ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE
ESPM 163AC AND SOCIOLOGY 128AC
3 Units - Fall 2004

Lectures:
Prof. Dara O’Rourke
Monday & Wednesday 1-2 p.m., 159 Mulford
orourke@nature.berkeley.edu
Office Hours: Wed. 2-4 p.m.
Discussion Sections: Mandatory
CCN: 30721 or 81818
130B Giannini Hall, Tel.: 643-3110
Blackboard Web Site: http://blackboard.berkeley.edu

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 regulation. 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 American Indian communities. The course is organized into five sections: (1) debating environmental justice claims; (2) methods for analyzing environmental, health, and social inequities; (3) cases of environmental injustice; (4) government policies and programs; and (5) community responses and future strategies.

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 quality and environmental burdens. Research methods will be assessed 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
• Develop students’ own definition and theories of environmental justice;
• 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 community and non-governmental strategies to respond to environmental and health problems;
• Engage real cases in the Bay Area related to environmental justice;
• Strengthen critical thinking, writing, and oral presentation skills.
ASSIGNMENTS

Students will be expected to:

1. Read all of the assigned readings before each lecture for which they are assigned.
2. Actively participate in class discussions in lecture and sections.
3. Group projects
   a) Write a one-paragraph statement of your term project topic and submit a one-page outline for the project. Due on October 11th.
   b) Students will form term project “teams” consisting of 3 to 5 people from your discussion section. The teams will conduct either a “service learning” project with a local non-profit organization or a traditional academic research project analyzing a case of an environmental injustice and employing tools learned in the course. A list of possible service learning projects will be presented to the class on September 8th. Teams will jointly analyze demographic, environmental, and health data, conduct original interviews, analyze government and community responses, and make recommendations for future policies or programs. The term projects will seek to analyze institutional processes driving the “injustice” and to propose realistic responses to these problems.

   The term project can result in one of three products: A traditional term paper (of approximately 30 pages), a web-based project (of equivalent depth), or a product requested by the non-profit organization (such as fact sheets, focus groups, etc.). Students will also write a one-page evaluation of their contribution to the team.

   Graduate students should consult with the instructor about conducting a graduate level term project.

   c) 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 December 8th. Late projects will not be accepted.

4. Complete three short individual assignments during the semester. Students will individually:
   a) Complete a short assignment defining environmental injustice and describing how their racial, socio-economic, and geographic background influenced their exposure to environmental harm and access to environmental benefits. This assignment will be due on September 20th.
   b) Complete a quantitative analysis comparing environmental, health, or equity disparities within and between two communities. This assignment will be due on October 25th.
   c) Complete a short essay analyzing federal, state, or local government policies related to an EJ case. This assignment will be due on November 17th.

5. 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 12: Friday, Dec. 17th, 5-8 p.m.
6. Extra Credit Assignments

a) Students can participate in a half-day field trip to West Oakland. Participants will write a one-page reaction paper following the field trip.

b) Students can conduct and write up an interview with a community member, staff of a non-profit organization, government official, or business representative.

c) Students can attend an event, rally, volunteer day, or community meeting sponsored by a local EJ organization, and then write up a one-page reaction paper.

d) There will also be occasional in-class extra credit opportunities through volunteering to participate in simulations, debates, or short assignments.

Evaluation:

The course grade will be based on the following activities:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Class participation</td>
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<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40%</td>
<td>Term project</td>
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<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Final Examination</td>
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</tbody>
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[Possible Extra Credit points - up to 5%]

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.

Plagiarism includes appropriation of whole passages with or without credit, appropriation of words and phrases without credit, appropriation of both main and supporting ideas without credit, and paraphrasing without credit. Plagiarism also includes submitting a paper written by someone else. Ethical research requires that you properly document the sources you use. Even when you do not quote directly from another work, if reading that source contributed to the ideas presented in your paper, you must give the authors proper credit. If you are unsure of how to properly cite sources, ask Professor O’Rourke or your GSI for guidance. Or visit these web sites:

http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/Citations.html
http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/Internet/Style.html

And for information on the UC Berkeley Student Code of Conduct visit:
http://students.berkeley.edu/sas/conduct.shtml

Required Texts

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, and in the Biosciences Library.

The reader will also be sold through Odin Readers – available at Ned’s on Bancroft.
SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS

Readings marked with an (R) are provided in the course reader.
Readings marked with an (W) are available on the internet.

Aug 30 - Introduction to the Course

No readings.

Sept. 1 – Claims of Environmental Injustice


Sept. 6 – Labor Day Holiday - No Class Today

Sept. 8 – What is Environmental Injustice?


Sept. 13 – What is Environmental Justice?


Sept. 15 – Challenging EJ Claims (I)


Sept. 20 – Challenging EJ Claims (II)


Sept. 22 – Debating the Data


Sept. 27 – Debating Race and Racism in America


Visit the Implicit Association Test web site at: https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/demo/selectatest.html

GUEST SPEAKER: Taeku Lee, Dept. of Political Science, UC Berkeley

Sept. 29 – Debating Class and Inequality in America


Oct. 4 – Measuring Environmental Injustices (I)


Oct. 6 – Measuring Environmental Injustices (II)


Oct. 11 – Environmental Injustices in Native American Communities


GUEST SPEAKER: Sherri Norris, International Indian Treaty Council
Oct. 13 – Environmental Injustices in African American Communities


GUEST SPEAKERS: Karen Pierce, Bayview-Hunters Point Community Advocates
Henry Clark, West County Toxics Coalition (invited)

Oct. 18 – Environmental Injustices in Latino Communities


GUEST SPEAKER: Antonio Diaz, People Organizing to Demand Environmental & Economic Rights (PODER)

Oct. 20 – Environmental Injustices in Asian American Communities


GUEST SPEAKER: Vivian Chang, Asian Pacific Environmental Network

Oct. 25 – Environmental Injustices in the Workplace


Oct. 27 – Environmental Justice and Access to Natural Resources


Nov. 1 – International Environmental Injustices


GUEST SPEAKER: Alastair Iles, UC Berkeley

Nov. 3 – Genetic Engineering and Environmental Justice


GUEST SPEAKER: Rich Hayes, Center for Genetics and Society

Nov. 8 – Government Responses to Remedy Environmental Injustices (I)


Nov. 10 – Government Responses to Remedy Environmental Injustices (II)


Nov. 15 – California State Responses to Remedy Environmental Injustices


GUEST SPEAKER: Romel Pascual, US Environmental Protection Agency

Nov. 17 – Community Responses (I): Social Movement Strategies


Nov. 22 – Community Strategies (II): Development Strategies


GUEST SPEAKER: Lynette Lee, East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation (invited)

Nov. 24 – Community Strategies (III): Citizen Science


Nov. 29 – Community Strategies (IV): Beyond Legal Strategies


GUEST SPEAKER: Luke Cole, Center on Race, Poverty, and the Environment
Dec. 1 – Cross-Movement, Cross-Border Organizing


Dec. 6 – The Deep Challenges: Institutional Processes and Power


Dec. 8 – Summary and Conclusions


Dec. 17 – Final Examination – Exam Group 12 – Friday, Dec. 17th, 5-8 p.m.