

Course Syllabus

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ENV H 205 ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH IN MEDIA

Spring 2024

Credits: 3

COURSE INFORMATION

Instructors

Instructor: Karen Levy (she/her/hers), Professor

Office: 261 Hans Rosling Building

Phone: 206-543-4341 (email preferred)

Email: klevyx@uw.edu (<mailto:klevyx@uw.edu>)

Office Hours: By appointment

Teaching Assistant: Becky Kann (she/her/hers)

Email: rkann@uw.edu (<mailto:rkann@uw.edu>)

Course Time and Location

Tuesdays, 10:30 AM - 12:20 PM

Health Sciences Education Building (HSEB) 101 ([campus map](#)
(<https://www.washington.edu/maps#!/hseb>))

Course Description

This class will examine environmental factors that affect human health through the use of popular film and visual media. We will explore how scientific issues related to health and the environment are embedded in a cultural matrix that involves ethical, legal and social concerns. We will evaluate how science and scientific information are portrayed in these films, and how the perspective of filmmakers and documentarians can influence the public's interpretation of environmental health issues. In an **active learning** format, we will discuss questions such as: What real-world events prompted the making of the film? What scientific issues are central to the film? What has happened since the film was made? How did the film affect our society's thinking about environmental health hazards?

Course Learning Objectives

1. Describe how cultural and economic differences can affect human health.
2. List the routes of human exposure to environmental pollution.
3. Describe how pollutant properties determine their fate in the environment.

4. Recognize bias in a film-makers perspective and contrast their perspective with evidence from the opposing argument.
5. Identify key diseases responsible for mortality globally and associate them with environmental health problems or specific pollutants.
6. Outline the US regulatory framework that protects the public from exposure to environmental pollution and occupational hazards.
7. Explain how scientific evidence is used in legal disputes related to environmental contamination.
8. Describe the role of the media in the presentation of environmental health risks.

Council for Education of Public Health (CEPH) Competencies

N/A

Required Textbooks & Readings

No textbooks required; for readings and films, please refer to the [modules](https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/modules) (<https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/modules>)_ page.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Weekly Class Schedule

Week	Class Date	Topic	Movie
1	March 26	Introduction & Media Studies	NA
2	April 2	Environmental Health Overview	Wall-E
3	April 9	Infectious Disease	Contagion
4	April 16	Chemical Exposures/ Chromium-6	Erin Brockovich
5	April 23	Shale/Hydrofracking	Promised Land
6	April 30	Sanitation	Toilet: A Love Story
7	May 7	Pesticides/ Environmental Justice	Cesar Chavez
8	May 14	Climate Change	Don't Look Up
9	May 21	Nuclear Energy/Radiation	Chernobyl
10	May 28	PFAS	Dark Waters

Class Prep

For most classes throughout the quarter (other than weeks 1 and 2) you will be expected to do the following **prior to the start of class**:

1. Watch the assigned **movie**
2. Complete and submit the **movie watching discussion questions**

3. Research the media type assigned to you and **submit a one-slide overview**

There is no prep required for week 1 and for week 2, instead of completing a movie watching discussion questions and reference, you will complete the introduction assignment.

Typical In-Class Schedule

10:30-10:35 Find your tables

10:35-10:45 Weekly quiz/survey

10:45-11:15 Group Work

11:15-11:25 Group Work Report Back

11:25-11:35 Bathroom break/buffer time

11:35-[variable time] Presentation about the next week

[Variable time] – 12:20 Clip of the day or other topic discussion

GRADING

Assignment Type	Assignment	#	Points	% of Grade	Assignment Description
Individual Short Answer/ Quizzes (17%)	In class weekly quizzes/ surveys	10	1	10%	Weekly-in person quizzes or surveys at the beginning of class asking questions about the course content and assigned movie.
	Poll Everywhere questions	7	1	7%	Poll Everywhere questions embedded in various lectures throughout the quarter.
In-class participation (5%)	Questions for lecturers	5	1	5%	For classes with a guest lecture, submit one question during or immediately after the class.
Group Work (36%)	In class group participation	8	2	16%	Group discussion of media coverage and summary of environmental health topic.
	Media Submission	8	2.5	20%	Submit a one-slide summary of assigned additional media type for each topic.
Out of class individual	Intro Assignment	1	3	3%	Short essay (150-300 words) reflecting on your own experiences, identifying one that

work (42%)					has influenced your position on an environmental health issue.
	Movie watching discussion questions	8	3	24%	For each movie, answer basic questions about the environmental health focus of the movie.
	Culminating project	1	15	15%	Write a 3-4 page summary of an environmental health topic and the media coverage on that topic.
Extra Credit (+3%)	Additional movie Review	1	3	+3%	Watch one additional movie and write a short essay (150-300 words) reflecting on the environmental health issue shown in the film.

Your overall grade for the course will be determined based on this 4.0 scale:

%	Grade	%	Grade	%	Grade	%	Grade
100	4.0	90	3.5	80	2.5	70	1.5
99	4.0	89	3.4	79	2.4	69	1.4
98	3.9	88	3.3	78	2.3	68	1.3
97	3.9	87	3.2	77	2.2	67	1.2
96	3.8	86	3.1	76	2.1	66	1.1
95	3.8	85	3.0	75	2.0	65	1.0
94	3.7	84	2.9	74	1.9	64	0.9
93	3.7	83	2.8	73	1.8	63	0.8
92	3.6	82	2.7	72	1.7	62	0.7
91	3.6	81	2.6	71	1.6	61	0.7
90	3.5	80	2.5	70	1.5	60	0.7

Late Assignment Policy

We expect that all assignments be turned in by the deadline indicated on the course website. If an assignment is turned in late, it is subject to a 10% per day grade reduction (e.g., the score on a 3-day-late assignment will be reduced by 30%). If the assignment is late due to an unforeseen emergency, an explanation is required in writing (via email), and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

In-person Attendance

Due to the discussion-based focus of this class, in-person attendance is required for all class sessions. There will be no option to attend virtually. If, for some reason, you are not able to attend a class in person, you should notify us ahead of time but you are still expected to submit all assignments for the class. We will drop 1 grade for the in-class participation assignments (group participation, weekly quizzes, poll everywhere questions, and guest speaker questions as applicable).

Student Expectations

Students are expected to complete all assignments on time and come to class prepared to participate in the group activities. While in class, students are expected to actively contribute to the group work and engage in the lecture content. Any concerns about group members not contributing or other issues with group work should be brought up with the instructor or TA.

Throughout the quarter, students should monitor the Canvas page regularly and check in with the teaching staff if any issues arise. We understand that unexpected challenges arise and we are happy to work with you to figure out accommodations as needed. However, we cannot address any issues unless we know about them, so it's important to let us know as early as possible if there is anything causing issues with your successful participation in the class.

COURSE POLICIES

Access and Accommodations

Your experience in this class is important to me. It is the policy and practice of the University of Washington to create inclusive and accessible learning environments consistent with federal and state law. If you have already established accommodations with Disability Resources for Students (DRS), please activate your accommodations via myDRS so we can discuss how they will be implemented in this course.

If you have not yet established services through DRS, but have a temporary health condition or permanent disability that requires accommodations (conditions include but not limited to; mental health, attention-related, learning, vision, hearing, physical or health impacts), contact DRS directly to set up an Access Plan. DRS facilitates the interactive process that establishes reasonable accommodations. Contact DRS at disability.uw.edu [\(https://depts.washington.edu/uwdrs/\)](https://depts.washington.edu/uwdrs/).

Religious Accommodations

Washington state law requires that UW develop a policy for accommodation of student absences or significant hardship due to reasons of faith or conscience, or for organized religious activities. The UW's policy, including more information about how to request an accommodation, is available at Religious Accommodations Policy (<https://registrar.washington.edu/staffandfaculty/religious-accommodations-policy/> [\(https://registrar.washington.edu/staffandfaculty/religious-accommodations-policy/\)](https://registrar.washington.edu/staffandfaculty/religious-accommodations-policy/)). Accommodations must be requested within the first two weeks of this course using the [Religious Accommodations Request form](https://registrar.washington.edu/students/religious-accommodations-request/) [\(https://registrar.washington.edu/students/religious-accommodations-request/\)](https://registrar.washington.edu/students/religious-accommodations-request/) [\(https://registrar.washington.edu/students/religious-accommodations-request/\)](https://registrar.washington.edu/students/religious-accommodations-request/) [\(https://registrar.washington.edu/students/religious-accommodations-request/\)](https://registrar.washington.edu/students/religious-accommodations-request/)).

Academic Integrity

Students at the University of Washington (UW) are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic conduct, professional honesty, and personal integrity.

The UW School of Public Health (SPH) is committed to upholding standards of academic integrity consistent with the academic and professional communities of which it is a part. Plagiarism, cheating, and other misconduct are serious violations of [the University of Washington Student Conduct Code](https://www.washington.edu/studentconduct/) [\(https://www.washington.edu/studentconduct/\)](https://www.washington.edu/studentconduct/) (WAC 478-120). We expect you to know and follow the university's policies on cheating and plagiarism, and [the SPH Academic Integrity Policy](https://sph.washington.edu/students/academic-integrity-policy) [. \(https://sph.washington.edu/students/academic-integrity-policy\)](https://sph.washington.edu/students/academic-integrity-policy). Any suspected cases of academic misconduct will be handled according to University of Washington regulations. For more information, see the University of Washington Community Standards and Student Conduct website.

Use of Generative AI in Coursework

In this course, students are permitted to use AI-based tools (such as ChatGPT) only for the additional media assignments (find more detail on the assignment page). You are not permitted to use AI-based tools for any other assignments unless instructed otherwise. All sources, including AI tools, must be properly cited. Use of AI in ways that are inconsistent with the parameters above will be considered academic misconduct and subject to investigation.

Please note that AI results can be biased and inaccurate. It is your responsibility to ensure that the information you use from AI is accurate. Additionally, pay attention to the privacy of your data. Many AI tools will incorporate and use any content you share, so be careful not to unintentionally share copyrighted materials, original work, or personal information.

Learning how to thoughtfully and strategically use AI-based tools may help you develop your skills, refine your work, and prepare you for your future career. If you have any questions about citation or about what constitutes academic integrity in this course or at the University of Washington, please feel free to contact me to discuss your concerns.

Land Acknowledgement

Washington state is home to 29 federally recognized and multiple unrecognized tribes. We include a land acknowledgment statement as a sign of respect for the original caretakers of the land: "We acknowledge the Coast Salish people of this land, the land which touches the shared waters of all tribes and bands within the Duwamish, Suquamish, Tulalip and Muckleshoot nations."

Classroom Climate


The UW School of Public Health seeks to ensure all students are fully included in each course. We strive to create an environment that reflects community and mutual caring. We encourage students with concerns about classroom climate to talk to your instructor, your faculty or academic advisor, or a member of the departmental or SPH Diversity Committee. Victoria Gardner (vg@uw.edu <mailto:vg@uw.edu>), SPH Assistant Dean for Equity, Diversity & Inclusion, is also a resource for students with concerns related to equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Diverse backgrounds, embodiments and experiences are essential to the critical thinking endeavor at the heart of University education. In SPH, students are expected:

- To respect individual differences, which may include, but are not limited to, age, cultural background, disability, ethnicity, family status, gender, immigration status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status and veteran status.
- To engage respectfully in the discussion of diverse worldviews and ideologies embedded in course readings, presentations and artifacts, including those course materials that are at odds with personal beliefs and values.
- To encourage students with concerns about classroom climate to talk to their instructor, adviser, a member of the departmental or SPH EDI Committee, the Assistant Dean for EDI, or the program's director.

Pronouns

The University of Washington supports the expression of all gender identity, and provides frequently asked question on pronouns at the following link: <https://registrar.washington.edu/students/personal-data/pronouns/faqs/>  (<https://registrar.washington.edu/students/personal-data/pronouns/faqs/>). UW staff, faculty, and students can now also set their pronouns in the Identity.UW system to make them automatically available in Canvas and other UW systems (see <https://itconnect.uw.edu/guides-by-topic/identity-diversity-inclusion/identity/pronouns> (<https://itconnect.uw.edu/guides-by-topic/identity-diversity-inclusion/identity/pronouns>)).


We share our pronouns because we strive to cultivate an inclusive environment where people of all genders feel safe and respected. We invite everyone to share their pronouns. Professor Levy uses [she, her, hers] pronouns. Your TA, Becky Kann, uses [she, her, hers] pronouns.


Respiratory Illness Protocols and Safety




If you feel ill or exhibit respiratory or other symptoms, you should not come to class. Seek medical attention if necessary and notify your instructor(s) as soon as possible by email.

Please check your email daily BEFORE coming to class. If we need to conduct class remotely because the instructor or a guest speaker is unable to attend in person, we will send all registered students an email with a Zoom link for remote instruction or a plan for making up the class.

Additional recommendations include:

1. [Get boosted with the updated COVID-19 vaccines](https://www.washington.edu/coronavirus/vaccines/)  (<https://www.washington.edu/coronavirus/vaccines/>). These vaccines are available at clinics and pharmacies, as well as through UW Medicine and local health agencies.
2. [Get your annual flu shot](https://wellbeing.uw.edu/flu-vaccination/) (<https://wellbeing.uw.edu/flu-vaccination/>).
3. Wear a high-quality mask in indoor public spaces and while traveling. Masks are strongly recommended the first two weeks of winter quarter. High-quality masks help protect against a range




of respiratory viruses, and are [available for free in locations on each UW campus](https://www.washington.edu/coronavirus/student-faq/#freemasks)  (<https://www.washington.edu/coronavirus/student-faq/#freemasks>).





4. Take a coronavirus test if you have symptoms or have been exposed. Rapid antigen tests are widely available for free in [at campus locations listed here](https://www.washington.edu/coronavirus/testing/)  (<https://www.washington.edu/coronavirus/testing/>). The [Husky Coronavirus Testing](https://www.washington.edu/coronavirus/testing/hct/)  (<https://www.washington.edu/coronavirus/testing/hct/>) voluntary research study is also available for UW students.
5. [Activate WA Notify on your phone](https://doh.wa.gov/emergencies/covid-19/wa-notify)  (<https://doh.wa.gov/emergencies/covid-19/wa-notify>) to receive exposure notifications and so that you can anonymously let others know of their exposure if you test positive.

Learning Environment










The Department of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences (DEOHS) strives to create welcoming and respectful learning environments that promote access and opportunity for all students, regardless of their experiences, perspectives, identities, and abilities. The DEOHS, along with The UW School of Public Health, seek to ensure all students are fully included in each course. We strive to create an environment that reflects community and mutual caring. Students are encouraged to talk to instructors, advisors, members of the departmental or SPH Diversity Committee and/or program director with concerns about the classroom climate.

If you feel like this class is not living up to that commitment, there are several ways you can register your concern and seek resolution:












- If you feel comfortable doing so, begin by discussing your concern with the instructor and/or teaching assistant. Your instructor is expected to take your concerns seriously and work with you to identify a resolution.
- If you are not comfortable discussing the concern with the instructor, or you did so and the issue has still not been resolved, contact Trina Sterry, DEOHS Manager of Student and Academic Services (tsterry@uw.edu (<mailto:tsterry@uw.edu>)) to discuss your concern. She can also connect you to the appropriate member of DEOHS faculty leadership as needed.
- If you prefer to discuss your concern directly with someone from the School of Public Health (SPH) Dean's Office, you can review [the SPH Student Concern Policy](https://sph.washington.edu/students/student-concern-policy)  (<https://sph.washington.edu/students/student-concern-policy>) and follow the procedures described there, including reaching out to the SPH Assistant Dean for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Dr. Victoria Gardner (vg@uw.edu (<mailto:vg@uw.edu>)). If you prefer to anonymously report your concern, you can email dcinfo@uw.edu (<mailto:dcinfo@uw.edu>) or use [the SPH Bias Incident Report Form](mailto:https://sph.washington.edu/about/diversity/bias-concerns)  (<mailto:https://sph.washington.edu/about/diversity/bias-concerns>).
- If your concern is related to a bias incident, you can review [the UW's guidance on reporting bias incidents](https://www.washington.edu/bias/)  (<https://www.washington.edu/bias/>), which includes a link to the UW Bias Reporting Tool.
- If you have experienced sex or gender discrimination, including sexual assault, relationship or intimate partner violence, stalking, sexual harassment, or other sexual misconduct, you have the












right to make a formal complaint and request an investigation under Title IX. Information about Title IX reporting options is available at <https://www.washington.edu/titleix/report/>  (<https://www.washington.edu/titleix/report/>). The University also has other designated offices to help you avoid and/or report sexual harassment: SafeCampus (<https://www.washington.edu/safecampus/>  (<https://www.washington.edu/safecampus/>)); Office of the Ombud (<https://www.washington.edu/ombud/>  (<https://www.washington.edu/ombud/>)); and University Complaint Investigation and Resolution Office (<https://www.washington.edu/uciro/>  (<https://www.washington.edu/uciro/>)).

Course Summary:

Date	Details	Due
Tue Apr 2, 2024	 Intro Assignment https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9143084	due by 10:30am
	 Watch Wall-E and Prepare for In-Class Discussion https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9239786	due by 10:30am
	 Pre-class Quiz for WALL-E https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9266590	due by 12:20pm
Tue Apr 9, 2024	 Infectious Disease Additional Media Submission https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9213985	due by 10:30am
	 Watch Contagion and Submit Movie Discussion Questions https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9165675	due by 10:30am
	 Pre-class Quiz for Contagion https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9295437	due by 12:20pm
Tue Apr 16, 2024	 Week 3 Group Work https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9166919	due by 11:59pm
	 Chemical Exposures/Chromium-6 Additional Media Submission https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9104358	due by 10:30am
	 Watch Erin Brockovich and Submit Movie Discussion	due by 10:30am

Date	Details	Due
	Questions (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9143230)	
	 Pre-class Quiz for Erin Brockovich (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9307600)	due by 12:20pm
	 Week 4 Group Work (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9144530)	due by 11:59pm
	 Shale/Hydrofracking Additional Media Submission (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9240241)	due by 10:30am
Tue Apr 23, 2024	 Watch Promised Land and Submit Movie Discussion Questions (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9162822)	due by 10:30am
	 Pre-class Quiz for Promised Land (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9314584)	due by 11am
	 Week 5 Group Work (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9167194)	due by 11:59pm
	 Sanitation Additional Media Submission (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9165678)	due by 10:30am
Tue Apr 30, 2024	 Watch Toilet: A Love Story and Submit Movie Discussion Questions (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9165680)	due by 10:30am
	 Pre-Class Quiz for Toilet: A Love Story (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9329722)	due by 11am
	 Week 6 Group Work (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9166307)	due by 11:59pm
Tue May 7, 2024	 Pesticides Additional Media Submission	due by 10:30am

Date	Details	Due
	https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9240631	
	 Watch Cesar Chavez and Submit Movie Discussion Questions https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9240253	due by 10:30am
	 Pre-Class Quiz for Cesar Chavez https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9340691	due by 10:50am
	 Week 7 Group Work https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9240639	due by 11:59pm
	 Climate Change Additional Media Submission https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9240743	due by 10:30am
	 Watch Don't Look Up and Submit Movie Discussion Questions https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9240691	due by 10:30am
Tue May 14, 2024	 Pre-class Quiz for Don't Look Up https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9356754	due by 10:50am
	 Week 8 Group Work https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9167199	due by 11:59pm
	 Nuclear Energy/Radiation Additional Media Submission https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9158702	due by 10:30am
	 Watch Chernobyl (E2) and Submit Discussion Questions https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9158706	due by 10:30am
Tue May 21, 2024	 Week 9 Group Work https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9165709	due by 11:59pm
	 PFAS Additional Media Submission	due by 10:30am
Tue May 28, 2024		

Date	Details	Due
	(https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9158684)	
	 Watch Dark Waters and Submit Movie Discussion Questions (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9144895)	due by 10:30am
	 Week 10 Group Work (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9165704)	due by 11:59pm
Fri May 31, 2024	 Culminating Project (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9159224)	due by 11:59pm
	 Extra Credit (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9159225)	due by 11:59pm
	 Week 1 Poll Everywhere (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9246891)	
	 Week 2 Poll Everywhere (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9290245)	
	 Week 3 Guest Speaker Questions (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9324004)	
	 Week 4 Guest Speaker Questions (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9324007)	
	 Week 4 Poll Everywhere (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9324045)	
	 Week 6 Guest Speaker Questions (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9336836)	
	 Week 6 Poll Everywhere (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1719023/assignments/9336677)	