

ENVI 101: Nature and Society: An Introduction to Environmental Studies

Williams College, Fall 2013
Tu-F 1:10-2:25 | Clark 105

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Course Description & Objectives

This course introduces environmental studies as an interdisciplinary field of learning. Together, we will survey a broad range of environmental problems, cases, and questions, from climate change to sustainable agriculture, toxic waste to species extinction. We will also examine the intellectual traditions, authors, and historical developments that have most profoundly shaped our understanding of these issues. Keeping a constant eye on the complexities of life in the twenty-first century, we will explore the many different theories and methods that inform environmental scholarship, activism, and policy-making in a variety of cultural arenas and across geographical scales. Along the way, we will read seminal works by philosophers, economists, journalists, historians, sociologists, and many others. As the course's title, "Nature and Society," suggests, environmental studies is a vast subject, covering almost every aspect of human relations with the natural world. Two goals will guide us throughout: to understand how social, political, cultural, economic, and ecological processes have interacted to create the world we inhabit today—for better and for worse—and to cultivate ways of thinking critically and productively about the worlds we might inhabit in the future.

Required Texts

- Kai N. Lee, William Freudenburg, and Richard Howarth, eds. *Humans in the Landscape: An Introduction to Environmental Studies*
- Course Reader available at the Office of Print & Mail (37 House, 51 Park Street)
 - Be sure to get the reader for ENVI 101-02, with Brian McCammack listed as professor

Assignments/Requirements Overview

This course will meet twice a week (on Tuesdays and Fridays) for 75-minute sessions, and most sessions will involve a combination of lecturing and in-depth discussion based on the readings. Your success in this course will require careful reading of assigned texts, diligent attention to material presented in lectures, punctual and regular attendance, engaged participation, and timely completion of assignments according to provided guidelines.

Readings. Readings listed on the schedule below must be completed *before* each class meeting. Careful reading is essential to good performance in the classroom and on written assignments. In addition to the *Humans in the Landscape* textbook, all other required readings are in the printed course reader available at the Office of Print & Mail (37 House, 51 Park Street). "Recommended" readings are posted on Glow for your perusal if you would like to further pursue a given week's themes, but are (perhaps obviously) *not* required. Any updates to the reading schedule and assignment guidelines will be announced in class and posted on Glow. It is your responsibility to keep up to date with course materials by checking the Glow page on a regular basis.

Written Assignments, Presentations, Group Work, and Discussion. The relative weights and due dates of assignments are summarized below. Each component of your final score is briefly described in this syllabus and more detailed guidelines will be distributed in class as appropriate.

Assignment	Weight	Due Date
Attendance & Participation in Group Discussions	20%	
Field Notes & Presentation	20% (4% for each note and presentation)	Tuesdays. Group 1: 9/10, 10/1, 10/22, 11/5 Group 2: 9/17, 10/8, 10/29, 11/12
Film attendance and discussion	10% (5% for each film)	Attendance and discussion participation required at 2 of 4 film screenings (see below for dates)
Annotated Bibliography	5%	10/4
Op-Ed	10%	10/25
Op-Ed revision	5%	11/8
Group Simulations	10%	11/26
Final Exam	20%	TBD by Registrar

Assignments/Requirements Explained

Attendance and Participation. Your regular attendance and participation is vital to the success of this class. Participation includes your informed, critical reactions to the readings and lectures, occasional in-class or before-class writing assignments, and active, regular contributions to our discussions. It is essential that you read each assignment completely and carefully before class, and that you come prepared to talk about each in detail, hard copy in hand. Engaging with the issues being raised in the course does not stop at the bounds of our classroom, you are expected to enrich discussions with material you have covered in other classes, activities outside of coursework, on-campus events, and unfolding developments in other fora—particularly current environmental news. Participation also includes your attendance at our Mass MoCA field trip (details to follow; a make-up assignment will be provided if you absolutely cannot attend).

It is essential that you attend class regularly and on-time. Habitual lateness will cause your final grade to suffer. If you cannot attend class because of an unforeseen problem, you must email me by 5 PM the day before our meeting. Documentation such as a doctor's note may be requested. If you cannot attend class because of a scheduled conflict, you must let me know at least a week in advance. If you have any concerns about your ability to meet these requirements, please talk to me as early as possible in the semester.

Field Notes. Over the course of the semester before Thanksgiving break, you will complete four 750-1,000 word (ie, ~3 page) essays (one essay roughly every other week) reflecting on some aspect of the Williamstown/North Adams environment and working to connect your own personal, local observations to the more abstract, global issues discussed in our readings. As a way of spurring discussion in a given class meeting, you will then share *one* of your field notes with the class in a brief, 3-5 minute presentation. A more detailed explanation of the field note exercise will be handed out separately.

Film Attendance and Discussion. Four films that expand on the global dimensions of environmental issues covered in readings will be screened in Weeks 9-12, complete with snacks and drinks! Two will be screened in the late afternoon and two in the early evenings in an effort to accommodate different extracurricular schedules. Your attendance and participation in a brief discussion after the film screening is required at two of the events. If you cannot attend one of the screenings, the films are available on reserve at Sawyer and you will be required to offer a 3-page response to the film that connects it to larger themes covered in class.

Annotated Bibliography. The first portion of the series of midterm assignments, the annotated bibliography will build on skills developed and resources discovered at the library research session on 9/20. You will compile several primary and secondary sources from your original research into a specific environmental topic of your choosing, offering a brief explanation of each source's arguments and its relevance to the formation of your own argument in an Op-Ed (see below). A more detailed explanation of the annotated bibliography and its specific requirements will be handed out separately, well in advance of the project's deadline.

Op-Ed and Op-Ed Revision. Building on the research completed for your annotated bibliography, you will compose a 750-1,000 word (~3 page) opinion piece on an environmental issue of your choosing. After it is graded and returned, a revised version that takes into account my comments will be due. A more detailed explanation of the Op-Ed and Op-Ed Revision—along with their specific requirements—will be handed out separately, well in advance of the assignment's deadline.

Group Simulations. After the individual Field Note exercise has ended, we will transition to a small group project to be presented to the class the Tuesday before Thanksgiving Break. I will provide you with a list of possible topics, and the goal will be to stage a debate staking out different policy positions on a handful of environmental issues. The simulations will be graded primarily on the in-class presentation/debate, but the group will also collaboratively produce a 5-7 page policy memo that will explain the group's position. In some cases, this project may happen to build on a group member's Op-Ed assignment, but this project will take an even more overtly policy-oriented approach, and all group members will be expected to contribute equally to this assignment as a standalone project. As with other assignments, a more detailed explanation of the requirements will be handed out separately, well in advance of the assignment's deadline.

Final Exam. Because the bulk of the assessment for 101 is out-of-class and/or collaborative, your final exam will be an in-class exam that is aimed at assessing your comprehension of the semester's reading—a very good reason to stay up-to-date on readings throughout the semester and avoid cramming at the very end. The exam will consist of a mix of identifications (of key terms, people, etcetera) and essays that are drawn from concepts in *Humans in the Landscape* and the course reader(s). I realize this may sound daunting! But the exam is not meant to be overly anxiety-provoking (any more than any other exam, anyway), and it certainly will not blindside you with “gotcha” questions. I will hand out a study guide in advance of the exam that contains—verbatim—the exam's identification and essay questions, along with others that will not ultimately appear on the exam. I would also be happy to hold a review session prior to the exam if there is popular demand for it.

Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Readings & Assignment Due Dates
F 9/6 (Week 1)	Introduction and course outline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Divide class into groups for Field Note project • Selection from Mark Twain, <i>Life on the Mississippi</i> (in class, if time)
Tu 9/10 (Week 2)	A Sense of Place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group 1 Field Note 1 due • <i>Humans in the Landscape</i>, Chapters 1-2 • Annie Dillard, "Seeing," Chapter 2 in <i>Pilgrim at Tinker Creek</i> (1974) • Gary Snyder, "The Place, the Region, and the Commons" in <i>The Practice of the Wild</i> (1990)
F 9/13	Historical Perspectives on the Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Nature" (1836) • Henry David Thoreau, "Walking" (1862)
Tu 9/17 (Week 3)	Historical Perspectives on the Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group 2 Field Note 1 due • Explanatory Introduction of Midterm Project Series • George Perkins Marsh, excerpts from "Man and Nature" (1864) in <i>Organization & Environment</i> Vol. 15 No. 2 (2002) • Mary Austin, excerpts from <i>The Land of Little Rain</i> (1903) • John Muir, "The Hetch Hetchy Valley," <i>Sierra Club Bulletin</i> Vol. VI No. 4 (January 1908) • Gifford Pinchot, excerpts from <i>The Fight For Conservation</i> (1910)
F 9/20		Library Research Orientation Trip with Rebecca Ohm – meet in Sawyer
Tu 9/24 (Week 4)	"Wilderness" Landscapes	<p>Landscape Art Museum Trip: Meet at WCMA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • William Cronon, "The Trouble With Wilderness; or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature," <i>Environmental History</i> Vol. 1 No. 1 (Jan 1996): 7-28. <p><u>Recommended</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rebecca Solnit, "The Rainbow" and "Spectators" in <i>Savage Dreams: A Journey into the Landscape Wars of the American West</i>
F 9/27	Property Rights and The Commons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Humans in the Landscape</i>, Chapter 3 • William Cronon, "Bounding the Land," Chapter 4 in <i>Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England</i> (1985) • Garrett Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons," <i>Science</i> Vol. 162 No. 3859 (1968): 1243-48. • Elinor Ostrom et al, "Revisiting the Commons: Local Lessons, Global Challenges," <i>Science</i> Vol. 284 (1999): 278-282. • Thomas Dietz et al, "The Struggle to Govern the Commons," <i>Science</i> Vol. 302 (2003): 1907-12.
Tu 10/1 (Week 5)	A World Without Edges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group 1 Field Note 2 due • <i>Humans in the Landscape</i>, Chapter 4

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Henry David Thoreau, “Economy” in <i>Walden</i> (1854)
F 10/4	Agriculture and Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annotated Bibliography due <i>Humans in the Landscape</i>, Chapter 6 Wendell Berry, Chapters 2-4 in <i>The Unsettling of America</i> (1977) Peter M. Vitousek et al, “Human Domination of Earth’s Ecosystems,” <i>Science</i> Vol. 277 (1997): 494-99.
Tu 10/8 (Week 6)	Agriculture and Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group 2 Field Note 2 due Michael Pollan, “Our National Eating Disorder” and “The Plant: Corn’s Conquest,” Introduction and Chapter 1 in <i>Omnivore’s Dilemma</i> (2006) Jonathan Safran Foer, “Words/Meaning” in <i>Eating Animals</i> (2009) Vandana Shiva, “Golden Rice and Neem: Biopatents and the Appropriation of Women’s Environmental Knowledge,” <i>Women’s Studies Quarterly</i> Vol. 29 Nos. 1-2 (2001): 12-23.
Th 10/10	Agriculture and Food	Jonathan Safran Foer virtual classroom visit, 3:50-4:25 PM (optional)
F 10/11		NO CLASS – MOUNTAIN DAY
Tu 10/15 (Week 7)		NO CLASS – READING PERIOD
F 10/18		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-class workshop: Op-Eds National Park Service, <i>Summary Guide for the Merced Wild and Scenic River Draft Comprehensive Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement</i> (2013) Norimitsu Onishi, “A Plan to Save Yosemite by Curbing Its Visitors,” <i>The New York Times</i> (July 28, 2013) Various Authors, “Room for Debate: Preserving vs. Enjoying Our National Parks,” <i>The New York Times</i> (August 1, 2013); accessible at http://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2013/08/01/is-yosemite-national-park-for-all-or-some
Tu 10/22 (Week 8)	Biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group 1 Field Note 3 due <i>Humans in the Landscape</i>, Chapters 5 & 9 David Quammen, sections 29-36 in <i>The Song of the Dodo</i> (1996) E.O. Wilson, “The Fundamental Unit,” Chapter 4 in <i>The Diversity of Life</i> (1992) <u>Recommended</u> Charles Darwin, “Natural Selection,” Chapter 4 in <i>On the Origin of Species</i> (1859) E.O. Wilson, “Nature’s Last Stand,” Chapter 3 in <i>The Future of Life</i> (2002) E.O. Wilson, “The Serpent,” in <i>Biophilia</i> (1984)

M-W-Sat this week: TBA		Mass MoCA Field Trips this week: 10/21, 10/23, 10/26
F 10/25	Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Op-Ed due • <i>Humans in the Landscape</i>, Chapter 7 • Naomi Oreskes, “The Scientific Consensus on Climate Change” in <i>Science</i> 306 (2004): 1686 • Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, “Climate Change 2007: Synthesis Report. Summary for Policymakers” (2007)
Tu 10/29 (Week 9)	Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group 2 Field Note 3 due • Elizabeth Kolbert, “Shishmaref, Alaska,” and “The Day After Kyoto,” Chapters 1 and 8 in <i>Field Notes From a Catastrophe: Man, Nature, and Climate Change</i> (2006) • Bill McKibben, “The End of Nature,” in <i>The End of Nature</i> (1989) • Bjorn Lomborg, Chapters 1 and 2 in <i>Cool It: The Skeptical Environmentalist’s Guide to Global Warming</i>
M-Tu-W this week: TBA		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Film Screening: <i>The Island President</i>
F 11/1		NO CLASS – MAKE-UP FOR MASS MOCA FIELD TRIP
Tu 11/5 (Week 10)	Population, Urbanization, and Global Environmental Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group 1 Field Note 4 due • <i>Humans in the Landscape</i>, Chapters 8 & 10 • Joel E. Cohen, “Water: A Case Study of Natural Constraints,” Chapter 14 in <i>How Many People Can the Earth Support?</i> (1995) <u>Recommended</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John P. Holdren and Paul R. Ehrlich, “Human Population and the Global Environment,” <i>American Scientist</i> Vol. 62 No. 3 (1974): 282-92.
Tu-W-Th this week: TBA		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Film Screening: <i>Taking Root: The Vision of Wangari Maathai and The Warriors of Qingang</i>
F 11/8	Population, Urbanization, and Global Environmental Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Op-Ed revision due • Robert Bullard, “Environmental Justice in the 21st Century” (2011) • Ramachandra Guha, “Radical American Environmentalism and Wilderness Preservation: A Third World Critique,” <i>Environmental Ethics</i> Vol. 11 (Spring 1989): 71-83.
Tu 11/12 (Week 11)	History of Environmentalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group 2 Field Note 4 due • <i>Humans in the Landscape</i>, Chapter 11 • Rachel Carson, selections from <i>Silent Spring</i> (1962) • Aldo Leopold, “Part III: The Upshot,” in <i>A Sand County Almanac</i> (1949) <u>Recommended</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barry Commoner, “Ecology and Social Action,” The Horace M.

		<p>Albright Lecture in Conservation at the University of California, Berkeley (1973)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lawrence Buell, “Toxic Discourse,” <i>Critical Inquiry</i> Vol. 24 No. 3 (1998): 639-665 • Ulrich Beck, “Living in the World Risk Society,” <i>Economy and Society</i> Vol. 35 No. 3 (August 2006): 329-45 • Terry Tempest Williams, “Whimbrels” and “The Clan of One-Breasted Women,” in <i>Refuge: An Unnatural History of Family and Place</i> (1991)
Tu-W-Th this week: TBA		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Film Screening: <i>The Cove</i>
F 11/15	Collective Action and Environmental Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Humans in the Landscape</i>, Chapter 12 • Christopher D. Stone, “Should Trees Have Standing?—Toward Legal Rights for Natural Objects” in <i>Southern California Law Review</i> 45 (1972): 450-501.
Tu 11/19 (Week 12)	Markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Humans in the Landscape</i>, Chapter 13 • Peter Barnes, “Selling the Sky” and “Who Owns the Sky?,” Chapters 3 and 4 in <i>Who Owns the Sky? Our Common Assets and the Future of Capitalism</i> (2001) • Mark Sagoff, “At the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima; or, Why political questions are not all economic,” Chapter 2 in <i>The Economy of the Earth</i> (1988)
M-Tu this week: TBA		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Film Screening: <i>Crude: The Real Price of Oil</i>
F 11/22		NO CLASS – WORK DAY FOR GROUP SIMULATION
Tu 11/26 (Week 13)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Simulation Presentations
F 11/29		NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY
Tu 12/3 (Week 14)	Affluence and Consumerism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Humans in the Landscape</i>, Chapters 14-15 • Jennifer Price, “Looking for Nature at the Mall: A Field Guide to the Nature Company” in <i>Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature</i> (1996) • Edward Abbey, “Polemic: Industrial Tourism and the National Parks” in <i>Desert Solitaire</i> (1968)
F 12/6	Affluence and Consumerism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lynn White, Jr. “The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis,” <i>Science</i> 155 (March 1967): 1203-7. • Carolyn Merchant, “Dominion Over Nature,” chapter 7 in <i>The Death of Nature</i> (1980) • “The Anthropocene: A Man-Made World,” <i>The Economist</i> (May 26, 2011)

General Course Information and Policies

Contact. I use email regularly to make announcements, clarify points from lecture, and draw your attention to events and news items. You are expected to check your email daily. Email is also an excellent way to get in touch with me, and during normal business hours I will try to respond as quickly as possible. If you want detailed advice or need to discuss a complicated and/or sensitive matter, it is best to set up a meeting.

Late Work. Late work will lose one-third of a letter grade for each day of lateness. After four days, late work will not receive credit. Extensions will only be granted under exceptional circumstances (work for other courses and athletic events do not count), and they must be negotiated at least four days in advance of the due date.

Honor Code. Although I encourage you to share ideas, strategies, and resources with your classmates, it is vital, on both moral and legal grounds, that you be graded on your work and your work alone. Williams takes charges of cheating and plagiarism very seriously, and either can result in your dismissal. Cheating is taking advantage of the work of others. Plagiarism is representing the work of others as your own without giving appropriate credit. All students are expected to abide by the College Honor Code. If you are uncertain how the Honor Code applies to your work in this course—or if you are unsure how to distinguish between legitimate collaboration with your colleagues and academic dishonesty—please ask me. More information on the Honor Code can be found here: <http://sites.williams.edu/honor-system/>

Classroom conduct. Laptops are not allowed in class except under special circumstances (come talk to me at the beginning of the semester if you have concerns about this). Please remember to turn off your cell phone before class. If you text during class, I will ask you to leave. Drinks are allowed in class, food is not.

Students with Disabilities. Students with disabilities who may need disability-related accommodations for this course are encouraged to contact the Dean's Office as soon as possible so that the proper arrangements can be made.

Research and Writing Resources.

Rebecca Ohm is the library liaison for Environmental Studies and is also available to provide guidance; you will have the opportunity to meet her when you attend the library skills workshop. She can be reached at Rebecca.Ohm@williams.edu or 413-597-4321.

Our TA for the course is Miguel Mendez, and he can serve as a sort of research and writing mentor for you over the course of the semester.

The Writing Workshop (<http://writing-programs.williams.edu/writing-workshop/>) is a peer writing assistance program. Drop in sessions are located in Paresky 207. They can help you at all stages of the writing process, from topic design to proofreading. You can also schedule hour-long appointments through the online scheduler for tutoring at Sawyer and Schow. Visit the program website for more information and to sign up for appointments. The Writing Workshop also runs a Writing Partners Program, which provides a recurring tutoring partnership. For more information, see <http://writing-programs.williams.edu/writing-workshop/writing-partners-program/>

For more general advice on the mechanics of good writing, see:

Strunk, William, and E. B White. 2000. *The Elements of Style*. 4th ed. New York: Longman.

Turabian, Kate L. *Student's Guide to Writing College Papers*. 4th ed. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2010.

For equally useful advice on the mechanics of good research, see:

Booth, Wayne C, Gregory G Colomb, and Joseph M Williams. *The Craft of Research*. 3rd ed. Chicago guides to writing, editing, and publishing. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008.

Grading Rubric

A. AN “A” PAPER COMMANDS ATTENTION because of its insight (i.e., its original, provocative ideas), its mature style (i.e., its smooth, effective use of language), and its logical development (i.e. its orderly and convincing argument and structure). It must be particularly strong in both content (ideas) and form (writing and structure). It must contain few if any notable errors of grammar or style. An “A” paper is by definition exceptional. Hence it will:

- respond to the assignment in a cogent, thoughtful, and creative way
- exhibit a clear and logical organizational structure
- include a strong and clearly identifiable thesis statement
- support all claims with telling details and compelling evidence
- provide adequate logical discussion and explanation of its claims
- create a unique personal voice, choose words effectively, and vary sentences aptly
- demonstrate mastery of the grammar and usage conventions of standard English

B. A “B” PAPER IS EXTREMELY COMPETENT. It fulfills the basic requirements of the assignment. It may have very good ideas but exhibit problems with language usage or argumentative structure. Or it may be very well-written but contain a somewhat predictable or unconvincing argument. Or it may have a very good argument and smooth writing, but fail to address the assignment or meet specific requirements. Most often, it simply contains good, but not excellent, ideas and writing. A paper of the last sort would:

- have a clear thesis which responds intelligently to the assignment
- organize appropriate details in coherent paragraphs and provide a sense of orderly progress between ideas
- provide logical explanations of and adequate support for its claims
- use words precisely and vary sentence structure enough to read smoothly
- use competently the conventions of written English (i.e., contain few, if any, errors in sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, or usage)

C. A “C” PAPER IS SATISFACTORY, SOMETIMES marginally so. It usually has at least some major flaws or inadequacies in both its content (i.e., the ideas being expressed) and the expression of that content (i.e., the writing). Such a paper might:

- have a thesis which responds adequately, but predictably, to the topic

- present a well-written, thorough argument, but one which does not go much beyond the ideas presented in lecture, section, and/or the secondary reading
- show a clear sense of organization but also some weakness in transitions and in paragraph structure and development
- not provide enough evidence and/or logical discussion to prove its points or use imprecise vocabulary and/or clichéd language
- include “dead weight” material: overly general introductions and/or conclusions, excessive and/or non-productive use of description, or restatements of class material
- be marked by redundancy or repetition
- contain a host of minor errors in mechanics and usage (e.g. comma splices) and perhaps one or two more distracting errors in sentence structure (e.g. , subject-verb agreement, incomplete or fragmentary sentences)

D. A “D” PAPER USUALLY LACKS COHERENCE AND DEVELOPMENT AND/OR DISPLAYS SERIOUS WRITING PROBLEMS. It is usually unsatisfactory in one or more of the following ways:

- responds ineffectively to the essay topic. Although a major idea may be clearly stated, the paper usually has inadequately developed or illogically sequenced paragraphs which lack transitions between ideas (and which fail to persuade)
- does not have a clearly identifiable thesis
- fails to provide adequate logical discussion and/or evidence to make its argument persuasive, or perhaps even intelligible
- uses vocabulary awkwardly or incorrectly
- seldom varies sentences, or it contains a number of awkward phrases and/or sentence fragments (which may even prevent the communication of ideas) marked by repetition of words and ideas, by wordiness, and/or by monotony
- makes enough errors in usage and sentence structure—errors in agreement, pronoun reference, sentence punctuation, and modifier placement—to cause the reader serious distraction

E. AN “F” PAPER IS NOT ACCEPTABLE. It shows serious weaknesses, often of several kinds. It may present marginal content, but it may also:

- distort the topic or fail to respond to it altogether
- contain plagiarized material (material taken from another author without proper citation in the form of footnotes)
- fail to provide adequate evidence, in the form of detailed analysis of the work under discussion, for its major claims
- neglect to explain the logic behind its argument
- lack coherent organization and development with specific details
- employ very basic vocabulary or misuse words
- make no attempt to vary sentences
- contain numerous distracting mechanical errors

N.B. This syllabus is subject to change as deemed necessary by the instructor and in consultation with students.