

**Instructor:**

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**A history of human-environment interactions.** Environmental history is the study of human interaction with the natural world over time. In contrast to other historical disciplines, it emphasizes the active role nature plays in influencing human affairs. In this course, we will draw from ancient, historical, and modern case-studies to examine how humans both shape their environment and are shaped by it. By the end of the course, you should understand the major historical patterns of human enterprise on our planet and have explored ideas about the present and future sustainability of our modern global ecosystem. Your writing skills, critical reading, and analytical abilities will be reinforced and improved. In short, you will be a more well-rounded biologist and an ecologically aware citizen. This is a writing-emphasis course: satisfies general education requirement (WC).

**Communication.** Check the Blackboard site and your UTK email frequently. All handouts, readings, and out-of-class assignments will be posted there.

**Required readings.**

The Human Footprint. 2010, by Anthony N. Penna. Wiley Blackwell. ISBN:978-1-4051-8771-8. E-book available here <http://www.coursesmart.com/9781405187718>.

The Holocene: An environmental history. 1998. by Neil Roberts. Blackwell. ISBN: 0-631-18638-7 (used ~\$20.) E-book available here <http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-1444313452.html>.

Guns, Germs, and Steel. 2005. by Jared Diamond. Norton. ISBN: 978-0393061314

**Course structure.** This is not a lecture course. Instead, you will engage the primary and secondary literature. Prior to most classes, you will read 1-3 papers or book chapters on a particular subject and come to class prepared to critique the papers. Nearly every class meeting, you'll post a question based on the reading on the course blog. Approximately weekly, you'll also provide an answer, written in paragraph form, to a question we provide. We may ask a few students to read their paragraphs aloud at the beginning of each class to spur discussion.

Evaluation	Points possible
Participation	100
Paragraphs and blog	150
Exams	100
Final Paper	100
Bonus points (from seminars)	(10)
<b>Total</b>	<b>450</b>

**Evaluation.** Participation: You must invest in your own learning by critically reading the assigned papers, thinking deeply about them, and being willing to discuss them in class.

Paragraphs and blog questions: Paragraphs will be graded for clarity, brevity, and completeness. Questions will be graded for originality and thoughtfulness.

Exams: There are two take-home exams in this class - one in the middle of the term (the week before spring break) and one at the end of the term. Each exam is worth 50 points.

Final Paper: You will write a referenced ~2500 word research essay on a topic of your choice and give an oral presentation of this work in class.

**Exams.** On exams I will focus mostly on the lecture material, but some information will come from the readings. In addition, you will be assigned several supplementary readings, and will be tested on them. The format will be essay and short answer. There is no final exam.

**Final Paper.** This project is one of the most important parts of the course. I want you to find a topic in environmental history that really excites you and to explore it deeply. By the 8th week of the semester, you should decide on an idea for a final project. You will then have about one month to read background material prepare the paper. During this month, you will be required to provide me with weekly progress updates. I am happy to discuss ideas with you, review drafts of papers, really to help in almost any way you'd like. You will also give a presentation to the class at the end of the semester. More instructions for the final project will be available soon.

**Ecology Seminar Series (A.K.A., Bonus Points).** Most Fridays at 3:30, the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology has a seminar in Science & Engineering, Room 307. This is a tremendous opportunity for you to learn about many different topics in ecology and to see how different people convey their findings. Once you've attended one of these seminars, write a one-page summary of it and email it to me. You may get up to 2 bonus points for each one. You can get points for attending 5 seminars, and these write-ups are due one week after the seminar. If you can't make the seminars, come talk to me about other options. The seminar schedule should be posted here <http://eeb.bio.utk.edu>.

**Missed And Late Assignments.** Only under very special circumstances will I give a makeup exam. You might be able to take a makeup exam if you alert me that you are going to miss it. Unless there are extenuating circumstances, work turned in late will lose 25% of the total available points each day it is late.

*Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs.*

**Schedule:**

*Subject to change based on student ideas and the whim of your instructor.*

<b>Day</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading</b>
10-Jan	What is environmental history?	
15-Jan	Guns, Germs, and Steel overview	Interview with J. Diamond
17-Jan	How do we know about the past?	Roberts – Ch 1-2
22-Jan	Earth history	Penna – Ch 1 Penna – Ch2, Cavalli- Svorza TBA
24-Jan	Human evolution and dispersal	TBA
29-Jan	Human ecology: Hunter gatherers	TBA
31-Jan	Human ecology: Life history	TBA
5-Feb	The Pleistocene	Roberts – Ch 3
7-Feb	Pleistocene megafaunal extinctions	TBA
12-Feb	Settlement and Domestication	GGs TBA Roberts – Ch 5, Penna- Ch 3-4
14-Feb	The Agricultural Revolution	1491 TBA
19-Feb	Life in the Americas	GGs TBA, 1493 TBA
21-Feb	The Conquest of the Americas	
26-Feb	<b>Exam 1</b>	
28-Feb	Cities	Roberts - Ch 6
5-Mar	The Industrial Revolution	Penna – Ch 7
7-Mar	Colonialism: the first global economy	
12-Mar	Extractive Economies	Penna – Ch 6, TBA
14-Mar	Urbanization	Penna – Ch 5
19-Mar	The Demographic Transition	TBA
21-Mar	Biodiversity and ecosystem services	TBA
26-Mar	No Class	
28-Mar	No Class	
2-Apr	Global trade and consumption	Penna- Ch 8
4-Apr	Pollution	Roberts – Ch 7
9-Apr	Climate change and energy use	Penna- Ch 9-10
11-Apr	<b>Exam 2</b>	
16-Apr	The environmental future	Roberts – Ch 8
18-Apr	Student presentations	
23-Apr	Student presentations	
25-Apr	Student presentations	