

The Ecology, History and Politics of California Ecosystems - Honors 378
Fall 2015

Instructor: Dr. Jennifer Funk
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Office Hours: TBD
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Lecture: 1:00-2:45 Tuesday, Thursday, AF 205

Instructional Materials

Hirsch, Aaron (2014) *Telling Our Way to the Sea: A Voyage of Discovery in the Sea of Cortez*
Additional readings will be posted on Blackboard as PDF files.

Course Description

Prerequisite: acceptance to the University Honors Program, or consent of instructor and Honors Director. California is a biodiversity hotspot with a number of distinctive ecosystems from deserts to kelp forests, and redwoods to skyscrapers. This course will explore the ecology of several California ecosystems, the historical, current and future impacts of humans on ecosystems, the political and social issues surrounding resource extraction in California, and recent conservation efforts. (Offered as needed.) 3 credits.

Course Learning Outcomes

- Students will understand the geological and climatic forces that have shaped California ecosystems and resulted in diverse plant and animal communities.
- Students will understand the impact of humans and climate change on ecosystem function.
- Students will be able to analyze and critically evaluate the ecological, political and ethical aspects of resource extraction and address the complex challenges that humans face moving forward.

Honors Program Learning Outcomes

Upon completing a course in the University Honors Program students will have:

- Obtained a starting point for integrative exploration of the development of cultures and intellectual achievements through a variety of disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives;
- Sharpened their ability to critically analyze and synthesize a broad range of knowledge through the study of primary texts and through engagement in active learning with fellow students, faculty, and texts (broadly understood);
- Understood how to apply more integrative and interdisciplinary forms of understanding in the advancement of knowledge and in addressing complex challenges shaping the world;
- Developed effective communication skills, specifically in the areas of written and oral exposition and analysis.

Methods of Instruction

The class will be taught in a seminar-style format. Throughout the semester, several lectures will be used to establish the context and theoretical framework of the readings to enhance seminar conversations. Because students learn in a variety of ways, I will use several methods to evaluate student learning including participation in group discussions, written exams, an essay and an oral presentation. Active and constructive student participation is central to the course. Students must complete a field trip to a nearby California ecosystem.

Exams

Two midterm exams will be given during the semester. Make-up exams will be given for extreme cases only, with written documentation of the reason the exam was missed.

Attendance

Participation in class discussion constitutes a large portion of the overall course grade. When conflicts or absences can be anticipated, such as for many University sponsored activities and religious observances, the student should inform the instructor of the situation as far in advance as possible. For unanticipated or emergency absences where advance notification to the instructor is not possible, the student should contact the instructor as soon as possible by e-mail. When the student is unable to make direct contact with the instructor, the student or the student's representative should contact the Office of the Dean of Students if the reported absence is expected to be for an extended period of time (normally a week or more). Each student is responsible for class-related work missed as a result of an unavoidable absence; this work may be made up at the discretion of the instructor.

Academic Integrity Policy

Chapman University is a community of scholars that emphasizes the mutual responsibility of all members to seek knowledge honestly and in good faith. Students are responsible for doing their own work, and academic dishonesty of any kind will be subject to sanction by the instructor and referral to the university's Academic Integrity Committee, which may impose additional sanctions up to and including expulsion. This document represents the Academic Integrity Policy of Chapman University as it pertains to students and to the responsibility of faculty in handling cases of alleged academic dishonesty. Please refer to Student Conduct Code for more information.

Chapman University's Students with Disabilities Policy

In compliance with ADA guidelines, students who have any condition, either permanent or temporary, that might affect their ability to perform in this class are encouraged to contact the Office of Disability Services. If you will need to utilize your approved accommodations in this class, please follow the proper notification procedure for informing your professor(s). This notification process must occur more than a week before any accommodation can be utilized. Please contact Disability Services at (714) 516-4520 or (www.chapman.edu/students/student-health-services/disability-services) if you have questions regarding this procedure, or for information and to make an appointment to discuss and/or request potential accommodations based on documentation of your disability. Once formal approval of your need for an accommodation has been granted, you are encouraged to talk with your professor(s) about your

accommodation options. The granting of any accommodation will not be retroactive and cannot jeopardize the academic standards or integrity of the course.

Equity and Diversity

Chapman University is committed to ensuring equality and valuing diversity. Students and professors are reminded to show respect at all times as outlined in Chapman's Harassment and Discrimination Policy: <http://tinyurl.com/CUHarassment-Discrimination>. Any violations of this policy should be discussed with the professor, the Dean of Students and/or otherwise reported in accordance with this policy.

Grade Composition

Participation – 54 points (3 points each day, 18 days)
Midterm exams – 100 points (50 points each)
Presentation – 50 points
Abstract/Bibliography – 40 points (20 points each)
Final paper – 50 points
Field trip participation – 20 points
Total points – 314

Final Grade Determination

A = > 92.5%, A- = 89.5 – 92.5%
B+ = 87.0 – 89.5%
B = 83.0 – 87.0%
B- = 79.5 – 83.0%
C+ = 77.0 – 79.5%
C = 73.0 – 77%
C- = 69.5 – 73.0%
D = 59.5 – 69.5%, F = < 59.5%

| Date | Topic | Reading/Assignments due |
|----------------|--|----------------------------|
| Feb 3 | Introduction: California's natural regions | R1 |
| Feb 5 | Basic Ecology | R2 |
| Feb 10 | Basic Geology | R3 |
| Feb 12 | Paleoecology | R4, P1 |
| Feb 17 | Native Americans and early settlers | R5, P2 |
| Feb 19 | Fire – science and people | R6, P3 |
| Feb 24 | Fire suppression policies | R7, P4 |
| Feb 26 | Midterm I | |
| Mar 3 | Deserts | |
| Mar 5 | Current issue (grazing) | R8, P5 |
| Mar 10 | Current issue (energy extraction) | R9, P6 |
| Mar 12 | Coastal sage scrub | |
| Mar 17 | Current issue (development/land use) | R10, P7 |
| Mar 19 | Current issue (invasive species) | R11, P8, Field assign. due |
| Mar 24-26 | Spring Break – No class | |
| Mar 31 | Current issue (climate change) | R12, P9 |
| Apr 2 | Kelp forests | |
| Apr 7 | Current issue (overfishing) | R13, P10 |
| Apr 9 | Current issue (pollution) | R14, P11 |
| Apr 14 | Current issue (off-shore oil extraction) | R15, P12, Abstract due |
| Apr 16 | Kelp forest restoration (guest speaker) | |
| Apr 21 | North coast forests | |
| Apr 23 | Current issue (forestry) | R16, P13 |
| Apr 28 | Current issue (climate change) | R17, P14, Bibliography due |
| Apr 30 | Midterm II | |
| May 5 | Conservation | R18, P15 |
| May 7 | Conservation | R18, P16 |
| May 12 | Student presentations | P17 |
| May 14 | Student presentations | P18 |
| Monday, May 18 | FINAL EXAM, 10:45 - 1:15 AM-PM | Final paper due |

R1-18 indicate readings that will be discussed in class that day.

P1-18 indicate classes where participation will be evaluated.

There is no final exam on May 18. Instead, the final paper is due by 1:15pm on that day.

A field trip is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, March 14 (subject to weather). If you cannot make this, an alternative assignment can be completed that requires your own transport to the field.

Participation grading rubric

This grading scale will be used to assess oral communication during lecture discussion and small group work. The scale ranges from 0 (lowest) to 3 (highest). The criteria focus on what you demonstrate in your contribution to class discussion; it does not reflect what you know but do not demonstrate. "Average" participation would be a level "2."

| <i>Grade</i> | <i>Criteria</i> |
|--------------|--|
| 0 | Absent |
| 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrates some level of preparation by knowing facts but does not attempt to interpret or analyze them• Offers straightforward information when called upon• Demonstrates sporadic involvement in small group discussions |
| 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrates good level of preparation, has clearly engaged in completing assignments• Offers interpretation and analyses of material• Demonstrates consistent and productive involvement in small group discussions• Responds to other students' points in a constructive way |
| 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrates excellent preparation in the evaluation and interpretation of ideas• Brings perspectives from additional readings or information sources• Offers analyses that push the class to a higher level• Contributes in a significant way by providing insights that build upon other students' ideas• Very high level of involvement in small group activities |