Syllabus
EVR 4415 RVC Population and Environment Issues
Spring 2019

Instructor: Jim Riach
Phone: (305) 348-1209
Office: AHC5 366 (MMC)
Office Hours: MWF 1-2 PM; TR 12-1PM or By Appointment
Contact: Please use Canvas messages.

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE
A study of evolutionary relationships between humans and their environment and subsequent impacts on human populations across time. Students are introduced to recent patterns of human population dynamics, their consequences to ecological and global environmental systems, and subsequent uneven effects on the quality of life of diverse populations. To better understand how we arrived at this current status, students will study the origins of the human species and investigate how traits specific to humans enabled their eventual increased abundance and distribution throughout the planet. Students will also study how key historical events led to major demographic transitions across time. Case studies of ancient societies that either collapsed or continue to thrive will be analyzed to better understand the complexity of factors mitigating the relationships between population, environment, and well-being. Finally, in light of the projections of future changes in population growth and environmental conditions, students study recent approaches to developing a more sustainable and equitable quality of life for present and future generations around the world.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
After successfully completing this course, students will be able to:
- Identify and explain current concerns regarding human population dynamics and environmental change;
- Define basic concepts in demography and human evolutionary theories;
- Explain the relationship between the environment and key biological, cognitive, and socio-cultural evolutionary developments among humans;
- Explain how multiple factors influence the effects of human population size on the environment;
- Explain how multiple environmental factors affect human population size and quality of life; and
- Identify social, cultural, ecological, and technological alternatives for reducing the threats of human population growth and environmental degradation.
POLICIES

Please review the FIU’s Policies webpage. The policies webpage contains essential information regarding guidelines relevant to all courses at FIU, as well as additional information about acceptable netiquette for online courses.

Language Policy
You will use appropriate language in your e-mail messages, online postings, and other digital communications. You will not use profanity, vulgarities, or any other inappropriate language as determined by school administrators. *Cyberbullying will not be tolerated. You may use e-mail and other means of communication responsibly. You will not send or post harse or harassing mail, make discriminatory or derogatory remarks about others, or engage in bullying, harassment, or other antisocial behaviors while in school or out of school.
*Cyberbullying is commonly defined as the use of information and communication technologies to support repeated and deliberate hostile behavior intended to harm others. You can read more about the laws against cyberbullying in the 2014 Florida Statutes.

Policy on late assignments:
Students are expected to participate in the online classes and submit their assignment by the stated deadlines.

For Key Concept Questions and Synthesis Report:
Students will be deducted 10% of their grade for every day their Key Concept Question or Synthesis Report assignment is turned in late. Any student who fails to submit a Key Concept Question or Synthesis Report assignment or submits it more than 3 days late, will receive a zero for the assignment.

For Group Discussions:
Students will be deducted 25% of their grade for any component of the discussion assignment for every day it is late. Failure to post to any of the components within three days past the deadline assigned for the discussion component will result in the student receiving a zero for that component of the discussion.

For Essays:
Students will be deducted 25% of their grade for every day their Essay assignment is turned in late. Any student who fails to submit a Essay assignment or submits it more than 3 days late, will receive a zero for the assignment.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT STATEMENT

Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellent teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of ideas and community service. All students should respect the right of others to have an equitable opportunity to learn and honestly to demonstrate the quality of their learning. Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to a standard of academic conduct, which demonstrates respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of the University. All students are deemed by the University to understand that if they are found responsible for academic
misconduct, they will be subject to the Academic Misconduct procedures and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Handbook.

Academic Misconduct includes: **Cheating** – The unauthorized use of books, notes, aids, electronic sources; or assistance from another person with respect to examinations, course assignments, field service reports, class recitations; or the unauthorized possession of examination papers or course materials, whether originally authorized or not. **Plagiarism** – The use and appropriation of another’s work without any indication of the source and the representation of such work as the student’s own. Any student who fails to give credit for ideas, expressions or materials taken from another source, including internet sources, is responsible for plagiarism.

Learn more about the academic integrity policies and procedures that can help you prepare for a successful semester.

**COURSE PREREQUISITES**
There are no prerequisites for this course.

**TEXTBOOK**
The Dominant Animal: Human Evolution and the Environment
Paul R. Ehrlich, Anne H. Ehrlich
Island Press; 2nd Edition; 2009
ISBN-10: 1597260975
You may purchase your textbook online at the FIU Bookstore.

**EXPECTATIONS OF THIS COURSE**
This is an online course, which means most (if not all) of the course work will be conducted online. Expectations for performance in an online course are the same for a traditional course. In fact, online courses require a degree of self-motivation, self-discipline, and technology skills which can make these courses more demanding for some students.

**Students are expected to:**
- Review the how to get started information located in the course content;
- Introduce yourself to the class during the first week by posting a self-introduction in the appropriate discussion forum;
- Interact online with instructor(s) and peers;
- Review and follow the course calendar; and
- Submit assignments by the corresponding deadline.

**READINGS AND CORRESPONDING CANVAS CONTENT**
All assigned readings will come from the textbook or additional readings posted in Canvas. All assigned readings are organized into 4-week modules. Students are expected to complete all of
these readings in order to answer Key Concept Questions, contribute to discussion assignments, and complete essay assignments. PowerPoint slideshows and links of online video or other content are included in the modules to complement the readings.

**DISCUSSION FORUMS**

Keep in mind that your discussion forum postings will likely be seen by other members of the course. Care should be taken when determining what to post. Students will participate in two distinct discussion assignments during the semester. The professor will provide students with instructions on how to complete the assignments, including deadlines for posting and requirements regarding the information to post and the types of references that are acceptable to be used in the discussion. All discussions include three separate components with their own deadlines and their own grades. The components include original comments AND two sets of replies to each other's comments. Participation in the group discussions will be monitored and students will receive a grade for their participation within a few days following the conclusion of the deadline for the discussion assignment based on the quality, quantity, and originality of the content of their responses. Given the public forum of these discussions, please make sure to observe proper net etiquette and be respectful of others. Do not post your response in an attached file, instead respond to what other people have posted.

**ASSIGNMENTS**

**Key Concept Questions:**
All students are required to complete each of the four sets of objective questions that correspond to the reading material for each of the four modules covered in the course. The questions deal with definition and explanation of key concepts covered in the readings and help to build the foundation upon which discussion questions will be addressed or debated. The answers to the questions will be submitted using the Turnitin dropbox in Canvas.

- **Key Concepts Questions 1:** Due by Fri., Jan 25 at 11:55pm
- **Key Concepts Questions 2:** Due by Sat., Feb. 16 at 11:55pm
- **Key Concepts Questions 3:** Due by Sat., March 9 at 11:55pm
- **Key Concepts Questions 4:** Due by Sat., April 6 at 11:55pm

**Synthesis Reports:**
All students will be required to submit a synthesis report, synthesizing material from all the lessons learned in the semester to the Turnitin dropbox in Canvas. The instructor will provide students with a set of questions or issues that will need to be addressed in the reports. The instructor will provide instructions regarding the format, number of words, and references to be used in completing the reports.

- **Final Synthesis Report:** due by Wed., April 24 at 11:55pm

**Group Discussions:**
All students will be randomly placed into similarly sized groups for the duration of the course. Group discussions and Essays will be conducted as group activities. Each student will receive a grade for these activities based on their individual contribution to the group activity.
Essays:
All students will be required to two essays during the course. The professor will provide students with instructions regarding the content that needs to be included in the essay assignments that will be completed in the course.

EXTRA CREDIT
In order to encourage civic involvement in efforts to learn about or address human-environment issues, extra credit will be offered to students who participate in selected volunteer activities during the semester. The list of possible extra credit volunteer activities will be posted in a folder entitled "Extra Credit Opportunities" located on the home page of this course. Students can earn a maximum of 5 points (half a letter grade) towards their final grade by demonstrating proof of having participated in the volunteer activity and submitting a 750-word paper describing the activities involved and how they contributed to a better appreciation of the subject matter of the course. Students can contact the professor with alternative ideas for volunteering activities to request approval for extra credit. Only those activities approved by the professor will count as extra credit. All extra reports about the extra credit activities must be submitted to the proper assignment link by Sat., April 27 at 11:55pm.

GRADING

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<th>COURSE REQUIREMENTS</th>
<th>NUMBER OF ITEMS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Key Concepts Questions</td>
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<td>Group Discussions</td>
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<td>Essays</td>
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<td>87 – 89</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77 - 79</td>
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GRADING
## COURSE CALENDAR

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<tr>
<th>MODULES</th>
<th>WEEKLY TASKS</th>
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| **MODULE 1**  
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HUMAN POPULATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT: POPULATION ECOLOGY AND EVOLUTION | **WEEK 1: JAN 7 - 12**  
- Read the syllabus  
- Review module 1 readings and PowerPoints  
- Post your introduction in the discussion forum entitled "Student Introductions" |
| **Readings:**  
- *The Tragic Story of Human Success*  
- *The Scale of Our Presence*  
- *Population Ecology*  
- *Human Population*  
- Ehrlich and Ehrlich: Prologue-Ch. 2; Chs. 4-5 | **WEEK 2: JAN 14 - 19**  
- Work on Key Concepts Questions 1 - Due by Fri., Jan 25 at 11:55 pm |
| **Corresponding Canvas Content:**  
- Population and Environment  
- Population Ecology  
- Evolutionary Theories  
- Human/Cultural Evolution | **WEEK 3: JAN 21 - 26**  
*MONDAY, JANUARY 21*  
MLK HOLIDAY - NO CLASSES  
- Submit Key Concepts Questions 1 - Due by Fri., Jan 25 at 11:55 pm |
| **WEEK 4: JAN 28 - FEB 2**  
- Complete Discussion 1 - Available from Mon., Jan 28  
- Initial post due by Mon., Jan 28 at 11:55 pm  
- Initial replies due by Thurs., Jan 31 at 11:55 pm  
- Final replies due by Sat., Feb 2 at 11:55 pm |
### MODULE 2
**HUMAN TRAITS THAT AFFECT POPULATION AND ENVIRONMENT**

**Readings:**
- Waal, Franz B.M. - *Apes in the Family, Sex, Violence, Kindness*
- Edward O. Wilson - *Biophilia and the Conservation Ethic*

**Corresponding Canvas Content:**
- Compared Relatives
- Sex
- Violence

### WEEK 5: FEB 4 - 9
- Review module readings and PowerPoints

### WEEK 6: FEB 11 - 16
- Complete Key Concepts Questions 2 - Due by Sat., Feb. 16 at 11:55 pm

### WEEK 7: FEB 18 - 23
- Start Essay 1 - Due by Sat., March 2 at 11:55 pm

### WEEK 8: FEB 25 - MARCH 2
- Finish Essay 1 - Due by Sat., March 2 at 11:55 pm

### MODULE 3
**FORCES THAT SHAPED HUMAN'S EVOLUTIONARY AND HISTORICAL PAST**

**Readings:**
- Ehrlich, Paul and Anne H. Ehrlich - Chs 6-8

**Corresponding Canvas Content:**
- Evolutionary and Historical Past

### WEEK 9: MARCH 4 - 9
- Review module readings and PowerPoints
- Complete Key Concepts Questions 3 - Due by Sat., March 9 at 11:55pm
- Assign Final Synthesis Report due by Wed., April 24 at 11:55 pm

### WEEK 10: MARCH 11 - 16
**SPRING BREAK - NO NEW MATERIAL**

### WEEK 11: MARCH 18 - 23
- Start Essay 2 - Due by Sat., March 30 at 11:55 pm

**MONDAY, MARCH 18**
**LAST DAY TO DROP COURSE WITH DR/WI GRADE**

### WEEK 12: MARCH 25 - 30
- Finish Essay 2 - Due by Sat., Sat., March 30 at 11:55 pm
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<tr>
<th>MODULE 4</th>
<th>WEEK 13: APRIL 1 - 6</th>
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<tr>
<td>FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE COLLAPSE AND THE SUSTAINABILITY OF HUMAN SOCIETIES</td>
<td>Review module readings and PowerPoints</td>
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<td>Readings:</td>
<td>Complete Key Concepts Questions 4 - Due by Sat., April 6 at 11:55 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Diamond, Jared - <em>Twilight at Easter</em></td>
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<td>- Hunt, Terry – <em>Rethinking the Fall of Easter Island</em></td>
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<td>- Diamond, Jared - <em>Opposite Paths to Success</em></td>
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<td>- Sponsel and Sponsel - <em>Illuminating Darkness: The Monk-Cave-Bat-Ecosystem Complex in Thailand</em></td>
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<td>- Brown, Lester R. – <em>Designing Cities for People</em></td>
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<td>Corresponding Canvas Content:</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Easter Island Video</td>
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<td>- What Makes a Success Story</td>
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<td>Complete Discussion 2 - Available from Mon., April 8</td>
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<td>Initial post due by Mon., April 8 at 11:55 pm</td>
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<td>Initial replies due by Thurs., April 11 at 11:55 PM</td>
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<td>Final replies due by Sat., April 13 at 11:55 pm</td>
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<th>WEEK 15: APRIL 15 - 19</th>
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<th>WEEK 16: APRIL 22 - 27</th>
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<td>Final Synthesis Report due by Wed., April 24 at 11:55 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Any reports from extra credit volunteering activities must be submitted by Sat., April 27 at 11:55 pm</td>
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