Summer, 2016, First Five-Week Session

**HIST 3355/GEOG 3355/ESST 2300: The Environmental History of the United States/ Intro to Environmental and Sustainability Studies**

**PROFESSOR**: C. MORRIS

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**FACULTY PROFILE:** <https://www.uta.edu/mentis/public/#profile/profile/view/id/1212/category/3>

**OFFICE HOURS**: MW 12:30–1:30, TTH 3:00-4:00

**SECTION INFORMATION**: HIST 3355/GEOG 3355, SECTION 001

**TIME AND PLACE**: MTWTh 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p. m., room UH 09

**CONTENT:** This course will introduce students to basic concepts necessary to understand and engage present-day debates over policy, politics, and science of sustainability and the relationship between people and the natural environment. This will be accomplished primarily be exploring the history of sustainability and the human-environmental relationship in the United States. The history of the United States has been shaped by a close relationship between people and the North American environment, relationships that have not always been sustainable. The land has altered human behavior and touched human consciousness as surely as people have transformed the land in ways both constructive and destructive. From the colonial period when nature mediated relations between Europeans and Native Americans to cattle ranching in the West to modern environmental engineering to conservation and environmentalist politics, this class will explore the largely unconsidered but crucial role non-human nature has played in the human history of America (and vice versa).

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:** By the end of the semester students will be able to explain the concept of sustainability and related concepts, and to apply those concepts critically and thoughtfully to issues and examples drawn from the relationship between people and the natural environment in the present and in American history.

**TEXTBOOKS:** Thomas Thwaites, *The Toaster Project*

Mark Fiege, *The Republic of Nature*

**ASSIGNMENTS AND ASSESSMENT:**

Three Writing Exercises (10 points each) 30 points

Three Exams (20 points each) 60 points

Class Participation 10 points

**Writing Exercises:** There will be three writing exercises, in which students will explain in a brief essay (500 words) a key concept as it applies to their own lives.

**Exams:** There will be two midterm exams and a final exam covering class lectures, readings, and discussions. These exams will not be cumulative.

**Missed assignments and Exams:** Students with a valid, documented reason for missing a writing assignment or exam will be permitted an extension or make-up exam as arranged with the instructor.

**ATTENDANCE:** There will be no grade for attendance, although there will be a grade for discussion participation, which of course, will require attendance. Students who attend class reliably and who regularly participate in class discussions always do better on exams and assignments.

**DROP POLICY:** Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance**. Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (<http://wweb.uta.edu/aao/fao/>).

**AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT:** The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including the *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*. All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Any student requiring an accommodation for this course must provide the instructor with official documentation in the form of a letter certified by the staff in the Office for Students with Disabilities, University Hall 102. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability) or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** Students enrolled in this course are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

*I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington’s tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.*

*I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.*

UT Arlington faculty members may employ the Honor Code as they see fit in their courses, including (but not limited to) having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System *Regents’ Rule* 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university’s standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student’s suspension or expulsion from the University.

**STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**:UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to [resources@uta.edu](mailto:resources@uta.edu), or view the information at [www.uta.edu/resources](http://www.uta.edu/resources).

**ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION:** UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

**STUDENT FEEDBACK SURVEY:** At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as “lecture,” “seminar,” or “laboratory” shall be directed to complete an online Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student’s feedback enters the SFS database anonymously and is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. UT Arlington’s effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law; students are strongly urged to participate. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

**EMERGENCY EXIT PROCEDURES:** Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exit, which is located outside the classroom and down the hall. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist handicapped individuals.

**CLASS AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE**:

WEEK ONE

June 6 Introduction. What is nature and what is our relationship to it?

June 7 discussion of Thwaites, *The Toaster Project*

June 8 finish discussion of *The Toaster Project*. Native American Ecology.

June 9 Ecology of Colonial New England; **First Writing Assignment Due**

WEEK TWO

June 13 discussion of Fiege, chapter one, “Satan in the Land”

June 14 How to Make a Farm in Four Easy Lessons

June 15 Founding Fathers, Science, and Natural Law; Discussion of Fiege, chapter two, “By the Laws of Nature and of Nature’s God”

June 16 **FIRST EXAM**

WEEK THREE

June 20 Nature and the Sublime: Romanticizing the Nineteenth-Century Landscape: The Hudson Valley School.

June 21 Thoreau as an Environmentalist

June 22 The ecology of cotton and slaves; discussion of Fiege, chapter three, “King Cotton”

June 23 Environmental History and the Civil War; **Second Writing Assignment Due**

WEEK FOUR

June 27 Westward Expansion; discussion of Fiege, chapter six, “Iron Horses”

June 28 Conservation versus Preservation: John Muir, Gifford Pinchot, Theodore Roosevelt, and the National Park and Forest Movement.

June 29 **SECOND EXAM**

June 30 Segregation, Civil Rights, and the Natural Environment; discussion of Fiege, chapter eight, “The Road to *Brown v. Board*”

WEEK FIVE

July 4 HOLIDAY, NO CLASS

July 5 Birth of the Environmental Movement: Aldo Leopold to Rachel Carson to Deep Ecology

July 6 Birth of Environmental Politics: Wilderness Act to the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts and the EPA; **Third Writing Assignment Due**

July 7 Energy Crises, Climate Change, Sustainability, and Resilience; discussion of Fiege, chapter nine, “It’s a Gas”

July 11 **FINAL EXAM**