

**SALEM STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**GPH 379-01**  
**Environmental Justice**  
**Spring 2014**

**Instructor:** Dr. Marcos Luna  
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**Phone:** (978) 542-6487  
**Class Time:** Wednesdays and Fridays 1:40 – 2:55pm  
**Class Room:** Meier Hall, Room 321  
**Office Hours:** Mon. 4 – 6pm, Tues. thru Fri. 3 – 5pm, or By Appointment  
**Website:** Canvas (<http://www.salemstate.edu/elearning/>)

**Course Description:**

This course explores the issue of Environmental Justice in both domestic and international settings. Environmental Justice is the fair treatment of all people with respect to environmental politics and their implementations. A hallmark of environmental injustice is the persistence of geographic inequalities in the distribution of environmental burdens or amenities. Students will review major theories of justice and discrimination and apply these concepts to case studies. Students will explore the social and structural factors that contribute to environmental inequalities and the innovative solutions that communities are using to address these problems. Three lecture hours per week. Not open to students who have received credit for GGR357.

**Course Goals:**

- To develop a critical awareness of the issue of environmental justice
- To appreciate the diversity of ways in which environmental and social differences intertwine and how the justice of their interrelationship matters
- To develop a critical perspective toward social and physical patterns in the landscape and their relationships to social justice, environmental quality, and public health and safety
- To develop familiarity with concepts and tools for investigating environmental justice issues and for participating in environmental justice debates and discussions
- To explore strategies for addressing environmental justice from the community, government, science, and legal perspectives

**Learning Objectives:**

- Describe the concept of Environmental Justice and contrast it with mainstream or traditional environmentalism
- Independently identify and summarize environmental justice situations and claims
- Identify, describe and evaluate environmental justice claims around evidence of inequality, injustice and social and historical processes
- Identify, retrieve and interpret relevant social and environmental data from publicly accessible data sources in order to describe, interpret and evaluate environmental justice claims
- Interpret, evaluate and propose actions or policies intended to promote environmental justice

**Required Materials:**

- An active mind, a good attitude, and something to take notes with. Some readings and all supporting multimedia materials will be provided through Canvas.
- Walker, Gordon. 2012. *Environmental Justice: Concepts, evidence and politics*. Routledge.

**Course Policies:**

- Students are responsible for all material found in the required readings, multimedia and class lectures. Students are responsible for all work and lectures due to absences. Attendance is very important and will be recorded throughout the semester.
- All quizzes and assignments are due before the assigned due dates. Late assignments will not be accepted unless discussed with the professor at least 48 hours BEFORE the due date OR with a documented emergency.
- Students who have questions about readings, lectures, or assignments are strongly encouraged to bring them to the attention of the instructor in class, after class, or during office hours.
- All students agree to abide by the course Honor Code: “My answers to homework, quizzes and exams will be my own work (except for assignments that explicitly permit collaboration). I will not make solutions to homework, quizzes or exams available to anyone else. This includes both solutions written by me, as well as any official solutions provided by the course staff. I will not engage in any other activities that will dishonestly improve my results or dishonestly improve/hurt the results of others.”
- Salem State University is committed to providing equal access to the educational experience for all students in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the American with Disabilities Act and to providing all academic accommodations, aids, and adjustments. Any student who has a documented disability requiring an accommodation, aid or adjustment should speak with the instructor immediately. Students who have not done so should provide documentation to and schedule an appointment with the Office for Students with Disabilities and obtain appropriate services.
- **Cell phones and beepers** are to be turned **OFF** while in class. Students seen to be **texting, IMing, Facebooking**, or using a cell phone or any other **portable electronic device** during class will lose participation credit for that day regardless of how well the student has participated in the day’s class discussion.
- **Laptops/tablets** may be used for note taking. However, if I find that your use of the device is becoming a distraction to you or those around you, I will ask you to turn it off or leave the classroom and you will lose participation points for that class. **Social media, Emailing , Instant Messaging, and Text Messaging** are all **INAPPROPRIATE** during class time.
- **The instructor reserves the right to change the course content and syllabus at any time during the semester.**

- **Grading**

Class Participation	10%
Reading Quizzes	25%
Assignments	50%
Final Presentation	15%
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Total:	100%

NOTE: In the event of a college declared critical emergency, Salem State University reserves the right to alter this course plan. Students should refer to <http://www.salemstate.edu/> for further information and updates. The course attendance policy stays in effect until there is a university declared critical emergency.

In the event of an emergency, please refer to the alternative educational plans for this course located in Blackboard. Students should review the plans and gather all required materials before an emergency is declared.

**Reading Quizzes**

There will be regular quizzes based on the week's reading, podcast, or videocast. These quizzes will evaluate your understanding and reflection of the material. Quizzes will take place online in Canvas and are *due before the week's class on that topic*.

**Assignments**Measuring Disproportionality:

- In this exercise we will use common methods of calculating environmental inequality.

Spatial Analysis of Environmental Justice:

- In this exercise we will use GIS software to measure and analyze environmental inequality.

For the following assignments you will describe and evaluate Environmental Justice claims. We will conclude the semester with a presentation your Environmental Justice topic in which you integrate these elements.

EJ Assignment #1:

- Identify an EJ issue (2 – 3 pages). Find a contemporary situation of potential environmental injustice. It can occur anywhere in the world and involve any type of environmental issue, however defined. Describe what makes this issue an EJ problem. Discuss the potential forces at play that may have created this problem.

EJ Assignment #2:

- Environmental inequality (2 – 3 pages). Using either the EJ issue from assignment #1 or a new EJ issue, identify and describe a claim about environmental inequality and distinguish this from claims about injustice. Identify and describe the evidence to support this claim.

EJ Assignment #3:

- Environmental injustice (2 – 3 pages). Using the EJ issue from assignment #2 or a new EJ issue, identify and describe a claim about environmental injustice and explain the concept(s) of justice being invoked and how it relates to the evidence of inequality.

EJ Assignment #4:

- Environmental Justice process (3 – 4 pages). Using the EJ issue from assignment #3 or a new EJ issue, identify and explain a claim about the process by which the environmental injustice has been created or perpetuated. Distinguish between contextual and structural explanations.

Final Presentation:

- Describe and evaluate an Environmental Justice claim: summarize or describe the environmental justice issue, identify and describe the claims about justice, inequality, and explanations for why the situation exists as it does. Conclude with a course of action (e.g. policy, institutional/private commercial action, civic action) that would promote greater environmental justice. More information will be provided at a later date.

All written assignments should be typed and submitted in hard copy at the beginning of class on the due date unless otherwise instructed. All assignments should include the following:

- Assignment title (e.g. Assignment 1)
- Class (i.e. GPH379-01 Energy and the Environment)
- Date
- Your full name
- Answers written in complete sentences with proper grammar and punctuation.
- Pages numbered at the bottom if more than one page

Week	Date	Readings	Assignments Due
Intro: Intertwining Environment and Social Difference			
1			
	1/17		
What is Environmental Justice?			
2	1/21		Reading Quiz 1
	1/22	Walker Ch1 "Understanding Environmental Justice"	
	1/24		
The Environmental Justice Frame			
3	1/28		Reading Quiz 2
	1/29	Walker Ch2 "Globalizing and framing Environmental Justice"	
	1/31		
Evaluating Claims			
4	2/4		Reading Quiz 3
	2/5	Walker Ch3 "Making claims: justice, evidence and process"  Luna (2012) "Was the siting of a cement plant in a poor, non-White neighborhood environmental discrimination?"	
	2/7		<i>EJ Assignment #1 – Identify an EJ Issue</i>
Measuring Environmental Inequality			
5	2/11		
	2/12		
	2/14		
Waste			
6	2/18		Reading Quiz 4
	2/19	Walker Ch4 "Locating waste: siting and the politics of dumping"  Luna (2012) "Bhopal: Who or What Was Responsible for the Bhopal Disaster?"	
	2/21		<i>Measuring Disproportionality</i>

Week	Date	Readings	Assignments Due
Air Quality			
7	2/25		Reading Quiz 5
	2/26	Walker Ch5 “Breathing unequally: air quality and inequality”	
	2/28		
Disasters			
8	3/4		Reading Quiz 6
	3/5	Walker Ch6 “Flood vulnerability: uneven risk and the injustice of disaster”  Luna (2012) “Hurricane Katrina: What Was Responsible for the Devastating Flooding of New Orleans?”	
	3/7		<i>EJ Assignment #2 – Environmental inequality</i>
9	3/12	<b>SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS</b>	
	3/14		
Measuring Access to Environmental Amenities			
10	3/18		Reading Quiz 7
	3/19	Walker Ch7 “Urban greenspace: distributing an environmental good”	
	3/21		<i>EJ Assignment #3 – Environmental injustice</i>
Climate Change and Justice 1			
11	3/25		Reading Quiz 8
	3/26	Walker Ch8 “Climate justice: scaling the politics of the future”  Luna (2012) “Kyoto Protocol: Should the United States Have Ratified the Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change?”	
	3/28		<i>Spatial Analysis of Environmental Justice</i>
Climate Change and Justice 2			
12	4/1		Reading Quiz 9
	4/2	Morello-Frosch et al. (2009) <i>The Climate Gap</i>	
	4/4		<i>EJ Assignment #4 – Environmental justice process</i>

Week	Date	Readings	Assignments Due
13	4/8	<b>AAG CONFERENCE – NO CLASS</b> <i>Work on your presentation!</i>	
	4/9		
	4/11		
14	4/15		Reading Quiz 10
	4/16	Walker Ch9 “Analysing environmental justice: some conclusions”	
	4/18		
15	4/22		
	4/23	<i><b>Final Presentations</b></i>	
	4/25	<i><b>Final Presentations</b></i>	
16	4/28		
	4/30	<i><b>Final Presentations</b></i> <b>LAST DAY OF CLASS</b>	
	5/2		