

ESI3010: Seminar in Environmental Studies (1)  
Dept of LJWL  
Fall 2024  
Course Time and Location: Wednesday 1:30-2:25pm BAC102

Instructor: Ben Cater, Ph.D.  
Office: Evans 124E  
Phone: 619.849.2932  
Email: [bcater@pointloma.edu](mailto:bcater@pointloma.edu)  
Office hours: drop-ins and by appointment  
Teaching Assistant: Sloane Young ([syoung0021@pointloma.edu](mailto:syoung0021@pointloma.edu))

#### PLNU Mission: To Teach, Shape, & Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is molded and formed, and service becomes an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we aspire to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

#### Course Description

This course provides a seminar-style critical examination of current environmental issues and perspectives. Students will also engage in student mentorship at the appropriate level.

ESI3010 is a discussion-based course that examines contemporary challenges to the environment, including climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution, and resource depletion. It emphasizes interdisciplinary study to reveal the scientific, social, economic, political, and religious dimensions of these issues. Learning from diverse people - policymakers, scientists, academics, pastors, indigenous people, and concerned citizens - encourages a broad understanding of the complexities and controversies surrounding care for God's creation. By engaging with them, students will develop a nuanced understanding of the global and local impacts of environmental change and strategies for addressing them. Reading, writing, and speaking about contemporary challenges will help sharpen professional skills, equipping students to put their environmental idealism into practice.

ESI 3010 may be repeated up to a combined total of eight (8) units. Environmental Studies majors must take at least three (3) units.

*Prerequisite(s): ESI 2050, or consent of instructor.*

#### Course Learning Outcomes

Students who complete ESI 3010 will be able to:

1. Consider (evaluation & analysis) the human relationship with the natural world through diverse disciplines. **(PLO 2, 3)**

2. Exhibit (application) increasing competency in gathering knowledge from diverse places. **(PLO 3)**
3. Establish a collaborative network of colleagues and community (both student and faculty) through one-on-one and small group mentorship **(PLO 1)**
4. Communicate (application, comprehension) ideas with competency addressing appropriate audience, purpose, and medium. **(PLO 2, 3, 4)**

### Program Learning Outcomes

Students who complete the program in Environmental Studies will be able to:

1. Demonstrate synthesis (Synthesis, Application) of scientific and humanistic studies through practical environmental application. [Integrative Learning, Critical Thinking, Written Communication]
2. Locate, evaluate, and effectively use (Application, Evaluation) information to address environmental concerns. [Written Communication, Information Literacy, Critical Thinking]
3. Identify and articulate (Knowledge, Comprehension & Analysis) sociocultural dynamics as they relate to the natural world. [Quantitative Reasoning, Critical Thinking]
4. Present (Evaluation, Application) analysis to formal audiences, demonstrating appropriate strategies for audience engagement and oral communication. [Oral Communication, Written Communication]
5. Identify and secure (Application) post-graduate studies or careers in environmental fields. [70% Percent of alumni who have work in the broad environmental field] – evaluate 3 years.

### Course Communication

Students are responsible for all messages from and to their PLNU email and Canvas accounts. Since Dr. Cater frequently provides clarifying notes about course content and assignments, please check your accounts daily. If you have questions or comments, please contact the instructor at: [bcater@pointloma.edu](mailto:bcater@pointloma.edu). However, please do not expect your professor to respond during the weekend (Friday evening to Sunday evening) unless it is an emergency. If that is the case, please indicate it in the subject line of your email.

### Grading Policy (Scale and Weights)

A	94-100%
A-	90-93%
B+	87-89%
B	84-86%
B-	80-83%
C+	77-79%
C	74-76%
C-	70-73%
D+	67-69%
D	64-66%

D- 60-63%  
F 0-59%

Participation 20%  
Assignments 80%

- Disciplinary Discussions - 20% (each)
- Four-year plan of study - 20%
- Interview or Field Trip - 20%

### Participation

Participation is vital to success in this course. Ways to participate include coming to class on time, contributing to discussions, and taking notes. Another is completing coursework on time. ESI4020 is a one-unit course, which means it will require about two hours of studying per week. Studying includes doing the assigned readings, writings, and film viewings, and scheduling voluntary office hours.

Use of cell phones will not be permitted unless you have an academic accommodation OR I give you specific permission. **If you use your device to disengage from the course discussion, I will ask you to leave that day and try again next time.**

### Assignments

#### A) Disciplinary Discussions

Each week, a student will lead the class in a discussion of an article of his or her choice. The discussion leader must explain the purpose and significance of the article, and leave us with questions or ideas to consider. These discussions will exhibit the varied challenges of environmental change and the disciplinary and interdisciplinary methods we can use to understand them. Each student will lead us in two discussions during the semester. Each discussion must be about a different topic, by a different author, and from a different disciplinary perspective. Some disciplines include Anthropology; Art and Design; Biology; Business; Chemistry; Computer Science; Creative Writing; Engineering; History; Journalism; Modern and Foreign Language; Literature; Political Science; Music; Sociology; and Theology.

**One week before your presentation**, you must email Dr. Cater a link to the article you'll be discussing. The link will be made available to the class, which will read the article.

**On the day of your presentation**, you must provide a handout or a visual (PowerPoint, etc) to guide us in your discussion. The discussion must be about 15 minutes long and interactive. Handouts or visuals must be 3-5 pages/slides in length, turned in to Canvas, and include the following:

- 1) a summary (75 words) of the article that includes the author, title, and source (link) and highlights the main argument
- 2) a summary (75 words) of the issues raised, questions asked, and evidence analyzed that reflects the article's disciplinary perspective
- 3) a summary (75 words) of why we should care about the environmental challenges under review

4) a list of questions/ideas (2-3) that we should ponder and/or a list of credible action steps we can take

Example articles:

[https://www.bu.edu/articles/2023/what-can-the-bible-teach-us-about-climate-change/Links to an external site.](https://www.bu.edu/articles/2023/what-can-the-bible-teach-us-about-climate-change/Links%20to%20an%20external%20site.)

[https://www.nature.com/articles/s41370-024-00676-9Links to an external site.](https://www.nature.com/articles/s41370-024-00676-9Links%20to%20an%20external%20site.)

A resource hub that might be helpful: [https://www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/Links to an external site.](https://www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/Links%20to%20an%20external%20site.)

#### B) Mentorship Activity

Students will engage in two mentorship activities. The first activity is course selection advice. During the semester, students will consult with a senior Environmental Studies major and Dr. Cater to draft a four-year plan of study. We will discuss minor fields of study (required for ES majors) and possible career pathways that reflect your specific environmental interests.

For the second mentorship activity, students will choose to either conduct an informational interview or participate in a field trip. In the first option, students will work with Dr. Cater to connect with an experienced professional who can provide insights into different environmental careers, their day-to-day responsibilities, and passionate care for the environment. Professionals include academics, policymakers, and businesspeople, people who work in social services and non-profit organizations, churches, and more. Students must prepare their interview questions, submit a 2-3 page paper (12 point font, double-spaced) summarizing the interview, and share their experience with the class. In the second option, students will attend a field trip hosted by Surfrider Foundation at Balboa Park on Saturday, October 5. The Foundation will host a morning seminar on water pollution and an evening one on green building. You must host one of these seminars, write a 2-3 page reflection, and share your experience with the class.

#### Incomplete and Late Work

Don't submit incomplete or late work. Incomplete work can be completed and resubmitted for reduced credit (5% off) within one day of its original due date. Late work can be submitted for reduced credit (5% off each day) until two days from the original date; after that, it counts as an incomplete.

#### Final Exam Policy

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final exam on its scheduled day. No requests for early examinations or alternative days will be approved.

#### Academic Honesty Policy

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. **All work submitted electronically is automatically checked against Turn-It-In.** A faculty member who believes a situation involving

academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using the procedure in the university Catalog. For more information, see the following link:

[https://catalog.pointloma.edu/content.php?catoid=41&navoid=2435#Academic\\_Honesty](https://catalog.pointloma.edu/content.php?catoid=41&navoid=2435#Academic_Honesty)  
[Links to an external site.](#)

### University Copyright Policy

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the U.S. Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

### Spiritual Care

PLNU strives to be a place where students grow as whole persons. To this end, we provide resources for our students to encounter God and grow in their Christian faith. If you have questions, a desire to meet with the chaplain, or if you have prayer requests, you can contact the [Office of Student Life and Formation](#).

### State Authorization

State authorization is a formal determination by a state that Point Loma Nazarene University is approved to conduct activities regulated by that state. In certain states outside California, Point Loma Nazarene University is not authorized to enroll online (distance education) students. If a student moves to another state after admission to the program and/or enrollment in an online course, continuation within the program and/or course will depend on whether Point Loma Nazarene University is authorized to offer distance education courses in that state. It is the student's responsibility to notify the institution of any change in his or her physical location. Refer to the map on [State Authorization](#) to view which states allow online (distance education) outside of California.

### Artificial Intelligence Policy

If it is part of your creative process, you are allowed to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g, ChatGPT, iA Writer, Marmot, Botowski, etc.) in this course. However, I would like you to speak to me before about how you plan to use this tool in your work. Another thing to note: most publications DO NOT allow use of AI in creative works. At this current cultural moment, using AI will limit where you can publish and work.

Any work that utilizes AI-based tools must be clearly identified as such, including the specific tool(s) used. For example, if you use ChatGPT, you must cite ChatGPT including the version number, year, month and day of the query and the statement "Generated using OpenAI. <https://chat.openai.com/Links to an external site..>"

Further, you must include with your work the sequential prompts and methodology that you used to generate it. Failure to indicate AI as part of the work will be considered plagiarism. It is important that you protect your colleagues' intellectual property. Providing AI with samples of your colleagues' works will result in an F in this course.

### Academic Accommodations Policy

PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities. Students with disabilities may request course-related accommodations by contacting the Educational Access Center (EAC), located in the Bond Academic Center ([EAC@pointloma.edu](mailto:EAC@pointloma.edu) or 619-849-2486). Once a student's eligibility for accommodation has been determined, the EAC will issue an academic accommodation plan ("AP") to all faculty who teach courses in which the student is enrolled each semester. PLNU highly recommends that students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester/term about the implementation of their AP in that particular course and/or if they do not wish to utilize some or all of the elements of their AP in that course.

Students who need accommodations for a disability should contact the EAC as early as possible (i.e., ideally before the beginning of the semester) to ensure appropriate accommodations can be provided. It is the student's responsibility to make the first contact with the EAC.

### Language and Belonging

Point Loma Nazarene University faculty are committed to helping create a safe and hospitable learning environment for all students. As Christian scholars we are keenly aware of the power of language and believe in treating others with dignity. As such, it is important that our language be equitable, inclusive, and prejudice free. Inclusive/Bias-free language is the standard outlined by all major academic style guides, including MLA, APA, and Chicago, and it is the expected norm in university-level work. Good writing and speaking do not use unsubstantiated or irrelevant generalizations about personal qualities such as age, disability, economic class, ethnicity, marital status, parentage, political or religious beliefs, race, gender, sex, or sexual orientation. Inclusive language also avoids using stereotypes or terminology that demeans persons or groups based on age, disability, class, ethnicity, gender, race, language, or national origin. Respectful use of language is particularly important when referring to those outside of the religious and lifestyle commitments of those in the PLNU community. By working toward precision and clarity of language, we mark ourselves as serious and respectful scholars, and we model the Christ-like quality of hospitality.

You may report an incident(s) using the [Bias Incident Reporting Form](#)[Links to an external site.](#)

### Sexual Misconduct and Discrimination

In support of a safe learning environment, if you (or someone you know) have experienced any form of sexual discrimination or misconduct, including sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, know that accommodations and resources are available through the Title IX Office at [pointloma.edu/Title-IX](http://pointloma.edu/Title-IX). Please be aware that under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, faculty and staff are required to disclose information about such misconduct to the Title IX Office.

If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact Counseling Services

at [counselingservices@pointloma.edu](mailto:counselingservices@pointloma.edu) or find a list of campus pastors at [pointloma.edu/title-ix](http://pointloma.edu/title-ix).

### Attendance and Participation Policy

Regular and punctual attendance at all class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions, the faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university withdrawal date or, after that date, receive an "F" grade.

See [Academic PoliciesLinks to an external site.](#) in the Undergraduate Academic Catalog.

### Use of Technology

In order to be successful in the online or hybrid environment, you'll need to meet the minimum technology and system requirements; please refer to the [Technology and System Requirements](#) information. Additionally, students are required to have headphone speakers, microphone, or webcams compatible with their computer available to use. Please note that any course with online proctored exams requires a computer with a camera (tablets are not compatible) to complete exams online. Problems with technology do not relieve you of the responsibility of participating, turning in your assignments, or completing your class work.

### PLNU Recording NotificationⓈ

In order to enhance the learning experience, please be advised that this course may be recorded by the professor for educational purposes, and access to these recordings will be limited to enrolled students and authorized personnel. Note that all recordings are subject to copyright protection. Any unauthorized distribution or publication of these recordings without written approval from the University (refer to the Dean) is strictly prohibited.

### Schedule

Dr. Cater reserves the right to make adjustments if necessary.

Sept. 4 - Introduction

Sept. 11 - How to Use Workday with Sloane Young

**Sept 13** - (optional) Welcome Back Dinner at Cater's House, 5pm, 4644 Adair

Sept. 18 - Disciplinary Discussions #1

Please read the following articles and prepare 1-2 written questions: <https://academic.oup.com/iob/article/4/1/obac041/6726633?searchresult=1>[Links to an external site.](#)

<https://eprints.soas.ac.uk/21933/2/7PageReport.pdf>[Links to an external site.](#)

\*Presenters: Charlie Lupo, Grace Berryhill, Julia Voss

Sept. 25 - Disciplinary Discussions #1 Due  
\*Landon Lorge, Lily Montes de Oca, Malie Vickers

Oct. 2 - Disciplinary Discussions #1 Due  
\*Ranen Seeck, Victoria Niizawa, Alandra Campos

**Oct 5** - (optional) Surfrider Foundation Event: "A Public Health Forum on the Tijuana Watershed Pollution Crisis". Listen to a moderated discussion with Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha and Imperial Beach Mayor Paloma Aguirre. Balboa Park 9:30-11AM. Lunch to follow.

4-6PM (in Balboa Park) there will be a forum on transboundary green infrastructure and nature-based solutions.

Oct. 9 - Disciplinary Discussions #1 Due  
\*Adam Grubb, Annalise Collis, Avery Plum

Oct. 16 - Mentoring and Advising with Sloane Young

Oct. 23 - Four-Year Plan of Study Due

Oct. 30 - Putting Idealism to Work: Rowdy Keelor, New Roots Institute

**Nov. 5** - (optional) - Dr. Bronner's Magic Soap at 9:30-10:45am in BAC102

Join a conversation about green business with the Chief of Sustainability and PLNU alum Brennan Ziegler

Nov. 6 - Interview or Field Trip Assignment Due  
\*Adam Grubb, Analise Collis, Avery Plum

Nov. 13 - NO CLASS. Instead, attend the Matt Bell guest lecture at 7pm at Crill Hall.

Nov. 20 - Mentoring: Interview or Field Trip Due

\*Charlie Lupo, Grace Berryhill, Julia Voss

Nov. 27 - NO CLASS

Dec. 4 - Mentoring: Interview or Field Trip Due

\*Landon Lorge, Lily Montes de Oca, Malie Vickers, Alandra Campos

Dec. 11 - Mentoring: Interview or Field Trip Due

\*Ranen Seeck, Sloane Young, Victoria Niizawa

Dec. 18 - Final Exam 1:30-4:00PM - Disciplinary Discussions #2 Due

