 14-16. Population, Climate, & Disease in the Late Medieval Crises.

Hoffmann, *Env. History*, ch. 8, pp. 279-86, 289-98; ch. 9, pp. 318-41; ch. 10, pp. 342-51.  
Course Pack Primary Source Selections: The Plague.

Week 8, Oct. 21-23. European Discoveries and the Columbian Exchange.

Hoffmann, *Environmental History*, ch. 10, pp. 351-70.

Course Pack Primary Source Selections: New World Encounters.

**Midterm Exam: Oct. 21.**

Week 9, Oct. 28-30. Early Modern States, Global Trade, & The Scientific Revolution.

Course Pack: Richards, John, *Unending Frontier*, intro. & ch. 1, pp. 1-24, 47-57; ch. 2, pp. 58-61, 84-85; & ch. 3, pp. 89-97, 110-111.

Course Pack: Coates, Peter, "The Advent of Modernity," in *Nature: Western Attitudes*, pp. 67-81.

Week 10, Nov. 4-6. Agrarian Intensification, Landscape Change, & British Energy Regimes.

Course Pack: Richards, *Unending Frontier*, ch. 6, pp. 193-214 (you may skim the political history on pp. 195-202), 221-41.

Course Pack: Rackham, *History of the Countryside*, ch. 5, pp. 88-97.

Course Pack: Paul Warde & Tom Williamson, "Fuel Supply and Agriculture in Post-Medieval England," *Agricultural History Review* 62: 1 (2014): 61-82.

Week 11, Nov. 11-13. The Enlightenment & New Approaches to Managing Natural Resources.

Course Pack: James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, introduction & ch. 1, pp. 1-22.

Cioc, *The Rhine*, foreword, pp. ix-xii; & ch. 1-3, pp. 3-75.

Course Pack Primary Source Selections: Early Modern Europe.

Week 12, Nov. 18-20. From the Mid-19<sup>th</sup> to the Mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century: Industry & Environment.

Cioc, *The Rhine*, ch. 4-5, pp. 77-143.

Course Pack Primary Source Selections: Early Modern Europe.

**Nov. 20: Critical Response Paper 2 (New Approaches to Nature) Due (5-6 pp.).**

Week 13, Nov. 25. Peak Environmental Degradation & Response.

Cioc, *The Rhine*, ch. 6-8, pp. 145-207.

Course Pack Primary Source Selections: Early Modern Europe.

**Thanksgiving Break, Nov. 27-30.**

Week 14, Dec. 2-4. The Rise of European Environmentalism (Focus: France).

Bess, *The Light-Green Society*, Intro., pp. 3-9; & ch. 2-4, pp. 38-114.

Week 15, Dec. 9-11. Is "Light-Green" the Color of the Future?

Bess, *Light-Green Society*, ch. 9, pp. 190-209; ch. 11, pp. 218-33; & Concl., pp. 291-95.

**Final Exam: Friday, Dec. 19, 12:25 – 2:25 pm.**