Stony Brook University  
Sustainability Studies  

**Sustainability Studies Program**  
**SBC 325 Environmental Writing and the Media**  
This course satisfies SBC categories: WRTD, HCA, HFA+  

Course Instructor: Heidi Hutner  

**Section: 01**  
Office Hours: Tuesday/Thursday 10:00 -11:30 and by appointment  
Office Location: Sustainability Studies #W0521  
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*Prerequisite: WRT 102*  

*Advisory Prerequisite: SBC 203*

**SBC 325: Environmental Writing and the Media**

An examination of multiple genres (including: photo journalism, literary nonfiction, fine art and advertising and documentary film), in order to understand ways in which these genres are utilized to inform and manipulate public opinion regarding the environment. The culmination of the course will be a final project using multiple genres.

**Course Learning Objectives:**

1) **WRT:** Weekly in-depth analytical writing will be required about course literature, art, and film readings and viewings (3 typed pages). The writings are posted as “blog entries” at a class blog site built and maintained by the students. These essays will be revised in consultation with the professor before posting at the blog site. Students also write on op-ed on an environmental subject and submit this to a local news site for publication. They will work on this in consultation with the professor.

2) **HCA:** Through analytical, critical, and speculative means, SBC 325 examines the relationship of human and environmental history, thought, values and considers the ways in which those ideas have shaped, and will shape, our global ecological communities. The course broadens understanding and fosters an appreciation of human global and environmental cultures, through analysis of the environment in literature, social media, internet, news, video, art and film.

3) **HFA+** Goes beyond HCA to foster a more in-depth understanding, and practice and analysis of human environmental thought and values in a global context. Students examine complex forms of environmental literature, film, internet, social media, news, and video
as a lens through which they gain a deeper understanding of the relationship of human and ecological communities worldwide. SBC 203 is an advisory prerequisite (HCA). The course is based on a critical analysis of cultural, social, political, environmental, gendered, racial concepts and their interconnections in literature, film and video. The class is conducted the “seminar” style, with students actively speaking, sharing ideas, and contributing to class discussion, both in written and oral participation.

Course Requirements:

1) **Attendance.** Students are permitted four absences in total all semester--including those due to a documented illness and/or emergency (university sanctioned events are the exception). Five absences will result in the lowering of the final grade by 20%. Every absence thereafter will result in another lowering of the final grade by 3%.

2) **Timely Arrival.** Arriving late is disruptive and inconsiderate. Students will not be counted as present if they arrive more than twelve minutes late.

3) **Participation.** Your participation is a very important part of the course grade. Much of the course will be organized around class discussion and small group assignments. There will be frequent in-class writing assignments; verbal and written contributions to the class will make a big difference to the final grade. The in-class writing assignments may NOT be made up at a later date.

4) **Reading Responses (short essays/blogs):** Students will write reading responses—3 page typed writings about the class readings. These are due and must be posted on Blackboard every Sunday night at 10 pm, every week of the semester. These writings will examine the language, imagery, structure and subject matter of the readings and film/video/art viewings of the course. These must be posted on our class site on BB under SafeAssign, AND brought into class each week at the start of the week. After consultation with me, they will be posted on our live class blog site.

5) **An Op Ed**— the OP Ed on an environmental news topic related to our class texts will be written, revised, and submitted for publication. Extra Credit the Op Ed gets published! This is due by Week 9.
6) **Final Exam.** The final exam will cover all of our class reading and viewings.

7) **Presentation** - students will create their own “environmental media” project and present this either at Earthstock or in class in the final weeks, depending on the semester in which this course is taught (Earthstock only takes place in Spring Semester).

The following activities are **strictly prohibited** in this classroom:

1) text-messaging and any use of computers or cell phones. Cell phones and computers must be put away and **turned off completely** during the class session.

**DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES (DSS):**
If you have a physical, psychological, medical, or learning disability that may impact your course work, please contact Disability Support Services (631) 632-6748 or http://studentaffairs.stonybrook.edu/dss/. They will determine with you what accommodations are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation is confidential. Students who require assistance during emergency evacuation are encouraged to discuss their needs with their professors and Disability Support Services. For procedures and information go to the following website: http://www.stonybrook.edu/ehs/fire/disabilities/asp.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:**
Each student must pursue his or her academic goals honestly and be personally accountable for all submitted work. Representing another person’s work as your own is always wrong. Academic dishonesty can range from simple breach of class or University guidelines, such as using a cell phone in an exam, to very serious cases which may result in expulsion. Any suspected instance of academic dishonesty will be reported to the appropriate academic judiciary committee. It is the responsibility of all students to make themselves familiar with the University’s policies and procedures regarding academic
integrity as well as any additional guidelines issued by instructors for specific classes. For more comprehensive information on academic integrity, including categories of academic dishonesty, please refer to the academic judiciary Web site at http://www.stonybrook.edu/uaa/academicjudiciary/.

**CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT:**
Stony Brook University expects students to respect the rights, privileges, and property of other people. Faculty are required to report to the Office of Judicial Affairs any disruptive behavior that interrupts their ability to teach, compromises the safety of the learning environment, and/or inhibits students' ability to learn. Important Note: We will use Blackboard actively throughout the semester. If you cannot access our class on Blackboard (and if you do not receive emails from me via Blackboard), go to the sinc site in the library basement and take care of this immediately.

The final grade will be calculated as follows:

Essay-Blogs: 45%
Group Research Project: 25%
Final Exam 30%

Required Reading:

*Communicating with Nature* by Julia B. Corbett
*Orion Magazine*

*Monkey Wrench Gang* by Edward Abbey

*Full Body Burden* by Kristen Iverson

Nonfiction essays and excerpts by: Sandra Steingraber, Rachel Carson, Bill McKibben, Wendell Berry, David Orr, Linda Hogan, Robert Bullard.

Schedule:

Week One

Earth 2100 (film) Bill Mckibben, on Climate Change at Rolling Stone.

Week Two

Inconvenient Truth and Everything’s Cool (films)


Week Three

View: Gasland One and Two

Rachel Carson, Chapter One and Two from Silent Spring; Sandra Steingraber, “The Fracking of Rachel Carson (from Orion); chapter on Fracking from Raising Elijah.

Communicating Nature Chapter 3.

Week Four

The Story of Stuff (video)
Communication Nature Chapter 4 (consumerism)
No Impact Man (film)

Week Five

Avatar (film). Joni Adamson’s “Indigenous Literatures, Multinaturalism, and Avatar”
Communication with Nature Chapter 5 (Travel/leisure/lawns)
Communication with Nature: Chapter 6 (Green Advertising)

Week Six

Alice Walker “Am I Blue”
The Cove (film)
Communicating Nature (Chapter 8)

Week Seven

Monkey Wrench Gang
Fierce Green Fire (film)
**Week Eight**  
*Monkey Wrench Gang*  

**Week Nine**  
*Monkey Wrench Gang*  
Excerpt from: *Desert Solitaire*  

**Week Ten**  
*Bidder 70*  
Tim DeChristopher Interview at *Orion*  

**Week Eleven**  
*Silkwood* (film)  
*Full Body Burden*  

**Week Twelve**  
*Full Body Burden*  

**Week Thirteen**  
*Blind*-short film on Fukushima  
*China Syndrome* (film)  
*Communicating Nature*: Chapters Nine and Ten  

**Week Fourteen**  
David Orr, Derek Jensen, Amory Lovins essays.  
Student Presentations/projects.  

**Week Fifteen**  
Student Presentations and projects. Catch up and readings.  

Wrap up.