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I decided to participate in the Piedmont project with the hope that I would receive relevant information regarding environmental issues that could give me a better idea of how to structure the syllabus for my proposed course on the Amazonian Rain Forest. However, I gained much more than that. During the two-day workshop I learned more about the university in which I work and about the place where I live than in the five years I have been at Emory. I thoroughly enjoyed the short walks in the woods and the chance to learn a little about the natural surroundings. I also found it particularly rewarding and enriching being able to work and interact socially with people from different disciplines and backgrounds. Finally, I am grateful for the fact that I now have created a network of contacts that is going to be very helpful when planning for guest speakers to give talks in subjects of their expertise related to my course.

I was also able to envision my own project more comprehensively, and the syllabus I have put together reflects the different ideas, teaching practices and the various types of knowledge to which I was exposed during the workshop. My goal is to teach about the Brazilian Rain Forest to students who know very little about it, and hence the idea of creating a Freshman Seminar in order to approach students at a time when they have great opportunities to become acquainted with so many things that are brand new to them. My syllabus now incorporates the multidisciplinary nature of the ways environmental issues can be presented to students, and I am hopeful this will make a difference in the way they perceive themselves in the world.

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SYLLABUS FOR PIEDMONT PROJECT: PORTUGUESE 190 - Freshman Seminar

**THE BRAZILIAN RAIN FOREST:
A MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES**

Course description:

This course will examine how various peoples and institutions have reacted to and portrayed the Amazon region. In particular, it will focus on the contrasting visions of the Rain Forest as a tropical paradise and an area of intense controversies for both its inhabitants and outsiders. A variety of fictional writings, non-fiction narratives, and articles written by scholars and the press, as well as videos and movies that provide a concept and a set of cultural values related to the Amazonian ecosystem, will be discussed throughout the semester.

Goals:

The course will have three main components: 1) To introduce students to folktales and narratives of the indigenous population as well as narratives written by travelers and fiction writers about the Amazon. 2) To discuss viewpoints as varied as those expressed by scholars such as anthropologists, historians, scientific researchers and environmentalists, in addition to laborers' and Amerindians' advocates. 3) To examine some of the different ways Amazonian environmental issues have been portrayed by the world press, and the manner in which public opinion has been shaped by them.

Requirements & Evaluations:

The class will be primarily discussion oriented. The course objectives will be developed through readings, lectures, active student participation in class and the viewing of documentaries and movies set in the Amazonian region. Students will be required to write three four-page essays on assigned readings or films. Course grade will be based on the completion of these essays, daily class participation, an individual oral presentation, and a term-paper (based on the oral presentation) at the conclusion of the course.

Tentative readings include excerpts from the following books:

1. Fiction, travel narrative and non-fiction narrative:

The Early Amazons (1994), Josine H. Blok
The Naturalist on the River Amazons (1863), Henry Walter Bates

The Journals of Ernest George Fenton Hall (1930), Ernest George Fenton Hall
Dreams of Amazonia (1993), Roger D. Stone
At Play in the Fields of the Lord (1965), Peter Matthiessen
Folk Literature of the Yanomami Indians (1990), Karin Simoneau and Johannes Wilbert
Amazonian Literary Review (2004), Nicomedes Suárez-Araúz (ed.)

2. Journalism, testimonials and scholarly research:

Tristes Tropiques (1955), Claude Lévi-Strauss
The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Theory (1996), Cheryll Glotfelt & Harold Fromm (eds.)
The Rivers Amazon (1986), Alex Shoumatoff
Fight for the Forest (1992), Chico Mendes
Into the Amazon: Chico Mendes & the Struggle for the Rain Forest (1990), Augusta Dwyer
The Fate of the Forest: Developers, Destroyers and Defenders of the Amazon (1990), Alexander Cockburn and Susanna Hecht
The Decade of Destruction: The Crusade to Save the Amazon Rain Forest (1990), Adrian Cowell
Alternatives to Deforestation: Steps Toward Sustainable Use of the Amazon Rain Forest (1990), Anthony B. Anderson
Sustaining Amazonia: Grassroots Action for Productive Conservation (1997), Anthony L. Hall
Voices from the Amazon (1993), Binka Le Breton
Tropical Rainforests, Latin American Nature and Society in Transition (1993), Susan E. Place (ed.)
Through Amazonian Eyes: The Human Ecology of Amazonian Populations (1993), Emilio F. Moran
Public opinion, the press, and public policy (1994), J. David Kennamer (ed.)
Propaganda and the public mind (2001), Noam Chomsky & David Barsamian
Setting the agenda: The news media and public opinion (2001), Maxwell McCombs

Articles:

“The politics of Amazonian deforestation”, *Journal of Latin American Studies* 23 (1991): 197-215, Andrew Hurrell
“Indian lands, environmental policy & military geopolitics in the development of the Brazilian Amazon: the case of the Yanomami”, *Studies in Comparative International Development* (1990), Bruce Albert

Documentaries and movies:

The Emerald Forest (1985), John Boorman
The Decade of Destruction (1990), Adrian Cowell
At Play in the Fields of the Lord (1991), Hector Babenco
Amazon: Journey to a Thousand Rivers (1991), Jacques Cousteau
Tainá: Uma Aventura na Amazônia (2000), Tânia Lamarca & Sérgio Bloch
Contact: the Yanomami Indians of Brazil, Geoffrey O'Connor

