

IDS 303-601/NR 303-601 Humans and the Environment Spring 2020

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Description:

IDS/STS 303 satisfies the General Education (GEP) requirement in Interdisciplinary Studies because it bridges literature, ecology and ethics. It also satisfies the Global GEP requirement since the course necessarily embraces the whole planet.

In this online course we will focus on how we can best fulfill our own needs as a species while living in balance with the needs of other species. We will begin with the novel *Ishmael* by Daniel Quinn. This fictional work of philosophy suggests a new way to look at the whole question of sustainability. We will then examine the complexity of ecosystems with a view toward increasing our awareness and understanding of our own role and how we might adjust our activities so as to minimize our global impact on the environment. Our textbook, *Environment*, is excellent, but long: We cannot cover all of it in one semester. You will read those chapters that focus on basic ecological understanding of the complexities of our planet. Please do dip into the chapters we are not covering. The authors have made the information very accessible.

Course Learning Objectives:

Our course is most of all, a course in environmental literacy. As citizens of the world, we have the job of combining scientific knowledge and social values in order to understand and analyze critically important dilemmas facing us both as individuals and as members of the global commons.

By the end of this course students will be able to:

1. Identify how human activities cause changes in the biogeochemical cycles of the planetary ecosystems;
2. Distinguish the difference between a Taker and a Leaver paradigm as described in *Ishmael*;
3. Apply the Leaver paradigm to a particular environmental topic, (water, forests, oceans, biodiversity, etc.);
4. Analyze how human activities on a particular ecosystem differ depending on whether a Taker or Leaver paradigm is followed;
5. Design a set of daily tasks that follow the Leaver paradigm;

6. Evaluate daily tasks that are doable right now for promoting a Leaver approach.

Course Website: All assignments, including discussions, will be conducted via the course website: <http://wolfware.ncsu.edu>

Textbooks: You are responsible for reading all required materials before the deadline. Required texts may be purchased from the NCSU bookstore or other sources. This semester we are cooperating with the NC State "All-in" program, allowing purchase of inexpensive ebook version of the *Environment* textbook. Order both books immediately, using this link: <http://shop.ncsu.edu/ePOS?form=schedule.html&store=432&r=Y&term=2198&department.0=IDS&course.0=303§ion.0=601>

A physical copy of each required text is also available on reserve at D. H. Hill Library. But reserve copies may not be there when you need them; plan ahead! Using your portable USB drive and D. H. Hill library book scanners, you may copy chapters for later use.

- Daniel Quinn, *Ishmael*, (Random House, 1995) paperback; used copies available in bookstores and online. \$13.50. Any edition is acceptable.
- Peter H. Raven, David Hassenzahl and Linda R. Berg. *Environment* 9th Edition (John Wiley & Sons, Inc. 2015) Hardback, paperback, notebook ready and ebook versions are acceptable. \$55 as ebook through NC State. **You must have the 9th edition.**

Assignments: The class is organized around five activities:

1. Quizzes
2. Reading Responses
3. Discussion Forums
4. Midterm
5. Final Forums

Quizzes: Each week you will read and take a quiz on the designated chapters. These are designed to encourage you to read, review, and take to heart principles of ecological science. The quizzes are taken directly from our ecology textbook.

Reading Responses & Discussion Forums: The purpose of the reading responses is to examine, explain, and defend your reaction to the text. The discussion forum is designed to take what you learned from the text and apply it to the Taker/Leaver paradigm. Since each assignment lasts at least three days you will have plenty of time to accomplish your assignments.

How you organize your time is up to you, but you do need to accomplish tasks within the window they are assigned. You must complete reading responses and discussions on schedule, so you benefit from staying on track in the reading and stay with your peers. All of our activities for the course are online on our course website.

We will begin by reading *Ishmael*, using the ideas in the novel to frame our study of ecology. For this first section of the course we will have Discussion forums as everyone proceeds through the book. **We will discuss all of *Ishmael* in weeks two and three: Do the reading on time and don't fall behind!**

We will then proceed through our ecology textbook, taking in many but not all of the chapters. We will thoroughly study basic areas in ecology so as to understand the scientific facts and interrelationships that drive planetary life systems. This will give us a basic understanding of the environmental realities we need to understand in order to begin to think through the challenge of our personal and societal ecological footprints. Lecture Notes are provided for certain chapters to bring out the important interrelationships to focus on in your thinking about the chapter's topics and to apply in the reading responses and discussion forums.

Necessarily, there are a great number of facts to learn. We first need to understand how the natural world works before we can think about our lives within it; whether we need to make changes in our activities or not; and if so, what these changes need to encompass. In order to learn these facts about a wide variety of topics we will have weekly quizzes. These quizzes will be multiple-choice, focusing on the major learning objectives in the *Environment* textbook. *Quizzes are open notes but closed book and students are bound by the university honor code* <https://studentconduct.dasa.ncsu.edu/code/>

We will use the reading responses and discussion forums to apply the facts, topics and ideas presented in the chapter we are studying. Most of the time you will be given a prompt question for discussion topics; other times we will look at a video as the basis for a discussion. We will often make use of the case study approach as a way to approach and analyze complex issues.

Class Requirements and Grading:

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|-------------------------|------------|
| Discussion Forums: | 25 percent |
| Reading Responses: | 25 percent |
| Quizzes: | 10 percent |
| Midterm: | 20 percent |
| End of Semester Forums: | 20 percent |

Midterm:

A midterm exam, conducted through the Moodle site in the week of **February 24-March 1**, will test your comprehension and analysis of course concepts and readings to date. Details will be available on the website in the weeks before the examination date.

End of Semester Forums:

Instead of a traditional final exam, we will have four final discussion forums that will be similar to what you've all been doing throughout the semester but with one major difference: You will be more thoroughly researching a topic of your choice.

For the **First** and **Second** final forums you will **select one chapter of Raven, Environment 9th edition** that we have not read in class. You will present your review of critical topics along with research regarding those topics to the rest of the class. Then you will reply to one colleague's new chapter with further research on that chapter.

For the **Third Forum** you will select your favorite food and then research it: where it originates from, what processes are involved, how it gets to you, any details about that food that give you information about how that food relates to the details of the biogeochemical planetary cycles we have studied. What is the ecological footprint of your food choices? What societal issues, what ethical issues does this food item bring to light?

For the **Fourth Forum** we will focus on the last chapter in our textbook, "Tomorrow's World," with each student selecting topics they want to focus on, and then replying to a colleague with more research on that topic.

These four forums will allow us to see how much our individual choices can matter in terms of the foods we eat every day, as well as our daily activities. These forums underscore a major theme in the course: the power of people, acting alone or together, to effect change.

Late Additions to the Course: If you add the course once the semester has begun, you are still responsible for all assignments, including those you missed. Contact Prof. Booker immediately upon adding the course to work out a schedule for submitting those assignments.

Late Assignments: Assignments submitted by the due date will receive full credit. Assignments late by 1-23 hours will be penalized ten points on a 100 point scale (e.g. a grade of 93 becomes an 83). Assignments submitted 24-35 hours late will be penalized 20 points (e.g. a grade of 93 becomes a 73). Assignments submitted 36-47 hours late will be penalized 30 points (e.g. a grade of 93 becomes a 63). Assignments submitted 48-71 hours late will be penalized 40 points (e.g. a 93 becomes a 53). **Assignments will not be accepted after 72 hours (three days).** If you know in advance you will miss class at any point this semester, please contact the instructor immediately. Excused absences have their own rules, and late assignments may be accepted without penalty. <https://policies.ncsu.edu/regulation/reg-02-20-03>

Grades:

Success in this course comes from consistency; plan not to miss any assignment.

A: (100-93); A-: (92-90) To earn an A grade, your discussion posts, quizzes and other work will show outstanding effort, originality and insight into the material. This is an unusual and exceptional grade.

B+: (89-87) B: (86-83) B-: (82-80) To earn a B grade, your discussions, quizzes and other work will show a steady effort and excellent understanding of the material. This is a very good grade.

C+: (79-77) C: (76-73) C- (72-70) To earn a C grade, you will be participating at an adequate level. Discussion posts, quizzes and other work will show a basic understanding of most of the material. This is the grade for doing a good job most of the time.

D+:(69-67) D: (66-63) D- (62-60) This grade is earned by poor participation in the discussions, weak effort on quizzes and other work and a poor understanding of the material in our course. You showed lack of effort or have scheduled yourself beyond capacity to get this grade.

F (anything below 59). This grade is assigned for failing to submit assignments as instructed.

Notes: I rarely give A+ grades in lower-division courses. Write to Professor Booker if you wish to discuss this policy. Final grades in this class round up. For example, if you have 79.50 in the course, that is rounded to 80, a B-. If you have 79.49 in the course, that is 79, a C+. If you elect to take the course Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory be aware that you must earn at least a C- (69.5%) to receive the grade of Satisfactory.

Expectations:

Education is a shared endeavor. You are expected to create and maintain a respectful classroom environment. You are expected to be responsible, prepared, and avoid distracting your instructors, fellow students and yourself. Thus:

- Read all of the assigned material before the day listed in the course schedule.

- Think critically but respectfully about the assigned readings.
- Respect others when communicating. Patience, tolerance and assuming the best of others is especially important in an online course, where it is all too easy to misunderstand.

Cheating and academic integrity: Cheating is unacceptable. Students who do so will fail the course and face academic sanctions from the university, up to and including expulsion. All students must follow the established policies on academic integrity: see <https://studentconduct.dasa.ncsu.edu/academic-integrity-overview/>

NOTE: Be particularly careful to cite references and to correctly attribute credit when using online sources.

What is plagiarism and how can I avoid it? <https://www.lib.ncsu.edu/plagiarism>

Deadlines, drop and add policy: See the academic calendar for key deadlines: <https://studentservices.ncsu.edu/calendars/academic/#spring> Monday March 4 is the last day to drop the course without a “W” on the transcript. NCSU policies on adding and dropping courses are located here: <https://policies.ncsu.edu/regulation/reg-02-20-02/>

Note: You are responsible for all course assignments even if you added the course after the first week. See the “grades” section for details.

Career Planning: Explore career options related to your major, make decisions about your major or minor, build resumes and cover letters, prepare for interviews, develop internship/ job search strategies, maximize career fairs, and more. For students majoring in the College of Humanities & Sciences, career contacts are Courtney Jones and Sarah Wild. Make appointments through www.ncsu.edu/epack

Accommodations for Disabilities: Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with verifiable disabilities. In order to take advantage of available accommodations, students must register with the Disability Resource Office on the third floor of Holmes Hall (Suite 304). For more information on NC State’s policy on working with students with disabilities, please see the Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities Regulation (REG02.20.01). <https://policies.ncsu.edu/regulation/reg-02-20-01>.

Coping resources: This class will require a great deal of your energy and your time. Depending upon your previous experience with humanities courses and the requirements of this discipline, you may find the assignments and reading load difficult. Many persons and resources are available to help you succeed. Instructors hold weekly office hours where you can ask questions and raise concerns about assignments and the course in general. The tutorial center, www.ncsu.edu/tutorial_center/ provides free writing and public speaking assistance to undergraduates. Use these resources!

Supporting fellow students: Occasionally, you may come across a fellow classmate whose personal behavior concerns or worries you. If this is the case, please contact NC State Cares at <https://ncstatecares.dasa.ncsu.edu/>

Student evaluations: Students will evaluate the course during the last two weeks of class. Professor Booker appreciates your detailed, constructive comments; they will improve the way he teaches and directly benefit future students. All evaluations are confidential; instructors will never know how any individual student responded to any question. <https://oirp.ncsu.edu/classeval/about-classeval/>

Working with this Course: Online courses are in some ways more difficult than on-campus courses because they require students to be constantly aware of deadlines. Most online students are busy and the reality is, scheduling your course work at the end of a workday when you're already exhausted, is often a mistake. Please review the class schedule of assignments as soon as possible. Be sure to read the Moodle Book, "Basic Instructions for the Course." If, after reviewing the Moodle site and reading the Moodle book and looking through and starting the practice discussion, you still have questions, please contact the teaching assistant or instructor. Please feel free to contact a teaching assistant or the instructor to talk about any specific concerns you have about this course. If you are having problems please contact the instructor immediately. Don't wait until the end of the semester when it will be too late. The instructor will also hold actual, physical office hours; see the top of this syllabus.

NC State University Policies, Regulations and Rules

Students are responsible for reviewing the PRRs which pertain to their course rights and responsibilities. These include: <http://policies.ncsu.edu/policy/pol-04-25-05> (Equal Opportunity and Non-discrimination Policy Statement), <https://oied.ncsu.edu/divweb/policies/> (Office for Institutional Equity and Diversity), <http://policies.ncsu.edu/policy/pol-11-35-01> (Code of Student Conduct), <http://policies.ncsu.edu/regulation/reg-02-50-03> (Grades and Grade Point Average), <https://policies.ncsu.edu/regulation/reg-02-20-04> (Audits), and <https://policies.ncsu.edu/regulation/reg-02-50-03> (Incompletes).

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

(R): Reading Responses (D): Discussions

| Date | Textbook Chapters and Quiz Topic | Discussion and Reading Response |
|---------------|--|--|
| <u>WEEK 1</u> | Ecological Footprint & Chapter 1 Introducing Environmental Science and Sustainability Begin Reading <i>Ishmael</i> Chs. 1-7 | (D) Mon-Sun, due 1/12 Ecological Footprints, IPATs, Overpopulation or Overconsumption |
| <u>WEEK 2</u> | Discuss Chs. 1-7 of <i>Ishmael</i> Finish Reading <i>Ishmael</i> Chs. 1-7 Chapter 1 Quiz on <i>Environment</i> | (D) Mon-Wed, due 1/15 <i>Ishmael</i> Chs. 1-4 (D) Wed-Sun, due 1/19 <i>Ishmael</i> Chs. 5-7 |

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| <u>WEEK 3</u> | Chapter 2 Environmental Laws, Economics and Ethics Finish Reading <i>Ishmael</i> Chapter 2 Quiz on <i>Environment</i> | (D) Mon-Sun, due 1/26 <i>Ishmael</i> Chs. 8-13 (R) Wed-Sun, due 1/26 Case Study: Coffee as an Environmental and Ethical Issue |
| <u>WEEK 4</u> | Chapter 3 Ecosystems and Energy Chapter 3 Quiz on <i>Environment</i> | (R) Mon-Sun, due 2/2 Biofuels: A Solution or a Problem? |
| <u>WEEK 5</u> | Chapter 4 Ecosystems and the Physical Environment Chapter 4 Quiz on <i>Environment</i> | (R) Mon-Sun, due 2/9 Biogeochemical Cycles and the Taker/Leaver stance |
| <u>WEEK 6</u> | Chapter 5 Ecosystems and Living Organisms Chapter 5 Quiz on <i>Environment</i> | (D) Mon-Wed, due 2/12 The Salmon Forest (D) Wed-Sun, due 2/16 Research Forests |
| <u>WEEK 7</u> | Chapter 8 The Human Population and Chapter 9 The Urban Environment Chapter 8 & 9 Quiz on <i>Environment</i> | (R) Mon-Sun, due 2/23 How Many People Can Live on Planet Earth? |
| <u>WEEK 8</u> | MIDTERM | No Discussion; Focus on the Midterm Midterm due Sunday 3/1 |
| <u>WEEK 9</u> | Selections from Chapter 11 Fossil Fuels and Chapter 12 Nuclear Energy Chapter 11 & 12 Quiz on <i>Environment</i> | (D) Mon-Sun, due 3/8 Comparing Risks of Different Energy Resources: Can We? |
| <u>WEEK 10</u> | SPRING BREAK | No assignments |
| <u>WEEK 11</u> | Chapter 13 Water: A Limited Resource Chapter 13 Quiz on <i>Environment</i> | (D) Mon-Sun, due 3/22 Blue Gold: World Water Wars |

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| <u>WEEK 12</u> | Chapter 16 Biological Resources Chapter 16 Quiz on <i>Environment</i> | (R) Mon-Sun, due 3/29 Endangered Species |
| <u>WEEK 13</u> | Chapter 21 Global Climate Change Chapter 20 Quiz on <i>Environment</i> | (R) Mon-Sun, due 4/5 Global Climate Change Case Study |
| <u>WEEK 14</u> | FINAL FORUM 1 FINAL FORUM 2 | Mon-Wed, due 4/8 Chapter of Your Choice Wed-Sun, due 4/12 Continue with Chapter of Your Choice |
| <u>WEEK 15</u> | FINAL FORUM 3 | Mon-Sun, due 4/19 Favorite Food |
| <u>WEEK 16</u> | FINAL FORUM 4 | Mon-Sun, due 4/26 Chapter 24 Tomorrow's World |