

Environmental Justice (G209)

Fall 2021 Syllabus

Welcome to Environmental Justice!

In this course you will be introduced to the field of environmental justice. You will examine evidence and reasons why certain racial and socioeconomic groups in the United States are more likely to be exposed to environmental hazards, and learn what can be done to remedy these issues. The class is designed to maximize your interaction with the material, engage and incorporate your own life experiences, and inspire your respect for the stewardship of the planet. No previous science background is necessary for success!

Instructor & Course Information

- **Course Name:** Environmental Justice
- **Course Number:** G209
- **CRN:** 27547
- **Instructor:** Deron Carter
- **Campus/Location:** Virtual (weekly required Zoom meeting, and online instruction)
- **Course Access:** Moodle. *All LBCC students have a Moodle account. Access with Single Sign-On ID and password.*
- **Course Start Date:** Monday, September 27th
- **Class Time/Dates:** Zoom class, Wednesdays 10-10:50 am. See Moodle for Zoom link.
- **Zoom Office Hours:** M 10-11, W 3-4, F, 9-11
- **Zoom office hours link:** [Schedule an appointment for office hours here.](#)
- **E-mail:** carterd@linnbenton.edu

Course Description:

Examines the unequal exposure to environmental hazards and unequal access to natural resources by particular racial and socio-economic groups in the United States. Focuses on how the environmental justice movement has grown to address these issues. Recommended: WR 121 with a C or better

Learning Outcomes

After successful completion of the course you will be able to:

1. Evaluate scientific data to understand problems related to environmental justice.
2. Apply techniques from multiple disciplines, such as the social and geosciences, to study issues related to environmental justice.

Difference, Power, and Discrimination Baccalaureate Core Requirement

G209 “Environmental Justice” fulfills the Difference, Power, and Discrimination (DPD) requirement in the Baccalaureate Core. The DPD requirement engages students in the intellectual examination of the complexity of the structures, systems, and ideologies that sustain discrimination and the unequal distribution of power and resources in society. The unequal distribution of social, economic, and political power in the United States and in other countries is sustained through a variety of individual beliefs and institutional practices. These beliefs and practices have tended to obscure the origins and operations of social discrimination such that this unequal power distribution is often viewed as the natural order. Examination of DPD course material will enhance meaningful democratic participation in our diverse university community and our increasingly multicultural U.S. society.

DPD Learning Outcomes

1. Students in Difference, Power, and Discrimination courses shall:
2. Explain how difference is socially constructed,
3. Using historical and contemporary examples, describe how perceived differences, combined with unequal distribution of power across economic, social, and political institutions, result in discrimination, and
4. Analyze ways in which the interactions of social categories, such as race, ethnicity, social class, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability, and age, are related to difference, power, and discrimination in the United States.

Required Text

There is no required textbook for this course. All readings are posted on Moodle and are freely available.

Expectations

- Log into Moodle regularly.
- Attend weekly Zoom meeting .
- Complete all assigned weekly readings, and view assigned videos.

- Complete all weekly assignments after carefully reading assignment instructions.
- Regularly check your LBCC student email.
- Contact the [Student Help Desk](#) when technical issues arise.
- Ask me questions when you have them. I'm always happy to help.
- Communicate when something isn't working for you.
- Support your fellow students.

Course Schedule

Work outside of class.

1. Much of class is devoted to discussion and active learning, where you take part in the learning process. To make this work everyone must be prepared when coming to class, so it is important that everyone complete the pre class assignments.
2. Each week you will submit an assignment that will prepare you for class.
3. Assignment format varies and includes quizzes (not timed, with two attempts), journaling, and posting on discussion boards and replying to other students.
4. You always submit assignments in Moodle.
- 5. Assignments are due at 10:00 am on Wednesdays.**
6. You are generally graded on completion and meeting basic requirements except for quizzes.

Work in class--Wednesday at 10 am on Zoom.

1. Your instructor's role in this class is to facilitate the learning process through active learning. There is little to no lecture in this course. A typical class might consist of:
 - a. Small group discussion in Zoom breakout rooms of the assigned reading, followed by a report out to the class,
 - b. A deeper dive into a case study, using evidence-based active learning techniques, such as jigsaws, gallery walks, or think-pair-share questions,
 - c. A data-rich activity using authentic scientific data, GoogleEarth, or the USDA's Food Atlas to study environmental justice issues.
2. A **road check** is a short survey you will take during class time at the end of class. These allow you to provide me feedback on the class and give you a chance to reflect on your learning. You will receive 2 points for completing a road check. The link is given at the end of class, so if you cannot attend class, please email me beforehand to get the link.

Weekly Reflection.

Reflection. Each Wednesday, at the end of class, your instructor will provide you with a question that ties together the week's topic. These questions will ask you to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate topics from the class. You will write your answer and upload it to Moodle as a submission (~350 words). You may discuss your answer with your peers, but you must answer in your own words. Your reflection grade is scored using a rubric provided on Moodle. **Reflections are always due Sunday at 11:59 pm.**

Final Project.

You will complete a final project that will help you synthesize what you have learned in this class. The project is due by Wednesday, December 8, at 11:59 pm. More info. provided in class. You will demonstrate how you have met the course learning outcomes in the portfolio.

Evaluation

Grading

You will receive a letter grade (A-F) in this course. There is no Pass/No Pass option. Your grade will be calculated based on the following criteria:

1. Pre Class Assignments = (10 at 10 points) = 100 points (30%)
2. Reflections = (8 at 20 points) = 160 points (49%)
3. Final project = 50 points (15%)
4. Road Checks = 20 points (6%)

Total = 330 points

Grading Scale

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|---|-----------|
| A | 100-90% |
| B | 89-80% |
| C | 79-70% |
| D | 69-60% |
| F | below 60% |

Grades 0.5% or higher will be rounded up. For example, a 89.5% will be rounded up to 90%.

Incomplete Grades

Incomplete grade (IN) will only be considered if a student has talked to me in advance, and a signed agreement between the student and myself is completed. IN grades are assigned only if the student has a good reason for making the request, has only the minority of coursework to complete, and has scored a C or better on work that has been submitted.

Late Work

On-time assignments are an essential element of college success. Please talk to me if you are having difficulty meeting course deadlines and we can work on a solution so that you don't get behind. I may allow a late assignment if you communicate your need for an extension in advance of the deadline.

Remote Instructional Methods

For our class, you will access all course materials in your student Moodle account.

Learning Material & Assignments

Readings, links, and assignments will be organized by week in Moodle. You can access them at any time during the week as long as you have completed the work by the deadlines.

Technology Requirements:

You will need access to a computer and reliable internet. We recognize that technology may represent a barrier to some students during this period. LBCC offers several resources to students which may help you address these barriers. See LBCC's COVID-19 frequently asked questions for students. If you know your circumstances will make it difficult, please contact me as soon as possible so we can work together to find a solution.

College Policies

Disability services and personal emergency arrangements:

Students who may need accommodations due to documented disabilities, who have medical information which the instructor should know, or who need special arrangements in an emergency should speak with their instructor during the first week of class. If you believe you may need accommodations but are not yet registered with

the Center for Accessibility Resources (CFAR), please visit the CFAR Website for steps on how to apply for services or call 541-917-4789.

Basic Needs

Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the Roadrunner Resource Center for support (resources@linnbenton.edu , or visit us on the web www.linnbenton.edu/RRC under Student Support for Current Students). Our office can help students get connected to resources to help. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable them to provide any resources that they may possess.

LBCC Comprehensive Statement of Nondiscrimination

LBCC prohibits unlawful discrimination based on race, color, religion, ethnicity, use of native language, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, marital status, disability, veteran status, age, or any other status protected under applicable federal, state, or local laws. For further information see Board Policy P1015 in our Board Policies and Administrative Rules. Title II, IX, & Section 504: Scott Rolon, CC-108, 541-917-4425; Lynne Cox, T-107B, 541-917-4806, LBCC, Albany, Oregon. To report: [linnbenton-advocate.symplcity.com/public report](http://linnbenton-advocate.symplcity.com/public-report).

Know your rights and responsibilities

LBCC students have rights: the right to free speech, the right to assemble, the right of a free press, etc. LBCC students also have responsibilities to their community: the responsibility to participate and engage in class, the responsibility to advocate for their needs (ask for help), the responsibility to support a respectful teaching and learning environment, the responsibility to treat all persons with respect, the responsibility to be truthful and honest in all work and communications, and the responsibility to follow staff directions, local, state, and federal laws.

Rights and responsibilities balance together to create the best learning environment. For example, while you have free speech in the café or courtyard, in class the instructor decides whose turn it is to talk and what the topics for conversation will be. Students are free to believe what they believe, but instructors may require students to learn and recite concepts, principles, or theories for a class even if the student does not believe those concepts. You play a role in creating a positive community at LBCC.

Please review your rights and responsibilities (<http://linnbenton.edu/go/studentrights>).

If you believe a student is violating your rights, ask to be treated with respect. If that does not cure the situation, report to Associate Dean Dr. Lynne Cox, Takena Hall Rm. 107. If you believe a faculty member or LBCC employee is violating your rights, please report to Human Resources, Scott Rolen, Calapooia Center Rm. 108.

Changes to the Syllabus

I reserve the right to change the contents of this syllabus due to unforeseen circumstances. You will be given notice of relevant changes in class, through a Moodle Announcement, or through LBCC e-mail.

Proposed Class Schedule G209 Course Schedule. Subject to Change.

| Module | Topic | Reading and viewing | Work Due |
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| Part I. Race, Power, and the Environment. | | | |
| Addresses DPD Outcomes: Explain how difference is socially constructed. Using historical and contemporary examples, describe how perceived differences, combined with unequal distribution of power across economic, social, and political institutions, result in discrimination. Analyze ways in which the interactions of social categories, such as race, ethnicity, social class, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability, and age, are related to difference, power, and discrimination in the United States. | | | |
| 1 | Class introductions and introduction to environmental justice | Syllabus Video: “The Injustice of Plastics.” Van Jones Video: Environmental Justice: Opposing a Toxic Waste Landfill , PBS “Fighting Environmental Racism in North Carolina,” Newkirk II, 2016, New Yorker | W: Class introduction discussion post Su: Reflection 1 |
| 2 | Race and racism in the United States | Race: The Power of Illusion: The Difference Between Us (video--login @ LBCC library) | W: Moodle quiz over video Su: Reflection 2 |
| 3 | Social construction of race, institutional racism and environmental racism | Race: The Power of Illusion: The House We Live In (video--login @ LBCC Library) Housing Segregation in Everything (video, NPR) | W: Discussion post over video Su: Reflection 3 |

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| | | Selected readings, “Environmental Justice for All,” (Bullard, 1994) | |
| 4 | Race, Housing, and Environmental Justice in Oregon: Vanport Floods | Vanport. Oregon Experience , video “How Oregon’s Second Largest City Vanished in a Day,” by Gelling, 2015, Smithsonian Magazine | W: Vanport Moodle Quiz over video and reading Su: Reflection 4 |
| Part 2. Unequal Exposure to Environmental Hazards and Toxins and Unequal Access to Natural Resources. | | | |
| Addresses Course Learning Outcomes: Evaluate scientific data to understand problems related to environmental justice. Apply techniques from multiple disciplines, such as the social and geosciences, to study issues related to environmental justice. | | | |
| 5 | Lead and the Environment | Lead and the Environment, SERC “A Freddie Gray Primer,” Herman and Cox, 2015, Washington Post “Freddie Gray’s Life a Study on the Effects of Lead Paint on Poor Blacks,” McCoy, 2015, Washington Post “America’s Real Criminal Element: Lead,” Drum, 2013, Mother Jones | W: Lead and the Environment Moodle Quiz over reading Su: Reflection 5 |
| 6 | (Un)fair and (un)equal access to water: Women and Water <i>*This week you will need access to a laptop or computer to use GoogleEarth. Mobile devices will not work.*</i> | Hydrologic Cycle, VisionLearning website Common Interest in Earth Science, Feminism, and Environmental Justice, Schneiderman, <i>NWSA Journal</i> | W: Water Scarcity GoogleEarth Assignment Su: Reflection 6 |

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| 7 | EJ Case Study: Climate Justice | Assorted Climate Narratives (see Moodle for your specific reading/viewing assignment based on your last name) "Climate Essentials: Science and Impacts," Center for Climate and Energy Solutions, 2019 | W: Climate narratives discussion post and reply W: Climate Essentials Quiz on Moodle Su: Reflection 7 |
| 8 | EJ Case Study: Food | "Food," Pearce and Huskey, in Contemporary Families: An Equity Lens, by Pearce, 2020. USDA Food Atlas Mapping Tool | W: Food Deserts Assignment Su: Reflection 8 |
| 9 | Next Steps and Taking Action | Final Project Details | W: Next Steps and Taking Action pre class assignment Su: No reflection due, begin working on final project |
| 10 | Faces of the EJ movement. Action and activism. | Selected Scientist Spotlights (your choice--see Moodle), accessed in 2020 from scientistspotlights.org by Schinske et al. | W: EJ Scientist Spotlight due No reflection due this week. Continue working on final project. |
| 11 | Finals Week | | Final Portfolio Due by Wednesday, March 17, at 11:59 pm |