Tufts University  
Department of Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning  

Environmental Justice UEP 278  
Fall 2007  

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Fridays 9.00-11.30 am at Miner 225  
Office hours: Friday after class and by appointment.

Description
Environmental justice is a framework for analyzing and addressing the inequalities in environmental conditions (benefits and burdens) among communities of varying race/ethnicity and economic class. At the same time, environmental justice presents a deep challenge to the mainstream environmental and sustainability frameworks.

This course will be divided into four sections:

1. Theory and concepts of environmental justice  
   We will examine the foundations of the environmental justice concept, the history of the environmental justice movement, and the links between environmental justice and the environmental and sustainability movements.

2. Case studies and local site visits  
   We will deepen our understanding of the challenges and responses to environmental injustice through several site visits with local EJ groups and guest presenters who will help frame environmental justice efforts in other parts of the country and the world. Issues that we will address include brownfields, land-use and gentrification, transportation, and others.

3. Strategies for addressing environmental justice  
   We will examine the community strategies, governmental and policy responses, and legal approaches to addressing environmental justice.

4. Service learning projects  
   Students will work in teams of 3-4 on projects that will help further the efforts of a local EJ group. See below for list of possible projects.

Course Objectives

- To develop theoretical frameworks for understanding how environmental injustice is produced locally, regionally, and globally and how environmental justice is linked to sustainability.

- To ground students in the realities faced by environmental justice communities locally and to connect these to struggles in other parts of the world.

- To explore strategies for addressing environmental justice from the community, government, science, and legal perspectives.

- To inspire and meaningfully engage students in local and regional efforts to promote environmental justice.
Course texts

A required Reader is also available for purchase. Where a reading on this syllabus is not in your Reader, it will be internet based as directed by a url in the syllabus. Note, suggested readings in the course syllabus are not in the Reader to save on printing costs.

Course Requirements and Assessment
All students are expected to attend class regularly and complete assignments on time, including completing the required readings before each class. Your grade will be based on the following:

1. **Group Project for Community Group (35%)**

Students will work in teams of 2-4 on a group project for a community organization. The projects will be defined and guided by the community group. A list of the projects will be available once the class begins. The projects will require reporting to the client group, conducting secondary research, data analysis and synthesis, interviews, and creating a final product (e.g. briefing paper, factsheet, web page, bibliography, powerpoint presentation, etc.).

Potential community clients and project issues include:
- Chelsea Green Space Committee – siting of diesel power plant in Chelsea
- T Riders Union – documentation of disparities in service and transit investment among communities
- Roxbury Environmental Empowerment Project – youth violence as an EJ issue
- Washington Street Corridor Coalition – replacement transit service to Roxbury
- Greater Four Corners Action Coalition – new stations on commuter rail line
- South Boston Neighbors First – truck traffic to Conley Marine Terminal

Student groups need to be formed and projects chosen by October 5.
Initial project scoping meetings and draft plans submitted by October 19.
Draft project outputs to client groups by November 30.
Final project presentations on December 7.

2. **Critical Comment (25%)**

Choose an issue in environmental justice that you think is contentious but about which you have strong feelings. It could be something like risk assessment, the relationship between environmental justice and sustainability, the role of experts or the debate about environmental security. Using class readings and others you can source, write a 5-page critique in support of your position. You should source at least 5 other readings in addition to required class readings. The paper is due on December 7th.
3. Site Visit/Conference Report or Reading Briefing (20%)

You may choose either to do a site visit/conference report or reading briefing paper. For both, the goal is to deeply analyze the themes and questions raised by either a site visit or the readings in relationship to the overall questions addressed by this class.

The site visit/conference report will be a 3-5 paged, double-spaced paper summarizing the main themes of a site visit or conference, questions and challenges raised by site visit or conference from your own point of view and compared to those views from relevant readings. In addition to the class site visits, you may choose to attend one or more of the following conferences (sessions that are at least 2 hours) or other conference/meetings that are approved by the instructor.

The reading briefing paper will be a 3-5 paged double spaced paper summarizing the main themes in a set of class readings and questions and challenges raised by those readings. Those choosing to do this briefing must also lead a 30 minute class discussion on the day that the readings are due. The Briefing document must be available to the rest of the class, on our Blackboard site http://blackboard.tufts.edu no later than 5.00pm on Wednesday before the class.

4. Class participation (20%)

Class participation includes regular and prompt attendance as well as quality of input in class discussions. Remember that class participation is enhanced by being prepared for each class by completing the required readings.

Schedule

Week 1: Sep 7. Overview

- Course overview and approach
- EJ case study snapshots
- ACE Video: Not In My Backyard
- Role of students and research in supporting community groups

Required Readings (available in class)


Optional Readings


Week 2: Sep 14. EJ Theory and Concepts 1

- What is environmental justice?
- Evidence of disproportionate impact
• Causes of environmental injustice
• Student-led discussion of readings.

Required Readings (~100)
Massachusetts Environmental Justice Populations. Available at: http://maps.massgis.state.ma.us/ij/ij.pdf

Optional Readings

Week 3: Sep 21. EJ Theory and Concepts 2
• EJ movement history
• EJ challenge to mainstream environmentalism and sustainability movements
• Student-led discussion of readings.

Required Readings (~109)

Agyeman. Introduction (pp. 1-13) and Chapter 3 (pp. 79-106).


Optional Readings
Agyeman. Chapter 2 (pp. 39-78) and 4 (pp. 107-132).


Week 4: Sep 28. Site Visit: Roxbury/EJ in Black Communities

- Site visit to Alternatives for Community & Environment in Dudley Square at 2181 Washington Street, Suite 301, Roxbury.

- Issues for site visit:
  - Asthma and air quality
  - Polluting facilities
  - Youth and Violence

- Student-led discussion of readings

Required Readings (~115)
Agyeman. Chapters 5 (pp 133-175).

ACE’s web site at: www.ace-ej.org


Cole & Foster: Chapters 2 and 3 (pp 34-79).


Optional Readings
ACE’s web page on the BU bioterror lab at: http://www.ace-ej.org/BiolabWeb/biolab.html

Airbeat monitoring system website at: http://www.airbeat.org

Loh, P; Sugerman-Brozan J.; Wiggins, S; Noiles, D; Archibald, C. “From Asthma to AirBeat: Community-Driven Monitoring of Fine Particles and Black Carbon in Roxbury, Massachusetts.” Environmental Health


Sherman, Scott, “Environmental Justice Case Study: West County Toxics Coalition and the Chevron Refinery Richmond, California,” available at: http://www.umich.edu/~snre492/sherman.html


West Harlem Environmental Action GIS maps at: http://www.weact.org/gis/index.html

**Week 5: Oct 5. Site Visit: Chinatown/Asian Pacific American Issues**

- Site visit to: Boston Chinatown: Jeremy Liu, Asian Community Development Corporation at 38 Oak Street, Boston Chinatown.
- Gentrification and control over land use.
- Student-led discussion of readings.
- Student teams and projects chosen

**Required Readings (~100)**


**Optional Readings**


Week 6: Oct 12. Site Visit: Chelsea/EJ in Latino Communities

- Site Visit to Chelsea Green Space and Recreation Committee at 300 Broadway, Chelsea
- Issues for site visit:
  - Polluting facilities: salt mountain, Boston Hides and Fur, proposed power plant
  - Chelsea Creek redevelopment and restoration
- Additional readings on EJ in Latino communities and immigration/population

Required Readings (~75)

Chelsea Green Space Committee web site at: http://www.chelseagreenspace.org/


Chelsea Creek restoration collaborative website at: http://www.noahcdc.org/cbe/ccrp.html

Cole & Foster: Chapter 4 (pp. 80-102).


Week 7: Oct 19. Case Study: Transportation

- Transportation and EJ
  - Guest speaker (to be confirmed) Bob Terrell (Washington Street Corridor Coalition)
- Initial project scoping meetings completed and draft plans submitted.

Required Readings (~100)


Optional Readings


Movie (DVD), *Bus Riders Union* (available to loan from ACE).

**Week 8: Oct 26. Legal Strategies and EJ in Native American Communities**

- Legal Strategies
  - Guest speaker: **Gene Benson**, ACE Staff Attorney
- Native American EJ issues
- Student-led discussion of readings.

*Required Readings (~150)*

Cole & Foster Chapter 5 and 6 (pp. 103-150)


*Optional Readings*


**Week 9: Nov 2. Community Strategies**

- Community organizing – building power from the bottom up
  - Guest speaker: **Khalida Smalls** (ACE Program Director)
- Building the EJ movement

*Required Readings (~100)*

Cole & Foster Chapter 7 (pp. 151-166)


Radical Organizing Conference 2003 booklet. Available at class site: http://blackboard.tufts.edu

Optional Readings


- Government responses to EJ
- EJ and Risk Assessment
- Student-led discussion of readings.

Required Readings (~90)


Urban Habitat Program. Webpage: Race, Class and the EPA’s Environmental Justice Strategic Plan. Read page plus pdf links to EPA memo and EPA comment letter. Available at: http://urbanhabitat.org/epa


Optional Readings


**Week 11: Nov 16. Case Studies: South Africa and Climate Justice**

- EJ in South Africa
  - Guest speaker: Heeten Kalan (GroundWork USA)
- Climate justice
- Student-led discussion of readings.

Required Readings (~110)


Optional Readings


November 23. HOLIDAY

Week 12: Nov 30. Future of Environmental Justice

- Guest: Professor Julian Agyeman
- Sustainability and EJ movements. What is to come? Where to from here?
- Student-led discussion of readings.
- Draft project outputs should be submitted to client groups.

Required Readings (~100)

Agyeman. Chapters 6 (pp 176-186).


Optional Readings


Week 13: Dec 7. Student project presentations

- Final group project presentations.
- Critical Comment papers due.