

**University of North Texas at Dallas**  
**Spring 2017**  
**SYLLABUS**

<b>HIST 3350: North American Environmental History 3 HRS</b>			
<b>Department of</b>	<b>Social Sciences</b>	<b>School of</b>	<b>Liberal Arts &amp; Sciences</b>
<b>Instructor Name:</b>	Dr. Matthew Babcock		
<b>Office Location:</b>	DAL 2 220		
<b>Office Phone:</b>	972-338-1554		
<b>Email Address:</b>	<a href="mailto:Matthew.Babcock@untdallas.edu">Matthew.Babcock@untdallas.edu</a>		
<b>Office Hours:</b>	MW 11:30am-1:00pm, TR 2:30-4:00pm, and by appointment.		
<b>Course Format/Structure:</b>	Face to Face		
<b>Classroom Location:</b>	DAL 2, 303		
<b>Class Meeting Days &amp; Times:</b>	TR 5:30pm-6:50pm		
<b>Course Catalog Description:</b>	Examines the history of human interaction with North America's natural world from pre-European contact to the present.		
<b>Prerequisites:</b>	3 hrs of History and Biology coursework		
<b>Co-requisites:</b>	NA		
<b>Required Texts:</b>	<p>(1) <i>Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England</i>, Revised Edition. By William Cronon (Hill and Wang, 2003) ISBN: 0809016346.</p> <p>(2) <i>Crimes Against Nature: Squatters, Poachers, Thieves, and the Hidden History of American Conservation</i>. By Karl Jacoby (University of California Press, 2014) ISBN: 9780520282292.</p> <p>(3) <i>Down to Earth: Nature's Role in American History</i>. By Ted Steinberg (Oxford University Press, 2013) ISBN: 0199797390.</p>		
<b>Recommended Text and References:</b>	Additional articles will be provided on Blackboard.		
<b>Access to Learning Resources:</b>	<p>UNT Dallas Library: (Founders Hall)  phone: (972) 780-1616  web: <a href="http://www.untdallas.edu/library">http://www.untdallas.edu/library</a>  e-mail: <a href="mailto:Library@untdallas.edu">Library@untdallas.edu</a></p> <p>UNT Dallas Bookstore: (Building 1)  phone: (972) 780-3652  web: <a href="http://www.untdallas.edu/bookstore">http://www.untdallas.edu/bookstore</a>  e-mail: <a href="mailto:untdallas@bkstr.com">untdallas@bkstr.com</a></p>		
<b>Course Overview:</b>			
	<p>This course surveys the history of human interaction with North America's natural world from pre-European contact to the present. It proceeds from the premise that, in addition to humans, plants, animals, climate, and diseases are central historical actors. The primary goals are to explore the numerous ways that nature has shaped North American history and that Americans of all sorts have attempted to reshape and control their environments. Major themes of the course include the ecological impact of the Columbian Exchange, the commodification of nature, and the rise of the corporation. The classes will consist of lectures that complement the assigned textbook chapters and discussions of assigned readings. To facilitate interactive learning about North America's natural world during this period, we will also examine maps, works of art, photographs, and films from different eras.</p>		
<b>Learning Outcomes:</b>			
1	Demonstrate critical thinking by understanding the impact of the natural world on the history of North America from pre-European contact to the present.		
2	Demonstrate critical thinking and written communication skills by writing an analytical essay and response paper with a thesis statement drawing on historical evidence from this course.		

3	Demonstrate critical thinking and written communication skills by writing a research paper based on primary and secondary historical sources.
4	Demonstrate critical thinking and oral communication skills by interpreting historical monographs, essays, and documents and reflecting on them in class discussions.
5	Demonstrate personal and social responsibility by researching, writing, and speaking about an environmental issue or problem.
6	Demonstrate critical thinking, personal responsibility, and social responsibility by applying these skills in daily life as an active citizen in a democratic society.

## Course Outline

This schedule is subject to change by the instructor. Any changes to this schedule will be communicated in class or via class email or Blackboard announcement.

### TIMELINE TOPICS (BB=Blackboard)

<u>Week 1</u>	
January 17	No Class—Power Outage
January 19	Introduction Steinberg, 3-7
<u>Week 2</u>	
January 24	Lecture: North America before Columbus Steinberg, Chapter 1 Cronon, 3-33
	Film: <i>Apocalypto</i> (2006)
January 26	Discussion: Indigenous Ecology BB: Shepherd Krech III, <i>The Ecological Indian</i> (1999), 15-43 BB: Charles C. Mann, "1491" (2002) Cronon, 34-81
<u>Week 3</u>	
January 31	Lecture: Contacts, Collisions, and Exchanges Steinberg, Chapter 2 Cronon, 82-126
February 2	Discussion: Columbian Exchange BB: Jared Diamond, "Predicting Environmental History" (1998) BB: David S. Jones, "Virgin Soils Revisited" (2003) Cronon, 127-156
<u>Week 4</u>	
February 7	Research Paper and Resources for American Environmental History Cronon, 157-170
<b>February 9</b>	<b>Response Paper #1 Due</b> Discussion: <i>Changes in the Land</i> Steinberg, Chapter 3
<u>Week 5</u>	
February 14	Lecture: Commodifying Nature Steinberg, Chapter 4 BB: Henry David Thoreau, <i>Walden</i> (1854) Jacoby, 1-28
<b>February 16</b>	<b>Research Paper Topic Due</b> Discussion: Antebellum Slavery and the Environment Steinberg, Chapter 5 BB: Frederick Law Olmstead, <i>Journeys and Explorations in the Cotton Kingdom</i> (1861) Jacoby, 29-78

- Week 6  
February 21 Lecture: Food and the Civil War  
Steinberg, Chapter 6  
Jacoby, 79-98
- February 23** **Research Paper Thesis Statement Due**  
Discussion: King Cotton and the Postbellum South  
Steinberg, Chapter 7  
BB: Louis Hughes, *Thirty Years a Slave* (1897)  
Jacoby, 99-146
- Week 7  
February 28 Lecture: Colonizing the West  
Steinberg, Chapter 8  
BB: Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Frontier in American History* (1893)  
Jacoby, 147-170
- March 2** **Mid-Term Exam**
- Week 8  
March 7 Lecture: Preservation and Conservation  
Steinberg, Chapter 9  
Jacoby, 171-203
- Film: *The Last Explorers: John Muir* (2011)
- March 9** **Response Paper #2 Due**  
Discussion: *Crimes Against Nature*
- Week 9  
March 14, 16 No Class—Spring Break
- Week 10  
March 21 Lecture: Industrialization and Urbanization  
Steinberg, Chapter 10  
BB: Robert Gottlieb, "Industrial Pollution and Reform" (1993)
- March 23 Discussion: Agribusiness and Dust Bowl  
Steinberg, Chapter 11  
BB: Donald Worster, *Dust Bowl* (1979), 3-8, 26-43
- Film: *The Plow that Broke the Plains* (1936)
- Week 11  
**March 28** **Annotated Bibliography Due**  
Lecture: Atomic Age  
BB: Sara Dant, "Booming the West" (2017)
- Film: *Atomic Cafe* (1982)
- March 30 Discussion: Fast Food Nation  
Steinberg, Chapter 12  
BB: Michael Pollan, *The Omnivore's Dilemma* (2006), 65-84, 109-117
- Film: *The Founder* (2017)
- Week 12  
April 4 Lecture: Ecology of Suburbanization  
Steinberg, Chapter 13
- April 6 Discussion: Conspicuous Consumption  
Steinberg, Chapter 14

### Week 13

April 11 Lecture: Environmental Movement  
Steinberg, Chapter 15

April 13 Discussion: Environmentalism  
BB: Aldo Leopold, "The Land Ethic" (1948)  
BB: Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring* (1962)  
BB: Edward Abbey, *Desert Solitaire* (1975)

### Week 14

April 18 Lecture: (Un)Natural Disasters  
Steinberg, Chapter 16

April 20 No Class—Writing Day

### Week 15

**April 25 First Draft of Research Paper Due by 5pm**

April 27 **Last day to submit Response Paper #3**  
Discussion: Global Climate Change  
BB: Sara Dant, "Sustainability and the 'Triumph of the Commons'" (2017)

Film: *An Inconvenient Truth* (2006)

### Week 16

May 2 Oral Presentations

May 4 Oral Presentations

### Week 17

**Mon., May 8 Final Draft of Research Paper due by 5pm**

### Week 18

**Tues., May 16 Final Exam: 5:00pm-7:00pm**

## Course Evaluation Methods

This course will utilize the following instruments to determine student grades and proficiency of the learning outcomes for the course.

**Attendance** – *Faithful class attendance is crucial since lectures complement the readings, rather than duplicate them. After the fourth missed class, each additional absence, whether excused or unexcused, will result in a five-point grade reduction from your final attendance grade in the course.*

**Participation** – *Participation is an important component of this class. Lectures are interactive and approximately fifteen minutes of each class will be set aside for discussion of documents, maps, paintings, and film clips. I encourage you to participate both by answering my questions and by asking me your own. The quality of your comments is more important than the quantity.*

**Exams** – *Two equally weighted exams will consist of two essay questions that will ask you to support an argument with evidence from your readings and class notes. The final exam will be given during finals week but is not cumulative. You will receive a review sheet with potential essay questions prior to each exam.*

**Assignments** – *Written assignments constitute forty percent of your overall grade in the course. To improve the quality of class discussion, you will write three 2-page response papers: one on the Cronon book, one on the Jacoby book, and one on an additional reading assignment. A 10-page research paper on a historical environmental problem or issue is due by the last class day of the semester. Papers should be typed double-spaced, and include footnotes and an annotated bibliography describing the content and utility of the sources you consulted for your paper.*

**The research must include primary and secondary printed sources, not simply on-line materials.**

**Research Presentation-** To improve your oral communication and encourage intellectual engagement with your classmates, you will give a fifteen-minute oral presentation on your research paper topic at the end of the course.

**Grading Matrix:**

<b>Instrument</b>	<b>Total</b>
Attendance	10%
Participation	10%
Mid-Term Exam	15%
Final Exam	15%
3 Response Papers	15%
Annotated Bibliography	5%
Research Paper	20%
Research Presentation	10%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Grade Determination:**

A = 90-100

B = 80 – 89

C = 70 – 79

D = 60 – 69

F = 0-59

**University Policies and Procedures**

**Students with Disabilities (ADA Compliance)**

The University of North Texas at Dallas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodations must first register with the Disability Services Office (DSO) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the DSO will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, DSO notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet/communicate with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information see the Disability Services Office website at <http://www.untDallas.edu/disability>. You may also contact them by phone at 972-338-1777; by email at UNTDdisability@untDallas.edu or at Founders Hall, room 204. (UNT Policy 7.004)

**CourseEval Policy**

Student's evaluations of teaching effectiveness is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT Dallas. This short survey will be made available to you at the end of the semester, providing you a chance to comment on how this class is taught. I am very interested in the feedback I get from students, as I work to continually improve my teaching. I consider students' evaluations to be an important part of your participation in this class.

**Assignment Policy**

*Written assignments should be submitted in hard copy or electronically by the beginning of class on the assigned due date. Late papers will be penalized and will receive a one-third letter grade reduction for each day they are late. So if you turn in an A paper two days late, you would receive a B+.*

**Exam Policy**

*Exams should be taken as scheduled. No makeup examinations will be allowed except for documented emergencies (See Student Handbook). In such a case the student should still make every effort to communicate with the instructor by phone or e-mail prior to the exam and take the make-up exam within a week of the originally scheduled date.*

### **Academic Integrity**

Academic integrity is a hallmark of higher education. You are expected to abide by the University's code of Academic Integrity policy. Any person suspected of academic dishonesty (i.e., cheating or plagiarism) will be handled in accordance with the University's policies and procedures. Refer to the Student Code of Academic Integrity (Policy 7.002) at

[http://www.untdallas.edu/sites/default/files/page\\_level2/pdf/policy/7.002%20Code%20of%20Academic\\_Integrity.pdf](http://www.untdallas.edu/sites/default/files/page_level2/pdf/policy/7.002%20Code%20of%20Academic_Integrity.pdf)

Refer to the Student Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities and Conduct at

[http://www.untdallas.edu/sites/default/files/page\\_level2/hds0041/pdf/7\\_001\\_student\\_code\\_of\\_conduct\\_may\\_2014.pdf](http://www.untdallas.edu/sites/default/files/page_level2/hds0041/pdf/7_001_student_code_of_conduct_may_2014.pdf)

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabrication of information or citations, facilitating acts of dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students. In addition, all academic work turned in for this class, including exams, papers and written assignments must include the following statement: "*On my honor, I have not given, nor received, nor witnessed any unauthorized assistance that violates the UNTD Academic Integrity Policy.*"

**Please note that I take your signing of this statement very seriously, and the minimum grade penalty for violating the Code of Academic Integrity in this course will be a zero on that assignment, quiz, or exam.**

**Bad Weather Policy:** Campus facilities will close and operations will be suspended when adverse weather and/or safety hazards exist on the UNTD campus or if travel to the campus is deemed dangerous as the result of ice, sleet or snow. In the event of a campus closure, the Marketing and Communication Department will report closure information to all appropriate major media by 7 a.m. That department will also update the UNTD website, Facebook and Twitter with closing information as soon as it is possible. For more information please refer to <http://www.untdallas.edu/police/resources/notifications>

**Attendance and Participation Policy:** (*Discuss your attendance and participation policy.*)

The University attendance policy is in effect for this course. Please refer to Policy 7.005 Student Attendance at <http://www.untdallas.edu/hr/upol>

**Diversity/Tolerance Policy:** Students are encouraged to contribute their perspectives and insights to class discussions. However, offensive and inappropriate language (swearing) and remarks offensive to others of particular nationalities, ethnic groups, sexual preferences, religious groups, genders, or other ascribed statuses will not be tolerated. Disruptions which violate the Code of Student Conduct will be referred to the Dean of Students as the instructor deems appropriate. (UNTD Policy 7.001)

### **Electronics:**

*Cell phones and other hand-held electronic devices are not permitted in this class.*

### **Laptops:**

*Laptops are only permitted with instructor approval and should be used solely for course-related activities. Anyone found surfing the internet during class will lose future computer privileges.*

### **Food and Drink**

*Food is not permitted in this class, but you may bring a non-alcoholic drink.*