

History/Environmental Studies 328 Environmental History of Europe, Fall 2020: Syllabus

Fully online, with class meetings and/or office hours scheduled Tues. and Thur., 1:00-2:15pm

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Office hours: at above times, or by appointment (arrange via email)

Description: This class explores a new approach to a part of the world with a very old history, but one that is now as ‘modern’ as any. The changing relations between Europeans and their environments from antiquity to the twenty-first century offer instructive comparison with American and current global environmental concerns. Approaching European history from an environmental perspective also offers fresh perspective on Europe’s enduring cultures. Questions we will consider include: how have Western ideas about nature changed over time? To what extent have Europeans degraded, or managed to live sustainably with, their environments? How did the development of capitalism, industrialization, and colonialism affect Europe’s environment? How do modern European conservationism and environmentalism compare with their American analogs?

Credit Hours: This is a 3-Credit-Hour, fully-online course. The credit standard for this course is met by an expectation of a total of 135 hours of student engagement with the course learning activities (at least 45 hours per credit), which include reading, writing, discussions, quizzes, and other student work and regular online interaction as described in the syllabus and as will be detailed on the course website on Canvas. Over the semester, which consists of fourteen weeks, this means students should expect to spend about 9-10 hours per week on this class.

Learning Outcomes. In this class students will practice and improve their skills and abilities to:

1. Define historical questions concerning the human understanding of and impact on past environments in Europe.
2. Identify pertinent types of evidence to study past interactions between humans and their environments in Europe, while assessing their advantages and disadvantages.
3. Evaluate the evidentiary and theoretical bases, and areas for further investigation, in ongoing scholarly and public debates about Europe’s environmental history.
4. Develop an understanding of the variety of natural environments, cultures, and processes of historical change in Europe.
5. Present original and coherent arguments through clearly written and persuasive writing.

Grades: will be calculated on the standard UW scale: A=93-100%, AB=88-92%, B=83-87%, BC=78-82%, C=70-77%, D=60-69%, F=0-59%. Note: in order to pass this class, you must complete all of the essay assignments and 75% of the discussions and quizzes. Grades will be determined as follows:

Item	Percent of course grade	Course points
Quizzes	10%	50
Discussion	15	75
Short Essay	20	100
Midterm Essay	30	150
Final Essay	25	125
Total	100	500

Quizzes: There will be online quizzes approximately every two to three weeks. These will consist of multiple choice and a few true/false questions.

Online Class Discussion. There will be weekly discussions of class materials on Canvas, to which everyone is expected to contribute regularly, both by answering discussion questions and by responding to other students' postings. The main goal of the discussion is to help everyone understand and analyze the assigned materials within their specific historical contexts. Usually you will need to make a total of two to three posts, including both your answers to the questions and your responses to others. Thus most posts should aim for a length of between about 75 and 250 words, with 100-200 words being a good average range to shoot for.

Quality of Participation: When making contributions to the discussion, quality of contribution counts more than quantity. A quality contribution is one in which you: a) cite the assigned readings and other sources; b) make thoughtful and ideally original points; and c) explain your ideas clearly and concisely. Quality contributions reflect your familiarity with the readings and your effort to ask good critical questions about them, such as: What are the main questions the author tries to answer? What is the author's main argument? What specific arguments, assumptions, or evidence are used in support? What is left out? Good participation also means that you listen to others and try to engage seriously but respectfully with what others say.

Timeliness and Consistency of Discussion Contributions. A major factor that I will consider in assessing discussion contributions will be their timeliness and consistency, over the course of the entire semester. There can be no real exchange of ideas and perspectives if you wait to just before the discussion closes!

Qualitative Assessment of Discussion Contributions. Most of the above criteria are inherently subjective, especially in the context of short discussion posts. Therefore, in order to avoid excessive worry and focus on counting points for each and every individual post, and in order to base your grade on a larger "sample size," I will only assign grades for your overall contribution to class discussion at the end of the semester. Then I will do not based on adding up points, but rather based on my subjective assessment in terms of an overall grade-level, i.e., A-level contributor, AB-level, etc. For more detail, see the "Rubric for Final Assessment of Discussion Contributions," under the Course Orientation Module.

Essays: There are essays due approximately every three to four weeks, ranging in length from 2-3 pages to about 6-7 pages. These will focus on the assigned readings, with topics and guidelines provided one week before their due dates. Essays must be turned in as electronic copies on Canvas (not via email!). Late papers will be heavily penalized: they will be marked down one grade per class day late. For help with the essays, besides asking me, see the tips on my webpage on [Teaching Guides](#). If you are near the UW-Madison campus, you can also get one-on-one help at both the [Writing Center](#) and the [History Lab](#).

Past-Due Guidelines: 1) valid excuses for any late or missed assignments are limited to: university-recognized religious observances and athletic participation (but in both of these cases you must inform me of your scheduling conflicts by the end of the second week of classes); and for well-documented major illnesses or emergencies in the immediate family. 2) In cases of missed deadlines for quizzes, discussions, and paper due-dates, you should inform me of your absence in advance if at all possible. Missing these deadlines without prior notice to me may result in a failing grade for that assessment.

Academic Honesty: Your written work must reflect your own ideas, and where you draw on others' words or ideas you need to indicate this clearly with proper quotations and citations. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated, and all appropriate penalties, including failing the course, will be strictly enforced. Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to "claim[ing] credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization or citation." See UW's guidance on this topic, on the page "[Academic Misconduct](#)." Specifically on the proper ways to give credit to sources, consult the [Writing Center](#) and see their page on "[Quoting and Paraphrasing](#)."

Accommodations: If you need accommodations due to any disability, please let me know within the first two weeks of class, i.e. by Sept. 19. It is the student's responsibility to contact the McBurney Center and arrange to have the proper notification sent to me. See: <https://mcburney.wisc.edu/>. If you are on or near campus, you can also visit their office, the McBurney Disability Resource Center, 702 West Johnson St., Suite 2104, tel. 608-263-2741; or email them at: mcburney@studentlife.wisc.edu.

Reading Notes: You should always read each weekly assignment carefully, take notes, and prepare a short summary of, response to, and critical questions (including, but not limited to the instructor-provided questions for the weekly discussions). There's no set length for such notes, but 1-2 pages is a good minimum target. I will not collect these, but if you are having trouble, reviewing such notes is a good place to begin a discussion with me. Such notes are also very helpful in preparing for quizzes, discussions, and papers.

Essay Drafts for Writing Fellows: for Essays 1 and 2 you are required to turn in a draft two weeks before the final paper is due. You will then work with an undergraduate Writing Fellow on revising them; see [Writing Fellows program](#) for general information. Our class is fortunate to have WFs to work with you!

***Note:** the draft for the WF is a course requirement. Failing to submit a draft on time will result in up to ten (10) points deducted from your final draft.

Required Books (3) & Course Pack (1): You need to acquire the three required books and the Course Pack for this class. They are listed here below in the order in which they will be assigned. You should get the books in the editions specified here. Please note that in many cases EBOOKS ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE, because they often leave out the page numbers or have other formatting problems. The books are available, among other places, the UW Bookstore: www.uwbookstore.com. The Course Pack is available from the Social Sciences Copy Center, in 6120 Social Sciences: <http://copy.ls.wisc.edu/>. Both the books and the Course Pack will also be on reserve at College Library.

Keyser, Richard. *Course Pack for Hist/Env Studies 328*. Social Science Copy Center, 2020.

Mark Cioc. *The Rhine: An Eco-Biography, 1815-2000*. University of Washington Press, 2006.

Winter, James. *Secure from Rash Assault: Sustaining the Victorian Environment*. University of California Press, 1999.

Bess, Michael. *The Light-Green Society: Ecology and Technological Modernity in France, 1960-2000*. The University of Chicago Press, 2003.

Reading Assignments: you should read each week's assignments in the order they are listed on the syllabus and finish all of them by Tuesday's class time (even though we won't be meeting in person). This will enable you to make connections among the readings and to use class time to review, clarify, and ask questions about the week's material.

SCHEDULE

***Note:** the schedule below provides the weekly topics, the reading assignments in the required textbooks, and the essay due-dates. These are all set and will not be changed. But the **full details for all of the course activities**, including any readings made available online and most of the online activities (lectures, film clips, discussions, quizzes, etc.), **will be**

updated and provided on a weekly basis on the course website on Canvas, under the **Activity Guide for each Module**.

****Note:** the schedule below lists our scheduled class days for each week (Tuesday and Thursday), when I will schedule any class meetings or office hours. But each weekly Module in Canvas will **open by 12:00 noon, Thursday, U.S. Central Time**, and all of the Module's activities (discussion, quiz, any essay that is due) will **close the following Thursday, at 11:59 am**. The only exceptions are weeks 13 and 14 (see below).

Week 1 (half-week), Thur., Sept.3. Introduction: Environmental History & Early Civilizations
Course Pack: R. Winks, *Ancient Mediterranean World*, pp. 1-15.
Course Pack Primary Sources, ch. 1: begin Ancient Sources (Greece).

Week 2, Tues.-Thur., Sept. 8-10. Ancient Civilizations to the Greeks.
Course Pack: Winks, *Ancient Mediterranean World*, pp. 36-41, 54-64.
Course Pack: J. D. Hughes, *Environmental Problems*, ch. 5, pp. 68-87; ch. 7, pp. 110-13, 118-28.
Course Pack Sources, ch. 1: Ancient Sources, Greece.

Week 3, Tues.-Thur., Sept. 15-17. The Roman Empire.
Course Pack: R. Winks, Robin, *Ancient Mediterranean World*, pp. 144-59.
Course Pack: Grove and Rackham, *Nature of Mediterranean*, pp. 8-15, 18-19, 48-56, 190-97.
Course Pack: Bryan Ward-Perkins, *Fall of Rome*, pp. 33-43, 58-62.
Course Pack Primary Sources, ch. 1: Ancient Sources, finish (Rome).

Week 4, Tues.-Thur., Sept. 22-24. The Fall of Rome.
Essay 1 Draft Due: Tues., Sept. 22.
Course Pack: Hughes, *Environmental Problems*, Conclusion, pp. 224-35.
Course Pack: Grove and Rackham, *Nature of Mediterranean*, pp. 167-74, 188-89.

Week 5, Tues. Sept. 29 -Thur., Oct. 1. Explaining the Fall.
Course Pack: Bryan Ward-Perkins, *Fall of Rome*, pp. 117-21, 122-34, 144-47.
Course Pack: Karl Butzer, "Environmental History," pp. 1773-78; 1794-98.

Week 6, Tues.-Thur., Oct. 6-8. Early Modern Growth to the First Industrial Revolution.
Essay 1 Due: Tues., Oct. 6.
Course Pack: James Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, introduction & ch. 1, pp. 1-22.
Cioc, *The Rhine*, ch. 1, pp. 3-19.

Week 7, Tues.-Thur., Oct. 13-15. Industrial Zones and Agrarian Landscapes.
Cioc, *The Rhine*, ch. 2-3, pp. 21-75.
Winter, *Secure from Rash Assault*, intro & ch. 1, pp. 1-18.

Week 8, Tues.-Thur., Oct. 20-22. Industry and Agrarian Change in the 'Long' Nineteenth Century.
Cioc, *The Rhine*, ch. 4, pp. 77-107.
Winter, *Secure from Rash Assault*, ch. 2-3, pp. 19-61.

Week 9, Tues.-Thur., Oct. 27 - 29. The Impact of British Industrialization.
Oct. 27: Essay 2 Draft Essay Due
Winter, *Secure from Rash Assault*, ch. 6-7, pp. 104-42.

Week 10, Tues.-Thur., Nov. 3-5. German & British Industrialization Compared.

Cioc, *The Rhine*, ch. 5, pp. 109-43.

Winter, *Secure from Rash Assault*, ch. 8, pp. 143-65.

Week 11, Tues.-Thur., Nov. 10-12. Environmental Impacts & New Environmental Ideas.

Nov. 10: Essay 2 Due.

Cioc, *The Rhine*, ch. 6, pp. 145-71, ch. 7, pp. 173-75.

Course Pack Sources, ch. 2: Romanticism.

Week 12, Tues.-Thur, Nov. 17-19. Early Conservation & Preservation.

Winter, *Secure from Rash Assault*, ch. 9, pp. 166-88.

Week 13 (half-week), Tues., Nov. 24. Begin: The Rise of Environmentalism

Winter, *Secure from Rash Assault*, ch. 11, pp. 209-30.

Cioc, *The Rhine*, ch. 7-8, pp. 176-207.

Thanksgiving Break, Nov. 26-29.

Week 14, Tues.-Thur., Dec. 1-3. Continue: The Rise of Environmentalism.

Bess, *The Light-Green Society*, Intro., pp. 3-9; & ch. 1, pp. 11-37; ch. 4, pp. 76-114.

Course Pack: Whited, *Northern Europe*, ch. 6, pp. 145-64.

Week 15, Tues.-Thur., Dec. 8-10. Green Parties & Green Governance.

Bess, *The Light-Green Society*, ch. 11, pp. 218-33; ch. 12, pp. 237-45; & Concl., pp. 291-95.

Final Essay: Due Tuesday, Dec. 15, by 2:30 pm (our official exam time).