**Introduction**

This course will offer an interdisciplinary introduction to environmental issues, problems, and problem solving. On each topic we will investigate the environment from many different disciplinary perspectives, such as economics, history, political science, ethics, and natural science. These perspectives will be presented through a variety of readings, short campus field trips, in-class activities and discussions, and a personal narrative assignment on a personal environmental value. Various skills will be emphasized through course assignments and discussions including group skills, critical thinking, oral communication, creativity, and principled problem solving. Primary themes of the course will include the concept of sustainable living, studies of the impacts of human activity on the natural environment, attempts to preserve natural systems, and the need for valid scientific information to make informed decisions and develop useful environmental policies.

Although the class will touch upon a number of environmental problems and solutions, the course will be richer if each student also feels free to bring in other contemporary environmental issues in a way that strengthens our discussion and understanding of the larger themes of the course.

**Academic Integrity**

As stated in the Honor Code of Guilford College, all students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. This class will maintain and support these standards, specifically the section of the [Guilford College Honor Code](https://www.guilford.edu/about/policies-and-procedures/honor-code) quoted below:

Academic honesty and integrity represent central elements of the liberal arts education at Guilford College. As scholars pursuing knowledge and truth, informed by the Quaker testimony on integrity, we seek a community where each member acts responsibly and honorably in all
activities and at all times. Acts of dishonesty represent a serious offense at Guilford College. Guilford College defines plagiarism broadly as presenting the interpretations, wording, images, or original conceptions of others as one’s own without appropriate acknowledgement. Individual faculty members determine what constitutes appropriate acknowledgement within the context of their courses, either by specifically stating requirements or by acknowledging the standard practice within a given discipline.

Paraphrasing another author is something I expect you to do frequently to support your analysis. Because you are using your own words, paraphrasing does not require quotation marks, but you must still use a complete Chicago Manual footnote immediately following the paraphrased material.

You will also use direct quotations in this course. For the purpose of this course, a direct quotation is any use of four or more words (e.g., the White House asked for a "renewal of crushing sanctions") or a specific term that is not your own (e.g., "adversarial legalism") that may be shorter than four words. Unlike a paraphrase, you must put all words of a direct quotation in quotation marks and follow the ending quotation mark with a complete Chicago Manual footnote citation to the original source material.

Appropriate acknowledgment for the purposes of this course requires giving credit where credit is due to the work of others described above. All sources used for completing assignments for this class must appear in the bibliography of a paper; not doing so constitutes plagiarism and violates appropriate acknowledgement according to the standard practice within political science. Any use of the work of others requires acknowledgment by citing the original author with a complete Chicago Manual footnote citation.

While learning from others represents an essential component of academic and intellectual inquiry, failure to give proper attribution to words, concepts, and evidence borrowed from others constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious academic offense. Any requirement for this course containing plagiarized material will, at minimum, receive a grade of F. Repeated or flagrant use of plagiarized material, even in a single assignment, may lead to the grade of F in the course, at the discretion of the professor. All honor code violations other than plagiarism will also be addressed in this manner.

In order to avoid unintentional errors, follow the guidelines on avoiding plagiarism in Chapter 33 of Simon and Schuster Handbook for Writers. While not required to purchase for the class, please consider obtaining Simon and Schuster Handbook for Writers. Using this or another reputable writing guide will help you avoid plagiarism. If you have questions about avoiding plagiarism, also please do not hesitate to contact me.

Learning Objectives

This course seeks to achieve learning outcomes for all students related to both goals for the Environmental Studies major as well as goals related to the Social Justice/Environmental Responsibility Learning outcome. A learning outcome is an essential goal focused on knowledge, skills, abilities or values that students are expected to attain after having successfully completed an educational experience.
The Environmental Studies program at Guilford College believes that students who have successfully completed ENVS 101 should be able to demonstrate an understanding of the complex relationship between humans and the environment. Additionally, students should be able to engage in interdisciplinary problem identification and formulate appropriate solutions.

ENVS 101 also fulfills the Social Justice/Environmental Responsibility general education requirement. This requirement carries with it the following learning outcomes. Students will articulate and evaluate:

1. possible meanings of justice and responsibility in relation to the environment
2. institutions, structures, ideologies, and power relationships that degrade the environment
3. institution, structures, ideologies, and power relations which sustain the environment
4. possible methods of actively pursuing change at the personal, social and institutional levels

**Course Books**

The following books will be read for this course:


Other required readings will be available from the professor.

**Grading, Course Policies & Detailed Requirements**

Grading for the course will be consistent with the guidelines of the College. To that end, as discussed in the Faculty Handbook:

The grade of A is awarded for original insight, sound reasoning and the ability to evaluate the scope of the materials studied.

The grade of B reflects interpretive skill on the part of the student and a clear understanding of the meaning and interrelatedness of the course materials.

A grade of C indicates thorough familiarity with the basic facts and concepts considered in the course, even though underlying principles may not have been grasped.

Although D is labeled a passing grade, it reflects a lack of fundamental knowledge of the subject. The grade of F is assigned for failing work.

In addition to the above criteria from the Faculty Handbook, mechanical, grammatical and stylistic skills in written assignments are also considered in determining grades.

Furthermore, it is extremely important for each student to affirm his/her commitment to the course and the work necessary to achieve the learning objectives outlined here. While there are numerous ways of recognizing student effort, the common standard at Guilford is to assign academic credit using the ratio of one credit unit per semester for each three hours of consistent effort per week. This course affirms this practice and this level of commitment is required to attain the learning
objectives outlined here. This means that students should be prepared to spend 2.5 hours in class each week and at least 9.5 hours each week preparing for class. Please practice good time management to sustain the effort required to meet the level of success to which you’ve committed yourself.

Finally, students should recall that all practices in this course are consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students that disclose a documented need and make timely requests for appropriate accommodations will receive the support necessary. Please review the policy of the College and consult with the professor for more information.

**Course Requirements**

The course requirements include class participation (attendance and discussion), reading quizzes, an eco-documentary film and a reflective paper. Please note that no late work will be accepted. You must complete all requirements in order to pass the course. Failure to complete one or more of the course requirements will lead to a failing grade in the course except in extraordinary circumstances.

Final grades are based on 400 points and are calculated by this formula:

- 140 points (35%) Class participation
- 160 points (40%) Tests (4)
- 100 points (25%) “This I Believe” project

**Class Participation & Discussion**

This element of the course includes class attendance, the ability to answer questions regarding readings in class, and participation in class discussions. Because we will use much of the class time to discuss the readings, I expect you to have done the day’s readings carefully before coming to class and to be an active participant in class discussions. I expect every class member to bring the reading to class and to have notes and ideas ready to inform our discussion.

Attendance is recorded. In support of Guilford's core values of integrity and community, it is the responsibility of each student to be present and on time for each class meeting. Arriving late or being absent from class meetings stands contrary to these values. Excused absences are rare. Students seeking an excused absence should be prepared to provide the instructor with certifiable documentation and justification for the absence to be excused (e.g. doctor’s note). Each unexcused absence beyond the first one will result in a 1% deduction from a student's final grade in the course. Further, in support of the college-wide policy on attendance as noted in the Student Handbook, any student missing 20% of class meetings in a semester (e.g. six absences from a twice-a-week course) may be administratively withdrawn from the course by the Academic Dean's office. Students with concerns about attendance should speak directly with the faculty member. Students with perfect attendance will also receive a 20-point bonus to their final grades.

Participation in two specific events will also represent part of each participation grade. First, students in the course will be required to participate in a workday on campus and the neighboring Price Park. The workday is sponsored by the local Audubon Society and will be an effort to curb invasive species in the Guilford College and Price Park woods. Second, students will also be required to attend the Environmental Studies Forum at the end of the semester. Specific dates for these events are below and subject to change. The level of student participation will determine the
Finally, while I expect each student to participate fully in class discussions and activities, participation should be respectful and always with an eye toward valuing the larger whole of our community of learners in the class. Rudeness, excessive side conversations and such run counter to community. Two additional reminders will also greatly help build a sense of community in our class. First, please refrain from using cell phones (silence them), texting, providing Facebook status updates, playing games or anything else that takes you out of our common activity. While I do encourage students to access the web to enhance their participation in a particular discussion, please limit your activities to those things related to our class. I use technology in class and you may too. However, there is a proper place for this. Second, try to learn the names of your fellow students. I will make every effort to call on people by name. When speaking of or to others, try to use their name. Doing so will help us all achieve richer discussions.

Tests

Four tests will be given in class over the course of the term. The tests will test your comprehension of the readings as well as previous discussions in class. As good note taking represents an essential element in successful learning, notes taken by the student can be used when completing tests. At no point though may the actual readings from be used during a test. Please be sure to take notes on separate material from the readings.

This I Believe Project.

In 1951, renowned journalist Edward R. Murrow began a series of public essays on the radio focused on individuals sharing a deeply held value. Over the course of this series, Murrow sought to create a space where individuals could share their beliefs in a way that did not dissolve into “pious platitudes or narrow prejudice”. Murrow hoped that “in an age of confusion, a lot of us have traded in our beliefs for bitterness and cynicism or for a heavy package of despair” and that “opinions can be picked up cheap in the market place while such commodities as courage and fortitude and faith are in alarmingly short supply.”

As a semester long project, each student will join this sixty-year-old public project and also share a deeply held belief. The belief you choose to share must be connected to your relationship to the environment in one form or another. Although we will discuss this project in depth together, some general outlines for the assignment are helpful here. These are taken from the This I Believe project:

1. We invite you to contribute to this project by writing and submitting your own statement of personal belief. We understand how challenging this is—it requires such intimacy that no one else can do it for you. To guide you through this process, we offer these suggestions:
   2. Tell a story: Be specific. Take your belief out of the ether and ground it in the events of your life. Consider moments when belief was formed or tested or changed. Think of your own experience, work, and family, and tell of the things you know that no one else does. Your story need not be heart-warming or gut-wrenching—it can even be funny—but it should be real. Make sure your story ties to the essence of your daily life philosophy and the shaping of your beliefs.
3. Be brief: Your statement should be between 450 and 500 words. That’s about three minutes when read aloud at your natural pace.
4. Name your belief: If you can’t name it in a sentence or two, your essay might not be about belief. Also, rather than writing a list, consider focusing on one core belief, because three minutes is a very short time.
5. Be positive: Please avoid preaching or editorializing. Tell us what you do believe, not what you don’t believe. Avoid speaking in the editorial “we.” Make your essay about you; speak in the first person.
6. Be personal: Write in words and phrases that are comfortable for you to speak. We recommend you read your essay aloud to yourself several times, and each time edit it and simplify it until you find the words, tone, and story that truly echo your belief and the way you speak.
7. For this project, we are also guided by the original This I Believe series and the producers’ invitation to those who wrote essays in the 1950s. Their advice holds up well and we are abiding by it. Please consider it carefully in writing your piece.
8. In introducing the original series, host Edward R. Murrow said, “Never has the need for personal philosophies of this kind been so urgent.” We would argue that the need is as great now as it was 50 years ago. We are eager for your contribution.

Work on the essays will be accomplished in stages and will develop over the course of the semester. Interim deadlines for each stage are:

Monday, 25 January - First rough draft
Monday, 27 February - Second rough draft
Monday, 26 March - Third rough draft
Tuesday, 24 April - Final draft submitted and uploaded to thisibelieve.org

All drafts and feedback will be conducted via Google docs. More information and feedback rubric to be provided throughout the semester.

Course Calendar

Below is a general outline of how the course will proceed. As the course progresses, it is possible that specific reading assignments for each class will be changed to reflect our progress. As always, it is important to stay aware of any changes in the calendar and updates on specific reading assignments. Presentation slides from class, when used, will be available and updated regularly. We will also have a series of visiting faculty who will lead class meetings throughout the semester; the names of these faculty members are listed below for the given meetings they will lead.

Interdisciplinary foundation of environmental studies

M 9 January - KDD
  Introduction

Invasive species

W 11 January - KDD

M 16 January
No class; Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday

W 18 January - KDD

M 23 January - KDD
*Anthology*, chapter 2, “Species in Danger: Three Case Studies”

W 25 January
No homework; woods walk with Lynn Moseley

S 28 January
Invasive species work day, Guilford woods & Price Park (20 participation points)

M 30 January - KDD

W 1 February
Test #1

**Wilderness and the inner space**

M 6 February - KDD
*Anthology*, chapter 9, “What is Wilderness and Do We Need It?”

W 8 February - KDD
*Anthology*, chapter 9, “What is Wilderness and Do We Need It?”

M 13 February - Maia Dery
*Anthology*, chapter 16, “The Inner Life”

W 15 February - Maia Dery
*Anthology*, chapter 16, “The Inner Life”

M 20 February - KDD
*Anthology*, chapter 22, “Law and Environmental Justice”

W 22 February
Test #2
Economics and the Environment:

M 27 February - Bob Williams
   Anthology, chapter 23, “Economics”

W 29 February - Bob Williams

M 5 March
   No class, Spring Break

W 7 March
   No class, Spring Break

Global Warming

M 12 March - Angie Moore
   Global warming science (readings forthcoming)

W 14 March - Angie Moore
   Global warming science (readings forthcoming)

M 19 March - KDD

W 21 March
   Test #3

Anthropology

M 26 March - Tom Guthrie
   Anthology, chapter 25, “Introduction” and Kane, “With Spears from All Sides”.

W 28 March - Tom Guthrie
   Anthology, chapter 25, Catlin, “Letters and Notes on the...North American Indians” and Bonner, “Whose Heritage Is It?”
**History**

M 2 April - KDD  
Pastoral v. preservation traditions

W 4 April - KDD  
Pastoral v. preservation traditions

M 9 April - Damon Akins  
*Anthology*, chapter 19, “History and the Environment”

W 11 April - Damon Akins  
*Anthology*, chapter 19, “History and the Environment”

**Action**

M 16 April - KDD  

W 18 April - KDD  
*Anthology*, Coda

M 23 April  
Working lab on “This I Believe Project”.

T 24 April  
Guilford College Environmental Studies Forum  
Special Academic Events Day. (20 participation points)

R 26 April  
Test #4

Deadline: Tuesday, April 24, 6:00 p.m.  
“This I Believe” final draft uploaded to thisibelieve.org

Printable copy of syllabus (updated 1/9/12)