***This syllabus is subject to change before the beginning of the semester***

HIST 3345.001: American Environmental History
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi
Fall 2015
Mondays and Wednesdays/5:30 p.m.–6:45 p.m.
BH 126

Instructor: Dr. Jen Corrinne Brown
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Office: FC 253C
Office Phone: (361) 825-2641

Office Hours: Mon. and Wed./4p–5p
Tues. and Thurs./5p–6p
Or by appointment

“...the idea of nature contains, though often unnoticed, an extraordinary amount of human history.”—Raymond Williams

COURSE DESCRIPTION
American Environmental History examines the role of nature in the nation’s past, looking beyond more traditional historical topics to discover how the environment has shaped society and the ways in which humans, in turn, have shaped nature throughout American history. We will connect nature and its creatures to larger historical trends and events. In class, there will be lectures, discussions, and other activities that will require your participation. Out of class, there will be reading, writing, and studying. Throughout, we will explore our own connections to nature and place.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
Upon successful completion of HIST 3345, students will:

• learn more about the role of the environment as well as transnational (across nations) and comparative factors in American history.
• gain a better understanding of human interactions with nature over time on a variety of geographic scales.
• demonstrate information retrieval skills required for historical research.
• be able to place the present in a historically-based context.
• improve writing skills.
• become familiar with the Chicago Manual of Style.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Note: The Republic of Nature and Flight Maps are available in the library on a 3-hour reserve.
COURSE REQUIREMENTS/GRADING (1,000 total points possible)

Note: more detailed assignment directions and grading rubrics will be posted on Blackboard.

Place Project (400 points): This project explores the place in which we live and will be the foundation of your course requirements. It consists of three separate components: Group Presentations (100 points), a Service Learning Project (100 points), and an Individual Research Essay (200 points). To help guide you through the research and writing process and to improve the final product, you will be turning in components of the research essay throughout the semester.

Take-Home Midterm Exam (200 points): This take-home exam will cover key environmental history topics that we have learned in the first half of class. The exam will consist of multiple short-essay questions and will require you to draw from course readings and materials.

Take-Home Final Exam (200 points): The final exam will be in format similar to the midterm and will cover important topics that we have learned in the second half of class and throughout the semester. It will require you to synthesize and evaluate course readings and materials.

Participation (4 quarters@50 points each=200 points): Participation, class attendance, contributions to discussion, preparedness, and classroom citizenship are key requirements which will be rewarded. Your participation for each quarter of class will be graded separately, with the dates for each as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quarter 1</th>
<th>Quarter 3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8/26 to 9/23</td>
<td>10/26 to 11/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/28 to 10/21</td>
<td>11/16 to 12/7</td>
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LATE POLICY

If you have a serious, documentable excuse, please contact the instructor about making up any missed in-class work or participation points. You may also turn in any out-of-class assignments late, but unless you have received prior instructor approval, assignments received after their due time and date will be marked down 5% for arriving after the due time (even one minute late) and 10% for each day late. Electronic copies of essays will not be accepted. You will need to turn in your late essay during class or during my office hours.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Academic integrity is an important requirement for this course. Plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic misconduct will not be tolerated. As a student, you are responsible for knowing how to avoid plagiarism. For more information, please see definitions of academic misconduct on the College of Liberal Arts’ website, available at http://cla.tamu.edu/about/documents/academicmisconductprocedures1.pdf. Any student guilty of academic misconduct may receive a failing grade for the course and will be reported to the university’s Judicial Affairs Officer.

COURSE SCHEDULE

The instructor reserves the right to modify the syllabus as needed prior to or during the course. Any changes will be announced in class.
Unit 1: What is Environmental History?
In this unit, we will explore the discipline of environmental history, both in its early roots and its emergence from the environmental movement of the 1960s. We will learn how environmental historians approach the study of history using readings and our own observations.

Guiding Questions:
- What is environmental history? What is nature? How do landscapes reflect human history?

Wednesday, 8/26: Course Introduction; What is Nature?

Monday, 8/31: The Nature of the Field
Reading Due: Fiege, pp. 3–22

Wednesday, 9/2: Landscapes as Historical Sources; Assigning Groups

Monday, 9/7: Labor Day, NO CLASS

Unit 2: Early American Encounters and Exchanges
Throughout this section of class, we will look at the periods of contact and colonization of North America, addressing the different ways that Native Americans and European settlers viewed nature and land use, and how they negotiated between them. We will investigate the consequences of disease, pigs, potatoes, and other European environmental baggage.

Guiding Questions:
- What did the Americas look like in 1491?
- Compare and contrast the uses and views of nature among natives and settlers. What changed over time?
- What were the environmental and social consequences of European and American imperialism?

Wednesday, 9/9: The Pristine Myth
**Assignment Due: Topic**

Monday, 9/14: The Columbian Exchange
Reading Due: Igler, pp. 43–71

Wednesday, 9/16: Settlers and Natives
Reading Due: Fiege, 23–56

Monday, 9/21: Pacific Worlds
Reading Due: Igler, pp. 1–42; 73–97

Wednesday, 9/23: Group Presentations
Unit 3: Nature’s Nation
This unit examines the environmental history of the early American republic. We will learn about the physical and economic growth of the new nation—and the environmental and social costs that accompanied it.

Guiding Questions:
- Why did revolutionaries and early Americans use nature to define their rights and liberties?
- Compare and contrast the whaling and cotton industries of the nineteenth century.
- According to author David Igler, what was the importance of naturalists in the Pacific?
- During the nineteenth century, why did Americans start to appreciate the beauty of nature?
- What environmental changes accompanied westward expansion?

Monday, 9/28: American Independence and the Empire of Liberty
Reading Due: Fiege, pp. 57–99
**Assignment Due: Tentative Bibliography**

Wednesday, 9/30: The Fur Trade and Whaling in the Pacific; Voting on Proposals
Reading Due: Igler, pp. 99–128
**Assignment Due: Service Learning Proposal**

Monday, 10/5: King Cotton and Slavery
Reading Due: Fiege, pp. 100–138

Wednesday, 10/7: American Naturalists; Romantic Nature
Reading Due: Igler, 129–154

Monday, 10/12: You have died of dysentery.
Reading Due: Igler, 155–185
**Assignment Due: Annotated Bibliography**

Wednesday, 10/14: Individual Meetings with Instructor

Monday, 10/19: Individual Meetings with Instructor
**Assignment Due by 6:00 p.m. in my office: Take-Home Midterm Exam**

Unit 4: Modernity and Nature “Out There”
In this unit, we will focus on the ecological revolution produced by the rise of industrial capitalism. We will use the example of the passenger pigeon to understand the modern world has obscured human connections to nature. We will also learn more about the changing idea of wilderness and how Americans began to consider the limits of the industrial era.

Guiding Questions:
- What environmental changes accompanied westward expansion (con’t)?
- How did industrialization and railroads change how humans interacted with nature?
According to Price, what is the lesson we can learn about the history of passenger pigeons?

What is the history of wilderness?

How did Americans try to clean up both cities and western spaces during the Progressive Era?

Wednesday, 10/21: TBD

Monday, 10/26: Industrialization and Railroads
Reading Due: Fiege, pp. 228–264
**Assignment Due: Thesis and Outline**

Wednesday, 10/28: The Fetishism of Commodities
Reading Due: Price, pp. xv–55

Monday, 11/2: Wilderness has a history.
**Assignment Due: Service Learning Reflection**

Wednesday, 11/4: The Conservation Movement
Reading Due: Price, pp. 56–109

Monday, 11/9: Cleaning Up Cities in the Progressive Era
**Assignment Due: Draft Essay**

Unit 5: Postwar Cities and Their Hinterlands
This unit appraises the vast environmental changes in the United States during the post-World War II era. We will analyze the interplay between race, class, and gender in cities and their hinterlands.

Guiding Questions:
- What contributed to suburban sprawl in the postwar era? How did these new spatial arrangements create inequalities in society?
- How did the Cold War shape American landscapes?
- How did environmental justice movements of the 1970s and 1980s differ from the modern environmental movement of the 1960s and 1970s?
- What can we do to live a greener lifestyle?

Wednesday, 11/11: Metropolitan and Suburban Sprawl
Reading Due: Price, pp. 111–165

Monday, 11/16: Malls and TVs
Reading Due: Price, pp. 167–256

Wednesday, 11/18: Cold War Hinterlands
Reading Due: Fiege, pp. 281–317
Monday, 11/23: Civil Rights
Reading Due: Fiege, pp. 318–357

Wednesday, 11/25: Environmental Limits in the 1970s and 1980s
Reading Due: Fiege, pp. 358–402

Monday, 11/30: Food and Our Basic Connections to Nature (Last Day of Class)
**Assignment Due: Final Essay**

Wednesday, 12/2: Reading Day, NO CLASS

Monday, 12/7: Take-Home Final Due at 4:30 in BH 126

CASA WRITING CENTER
The CASA Writing Center is located in room 112 of the Glasscock Student Success Center (GSSC), also known as CASA. We provide free help for TAMUCC students at any stage of their writing process. Writing Consultants are trained to support writers in planning, outlining, drafting, organizing, and/or revising their writing and are also knowledgeable in citing sources in various documentation styles used in academic writing. We offer both face-to-face and online appointments for undergraduate and graduate students. The CASA Writing Center works closely with faculty across the TAMUCC campus to understand writing in different disciplines and to help students meet these expectations. We encourage students to make a 30-minute appointment, but we do take walk-in appointments if a Writing Consultant is available. Visit casa.tamucc.edu/wc.php to create an account using your @islander.tamucc.edu email address. Once you have an account, you can log-on to make an appointment with us.

ACADEMIC ADVISING
The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.

DISABILITY SERVICES
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall, Room #116. If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

GRADE APPEALS PROCESS
Students who feel that they have not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in this class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, cltamu.edu/students/studentinfo.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s Office.

**STARFISH**

Starfish is a software communication program used to connect you (the student) to your “Success Network” of instructors, advisors, and other academic support programs on campus. If you receive an email from starfish@tamu.edu, this means I have raised a Starfish “communication” item useful for connecting you to campus resources and course progress guidance. Starfish “communication” items include:

* Flags: early alerts regarding course effort and/or progress (missing a quiz or exam, poor attendance, a poor exam grade)
* Kudos: commendation for course effort and progress
* Referrals: recommended utilization of campus services: SI sessions, the Writing Center, and others

Acting on these messages in a timely manner is vital to your success as a student at TAMU-CC. The purpose of Starfish is to help instructors communicate information with their students and connect students with campus resources available to them. For Starfish assistance, please call (361) 825-3653 or email Starfish@tamu.edu