CIEE Prague, Czech Republic

Course title: European Environmental Studies
Course code: ENVI 3001 PRAG
Programs offering course: Global Architecture and Design
Language of instruction: English
U.S. semester credits: 3.00
Contact hours: 45.00
Term: Spring 2021

Course Description

The course discusses environmental studies as an interdisciplinary field, exploring their intersection with other disciplines. The core of the course is focused on the current environmental issues in a global context, primarily within the conceptual framework of Anthropocene and Post-Anthropocene. The Czech context is presented through an analysis of the most burning environmental issues, including brown coal mining, air pollution, carbon emissions, waste management, landscape transportation, soil erosion, and energy production, while offering students a unique opportunity to learn about some of these issues through first-hand experience gained during field trips to different sites around Prague. The interconnection of social, economic, and ethical context of the environmental issues is stressed throughout the course.

Learning Objectives

By completing this course, students will:

- compare different approaches to environment in the historical perspective;
- analyze the complexity of the human-environment relationship;
- assess the specifics of European and Czech environmental problems and discourse;
- critically discuss the problems of contemporary global environmental issues;
- research one topic related to environmental issues in Anthropocene and Post-Anthropocene, deliver a short presentation and defend their arguments.

Course Prerequisites

None

Methods of Instruction

Lectures with PowerPoint presentations and class debates are the basic methods of instruction. Students’ presentations, group work, and quiz games also appear in the course, as well as short videos. Additionally, there will be one excursion (outclass), one field trip, and possibly also one guest lecture during the semester.

N.B. Course schedule is subject to change due to study tours, excursions, or local holidays. Final schedules will be included in the final syllabus provided to students on site.

Assessment and Final Grade

1. Writings, all together 27%
2. Presentation 8%
3. Midterm Test 15%
4. Final Test 20%
5. Active Class Participation 30%
TOTAL 100%

Course Requirements

Writings, all together

Writing 1: Most field trip reflection
Reflection paper on Most trip. Length 700–900 words, further instructions will be explained in the beginning of the semester. Paper should include both personal experience and information from other sources than the excursion/trip. Grade will reflect: a) whether the instructions were followed; b) overall quality of argument and factual errors; c) quality of the paper compared to other students.

Writing 2: COP 21 Paris essay

Essay on Rio+20 or COP2 21 environmental conferences its outcomes. Length 700–900 words, detailed instructions will be given. Grade will reflect: a) whether the instructions were followed; b) overall quality of argument and factual errors; c) quality of the paper compared to the works of other students.

Writing 3: Reflection paper on Kenneth Boulding’s text

Essay reacting to Boulding’s text "The Economics of the Coming Spaceship Earth" (1966). Length 600–800 words, further instructions will be given. Grade will reflect: a) whether the instructions were followed; b) overall quality of argument and factual errors; c) quality of the paper compared to the works of other students.

Instead of reflection on Boulding’s paper, reflection essay on the guest lecture (if appropriate) may be the topic of Writing 3 assignment. The guest lecture is not included in the Weekly Schedule, due to unknown date and unknown guest speakers.

Presentation

Each student will have one approx. 10–15 minutes presentation (in pairs or individually) on the topic offered by the professor. Student will know the topic of presentation a week beforehand. Further instructions will be explained. Grade will reflect: a) whether the instructions were followed; b) overall quality of argument and factual errors.

Midterm Test

Test consisting of 10–20 open tasks. Study guide will be provided in advance.

Final Test

Test consisting of 15–25 open tasks. Study guide will be provided in advance.

Active Class Participation

See the CIEE Prague Class Participation Policy below.

Answers to the questions on readings

Some questions are usually given in advance along with the class readings and students should answer these through Canvas online system. These brief answers are graded and the grades make part of the Active participation (together with submitting and preparing of non-graded assignments).

Other important information

Computers are not allowed in the class (if not needed for any online class work), not even for taking notes. The only exception could be special needs of students; these will be discussed individually with Academic Director.

Late submissions of work (writings, answers to reading, other homework) are not accepted. All work should be submitted through Canvas system. If you face any technical problems, submit the work by email and immediately inform me about problems with Canvas system. The system checks activity of all users and CIEE staff is able to see whether there were some technical problems or whether the users were logged in or not.

Canvas email (Inbox) is preferred way of communication. If there are technical problems, use my email.

Attendance

Regular class attendance is required throughout the program.

If you will miss a class for any reason, notify the Program Coordinator and your instructor beforehand via Canvas. You are responsible for any materials covered in class during your absence, and except in the specific cases listed below, credit will not be granted for missed assessments.

Excessive absences will result in a notification letter, and finally a warning letter, sent to you and your home
school, based on the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of course hours missed</th>
<th>Number of CIEE classes</th>
<th>Minimum penalty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to 10%</td>
<td>One to Three 90-min. classes; or One 180-min. class</td>
<td>No penalty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10% - 20%</td>
<td>Four 90-min. classes</td>
<td>Written notification* to the student, followed by a warning letter to the student and home school; 3% reduction in the final grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Five 90-min. classes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Two 180-min classes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 20%</td>
<td>Six 90-min. classes; or Three 180-min. classes</td>
<td>Automatic course failure, and possible expulsion with notification to the home school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The notification letters are intended to ensure that you are well advised in advance of any potential for failure or dismissal, so that you can take steps to avoid this.

As the table shows, **missing more than 20% of any class (e.g., due to undocumented illness, travel delays, flight cancellations, over-sleeping, etc.) results in automatic failure of the course.**

If you miss an assessment in class due to an absence, you will be able to make it up in the following instances:

- You provide a relevant doctor's note from a local medical professional to your Program Coordinator within 24 hours of your absence (a scan or photograph sent via e-mail are acceptable)
- A CIEE staff member verifies that you were too ill to attend class.
- You provide evidence of a family emergency to your Program Coordinator.
- You have an approved absence related to the observance of a religious holiday from the Academic Director based on a request submitted before you arrived onsite.

**Please note:** Absences incurred due to documented illness, documented family emergency or the observance of a religious holiday approved before arrival onsite do not count towards the total of absences. Students may self-certify one absence due to illness without providing a doctor’s note as long as they notify the Program Coordinator within 24 hours of their absence by e-mail or a text message.

**Other attendance-related policies**

If you transfer from one CIEE class to another during the Add/Drop period, you will not be considered absent from the first session(s) of the new class provided you were marked present for the first session(s) of the original class.

If you are over 15 minutes late for a class, the instructor is required to mark you absent.

In case of class conflicts (irregularities in the class schedule, including field trips and make-up classes), always contact the Academic Department to decide the appropriate course of action.

Please remember to track your attendance on the Canvas Course Sites and report any errors in the record to the Academic Department within one week of the discrepancy date, as later claims may not be considered.

These attendance rules also apply to any required co-curricular excursion, activity, or event, and to for-credit internships.

CIEE staff does not manage absences at partner institutions providing direct enrolment classes (FAMU, ECES and FSV), but they have similar attendance policies and attendance is monitored there. Grade penalties may result from excessive absences.

**N.B. Course schedule is subject to change due to study tours, excursions, or local holidays. Final schedules will be included in the final syllabus provided to students on site.**

**Weekly Schedule**
Week 1
Class: Introduction to class and theory of human-environment study

Presentation of the basic information on selected branches of social sciences (human ecology, cultural ecology, social ecology, environmental sociology) and on the logic of social science understanding to human-environment relationship.

Discussion of selected Czech and global environmental problems.

Week 2
Class: Czech landscape as a place for human-nature interaction

History of Czech landscape, main changes of landscape, agriculture and society from Neolithic era to 19th century. Era between WWI and WWI, expulsions of Germans, communist era, market economy, nature conservation, landscape perception.

Reading: Naughton 2001

Reading: Bičík, Jeleček and Štěpánek 2001, 65-73. (Send answers to the questions given.)

Week 3
Class: Czech environmental problems – selected case studies

Presentation and discussions of most important Czech environmental issues (brown coal mining, air pollution, carbon emissions, waste management, landscape transportation, soil erosion, energy production,...)

Week 4
Class: Czech environmental movement and environmental policy

Brief history of Czech environmental movement and important milestones of NGO-government relationship, including selected points of environmental policy. Comparison to other EU countries.

Reading: Fagin 2000, 139-156. (Send answers to the questions given.)

Course Excursion to Most

Mandatory trip to Northwest Bohemian brown coal mining area (Most, Horní Jiřetín and chateau Jezeří). Glassheim (2006) is recommended reading for the trip.

Week 5
Class: Global environmental policy


Reading: United Nations 1987 (Send answers to the questions given.)

Writing 1 (Most excursion reflection) due

Week 6
Class: First part- Midterm test

Second part - Selected trends in developed and developing countries

Examples of environmental and social problems, ethical consequences, etc.

Possible reading: European Environmental Agency 2011 (Send answers to the questions given.)

Week 7
Class: Climate change - nature and society

Causes and consequences of climate change, natural aspects, political agreements, EU specifics, Kyoto protocol), role of individual in climate change, household carbon footprint, possibilities and limits of behavioral change.
Possible discussion of the personal students’ carbon footprints.

Reading: Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change 2014. (Send answers to the questions given.)

**Week 8**

**Class:** Climate change and media and climate change skepticism

Presentation of climate change in media, specifics of journalism, problem of balance, impact of media on individuals.

Neo-liberal criticism of climate change discourse, climate change denial, Julian Simon, Björn Lomborg, Václav Klaus, free-market environmentalism

Reading (two out these three texts): Klaus2005, 46-48.
Klaus2010.
Simon 1995, 11. (Send answers to the questions given.)

Writing 2 due

**Week 9**

**Class:** Measuring the progress

Gross Domestic Product and alternative economic indicators of development (Index of Sustainable Economic Welfare, Genuine Progress Index). Human Development Index and OECD index.

Group work – preparation of your own development index

Reading: Max-Neef 1995, 115-118. (Send answers to the questions given.)

**Week 10**

**Class:** Environmental impact of human activities and value of nature

Ecological footprint and its measurement. Concept of ecosystem services, financial value of nature, environmental and ecological economics. Each student will calculate his/her ecological footprint for the class discussion.

Reading: Ewing, Moore, Goldfinger, Oursler, Reed and Wackernagel 2010, 5-14. (Send answers to the questions given.)

**Week 11**

**Class:** Environmental philosophy

Selected names and issues of environmental philosophy and ethics

Reading: TBA. (Send answers to the questions given.)

Backlogs

Any backlogs, review for final test, etc.

Writing 3 due

**Week 12**

**Class:** Greenpeace excursion (outclass)

Excursion to the Czech Greenpeace office, presentation of their work (including ongoing Czech and global campaigns), discussion with students

**Exact date can be changed due to Greenpeace preferences!!!**

**Week 13**

**Class:** Final Exam Week

Final test.
Course Materials

Readings


http://www.ub.edu/prometheus21/articulos/obsprometheus/BOULDING.pdf


http://sreview.soc.cas.cz/uploads/239fd6717f8e86a92c33864b0064088308f59ed1_353_139FAGIN.pdf


http://www.klaus.cz/clanky/1557

Klaus, V. (2010), The Climate Change Doctrine is Part of Environmentalism, Not Science. Lecture at The Global Warming Policy Foundation.

http://www.klaus.cz/clanky/2694


Naughton, J. (2001), A brief history of the Czech lands. James Naughton’s personal pages at Oxford University.

http://users.ox.ac.uk/~tayl0010/history.htm


http://worldinbalance.net/intagreements/1987-brundtland.php


Pavan Sukhdev: Put a value on nature!

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A-QpKlU-NHo

Bjorn Lomborg on Global priorities

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Ge71ZTRaI

EconStories: Keynes and Hayek Round 2

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GTQnarzmTOc