ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE
ESPM 163AC AND SOCIOLOGY 137AC
4 Units – Spring 2012

LECTURES:
Monday & Wednesday 5:30-6:30 pm
CCN: 29490
Discussion Sections: Mandatory

INSTRUCTOR:
Dara O’Rourke
orourke@berkeley.edu
Office Hours: Wed. 3:00-5:00 pm. 130B Giannini Hall. Sign up at: http://tungle.me/dara

GRADUATE STUDENT INSTRUCTORS:
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COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course engages environmental problems, community responses, and policy debates regarding “environmental justice” (EJ) issues – essentially the race, class, and equity implications of environmental problems and policies. The course presents empirical evidence on distributions of environmental quality and health, enforcement of regulations, access to resources to respond to urban and industrial problems, and the broader political economy of decision-making around environmental and health issues. The course explores and critically analyzes philosophies, frameworks, and strategies underlying environmental justice movements and struggles of African American, Latino American, Asian American, and Native American communities.

The course seeks to prepare students to critically analyze environmental outcomes and processes, providing frameworks for evaluating the equity implications of environmental policies and programs, and distributions of environmental amenities and burdens. Case studies of, and research methods for, identifying environmental, health, and social inequities that underlie environmental justice claims will be incorporated throughout the course. Students will also analyze community and government responses to environmental injustices, and critically assess recent strategies to promote more ecologically sound and socially just development.

The course will include cases of environmental problems in communities that are predominantly African American, Latino American, Asian American, and Native American. These cases will be analyzed using social science research methods, and discussed within a broad political economy framework, essentially asking why environmental problems play out differently for different groups, and why some groups are more effective than others in mobilizing to pressure for environmental improvements.

GOALS FOR THE COURSE
• Analyze institutional processes impacting race, class, and the environment;
• Analyze data on the distributions of environmental quality and demographic trends;
• Analyze government policies related to environmental issues;
• Analyze strategies to prevent or remedy environmental justice problems;
• Strengthen critical thinking, writing, and presentation skills.
ASSIGNMENTS

Students are expected to:
1. Read all of the assigned readings before each lecture for which they are assigned, and actively participate in class discussions in lectures and sections.

2. Complete three short individual assignments during the semester. These may include:
   a) Complete a short assignment defining environmental injustice and describing how your own racial, socio-economic, or geographic background influenced your exposure to environmental harm and access to environmental benefits. This assignment will be due on February 6th.
   b) Complete a short essay analyzing federal, state, or local government policies related to an EJ case. This assignment will be due on March 7th.
   c) Complete a short assignment on Participatory Action Research with your non-profit group. Describe the goals and strategies of your partner group and analyze the research questions they are interested in. This assignment will be due on April 4th.

3. Complete a group service learning project.
   a) Students will form project teams consisting of 3 to 5 people from your discussion section. The teams will conduct a “service learning” project with a local non-profit organization. A list of possible service learning projects will be presented to the class on January 25th.
   b) Contact your organization by February 10th to arrange a face-to-face meeting with them in the next 10 days.
   c) Write a one-paragraph description of your term project topic and a one-page outline of your plan of action for completing the project. Due on February 24th.
   d) Teams will meet with their GSI at least once during the semester to discuss their plans for the term project. Students will also meet once individually with their GSI to discuss the term project. Term projects will be due in class and to your partner organizations on April 25th. Late projects will not be accepted.

4. Students will take an in-class final exam. This exam will link the course readings and lectures to experiential learning from the term projects. We will be in Final Exam Group 18: Friday, May 11 from 11:30-2:30.

EVALUATION:
The course grade will be based on the following activities:
20% - Class participation in lectures and sections.
20% - Assignments
40% - Term project
20% - Final Examination

ACADEMIC HONESTY AND COURSE JUSTICE
This course is about justice and equity. In that light, and in fairness to students who put in an honest effort, cheaters will be treated very strictly. Any evidence of cheating will result in a score of zero on the assignment. Incidences of cheating or plagiarism will be reported to Student Judicial Affairs, which may administer additional punishment.

REQUIRED READINGS
The readings will be available either in the course reader or on the web. The reader will be on reserve in the CNR Resource Center (260 Mulford Hall). The reader will be available for purchase at CopyEdge, 2121 University Ave.
SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS

January 18 - Introduction to the Course
No readings.

January 23 – What is Environmental Injustice?

January 25 – Environmental Disparities in the US

January 30 — Health Disparities in the US

Morello-Frosch, Rachel, Miriam Zuk, Michael Jerrett, Bhavna Shamasunder, and Amy D. Kyle, “Understanding the Cumulative Impacts of Inequality in Environmental Health: Implications for Policy,” *Health Affairs* 30, No. 5 (2011): 879-887.


February 1 – Frameworks of Justice

February 6 – Race in America


February 8 – Class in America


For more statistics, check out: http://inequality.org/inequality-data-statistics/

February 13 - Measuring Environmental Injustices


February 15 – Measuring Environmental “Risks”


February 20 – President’s Day

Feb 22 – Federal Policies - Guest Speaker – Max Weintraub


February 27 – State and Local Policies


February 29 – Legal Bases for Environmental Justice Claims


**March 5 – The Environmental Justice Movement**


**March 7 – Campaigning Strategies**


**March 12 – Community-Based Participatory Research**


**March 14 – Community Monitoring**


**March 19 – Biomonitoring**


Morello-Frosch, Rachel, Julia Brody, Phil Brown, Rebecca Gasio Altman, Ruthann Rudel, and Carla Perez, “Toxic Ignorance and Right-to-Know in Biomonitoring Results Communication: A Survey of Scientists and Study Participants,” *Environmental Health*, 2009 8:6.

**March 21 – Community Benefits Agreements**


**March 26-30 - SPRING BREAK**

**April 2 – Climate Change and Justice**


**April 4 – Climate Justice Activism**


**April 9 – International EJ**


**April 11 – Consumption and EJ**


**April 16 – Food Justice and Health Equity**


April 18 – Green Jobs and Sustainable Development


April 23 – What Do We Want in Our Backyards?


April 25 – The Future of Environmental Justice


CLASSES END

READING WEEK – April 30th – May 4th

FINAL EXAMINATION – May 11th – 11:30-2:30 p.m.