

# HIST 4350: American Environmental History

Fall 2020

Online/Virtual

Prof. Matt Stith; CAS 127 (Office); [mstith@uttyler.edu](mailto:mstith@uttyler.edu)

Office Hours: In-Person --or-- Canvas Chat: TT 10:50a–11:50a; M 4:30-5:30p; and by appointment.

## Course Description:

This course examines the relationship between people and nature in America from the pre-colonial era to the present. It explores how the natural and built environment shaped American history with an emphasis on the relationships between environmental, social, and cultural change.

## Content Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate a strong understanding of the causes, course, and consequences of the American history through an environmental lens.
2. Think critically and objectively about environmental history its place in the course of American history.
3. Develop analytical skills through thinking, speaking, and writing about American history generally and the environmental history specifically.

## Important Note:

I encourage you to meet with me regularly to discuss or clarify lecture, discussion, or reading—or to talk about history in general. My job (and satisfaction) is as much to work with students on an individual basis as it is to lecture and facilitate discussion. Please keep this in mind throughout the semester.

## Required Reading:

1. Elizabeth A. Fenn, *Pox Americana: The Great Smallpox Epidemic of 1775-82* (New York: Hill & Wang, 2001)
2. Alfred W. Crosby, *America's Forgotten Pandemic: The Influenza of 1918*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003)
3. Eric Jay Dolin, *Leviathan: The History of Whaling in America* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2007)
4. Dan Flores, *Coyote America: A Natural and Supernatural History* (New York: Basic Books, 2016)

## Exams (2x100 pts):

There will be two exams, including the final, worth 100 points each. The final is *not* comprehensive. The exams will consist of two essays worth equal amounts. The first essay will cover a topic from class lecture/discussion. I will give you a list of potential topics a week in advance, and I will craft an essay question on only one of those topics for the exam. The second essay will relate directly to the readings, and you will have a week to write it.

## Research Presentation (20):

Students will record an 8-10 minute presentation focused on your research paper, and upload the link to Canvas. Detailed instructions will be distributed early in the semester.

## Research Paper (100 pts):

Students will write an 8-10 page research paper on some aspect of American Environmental History. The paper *must* be based on primary source material. It is worth 100 points. Detailed instructions will be distributed early in the semester.

## Attendance and Participation:

This is an upper-level university course. Attendance (watching video lectures, recorded student presentations, etc.) and participation are mandatory.

## Classroom Conduct:

Be nice.

## Make-up Policy:

I'll work with you

**Academic Honesty:**

Cheating of any kind, including plagiarism, will result in immediate failure of the class and possibly further sanctions from the University of Texas at Tyler. Plagiarism, put simply, is using another's work as your own without proper citation or usage. This includes everything from copying and pasting from the Internet to failing to cite an idea from another source that you put in your own words. I strongly recommend reviewing the university policy for cheating and academic dishonesty at the following website: <http://www.uttyler.edu/judicialaffairs/>

**Point Breakdown:**

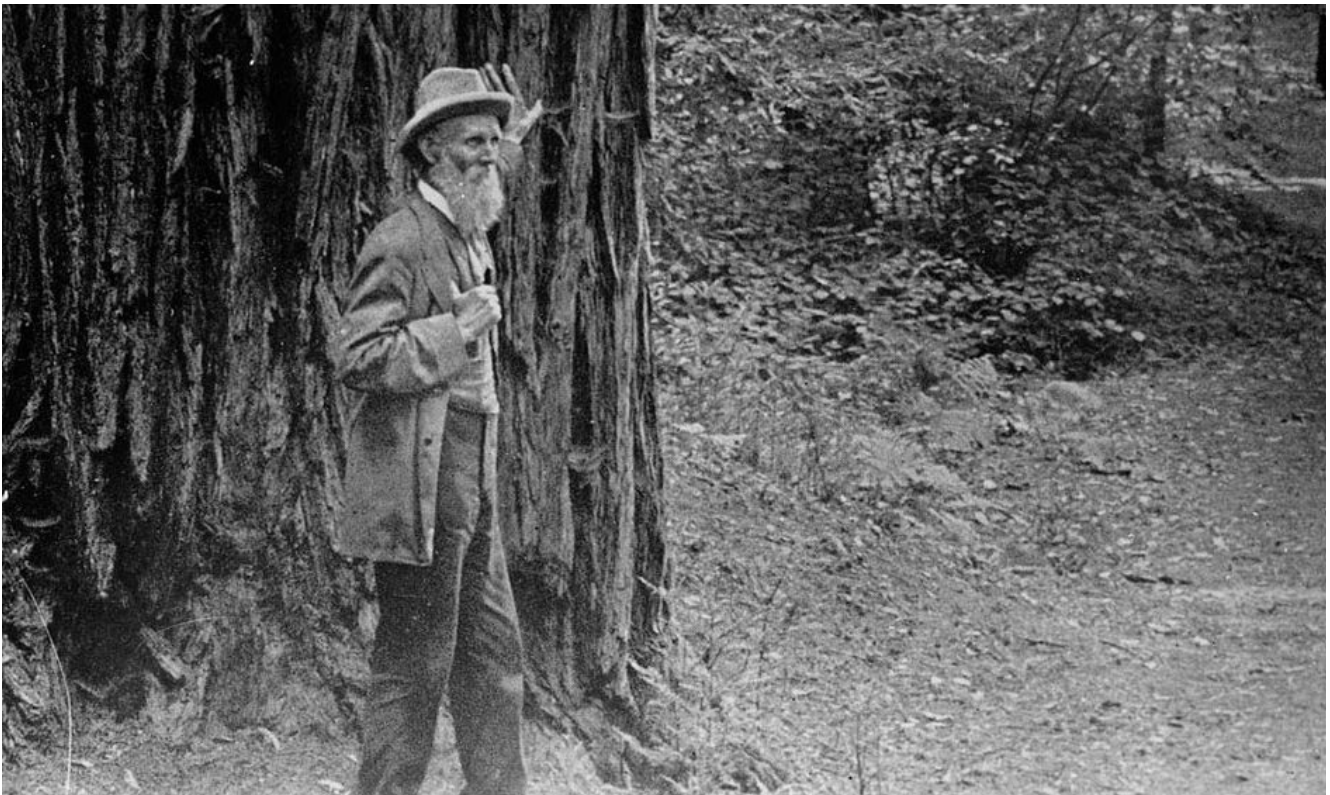
Exam I: 100 pts  
 Exam II: 100 pts  
 Presentation: 20 pts  
Final Paper: 100 pts  
 Total: 320 pts

**Grade Scale**

A = 320-288 pts  
 B = 287-256 pts  
 C = 255-224 pts  
 D = 223-191 pts  
 F = 191-000 pts

**Course Schedule<sup>1</sup>**

- Part I: American Environmental History, ~13,000 BCE-1865 CE (Monday, August 24-Friday, October 9)
  - o Reading: Fenn, *Pox Americana* & Crosby, *America's Forgotten Pandemic*
  - o Exam I: Friday, October 9
- Part II: American Environmental History, 1865-Present (Monday, October 12-Friday, December 4)
  - o Reading: Dolin, *Leviathan* & Flores, *Coyote America*
  - o Exam II: Friday, December 4
- Final Research Paper Due: 11:59pm, Thursday, Dec. 10



<sup>1</sup> I will distribute detailed outlines for each topic we cover throughout the semester.

## UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### UT Tyler Honor Code

Every member of the UT Tyler community joins together to embrace: Honor and integrity that will not allow me to lie, cheat, or steal, nor to accept the actions of those who do.

### Students Rights and Responsibilities

To know and understand the policies that affect your rights and responsibilities as a student at UT Tyler, please follow this link: <http://www.uttyler.edu/wellness/rightsresponsibilities.php>

### Campus Carry

We respect the right and privacy of students 21 and over who are duly licensed to carry concealed weapons in this class. License holders are expected to behave responsibly and keep a handgun secure and concealed. More information is available at <http://www.uttyler.edu/about/campus-carry/index.php>

### UT Tyler a Tobacco-Free University

All forms of tobacco will not be permitted on the UT Tyler main campus, branch campuses, and any property owned by UT Tyler. This applies to all members of the University community, including students, faculty, staff, University affiliates, contractors, and visitors. Forms of tobacco not permitted include cigarettes, cigars, pipes, water pipes (hookah), bidis, kreteks, electronic cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chewing tobacco, and all other tobacco products.

There are several cessation programs available to students looking to quit smoking, including counseling, quitlines, and group support. For more information on cessation programs please visit [www.uttyler.edu/tobacco-free](http://www.uttyler.edu/tobacco-free).

### Grade Replacement/Forgiveness and Census Date Policies

Students repeating a course for grade forgiveness (grade replacement) must file a Grade Replacement Contract with the Enrollment Services Center (ADM 230) on or before the Census Date of the semester in which the course will be repeated. (For Fall, the Census Date is Sept. 12.) Grade Replacement Contracts are available in the Enrollment Services Center or at <http://www.uttyler.edu/registrar>. Each semester's Census Date can be found on the Contract itself, on the Academic Calendar, or in the information pamphlets published each semester by the Office of the Registrar.

Failure to file a Grade Replacement Contract will result in both the original and repeated grade being used to calculate your overall grade point average. Undergraduates are eligible to exercise grade replacement for only three course repeats during their career at UT Tyler; graduates are eligible for two grade replacements. Full policy details are printed on each Grade Replacement Contract.

**The Census Date** (Sept. 12th) is the deadline for many forms and enrollment actions of which students need to be aware. These include:

- Submitting Grade Replacement Contracts, Transient Forms, requests to withhold directory information, approvals for taking courses as Audit, Pass/Fail or Credit/No Credit.
- Receiving 100% refunds for partial withdrawals. (There is no refund for these after the Census Date)
- Schedule adjustments (section changes, adding a new class, dropping without a "W" grade)
- Being reinstated or re-enrolled in classes after being dropped for non-payment
- Completing the process for tuition exemptions or waivers through Financial Aid State-Mandated Course Drop Policy

Texas law prohibits a student who began college for the first time in Fall 2007 or thereafter from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career. This includes courses dropped at another 2-year or 4-year Texas public college or university. For purposes of this rule, a dropped course is any course that is dropped after the census date (See Academic Calendar for the specific date). Exceptions to the 6-drop rule may be found in the catalog. Petitions for exemptions must be submitted to the Enrollment Services Center and must be accompanied by documentation of the extenuating circumstance. Please contact the Enrollment Services Center if you have any questions. Disability/Accessibility Services In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) the University of Texas at Tyler offers accommodations to students with learning, physical and/or psychological disabilities. If you have a disability, including a non-visible diagnosis such as a learning disorder, chronic illness, TBI, PTSD, ADHD, or you have a history of modifications or accommodations in a previous educational environment, you are encouraged to visit <https://hood.accessiblelearning.com/UTTyler> and fill out the New Student application. The Student Accessibility and Resources (SAR) office will contact you when your application has been submitted and an appointment with Cynthia Lowery, Assistant Director of Student Services/ADA Coordinator. For more information, including filling out an application for services, please visit the SAR webpage at <http://www.uttyler.edu/disabilityservices>, the SAR office located in the University Center, # 3150 or call 903.566.7079. Student Absence due to Religious Observance Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious observance are requested to inform the instructor of such absences by the second class meeting of the semester.

### Student Absence for University-Sponsored Events and Activities

If you intend to be absent for a university-sponsored event or activity, you (or the event sponsor) must notify the instructor at least two weeks prior to the date of the planned absence. At that time the instructor will set a date and time when make-up assignments will be completed.

### **Social Security and FERPA Statement**

It is the policy of The University of Texas at Tyler to protect the confidential nature of social security numbers. The University has changed its computer programming so that all students have an identification number. The electronic transmission of grades (e.g., via e-mail) risks violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; grades will not be transmitted electronically.

### **Emergency Exits and Evacuation**

Everyone is required to exit the building when a fire alarm goes off. Follow your instructor's directions regarding the appropriate exit. If you require assistance during an evacuation, inform your instructor in the first week of class. Do not re-enter the building unless given permission by University Police, Fire department, or Fire Prevention Services.

### **Student Standards of Academic Conduct**

Disciplinary proceedings may be initiated against any student who engages in scholastic dishonesty, including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts.

"Cheating" includes, but is not limited to:

- copying from another student's test paper;
- using, during a test, materials not authorized by the person giving the test;
- failure to comply with instructions given by the person administering the test;
- possession during a test of materials which are not authorized by the person giving the test, such as class notes or specifically designed "crib notes". The presence of textbooks constitutes a violation if they have been specifically prohibited by the person administering the test;
- using, buying, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in whole or part the contents of an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program;
- collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test or other assignment without authority;
- discussing the contents of an examination with another student who will take the examination;
- divulging the contents of an examination, for the purpose of preserving questions for use by another, when the instructors has designated that the examination is not to be removed from the examination room or not to be returned or to be kept by the student;
- substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for oneself to take a course, a test, or any course-related assignment;
- paying or offering money or other valuable thing to, or coercing another person to obtain an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program or information about an unadministered test, test key, home solution or computer program;
- falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other academic work offered for credit;
- Taking, keeping, misplacing, or damaging the property of The University of Texas at Tyler, or of another, if the student knows or reasonably should know that an unfair academic advantage would be gained by such conduct; and
- misrepresenting facts, including providing false grades or resumes, for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial benefit or injuring another student academically or financially.

"Plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to, the appropriation, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another's work and the submission of it as one's own academic work offered for credit.

"Collusion" includes, but is not limited to, the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any section of the rules on scholastic dishonesty.

All written work that is submitted will be subject to review by plagiarism software.

### **UT Tyler Resources for Students**

- [UT Tyler Writing Center](http://writingcenter@uttyler.edu) (903.565.5995), [writingcenter@uttyler.edu](mailto:writingcenter@uttyler.edu)
- [UT Tyler Tutoring Center](http://tutoring@uttyler.edu) (903.565.5964), [tutoring@uttyler.edu](mailto:tutoring@uttyler.edu)
- The Mathematics Learning Center, RBN 4021, this is the open access computer lab for math students, with tutors on duty to assist students who are enrolled in early-career courses.
- [UT Tyler Counseling Center](http://counseling@uttyler.edu) (903.566.7254)

## Additional Syllabus Information

### **Important Covid-19 Information for Classrooms and Laboratories**

Students are required to wear face masks covering their nose and mouth, and follow social distancing guidelines, at all times in public settings (including classrooms and laboratories), as specified by [Procedures for Fall 2020 Return to Normal Operations](#). The UT Tyler community of Patriots views adoption of these practices consistent with its [Honor Code](#) and a sign of good citizenship and respectful care of fellow classmates, faculty, and staff.

Students who are feeling ill or experiencing symptoms such as sneezing, coughing, or a higher than normal temperature will be excused from class and should stay at home and may join the class remotely. Students who have difficulty adhering to the Covid-19 safety policies for health reasons are also encouraged to join the class remotely. Students needing additional accommodations may contact the Office of Student Accessibility and Resources at University Center 3150, or call (903) 566-7079 or email [saroffice@uttyler.edu](mailto:saroffice@uttyler.edu).

### **Recording of Class Sessions**

Class sessions may be recorded by the instructor for use by students enrolled in this course. Recordings that contain personally identifiable information or other information subject to FERPA shall not be shared with individuals not enrolled in this course unless appropriate consent is obtained from all relevant students. Class recordings are reserved only for the use of students enrolled in the course and only for educational purposes. Course recordings should not be shared outside of the course in any form without express permission.