

THE ENVIRONMENT ON FILM

AS-131-01

FALL 2015

UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY

3:30 - 6:00 Thursdays 212 CB

Instructor: J. Anthony (Tony) Stallins
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Office hours: TBA

Prerequisites:
Class home page: Available in Canvas

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Environment refers to more than just environmentalism. In this course we will use movies to learn about the different ways the environment can be conceptualized and experienced. An environment may be ecological and refer to a place that one might argue is in need of protection and worthy of detailed scientific study. The environment can be a place where we obtain resources and transform nature. The environment can also be one's social or cultural context along lines of class, race, or gender. Environments are exterior or interior, designed or natural, and can reflect human intentions or defy them. Through films and discussion students will develop an understanding of these diverse ways the human-environment relationship can be conceived. The films we watch convey this diversity not only through their content but also in the way film itself is an environment, an immersion into a culture of light and sound. Ultimately, the films in this course and our discussions of them will inform students of what aspects of environment have more intrinsic and extrinsic value to them. This class foregrounds a humanist perspective through its emphasis on the individual experience of the environment.

Student Learning Outcomes:

After completing this course, the student will be able to:
Explain the different ways in which the environment can be conceptualized and studied
Identify key debates about the role of these environments for human well-being
Define humanism and describe how it can be conveyed through film
Assemble and curate a digital film festival that describes representations of the environment
Cultivate a perspective on the facets of the environment of greater value to you
Describe the role films play in shaping our imagination of the environment and how they might influence our beliefs and actions.

Required Materials:

There is no required textbook for the class. However, there are required readings that will be made available online for no charge from the class home page. Because films will be regularly viewed outside of class as part of the curriculum, students will be required to rent online videos when they are not free to stream. Estimated total cost for video rentals is estimated to be \$75 depending upon whether or not students already have monthly rental accounts with online video streaming sites like Netflix. Most of the videos are available to rent through iTunes, Netflix, or Amazon. If you do not have a credit card to make online purchases on iTunes, you can pay cash for an iTunes gift card at most major retail outlets and use this to activate a rental.

Description of Course Activities:

Grades are derived from four primary activities:

Film viewings

Online quizzes

Short readings

Weekly discussion

Film festival project

Midterm and final exam

Attendance and participation

Course Assignments:

Online quizzes	150 (15 at 10 points each)	25%
Film festival project	100	20%
Midterm exam	100	20%
Final exam	100	20%
Attendance and discussion participation	150 (15 at 10 points each)	25%
Total points	600	

Description of Course Assignments:

Film viewings. Students are required to watch two films each week outside of class. These should be viewed under conditions that will not interrupt or distract you from the film's content. In other words, watching these films at a Friday night social gathering may have the unfortunate result of making the film depart from its intent. A drama can become a slapstick comedy depending upon who is watching it with you. Students have the option form small groups of two or three to view films.

Online quizzes. Each week you will be given an online quiz to test your comprehension of the film. You are expected to take notes and retain a memory of the key characters, settings, and plot of each film.

Short readings. For the theme of each week's films, a short reading will provide context for the films. These may be critical essays, newspaper articles, web sites, or movie reviews. These readings will also comprise content for the midterm and final exam and assist students in the design of their UK Core Project.

Weekly discussion: Each week's discussion will begin with a short instructor led activity, followed by small cooperative group work. Groups will be expected to address a prompt or question(s) about the films for that week and report upon their collaboration to the class. These prompts may sometimes be provided before film viewing. Small group work will be uploaded into Canvas before the end of the class period unless otherwise specified.

Film festival project: Students will be expect to develop a web site for an environmental film festival that they are curating. Ten films need to be selected the each convey a distinctive aspect of the environment and how human relate to it. Google Sites will be used to house these independent projects. A film poster and/or a trailer for each film must be included, along with an original, written justification of how the environment is thematically represented. Each film will have a categorical descriptor, as shown in the headings for each week's film in the course schedule. This film festival is expected to be representative of the student's individual values regarding what kinds of environments matter most to them. A rubric will be provided.

Midterm and final exam. Class size will determine the exact format of the test. Tests are not cumulative and will consist of multiple choice questions as well as short essay. Some essays may be take home.

Attendance and participation. Attendance will be taken each class period and triangulated with records of small cooperative group work uploaded into Canvas.

Grading Scale:

- A (100 - 90%)
- B (80 - 89%)
- C (70 - 79%)
- D (60 - 69%)
- E (<59%)

Exam Information:

Mid-term grades will be posted in myUK by the deadline established in the Academic Calendar (<http://www.uky.edu/registrar/content/academic-calendar>)

Final Exam Day and Time:

TBA

COURSE POLICIES

Submission of Assignments

There is no makeup for missed class discussions and small cooperative group work. Once online quizzes are taken down in Canvas, no makeups will be administered. There are enough of these small grades that if you have to miss one or two because of circumstances your grade should not be significantly impacted.

Attendance Policy

Roll will be taken each class meeting and will ultimately comprise 25% of your final grade

Excused Absences:

Students need to notify the professor of absences prior to class when possible. S.R. 5.2.4.2 defines the following as acceptable reasons for excused absences: (a) serious illness, (b) illness or death of family member, (a) University-related trips, (d) major religious holidays, and (e) other circumstances found to fit “reasonable cause for nonattendance” by the professor.

Students anticipating an absence for a major religious holiday are responsible for notifying the instructor in writing of anticipated absences due to their observance of such holidays no later than the last day in the semester to add a class. Information regarding dates of major religious holidays may be obtained through the religious liaison, Mr. Jake Karnes (859-257-2754).

Students are expected to withdraw from the class if more than 20% of the classes scheduled for the semester are missed (excused or unexcused) per university policy.

UK Health Center verification of visits or notes from an outside doctor or clinic are not automatically excused absences. Final decision on whether or not they are excused will be based on the student’s overall attendance record for the semester. This will permit inference as to whether these absences have been frequent enough to warrant suspicion that the illnesses are fabricated or that the student has a significant health issue that will requires further substantiation before an excused status can be given.

Verification of Absences

Students may be asked to verify their absences in order for them to be considered excused. Senate Rule 5.2.4.2 states that faculty have the right to request “appropriate verification” when students claim an excused absence because of illness or death in the family. Appropriate notification of absences due to university-related trips is required prior to the absence.

Academic Integrity:

Per university policy, students shall not plagiarize, cheat, or falsify or misuse academic records. Students are expected to adhere to University policy on cheating and plagiarism in all courses. The minimum penalty for a first offense is a zero on the assignment on which the offense occurred. If the offense is considered severe or the student has other academic offenses on their record, more serious penalties, up to suspension from the university may be imposed.

Plagiarism and cheating are serious breaches of academic conduct. Each student is advised to become familiar with the various forms of academic dishonesty as explained in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Complete information can be found at the following website: <http://www.uky.edu/Ombud>. A plea of ignorance is not acceptable as a defense against the charge of academic dishonesty. It is important that you review this information as all ideas borrowed from others need to be properly credited.

Part II of Student Rights and Responsibilities

<http://www.uky.edu/StudentAffairs/Code/part2.html> states that all academic work, written or otherwise, submitted by students to their instructors or other academic supervisors, is expected to be the result of their own thought, research, or self-expression. In cases where students feel unsure about the question of plagiarism involving their own work, they are obliged to consult their instructors on the matter before submission.

When students submit work purporting to be their own, but which in any way borrows ideas, organization, wording or anything else from another source without appropriate acknowledgement of the fact, the students are guilty of plagiarism. Plagiarism includes reproducing someone else’s work, whether it be a published article, chapter of a book, a paper from a friend or some file, or something similar to this. Plagiarism also includes the practice of employing or allowing another person to alter or revise the work which a student submits as his/her own, whoever that other person may be.

Students may discuss assignments among themselves or with an instructor or tutor, but when the actual work is done, it must be done by the student, and the student alone. When a student’s assignment involves research in outside sources of information, the student must carefully acknowledge exactly what, where and how he/she employed them. If the words of someone else are used, the student must put quotation marks around the passage in question and add an appropriate indication of its origin. Making simple changes while leaving the

organization, content and phraseology intact is plagiaristic. However, nothing in these Rules shall apply to those ideas which are so generally and freely circulated as to be a part of the public domain (Section 6.3.1).

Please note: Any assignment you turn in may be submitted to an electronic database to check for plagiarism.

Accommodations due to disability:

If you have a documented disability that requires academic accommodations, please see me as soon as possible during scheduled office hours. In order to receive accommodations in this course, you must provide me with a Letter of Accommodation from the Disability Resource Center (Room 2, Alumni Gym, 257-2754, email address: jkarnes@email.uky.edu) for coordination of campus disability services available to students with disabilities.

Classroom Behavior Policies

Use of electronic devices must be discrete and respectful of all persons in the class, including the instructor. I do not forbid the use of electronic devices for non-class related communications, but if used during class time for those reasons it must be done discretely and infrequently.