

Urban and Environmental Policy 101: Environment and Society
Tues/Thur 10:05-11:30, Fowler 111, Section 1, Fowler 112, Section
Prof. Mijin Cha, Section 1
Prof. Bhavna Shamasunder, Section 2

Office Hours, Prof. Cha
UEP Dept. #204; Tuesday 3-4:30pm or by appointment

Office Hours, Prof. Shamasunder
UEP Dept #202; Tuesday&Thursday 1-2:30pm or by appointment

What is this course about?

This course is an introduction into issues at the intersection of “urban” and “environment”. It is for those interested in learning more about these concepts and the path forward towards creating more just and equitable environments and cities. This course introduces students to the political, economic, and social aspects of the environment with a focus on the role of government, policy, and social change. The course is designed for students considering a UEP major and those who want to take the class because you are interested. The course is structured for us, as a group, to learn about these issues and discuss them in small groups, in our sections, and in a larger group when we combine sections. It is an opportunity for you to interact with others interested in asking and answering complex questions about our cities, the natural world, and our global context.

What are the goals of this course?

The goals of this course are to examine the idea of “environment” and how it relates to the urban context. This course explores the intersection of race, poverty, and the environment and introduces how issues of race, class, and workers’ rights interact with the environment. Finally, this course will help students begin to critically examine environmental issues and movements.

Course Requirements

Participation (25%) : You are expected to do all of the course readings and keep up to date. This is a reading intensive seminar. Attendance and preparation is required. Participation in class (coming to class and being a part of it) counts for 25% of your grade. You may only miss class *once* without prior approval. And you may miss *once* with approval. Any additional absences will result in an automatic decrease by one grade (a B will become a B-, for example).

Your participation in class will also be evaluated based on your ability to contribute to the class discussions as a whole. Be mindful of your own contribution but also the overall classroom dynamic. Listen attentively to others, recognize when to “step up” and “step back” to contribute to a productive discussion that enables meaningful participation by others in the class. Focus on quality over quantity when participating in class.

Reflection Paper (10%): Highland Park Walk #1; Paper prompt will be passed out in class.

Reflection and analytical paper (15%): Highland Park Walk #2 plus incorporation of class topics. Paper prompt will be passed out in class

Midterm Exam (25%): You will have a mid-term exam on **Thursday, Oct. 4**. More details will be discussed in class closer to the date.

Final (25%): In-class final on **Tuesday, Dec. 4**. More detail to be discussed in class.

COURSE POLICIES

Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism consists of any form of passing off, or attempting to pass off, the knowledge or work of others as your own. It is a form of cheating. Examples of plagiarism include: unattributed quotations from a book, magazine or article; copying from the notes or essays of others; the submission of work actually written or dictated by others; and unattributed use of other people’s ideas. Remember, plagiarism includes information from books, newspapers, journals and the Internet. Plagiarism is grounds for failing the course and possible expulsion from the college. Students should consult Occidental’s student handbook for information on academic misconduct policy at the college: <http://www.oxy.edu/student-handbook/academic-ethics/academic-misconduct>.

Classroom Community

This course is intended to provoke discussion and new understandings of the urban environment we live in. Toward this end, the course will grapple with discussions about inequity, power, race, class, and gender. We expect our classroom to be a productive space for open, honest, and thoughtful discussion that recognizes and respects differences and acknowledges the broad range of knowledge we bring to the classroom and discussion. Please remember that our focus in this course is the issues, texts, course materials and presentations

themselves, and not the personalities, identities, or opinions of other participants in the discussion.

Laptops and Cellphones

Electronic devices in the classroom limit full participation in class. In order for you to pay attention and engage in learning and minimize distractions to others, laptops are not allowed unless they are necessary for note-taking, which must receive prior approval. Cell phones and all other electronic devices are to be turned off or put on silent. Students who are not paying attention in class will be marked as absent.

Course Readings will be posted on Moodle. Please complete readings for the day they are assigned. Readings will largely follow the syllabus but are subject to some changes. Please pay attention to the Moodle site for any changes to the schedule and/or the readings

Support Services

The college provides a set of resources to students to support them in learning. The [Writing Center](#) provides writing assistance to students to develop ideas, draft, and revise papers.

Students with documented disabilities who are registered with Disability Services are required to present their accommodation letter to the instructor at the beginning of each semester or as soon as possible thereafter. Any student who experiences significant physical or mental impairments may contact Disability Services at (323) 259-2969 to learn about available services and support. More information is available at <http://www.oxy.edu/disability-services>

The Emmons Wellness Center also provides important support services and can help you address issues of stress, medical and mental health, and overall well-being. For more information, see their website at <http://www.oxy.edu/emmons-wellness-center>

Class Readings and Assignments

Thursday, August 30—Introduction to the Course

- Introductions
 - Name, preferred gender pronoun, where you grew up, what do you think is the most challenging urban environmental issue we face and why.
- Goals for class; expectations; email protocol
- Review syllabus
- How to read the articles and take notes
 - *Best way to read the articles is to:*

- *Read for content*
 - *What is the subject/topic being covered?*
- *Read to critique:*
 - *What's the author's primary point?*
 - *Does he/she/they make the points? How so? How not?*
 - *Are you convinced?*
 - *What does the author miss?*
- Letter of Introduction

Tuesday, September 4: North American Environmental Historical Context

William Cronon, "The Trouble with Wilderness; or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature"

Thursday, September 6: Environmental Understandings

Lynn White, Jr. "[The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis](#)" in *Science*. Vol. 155, No. 3767 (March 1967), pgs. 48-54

Winona LaDuke. "Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Environmental Futures". *The Winona LaDuke Reader*. Voyageur Press. 2002. Pgs. 78-88.

Tuesday, September 11: Inequality and the Environment

James Boyce, "Is Inequality Bad for the Environment, PERI;
https://scholarworks.umass.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1108&context=peri_workpapers

Michele Morrone and Geoffrey Buckley. 2011. Chapter 1 in *Mountains of Injustice*. Columbus, OH: Ohio University Press. pgs. 3-31

Thursday, September 13: The Oxy Environment

Reflection Paper #1: Highland Park Exercise. During class time, you will undertake the Highland Park exercise.

Background reading:

- Introduction to a Peoples Guide to Los Angeles

- Jenny Price, “13 Ways of Seeing Nature in Los Angeles,”

Reflection Paper #1: Due Monday, September 17 by Noon. Turn in hard copy to UEP.

Tuesday, September 18: Cities and the Environment

Davis, Mike; The City of Quartz; Introduction

“The City and the Natural Environment.” The Global Development Research Center.
<http://www.gdrc.org/uem/doc-tarr.html>

Harvey, David; “The Right to the City” New Left Review; September/October 2008

Thursday, September 20: Cities, Suburbs, and Environmental Change in Post-World War II America

George Lipsitz, “Introduction: Race, Place, and Power,”

Powell, John; “Race, Place, and Opportunity”; *American Prospect*; September 21, 2008; <http://prospect.org/article/race-place-and-opportunity>

Hanchett, Tom; “The Other ‘Subsidized Housing’: Federal Aid to Suburbanization, 1940s-1960s”; in From Tenements to Taylor Homes: In Search of Urban Housing Policy in Twentieth Century America; Pennsylvania State University Press; 2000; pg. 163-179; <http://www.historysouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/The-Other-22Subsidized-Housing22-Federal-Aid-To-Suburbanization-.pdf>

(The house we live in YOUTUBE)

Tuesday, September 25: Race and the Environment

Laura Pulido, “Rethinking Environmental Racism,”

Luke Cole and Sheila Forster, “Introduction to From the Ground Up

Thursday, September 27nd: Race and the Environment, Part II

J. Mijin Cha. “Flint Water Crisis is a Classic Case of Environmental Racism” The Hill January 25, 2016.; <http://thehill.com/blogs/pundits-blog/energy-environment/266850-flint-water-crisis-is-classic-case-of-environmental>

David Pellow, "Critical Environmental Justice Studies," in *What is Critical Environmental Justice*

Tuesday Oct. 2: PLAN TO STAY FOR 15 MINUTES for JOINT CLASS- HELL OF HIGH WATER SCREENING

Thursday, October 4th: IN CLASS MIDTERM

Tuesday, October 9: FALL BREAK- NO CLASS

Thursday, October 11: Gender and the Environment

Jade Sasser, "From Darkness into Light: Race, Population, and Environmental Advocacy," <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/anti.12029>

Julie Sze. "[Gender, Asthma Politics, and Environmental Justice](#)" in *New Perspectives on Environmental Justice: Gender, Sexuality, and Activism*. Rachel Stein, ed. pp. 177-190. 2004

Celene Krauss. "Challenging Power: Toxic Waste Protests and the Politicization of White, Working Class Women." In *Community Activism and Feminist Politics: Organizing Across Race, Class and Gender*. Nancy Naples (ed). New York: Routledge, 1998).

"Women Spend 374 Hours Each Year Collecting Firewood in India, Study Finds" [Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves](http://cleancookstoves.org/about/news/05-05-2015-women-spend-374-hours-each-year-collecting-firewood-in-india-study-finds.html). May 5, 2015: <http://cleancookstoves.org/about/news/05-05-2015-women-spend-374-hours-each-year-collecting-firewood-in-india-study-finds.html>

Tuesday, October 16: Workers and the Environment

Watch this 8 minute video: Inside (1995 El Monte Thai Garment Slavery Case): <https://youtu.be/QLVeiKTLggg>

Jason Burke and Saad Hammoudi. "Bangladesh textile factory fire leaves more than 100 dead" [The Guardian](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/nov/25/bangladesh-textile-factory-fire). November 25, 2012: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/nov/25/bangladesh-textile-factory-fire>

John-Henry Harter Source. *Environmental Justice for Whom? Class, New Social Movements, and the Environment: A Case Study of Greenpeace Canada, 1971-2000*, Labour / Le Travail, Vol. 54 (Fall, 2004), pp. 83-119

Watch the Ted Talk; Chang, Leslie T.; “The voices of China’s workers”;
https://www.ted.com/talks/leslie_t_chang_the_voices_of_china_s_workers?language=en

Thursday, October 18: Industrial Pollution and Occupational Health

Sarah Maslin Nir, “Perfect Nails, Poisoned Workers,” New York Times, May 8, 2015:
<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/11/nyregion/nail-salon-workers-in-nyc-face-hazardous-chemicals.html>

Sarah Maslin Nir, “Cuomo Orders Emergency Measures to Protect Workers at Nail Salons,” New York Times, May 11, 2015:
<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/11/nyregion/cuomo-orders-emergency-measures-to-protect-workers-at-nail-salons.html>

Shamasunder, Bhavna; “The Environmental Justice of Beauty: Framing Beauty Products as a Health Disparities Concern”; *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology*; October 2017; <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov.oxy.idm.oclc.org/pubmed/28822238>

Adewumi-Gunn, Teni; A Preliminary Community-Based Occupational Health Survey of Black Hair Salon Workers in South Los Angeles; *Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health*; February 2018; <https://link-springer-com.oxy.idm.oclc.org/article/10.1007%2Fs10903-016-0521-0>

Tuesday, October 23: Consumption of Energy

Mikel González-Eguino, “Energy Poverty: An Overview”
<http://www.science.smith.edu/~jcardell/Courses/EGR325/Readings/EnPovOvrvw%20Elsevier%202015.pdf>

J. Mijin Cha, “Unnatural Gas: How Government Made Fracking Profitable (and Left Renewables Behind)”, Dissent, Jun 27, 2013
http://www.dissentmagazine.org/online_articles/unnatural-gas-how-government-made-fracking-profitable-and-left-renewables-behind

Thursday, October 25: Global Trade and the Environment

Joint class: Guest Speaker.

Andrea Hricko, "Global Trade Comes Home: Community Impacts of Goods Movement" (Environmental Health Perspectives, 116 (2), Feb, 2008, 80-81).

Ronald White. "Local Ports face Panama Challenge." Los Angeles Times, December 29, 2011

Lydia DePillis, "Ports are the New Power Plants," Washington Post, November 24, 2015
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2015/11/24/ports-are-the-new-power-plants-at-least-in-terms-of-pollution/>

Karen Robes Meeks. "[Los Angeles, Long Beach port truck drivers move nation's goods](#)" Long Beach Press Telegram May 16, 2015.

Richard Wilson. American Federation of Teachers. How Wal-Mart Is (Mis)Shaping the Global Economy. <http://www.aft.org/periodical/american-educator/spring-2007/how-wal-mart-misshaping-global-economy>

Tuesday, October 30: Waste and the Environment

Sintana E. Vergara¹ and George Tchobanoglous, "Municipal Solid Waste and the Environment: A Global Perspective," Annual Review of Environment and Resources, Nov. 2012, <http://www.annualreviews.org/doi/full/10.1146/annurev-environ-050511-122532>

Liyana Anwar, "Waste in LA: Closing America's Largest Landfill, Without Taking Out The Trash," NPR, Feb 22, 2014 <http://www.npr.org/2014/02/22/280750148/closing-americas-largest-landfill-without-taking-out-the-trash>

LAANE, "Don't Waste LA: Cleaning Up Waste and Recycling Management and Securing the Benefits," July 2015: <http://www.laane.org/zero-waste-blueprint/> and watch this video: <http://www.dontwastela.com/2014/04/15/pbs-social-insider-covers-zero-waste-la-policy/>

Larmer, Brook; "E-Waste offers economic opportunity as well as toxicity"; New York Times; July 5, 2018; <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/05/magazine/e-waste-offers-an-economic-opportunity-as-well-as-toxicity.html>

Thursday, November 1: Consumption: Food Systems

Joint class- Guest Speaker

Joann Lo, "Walmart at the Crossroads: Live Better, Do Better for All of Us/The Environmental and Labor Impact of Its Food Supply Chain"; Capital & Main; June 4, 2015; <http://capitalandmain.com/latest-news/issues/labor-and-economy/walmart-at-the-crossroads-live-better-do-better-for-all-of-us-0604/>

City of Los Angeles, Good food purchasing pledge, read pgs 1-6.
http://lacity.cityofla.acsitefactory.com/sites/g/files/wph281/f/mayorvillaraigosa331283141_10242012.pdf

Minkoff-Zern, Laura; "Challenging the Agrarian Imaginary: Farmworker-Led Food Movements and the Potential for Farm Labor Justice"; *Human Geography*; 2014;

Tuesday, November 6: Highland Park observation #2

Assignment Reflection Paper #2: Due Friday, November 10 by Noon. Post to Moodle

Thursday, November 8: **JOINT CLASS: GUEST SPEAKER, CAROLINE FARRELL, CENTER ON RACE, POVERTY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

Sponsored by Remsen Bird Fund

Tuesday, November 13. **MAYBE GUEST SPEAKER ANGELA HARRIS**

Thursday, November 16: Political Economy of the Environment

Thomas K. Rudel, J. Timmons Roberts, and JoAnn Carmi. *Political Economy of the Environment*: Annual Review of Sociology, Vol. 37 (2011), pp. 221-238.

Nazli Choucri. *Political Economy of the Global Environment*, International Political Science Review, Vol. 14, No. 1, (Jan., 1993), pp. 103-116.

Tuesday, November 20 and Thursday, November 22- NO CLASS, THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

Tuesday, Nov 27: Overview on Climate

National Research Council of the National Academies; “Climate Change: Evidence, Impacts, and Choices; Read part 1 on ‘Evidence’”; pp. 1-18; <https://nas-sites.org/americasclimatechoices/more-resources-on-climate-change/climate-change-lines-of-evidence-booklet/> ;

Oliver Milman, “Climate Change and National Parks,” The Guardian, Aug 22, 2016: <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2016/aug/22/climate-change-national-parks-threat>

Jack Healy, “Occupying the Prairie: Tensions Rise as Tribes Move to Block a Pipeline,” (make sure to watch the video, too), New York Times, Aug 23, 2016: <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/24/us/occupying-the-prairie-tensions-rise-as-tribes-move-to-block-a-pipeline.html? r=0>

“Climate Injustice: Those Who Emit the Least Pay the Most,” Conservation Magazine, Feb 11, 2016: <http://conservationmagazine.org/2016/02/those-who-emit-least-pay-most/>

Thursday, November 29—JOINT CLASS: CLASS EXERCISE: HEATHY AND JUST CITIES AGENDA WITH JAMES ROJAS, PLACE IT! SUPPORTED BY REMSEN BIRD FUNDS.

Tuesday, December 4 – FINAL EXAM

Final exam in-class.

Summary of Assignments and Due Dates

Assignment	Due Date
Reflection Paper #1: Highland Park Walk	9/18 by noon. Turn in hard copy to UEP
Midterm in class	10/4
Reflection Paper #2: Highland Park analytical paper	11/10 by noon; turn in hard copy to UEP
Final exam	12/4