**Spanish/Environmental Studies**

**Undergraduate Seminar 445**

**“Culture, Economy, and the Environment in the Hispanic World**”

(3 credits)

**Class Description:**

This advanced undergraduate course investigates how economy and culture work together, consuming and/or restoring their environments in divergent scenarios within the Hispanic world. Applying perspectives from environmental humanities, we reexamine conventional economic discourses with stories “from below,” featuring human and non-human experiences resulting from existing cultural and economic arrangements. From scenarios of the expansion of a neoliberal global economy, we move to those of resistance, and new social movements that seek to live by better respecting their local environments. Focusing on chosen localities in the Hispanic world, we discuss some of the most significant aspects of culture, economy, and environment in global scenarios: (1) cultures of food production and consumption, biotechnology, and its discontents; (2) cultures and economies of time and work; (3) interspecies relations; (4) cultures of energy production.

**Learning outcomes:**

1) Finding out how culture, economy, and environment are interconnected in the Hispanic world.

2) Becoming critically aware of various socio-environmental conflicts in Latin America.

3) Getting to know and understanding various emerging socio-economic visions aimed at improving human relationships with the environment in the Hispanic World.

4) Reflecting on how the cultural and socio-environmental issues discussed in class are present in our own backyard in the US, Wisconsin, and Madison**.**

**Components of the Class and of the Final Grade:**

I. 20 Assignments (3 points each): Responses or Discussion entries (including presentations in groups except the Alternative Project) 60%

II. Project “Alternatives” in Groups 20%

III. Participation 20%

**Syllabus FALL 2021**

(All the readings, films and interviews are available in Canvas)

Changes may be introduced if they result in benefit of the learning process

+ this is not an obligatory reading/video

**PARTE I: (INTRODUCCION) ANTROPOCENO EN LOS TIEMPOS DEL COVID**

**September**

**8 Introducciones.**

**13 COVID y la Crisis Ambiental.**

Medardo Ávila Vazquez [“Coronavirus, Y después?”](https://www.thetricontinental.org/es/ba-research/fp-avilavazquez/?fbclid=IwAR2VOD1VQv9DjNXiG4Y3EPyvDRn0Jjjmvp0_o4NSMPwSvKKiGC2TFeON0eQ)

Boaventura de Sousa Santos [“El virus: todo lo que es sólido se desvance en el aire.” *La cruel pedagogía del virus*](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/219494/files?preview=14110353)*.* Pag. 18-27 +79-85

+ [“Brutes: Meditation on the Myth of Voiceless”](https://orionmagazine.org/article/brutes/) Amitav Ghosh

**Assignment 1:** Cómo interpretan la pandemia, el filósofo, Santos, el médico, Ávila Vazquez, y … si has tenido tiempo de leerlo Amitav Ghosh? Estás de acuerdo? Por qué o por qué no?

**15 Antropoceno.**

[*Before the Flood*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zbEnOYtsXHA)

Leonardo Di Caprio y el website <http://www.anthropocene.info/>

**Assignment 2:** Cuáles son los puntos de diálogo más interesantes entre la película [*Before the Flood*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p40r6LiFeYc) de Leonardo Di Caprio y el website <http://www.anthropocene.info/>?

(Alternative: Cuáles son los últimos descubrimientos sobre el cambio del clima que la película no cubre?)

[+ Confirmando: La corriente que regula el clima europeo se debilita.](https://www.tiempo.com/noticias/actualidad/corriente-oceanica-amoc-del-golfo-cambio-climatico.html)

**16 (**4:15-5:15pm) Lecture by Marina Silva about the challenges to preserve the Brazilian Amazon

<https://today.wisc.edu/events/view/162347> (**Focus on Brazil)**

**20 Lenguaje para el Antropoceno.**

Conceptos para el Antropoceno. Robert Macfarlane [“Generation Anthropocene”](https://www.theguardian.com/books/2016/apr/01/generation-anthropocene-altered-planet-for-ever)

**Assignment 3**: Make a list of 5 concepts connected to the Anthropocene that you did not know, and that appear in the article. Define them in one sentence each, and then choose one and discuss.

**22 Antropoceno, Capitaloceno, Wastoceno…**

[Raúl García Barrios](https://medioambiente.nexos.com.mx/author/raul-garcia-barrios/) y [Nancy Merary Jiménez Martínez](https://medioambiente.nexos.com.mx/author/nancy-merary-jimenez-martinez/) [“Antropoceno o Capitaloceno?”](https://medioambiente.nexos.com.mx/antropoceno-o-capitaloceno/)

Jason Moore. [“Anthropocene or Capitalocene?”](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/219494/files?preview=14113481)

**Discussion (Assignment 4):** Cómo debemos llamar nuestro tiempo? Antropoceno, Capitaloceno, o…..?

**Parte II. EL CHOQUE DE CULTURAS: CONFLICTOS AMBIENTALES EN AMERICA LATINA**

**27 *Qué les pasó a las abejas?*** Dir. Adriana Otero and Robin Canul (**Focus on Yucatán, México**) – link will be delivered on 23rd.

**Assignment 5:** Escribe una reseña de la película enfocándote tanto en el contenido como también en su forma.

**29 TBA**

**October**

**4** *El abrazo de la serpiente.* Dir. Ciro Guerra. **(Focus on the Amazonia)**

**Assignment 7:** Caracteriza la filosofía de los dos mundos culturales que chocan en la película distnguiendo entre las dos historias paralelas que se cuentan. Qué aprenden durante el viaje los exploradores blancos y los indígenas que colaboran con ellos?

**6.** **La cultura de la ciudad y la del bosque; Extracción del petróleo en el Perú.** *El choque de dos mundos.*  / [When Two Worlds Collide](https://dll.lss.wisc.edu/player/player.php?item_id=1829) Dir. Heidi Branderburg and Matthew Orzel.

**Assignement 8:** Cómo son los dos mundos que chocan en la película?

+Mitra Taj. [“Virus Exposes Weak Links in Peru’s success Story.”](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/12/world/americas/coronavirus-peru-inequality-corruption.html)

+[**Peru has a new president, its fifth in five years – who is Pedro Castillo?**](https://theconversation.com/peru-has-a-new-president-its-fifth-in-five-years-who-is-pedro-castillo-165157)*Conversation.*

+[*Pedro Castillo, Leftist Political Outsider, Wins Peru Presidency*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/19/world/americas/peru-election-pedro-castillo.html)*.* ***New York Times.***

[A tumultuous first week in office for Peru’s new president](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/8/7/a-tumultuous-first-week-in-office-for-peru-new-president) *al-Jjazeera.*

**11**. **Extracción del petróleo en Ecuador:** Oil. [*Crude*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BvrZRvgwBS8)(2009). Dir. Joe Berlinger

**Assignment 9:** Choose two characters from the film and write a criticism of their discourses and actions. If possible, these characters should belong to the opposite sides of the conflict.

**13** **Tecnología, ambiente y las culturas; Extracción del petróleo en Ecuador**.

Susana Sawyer [“Subterranean Techniques: Corporate Environmentalism, Oil Operation and the Social Injustice in the Ecuatorian Rain Forest.”](https://canvas.wisc.edu/files/3395920/download?download_frd=1)

**Assignment/Discussion 10:** Es la tecnología punta (cutting edge technology) una solución en el contexto de la destrucción y contaminación provocada por la explotación del petróleo? Básate en el artículo de Sawyer.

18 **Conflicto sobre el agua en Bolivia**. *También la lluvia* [*Even the rain*](https://dll.lss.wisc.edu/player/player.php?item_id=132). Dir. Icíar Bollaín.

**Assignment 11:** Cuáles son los paralelismos entre el pasado colonial y el presente neoliberal que aparece en la película. Por qué aparecen estos paralelismos?

20 [“Market reforms and water wars”](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/273730/files?preview=21521586) Erica Simmons.

**Assignment 12:** Cuáles son las relaciones entre la (des) regularización de los mercados y las protestas sociales en América Latina? Básate en el artículo de Simmons, pero investiga más sobre otros casos.

25 **Agua y Ciudadanía Medellín (Colombia)**. [*O comemos o pagamos*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UGQTLz_vFbY)Dir. Marcela López.

[“Struggling for Public, Reclaiming Citizenship: Every Day Practices of Access to Water in Medellín, Colombia”](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/91863/files?preview=3431583)

**Assignment 13 (in groups of 4 or 5):** Taking into consideration the strategies of the two localities discussed in the reading, and the general context of the economy of water in Medellín, suggest what should be the best policy applied in this situation. Write a 400-word analysis and policy plan and be prepared to present it in class.

**27** **La soja transgénica en Argentina.**

Medardo Avila Vázquez [“Agricultura tóxica y pueblos fumigados.”](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/219494/files?preview=14140710)

[*Soja asesina*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1XTKt6MnVb8&t=820s)*.*

Gustavo Gropocopatel [“Futuro y tecnología en el campo”](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YbyTTag1HMU)

**Assignment 14:** Cuáles son los dos puntos de vista sobre el papel de soja?

**+** Kata Beilin and Sainath Suryanarayanan [“War between Amaranth and Soy”](https://read.dukeupress.edu/environmental-humanities/article/9/2/204/133011/The-War-between-Amaranth-and-SoyInterspecies)

November

1 **La soja transgénica en Paraguay.** [*Rising Resistance*](https://dll.lss.wisc.edu/player/player.php?item_id=1299)*.* Dir. David Bernet and Bettina Borgfeld.

**Assignment 15 (in groups of 4 or 5)**: Research the history of land disputes in Paraguay in the twentieth century, and based on what you find out, write a 400-word-long plan of how to solve the conflict that you saw in the film. Be prepared to discuss your plan in class.

3 **Los debates mexicanos sobre el maiz**. [*Sunú*](https://dll.lss.wisc.edu/player/player.php?item_id=1354)*.* Dir. Teresa Camou.

**Assignment 16 /Discussion:** Research the history of the debates about the GM corn in **Mexico** (since 1996). Connect your research to the arguments presented in the film and to the answers of your classmates. Es una buena idea introducir el máiz transgénico en México? Por qué sí o no?

8. **La importancia de los mapas.** Paul Voosen.

[“The Oaxaca Incident”](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/219494/files?preview=14115106) **(Focus on Oaxaca, Mexico)**

Peter Canby [“Retreat to subsistence.”](https://www.thenation.com/article/retreat-subsistence/)

**Assignment 17: Analyze the conflict between Zapotecan activists and American geographers**.

+ Cyril Michalejo and Ramor Ryan [“US Millitary Funding Project in Oaxaca](http://upsidedownworld.org/archives/mexico/us-military-funded-mapping-project-in-oaxaca-university-geographers-used-to-gather-intelligence/)

**10 La historia colonial y el presente del azúcar en Belize.** Amy Moran-Thomas. Intro. [*Travelling with sugar.*](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/219494/files?preview=14140727)

**Assignment 18:** Based on the reading and the lecture, explain what “sugar” means in Belize.

15 **Las maquilas**.[*Maquilópolis*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WUQgFzkE3i0)*.* (2006)Dir. Vicki Funari and Sergio de la Torre. **(Focus on the US/Mexico border)**

**Assignment 19 (in groups of 4 or 5):** Research the origin, rationale, and operations of sweatshops in Latin America. Based on the film and your research, explain what is wrong?

17 **Trabajo en los escenarios distópicos.** [*Sleep Dealer.*](https://dll.lss.wisc.edu/player/player.php?item_id=277)(2008) Dir. Alex Rivera. **(Focus on the US/Mexico border)**

**Assignment 20: Cuál es la visión del trabajo y de la tecnología en la película?**

**PART III: ALTERNATIVAS**

There are no assignments/responses in this part.

**Group project for the Part III: “Anthropocene as an environmental conflict”**

In groups of 4, write a 1000-word essay about how to improve culture, economy, and environment of the Anthropocene to build a more sustainable and less conflicted world. Draw mainly on the readings from Part III of this class, but include your own research on the topics covered and refer as needed to the previous two parts of the semester. Choose the ideas, strategies, and visions that you as a group want to adopt after discussing them first in an online group meeting. Make it a world where diverse societies and their environments flourish together peacefully to the extent possible. Be serious and realistic, yet visionary and courageous. After uploading your essay, read the essays submitted by other groups. During the last class we will discuss all the projects. This group project is worth 20% of your grade. All members of each group will receive the same grade. Please share the workload fairly. Due Dec 10th at 5pm.

22 **Cultura y economía en el Antropoceno.** Miguel Brieva. [*Memorias de la tierra*](https://canvas.wisc.edu/files/folder/courses_91863/?preview=3395913)*.*

**Pregunta de reflexión:** Cuál es la visión del Antropoceno que surge de esas viñetas? Escoge una viñeta e interprétala en 350 palabras. Post on Canvas. Optionally, upload a 1-2-minute video with your reflection recorded.

29 **La ciencia indígena.**

[Indigenous Knowledge and Western Science](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gJSJ28eEUjI): Dr. Leroy Little Bear Talk (15 min)

+[“Indigenous Science: Proven, Practical and Timeless”](https://pressbooks.bccampus.ca/knowinghome/chapter/chapter-6/)

**Pregunta de reflexion:** Qué puede nuestra ciencia y cultura aprender de la cultura yconocimiento/ciencia indígena?

**December**

1 **Ecofeminismo y la economía feminista.**

Yayo Herrero “Miradas ecofeministas”

**Pregunta de reflexión:** Cómo tendrían que cambiar los roles y los modelos relacionados con el género en nuestra sociedad para una economía más sostenible y respetuosa del ambiente?

**+** Amaia Pérez Orozco.[*Subversión feminista*](https://canvas.wisc.edu/files/folder/courses_219494/?preview=14110402)

6 **Ecopedagogía**

Luis Iñaki Prádanos [“Pedagogy of Degrowth”](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/219494/files?preview=14115616)

**Pregunta de reflexion:** De qué diferentes maneras nuestra educación universitaria **no** contribuye a la superación de la crisis según Prádanos?

+ [Glosario ecopedagógico](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1vBFql2_rizFwdF62gODHHGcky6tmsXvoEbM7VVDvLpk/edit?usp=sharing)

+ Daley and Farley [*Ecological Economics.*](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/219494/files?preview=14110414)

8 **Economía de tiempo.**

[Jorge Riechmann. "Tiempo para la vida"](https://canvas.wisc.edu/files/3395915/download?download_frd=1)

+ [Meyerhoff and Johnson. “Time and University.”](https://canvas.wisc.edu/files/folder/courses_219494/?preview=14140468)

+ [Riyad Shahjahan “Being Lazy”](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/91863/files?preview=3395918)

+ [Suzie O’Brian “Desert walk”](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/91863/files?preview=3395926)

**Pregunta de reflexion:** Cómo debería cambiar nuestra economía de tiempo para ser más saludable y sostenible?

Proyecto *Alternativas* Due Dec. 10 at 5pm

13 **Discussion of group presentations**.