

## Welcome to Living in the Anthropocene- ENVS 120

Fall 2023

Emory University

**\*\*\*DRAFT- assignments and dates are subject to change\*\*\***

**Instructor: Dr. Shaunna Donaher (she/her)**

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**Teaching Assistants:** TBA

**CLASS MEETINGS:** Mondays and Wednesdays 1:00-2:15 PM in PAIS 290

**OFFICE HOURS:** TBD

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course introduces the study of environmental science through major overarching hot-button topics. For Fall 2023 these topics will include Climate Change and Coral Reef Stressors. Within these topics we will discuss earth science, ecology, policy, resilience, and sustainability with an interdisciplinary approach. The influence of human activities on the environment will be discussed and debated through analysis of past and current events and case studies. A large, 2-part group project connecting course content to real-world issues will be required. This course is intended for non-majors but is allowed to fill the lecture component of the introductory ENVS series as well.

**LEARNING GOALS:** By the completion of this course, you will be able to

- Critically evaluate a variety of scientific literature
- Communicate scientific ideas concisely across a variety of mediums
- Understand the complex issues of climate change and coral stressors
- Examine our human influence on the environmental system
- Critique scientific information from other sources
- Compare solutions to environmental issues

**TEXTBOOK:** *No textbook required.* Lectures and required readings (from books, news articles, scientific papers, and more) will be uploaded to Canvas for each class meeting. These will be organized on the Modules page.

**TECHNOLOGY:** You will need to bring an internet-enabled device to class every day. You'll use these to access Canvas to take the attendance quizzes at the start of each class. Some days we will also use them for participation using Poll Everywhere (free).

Follow me on Twitter [@WeatherDoc12](https://twitter.com/WeatherDoc12) for updates about class activities (#envs120) as well as general science news.

## **COURSE OUTLINE AND IMPORTANT DATES**

**~subject to change with notice~**

**Introductory Material:** Topics include introduction to course, how to read a scientific paper, and defining the Anthropocene.

### **Environmental Issue #1: Climate Change**

Some topics in this section will include atmospheric composition, the greenhouse effect, human-caused emissions, past climates on Earth, predicting climate change, current and future impacts of a changed climate, communication of uncertainty, climate policy (local, domestic, and international) and law, resiliency, critiques of climate change, solutions to climate change issues, and climate/environmental justice.

### **Project Part A: October 4<sup>th</sup>**

This project will involve working in groups of 4 to create a 2-minute informational video about a solution to an environmental issue that an individual can undertake. On October 4<sup>th</sup> we will watch the videos in class, and you'll use these videos for community outreach for Part B of the project later in the semester.

### **Exam 1: October 16<sup>th</sup>**

### **Environmental Issue #2: Coral Reef Stressors**

Some topics in this section will include ecological interactions, resilience, biodiversity, invasive species, endangered species, marine pollution, sustainability, coral bleaching, coral restoration, and the effects of climate change on these oceanic organisms.

### **Exam 2: November 15<sup>th</sup>**

Cumulative 75-minute final exam, about 1/3 based on material from the first half of class and 2/3 from material in the second half of class.

### **Project Part B: November 29<sup>th</sup> and December 4<sup>th</sup>**

In your same groups, you will show your video to at least 20 people not in this class and interview them about how the video changed their knowledge about the topic and how likely they are to make the change suggested. Your group will submit up a short (~3 page) report of the results and reflect on what you learned from this experience. You'll also brief the class on 3 key outcomes of your survey on one of these two dates.

WEEK	Monday Class Meeting	Wednesday Class Meeting	Summary Paper Due By 11:59 PM
1		8/23 Introductory Lecture	Complete intro survey, name coach, case study
2	8/28 Scientific Literature	8/30 Defining the Anthropocene	<b>Post #1 due by Sept 3<sup>rd</sup></b>
3	9/4 <i>No class (Labor Day)</i>	9/6 Atmosphere/Greenhouse	<b>Post #2 due by Sept 10<sup>th</sup></b>
4	9/11 Past Climate	9/13 Understanding Climate Change	<b>Post #3 due by Sep 17<sup>th</sup></b>
5	9/18 Future Climate Predictions	9/20 Climate Critiques	<b>Post #4 due by Sep 24<sup>th</sup></b>
6	9/25 Climate Solutions	9/27 Climate Justice	<b>Post #5 due by Oct 1<sup>st</sup></b>
7	10/2 Climate Communication	10/4 <b>Project part A due</b>	<b>Post #6 due by Oct 8<sup>th</sup></b>
8	10/9 <i>No class (Fall Break)</i>	10/11 Exam Review	--
9	10/16 <b>EXAM 1</b>	10/18 Sustainability at Emory	--
10	10/23 Ecosystem Ecology	10/25 Species Interactions and Resilience	<b>Post #7 due by Oct 29<sup>th</sup></b>
11	10/30 Biodiversity, Invasive Species + Extinction	11/1 Marine Pollution and Protected Areas	<b>Post #8 due by Nov 5<sup>th</sup></b>
12	11/6 Coral Bleaching and Other Stressors	11/8 Guest Lecture: Coral Restoration	<b>Post #9 due by Nov 12<sup>th</sup></b>
13	11/13 Exam Review	11/15 <b>EXAM 2</b>	--
14	11/20 <i>Watch Chasing Coral at home</i>	11/22 <i>No class (Thanksgiving Break)</i>	<b>Post #10 due by Nov 26<sup>th</sup></b> Extra credit due 11/26 (optional)
15	11/27 Project workday	11/29 <b>Project Part B due/presentations</b>	Complete end-of semester survey
16	12/4 <b>Project Part B presentations</b>		

Schedule may be changed with notice.

## COURSE GRADING POLICY

Exams (2)- 30%

Project- 20%

Attendance/Participation- 10%

Reading Quizzes (17)- 20%

Diving Deeper Discussion Board Posts (10)- 20%

<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Grade</u>
92.5-100%	A
89.5-92.4%	A-
86.5-89.4%	B+
82.5-86.4%	B
79.5-82.4%	B-
76.5-79.4%	C+
72.5-76.4%	C
69.5-72.4%	C-
66.5-69.4%	D+
59.5-66.4%	D
<59.5%	F

There will be no grading curve in this class.

### Exams- 30% of course grade

There will be 2 exams, worth 15% of your course grade each. They will be held during normal class meeting times on 10/16 and 11/15. Exam questions will assess your ability to apply the content and make connections, not just memorize the material. Study guides will be provided for each exam, and we will use class time to hold review sessions before each exam. Make-ups will only be allowed for extenuating circumstances with appropriate documentation. Exam two will cover approximately 1/3 material from the first half of class and 2/3 material from after exam 1.

Per the Emory catalog, *“A student who fails to take any required midterm or final examination at the scheduled time may not make up the examination without written permission from a dean in the Office for Undergraduate Education. Permission will be granted only for illness or other compelling reasons, such as participation in scheduled events off-campus as an official representative of the University”*

### Project- 20% of course grade

The interdisciplinary nature of this course will require you to apply what you learned in content to a related project as shown in the course outline on page 3 of this syllabus. Projects will consist of group work and will be evaluated based on class connections made, understanding of scientific processes, and creativity. Projects will also be graded based on participation and effort. Detailed instructions and grading rubrics for each part of the project will be provided. Each part will have an associated due date and will not be accepted late.

### Attendance/Participation - 10% of course grade

This category will consist of a few different components such as beginning -and end-of-semester tasks and attendance/participation in class sessions. These will earn credit for completion/attending. If you need to miss class due to an Emory approved reason (religious observance, athletics, illness, club event, etc.) please fill out the [Self-Service Student Absence Form](#) through OUE within 1 week of the missed class and I will excuse the class so it doesn't count against this score. I will also automatically drop 2 unexcused absences (or other components) in this category.

### Reading Quizzes (17) - 20% of course grade

There will be one assigned reading for almost every class meeting (starting on 8/30, excluding project days and exam days). You are responsible for reading the assigned material **before** class. This will be assessed with brief (3 question) reading quizzes on Canvas that need to be completed *before the class starts*. These are open notes but need to be completed individually. You will have one attempt at each quiz, but there is no time limit on the quiz duration as long as it is completed before class starts. Because of the flexibility in the timing of these quizzes, makeup quizzes will not be allowed. However, your **lowest 2 quiz scores will be dropped**, regardless of reason (illness, traveling, internet issues, or other life challenges).

### Diving Deeper Discussion Board Posts (10)- 20% of course grade

After most weeks of new class material, you will choose any ONE idea from the lectures/readings/class discussions to expand on further in a discussion board post. Your post should be about a *paragraph in length and should add something new to the conversation*, showing that you have devoted time to think about that idea more outside of class. After posting you will be able to see the posts of your classmates and should choose TWO of their posts to respond to meaningfully.

Posts will earn up to 4 points total: 2 points for a well-developed original idea, and one point for each thoughtful response to a classmate (maximum of two for credit, but more are welcome). Posts that simply reword class content or state that we need to care about the environment will not earn full credit. Responses that just say how you agree with a classmate will not earn credit. Posts and responses should be completed by 11:59 PM on the dates below. There will be a 12-hour grace period from this deadline, after which no credit will be given. Your **1** lowest score in this category will be dropped.

Discussion Post	Due on (by 11:59 PM)	Based on Lectures and Readings from
#1	9/3	8/28 and 8/30
#2	9/10	9/6
#3	9/17	9/11 and 9/13
#4	9/24	9/18 and 9/20
#5	10/1	9/25 and 9/27
#6	10/8	10/2 and 10/4
#7	10/29	10/23 and 10/25
#8	11/5	10/30 and 11/1
#9	11/12	11/6 and 11/8
#10	11/26	Chasing Coral

## COURSE POLICIES

### **Office Hours:**

Office hours are posted on page 1 of this syllabus. THESE ARE FOR ALL STUDENTS TO HELP YOU WITH ANYTHING YOU NEED! Please take advantage of office hours for additional class support or to ask any environmental questions you may have. The hours posted are drop-in, so you don't need an appointment or to let me know that you are coming to them. If you need to reach me outside of my office hours, I encourage you to email me. We can also set up personal appointments via email. If there is repeated demand for office hours outside of my offered times, the teaching assistants may offer them as well. *If you are planning to email me questions about course content, please post them on the general question discussion board on Canvas instead.* This way everyone can benefit from the answer.

### **Attendance:**

Attendance for this class is required, and you are responsible for being aware of any information given during our class sessions. If you miss class due to an Emory sanctioned reason (religious observance, athletics, illness, club event, etc.) please fill out the Student Absence form through OUE and I will excuse the classes. I will also automatically drop 2 unexcused absences because I know that life happens. I will do my best to record classes and post the links on our Canvas site, so if you do have to miss class you should watch them to see what you missed and stay on top of course expectations. I also highly recommend finding a "class buddy" to contact in case of missed classes.

### **Late Assignment Policy:**

This class builds in content all semester, thus is imperative to stay on top of course material and assessments and participate in our class sessions. For that reason, assignments will not regularly be accepted late, and makeup activities/reading quizzes/exams will not be given. I know the state of the world is still unusual right now and I have tried to build in some flexibility in dropping lowest grades and granting extensions (see above). If you have a longer-term medical or personal situation arise, please let me know before deadlines occur and I will do my best to approve reasonable accommodations.

### **Extra credit:**

Extra credit is not traditionally given in this class. The grading structure is straightforward, and you should be aware of your standing and what you need to do to improve it all semester. The only extra credit option available will be related to watching Chasing Coral. Dr. Donaher will explain the requirements in class and on Canvas on 11/13.

### **Student progress:**

Please feel free to contact me at any time to find out your official grades and scores. Grades will also be kept as up to date as possible on Canvas so you will have every opportunity to be aware of your current standing in the course.

**Incompletes:**

An Incomplete or “I” grade may only be issued following the Emory Catalog: *“A student may be granted formal permission by a dean in the College’s Office for Undergraduate Education to defer the final examination or other parts of a course. Deferments will not be permitted except for illness or other emergency and must normally be secured prior to the examination.”*

**Inclusivity:**

Every student in this classroom, regardless of personal history or identity categories, is a valued member of this group. We will be discussing some hotly contested issues, and your opinions and experiences are valuable and important. Please feel free to share them as they become relevant to our class without fear of reprisal.

**Class Session Recording:**

Our class sessions will be audio visually recorded for students in the class to refer to the information. Lectures and other classroom presentations presented through video conferencing and other materials posted on Canvas are for the sole purpose of educating the students enrolled in the course. The release of such information (including but not limited to directly sharing, screen capturing, or recording content) is strictly prohibited. Doing so without the written permission of the instructor will be considered an Honor Code violation and may also be a violation of other state and federal laws, such as the Copyright Act.

**Academic honesty:**

The Honor Code applies to all work submitted for courses in Emory College. Students who violate the Honor Code may be subject to a written mark on their record, failure of the course, suspension, permanent exclusion, or a combination of these and other sanctions. The Honor Code may be reviewed online at: <http://catalog.college.emory.edu/academic/policies-regulations/honor-code.html>.

## OTHER RESOURCES

**Office for Undergraduate Education**

The Office for Undergraduate Education (OUE) central office is located in White Hall 300. Please visit or call 404.727.6069 with questions about academic affairs, concerns or policies. All Emory College of Arts and Sciences policies may be found in the College Catalog: <http://catalog.college.emory.edu/>

Students who have an academic concern or question about Emory College of Arts and Sciences policies or who seek supplemental advising to that of their faculty pre-major or major advisors can seek advising from an Office for Undergraduate Education (OUE) staff.

**Academic Support**

There is a range of resources available to Emory undergraduates designed to enrich each student’s educational experience and support their academic progress. Visit <http://college.emory.edu/oue/current-students/student-support/index.html> for a list of programs and appointment instructions.

### **Accessibility and Accommodations**

As the instructor of this course, I endeavor to provide an inclusive learning environment. I want every student to succeed. The Department of Accessibility Services (DAS) works with students who have disabilities to provide reasonable accommodations. It is your responsibility to request accommodations. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, you must register with the DAS at <http://accessibility.emory.edu/students/> . Accommodations cannot be retroactively applied so you need to contact DAS as early as possible and contact me as early as possible in the semester to discuss the plan for implementation of your accommodations. For additional information about accessibility and accommodations, please contact the Department of Accessibility Services at (404) 727-9877 or [accessibility@emory.edu](mailto:accessibility@emory.edu).

### **Writing Center Support for ECAS Students**

The **Emory Writing Center** staff of undergraduate tutors and graduate fellows is available to support Emory College students as they work on any type of writing assignment in any field: sciences, social sciences, or humanities. Tutors can assist with a range of projects, from traditional papers and presentations to websites and other multimedia projects. They work with students on concerns including idea development, structure, use of sources, grammar, and word choice. They do not proofread for students. Instead, they discuss strategies and resources students can use as they write, revise, and edit their own work. Tutors also support the literacy needs of English Language Learners; several tutors are ELL Specialists, who have received additional training. Learn more and make an appointment at [writingcenter.emory.edu](http://writingcenter.emory.edu). Please note that you need to make (and cancel) appointments at least 3 hours in advance to accommodate our remote staff. Please review our [tutoring policies](#), including our updated [policies and procedures for online appointments](#), on our website before your visit.