



Course Title: **Introduction to Environmental Issues**

Course Number: **ENV100**

Term: **Fall 2025**

Course Credits: **3**

Class Meeting Times: **Tues & Thur: 11:30-12:50**

Class Location: **Sullivan Library Hall 102**

Instructor Name: **Dr. Lupita Ruiz-Jones**

You can call me Dr. Lupita or Professor Lupita

Email: **guadalupe.ruiz-jones@chaminade.edu**

Office Location: **Wesselkamper 104**

Cell Phone (welcome to text, lmk who you are): **505.603.1985**

Office Hours: **Tues 2:30-3:30 / Wed 12:30-3:30 / Thur 2:30-3:30** in-person or zoom (zoom link in Canvas - text me to lmk you want to zoom). **Also happy to schedule a meeting for a time that works better for you!**

### **Course description from University catalog**

An interdisciplinary course in which students are introduced to the ethical issues, tools and techniques involved in environmental and sustainability problem-solving. Students are presented with a series of real (often Hawaiian) environmental problems that they will investigate, attempt to understand in entirety and devise a solution or solution-strategy for. This hands-on approach will allow students to discover the many disciplines and techniques involved in ameliorating real environmental challenges.

### **Course overview**

This is one of the first courses along the path to three majors at Chaminade: Our twenty-plus-year old Environmental Studies major, our new Environmental Science major and our new Community & Public Health degree (Environment & Health Track)! If none of these are your major, have no fear! This course also counts for your General Education Core- Critical Thinking requirement and we are thrilled you have decided to join us planet savers!

This class is the most general, interdisciplinary and inclusive course you'll take as an Environmental student. It introduces you to a variety of careers related to the environment and environmental human health. You'll discover through the complexity of environmental challenges and the diversity of environmental values, and you will begin to learn and use the tools and techniques available for successful environmental problem solving. Very often, we, as a class, also come up with new creative and timely problem-solving tools of our own.

In this class you will be introduced to real (international and regional) environmental issues, which you will investigate, attempt to understand in entirety, and devise a solution or solution-strategy for. **The issues are organized throughout the semester into three "modules:" (1) WATER & AIR issues, (2) TERRESTRIAL ECOSYSTEM issues, and (3) ENERGY-WATER-FOOD SECURITY issues.**

At the end of each module you will choose your own contemporary issue that pertains to the module and work in groups to dive deep into the topic. You will gain an understanding of the problem, collaborate with one another and discuss the problem, devise possible solutions, negotiate, and finally reach a hypothetical solution(s) which you will "advocate" for in presentations to the class.

Each subsequent module will be more complex than the previous one, requiring you to draw upon the perspectives of a wider range of disciplines, manage more variables and/or consider more stakeholders. This course is meant to introduce you to the sorts of multidisciplinary tasks you will be learning about in greater detail in later courses and performing in your future careers.

**My teaching philosophy** is that we will have a more engaging, and fun time, together if you come prepared. That means get the books (either buy your own copies, use the copies in the library, or borrow the student loaners from me), read the assigned sections prior to class, and practice critical thinking, which requires energy and is active. You will not enjoy your experience if you just show up without a clue of the day's topic and sit there expecting to be entertained without making any contribution.

### **Service learning requirement**

Through participation in organized service learning activities you will discover the many disciplines and techniques involved in ameliorating environmental challenges; and see how we put our skills and our Marianist and Pacific Island values into action for the good of the community. Service learning requirements will be described in class.

### **Alignment of Natural Sciences Courses with Marianist and Hawaiian values**

The Natural Sciences Division provides integrative course content taught by experienced, dedicated, and well-educated instructors. *We educate in the family spirit* – every classroom is an *Ohana* (family) and you can expect to be respected yet challenged in an environment that is supportive and inclusive by instructors who take the time to personally get to know and care for you. *We educate for service, justice and peace*, because many of the most pressing global issues (climate change, health inequity, poverty, justice) are those which science and technology investigate, establish ethical parameters for, and offer solutions to. *We educate for adaptation and change*. In science and technology, the only constant is change. Data, techniques, technologies, questions, interpretations, and ethical landscapes are constantly evolving, and we teach students to thrive on this dynamic uncertainty.

The study of science and technology is formative: exploring human creativity and potential in the development of technologies and scientific solutions; engaging in the stewardship of the natural world; and, promoting social justice. We provide opportunities to engage with the problems that face Hawai'i and the Pacific region through the Natural Sciences curriculum, in particular, those centered around severe challenges in health, poverty, environmental resilience, and erosion of traditional culture. The Marianist Educational Values relate to Native Hawaiian ideas of *mana* (spiritual energy of power and strength), *na'auao* (wisdom, enlightenment), *ohana*, *aloha* (love, affection, generosity, speaking from the heart, patience, and listening) and *aina* (love for the land and its people). We intend for our Natural Sciences programs to be culturally-sustaining, rooted in our Hawaiian place, and centered on core values of *Maiiau*, be neat, prepared, careful in all we do; *Makawalu*, demonstrate foresight and planning; *`Ai*, sustain mind and body; *Pa`a Na`au*, learn deeply.

### **Environmental Studies Program Learning Goals**

Upon completion of the undergraduate B.S. program in Environmental Studies, students will be able to:

1. Authenticate their commitment to service, justice and peace through experiential project-based activities that enhance the condition of the integral ecology, care for creation and value all voices.
2. Apply analytical methods and skills from multiple disciplines to environmental problems.
3. Participate in, plan and execute environmental change-making strategies that employ scientific, political, socio-cultural, artistic, educational and economic skills and knowledge.

4. Design and describe new futures and ideas that solve environmental problems and foster sustainability.
5. Pursue throughout their education the ever-changing knowledge and skills that prepare them for the adaptation and change essential to environmental problem solving.

**Course Learning Outcomes** alignment to **Environmental Studies** Program Learning Outcomes.

Students who successfully complete this course will demonstrate:

Course Learning Outcomes	PLO 1	PLO 2	PLO 3	PLO 4	PLO 5
1. Knowledge of diverse environmental ethics and their implications for the treatment of nature.	X	X	X		
2. An understanding of the positive roles Judeo-Christian, Polynesian and other worldviews can play in environmental problem solving.		X	X	X	X
3. Knowledge of the importance of natural resources for the holistic health of diverse peoples.	X				X
4. A thorough understanding of some of the major historic environmental crises.	X			X	
5. An awareness of the complexity of environmental issues and the important role of ethics, science, education, economics, the media and politics in environmental problem solving.		X	X	X	
6. Knowledge of the diverse perspectives of stakeholders.	X		X		
7. The ability to take a balanced outlook to environmental problems.			X	X	X
8. The ability to collaborate with others in developing a systems approach to creative environmental problem-solving.	X		X	X	X

9. Knowledge of the major federal, state and non-governmental environmental agencies.			X	X	X
10. Familiarity with a variety of careers in the environment.			X	X	X
11. An understanding of the connections between academic work and real-life situations.	X		X		
12. Increased interest and experience in putting Marianist Values and Pacific Island values into action to solve problems.	X	X	X	X	

### **Environmental Science Program Learning Goals**

Upon completion of the undergraduate B.S. program in Environmental Science, students will be able to:

1. Authenticate their commitment to service, justice and peace through experiential project-based activities that enhance the condition of the integral ecology, care for creation and value all voices.
2. Apply scientific reasoning and methodology to environmental problems.
3. Identify the major physical, chemical and biological components, interactions and cycles of earth systems and ecosystems.
4. Propose, design and participate in scientific research projects that document, describe and/or help solve environmental problems and foster sustainability.
5. Pursue throughout their education new scientific knowledge and techniques that prepare them for the adaptation and change essential to environmental problem solving.

**Course Learning Outcomes** alignment to **Environmental Science** Program Learning Outcomes.

Students who successfully complete this course will demonstrate:

Course Learning Outcomes	PLO 1	PLO 2	PLO 3	PLO 4	PLO 5
1. Knowledge of diverse environmental ethics and their implications for the treatment of nature.	X				

2. An understanding of the positive roles Judeo-Christian, Polynesian and other worldviews can play in environmental problem solving.					
3. Knowledge of the importance of natural resources for the holistic health of diverse peoples.	X	X	X		X
4. A thorough understanding of some of the major historic environmental crises.	X	X	X		X
5. An awareness of the complexity of environmental issues and the important role of ethics, science, education, economics, the media and politics in environmental problem solving.		X	X	X	X
6. Knowledge of the diverse perspectives of stakeholders.	X			X	X
7. The ability to take a balanced outlook to environmental problems.				X	X
8. The ability to collaborate with others in developing a systems approach to creative environmental problem-solving.	X	X		X	
9. Knowledge of the major federal, state and non-governmental environmental agencies.			X		X
10. Familiarity with a variety of careers in the environment.			X		X
11. An understanding of the connections between academic work and real-life situations.	X			X	
12. Increased interest in being civically engaged due to your service learning experience.	X			X	X

**Required course texts (both available in the bookstore; a copy of each is in the Library on reserve and in my office for borrowing)**

**Earth Insights:** A Multicultural Survey of Ecological Ethics from the Mediterranean Basin to the Australian Outback. 1994. J.B. Callicott. University of California Press, Berkeley, CA.

**What We Owe the Future.** 2022. William MacAskill. Basic Books, Oneworld Publications. [ISBN 978-1-5416-1862-6]; <https://whatweowethefuture.com/>

\*Supplementary material will be provided pretty much weekly in the form of articles, podcasts, and videos.

**Assessment of perceived learning**

Because this class is an important introductory course for three majors and one of the General Education Core Learning Outcomes I will be administering an assessment of perceived learning pre- and post-survey. These will be given online on the first and last days of the course.

**See Canvas Modules for the tentative schedule**

**Grading breakdown**

\* The grade listed in Canvas is NOT accurate because it does not include Participation. If you are ever curious about your grade ASK ME.

- 10% = Attendance ~ Roll Call in Canvas
- 8.5% = Engaged participation with peers, me, and guests (requires arriving to class prepared), includes attendance.
  - To earn an A involves:
    - Regularly asking questions and responding to questions.
    - Being prepared to share your thoughts on the material assigned for class discussion.
  - To earn a D involves:
    - Being present.
    - Demonstration of lack of preparedness for discussions.
    - Being distracted by phone/laptop.
    - Lack of active listening.
- 20% = Canvas discussion posts and regular mini quizzes (how I will assess your reading comprehension) and reflections. The discussion posts are a great way to prepare to engage in class discussions. These are generally not accepted late because they are meant to prepare you for class discussion.

- 22% = Environmental Issue Team Presentations: two team presentations on current issues at the end of the WATER & AIR module and TERRESTRIAL module (on local or global issues that fit into that modules' category). In addition to presenting the situation with supporting evidence you will also share solutions you have brainstormed.
- 5% = Solution Analysis Project related to your Op-Ed topic.
- 29.5% = Final Project: Op-Ed Article (includes annotated bibliography, outline, version 1, giving peers feedback, and version 2)
- 5% = Participation in service learning events (will be explained in class)

A = >90%: Outstanding scholarship and an unusual degree of intellectual initiative

B = 80-89.9%: Superior work done in a consistent and intellectual manner

C = 70-79.9%: Average grade indicating a competent grasp of subject matter

D = 60-69.9%: Inferior work of the lowest passing grade

F = <59.9%: Failed to grasp the minimum subject matter; no credit given

### **Late work policy**

This policy applies to components of the major projects: Environmental Issue Team Presentations (2), Solution Analysis Project, and the Op-ed Project. If something happens and you know you need an extension on an assignment, contact me. If we do not make a prior arrangement, 10% of the assignment points will be deducted for each day after the assignment due date. Generally canvas discussion posts are not accepted late.

### **Attendance and your grade**

As an enrolled student in the course, I expect that you will attend every class unless you are sick. **If you have more than two unexcused absences your grade will be negatively impacted.** An important aspect of learning is active engagement. There is no substitute for being in class when it comes to understanding and thinking critically about the material. Unexcused absences occur when playing hooky to go surfing, to sleep, to cram for an exam in another class, etc.

### **Assignment activities**

#### **Canvas discussion posts & regular mini quizzes**

You will post questions you think will stimulate your peers to have a class discussion or post responses to specific questions about the readings or course material. Questions you develop for class discussion will be due the night before we meet to have class.



### **Environmental Issue Team Presentations**

Presentations will be based on a particular local, regional, or international environmental issue of the team's choice. Presentations will (1) illustrate your understanding of the issue, (2) describe your awareness of each of the components AND "stakeholders" involved in the issue, (3) differentiate your understanding of all of the ethical aspects of the issue and (4) reveal and defend your ability to design a solution to the problem, which may incorporate a number of compromises in the eyes of each of the stakeholders. The presentations will conclude the first two modules: WATER & AIR issues and TERRESTRIAL issues.

### **Final Op-Ed Project**

You will write a short op-ed article focused on a specific environmental case study. The purpose of your op-ed is to convince your target audience of the urgency of a current issue/problem and the need to adopt your recommendation. Your op-ed will employ scholarly research and literature review to illustrate the issue and develop a position for a solution you advocate. You will also incorporate the ethical perspective and use ideas you will read about in the course text Earth Insights.

### **Extra credit opportunities**

Throughout the course I will notify you of opportunities to engage with ideas and scholars outside of Chaminade. Be sure to get pre-approve from me if it is not something I share with the class.

If looking for extra credit, a place to look for community service opportunities: <http://www.conservationconnections.org/>

To receive credit for extra credit you will need to submit a reflection on Canvas for each activity you participate in. Find the assignment on canvas, in the top module, called Extra Credit. **Max accepted will be 3 extra credit opportunities.** The points can be used towards missed discussion post or to bump up other grades.

### **Workload Expectations ~ Credit Hour Policy**

- ENV100 is a 3 credit class requiring a MINIMUM of 135 clock hours of student engagement, per the official CUH Credit Hour Policy.
- We will meet twice a week: 2h 40min each week = ~40h for 15 weeks
- You will have reading and short writing assignments that are expected to take you ~2.5h per week (37.5h).

- Preparing for your Environmental Issue Team Presentations is expected to take you ~20h.
- Preparing for your Solution Analysis Project is expected to take you ~10h.
- For your Final Op-Ed Project you will spend time researching, drafting, giving feedback, and revising. This is expected to take you ~25h.
- It is expected that completing the class service learning project will take you ~6h.

The unit of semester credit is defined as university-level credit that is awarded for the completion of coursework. One credit hour reflects the amount of work represented in the intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement for those learning outcomes. Each credit hour earned at Chaminade University should result in a minimum of 45 hours of engagement, regardless of varying credits, duration, modality, or degree level. This equates to one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester. Terms that have alternative lengths, such as 10 week terms, should have an equivalent amount of faculty instruction and out-of-class student work to meet each credit hour. Direct instructor engagement and out-of-class work result in total student engagement time of 45 hours for one credit. The number of engagement hours may be higher, as needed to meet specific learning outcomes.

### **Course website**

We will use Canvas and google drive.

### **Classroom atmosphere**

#### **Learning through discussion**

In class and online discussions provide an excellent opportunity to learn from classmates; to formulate and rethink your own understanding of the material; to practice thinking on your feet; and to critically evaluate evidence.

Over the semester, you will develop your skills in:

- ❖ Engaging substantively with different types of sources in critical and productive ways
- ❖ Posing thought provoking questions and collaborating with peers
- ❖ Effectively communicating your ideas, both orally and in writing

### **Expectations of students in class**

You have the responsibility to commit yourself to your academic work in ways that will increase your learning. In this course, following the guidelines below will give you the best chance of growing as a critical thinking learner:

Arrive to every class on time, which means settled in your seat by the start time.

Approach the work of the course with the habits of mind critical for success at the university level: intellectual curiosity, critical engagement, and creativity.

Prepare by doing all the required reading and assignments before class. Feel free to bring printed copies of articles or notes you took while reading to guide you during discussions.

Listen actively and with respect to your peers. We listen to each other with dignity by thoughtfully grappling with the ideas of others and using non-verbal cues to show we are paying attention to them. Active listening is essential to engaged participation.

Speak up and challenge yourself to share your thoughts and ideas with your classmates in skillful and respectful ways. Being critical of your peers is essential for proper academic discourse, but we strive to do so respectfully. Since you are thinking on your feet, you are not expected to speak with perfect clarity. Class discussion is a cooperative enterprise, not a competition. A quality contribution is one that helps stimulate our learning. A thoughtful response to another student's comment leads to a much richer learning experience than a long and well-researched but disconnected comment.

Inquire by asking questions—this is a key aspect of learning. Ask yourself questions as you engage with the course material. Engage with your peers by asking questions. Often there is not a single “right” answer.

### **Expectations you can have of me**

I will continually strive to be an engaging, thoughtful, and critical teacher. One of my primary goals is to create a learning environment where everyone feels included. You can expect me to make space for you to share your thoughts and questions. You can also expect me to listen to your feedback on how the class is going -- please share your observations and ideas with me.

### **Technical Assistance for Canvas**

- ❖ Search for help on specific topics or get tips in [Canvas Students](#)

- ❖ [Live chat with Canvas Support for students](#)
- ❖ Canvas Support Hotline for students: +1-833-209-6111
- ❖ Watch this [video to get you started](#)
- ❖ [Online tutorials](#): click on “Students” role to access tutorials
- ❖ Contact the Chaminade IT Helpdesk for technical issues: [helpdesk@chaminade.edu](mailto:helpdesk@chaminade.edu) or call (808) 735-4855

## **Course Policies**

### **Communication with me**

I’m always happy to address your questions. I generally answer emails within 24 hours on weekdays and by the following weekday if sent on a weekend or holiday. Please do not wait until the last minute to ask questions. I expect you to communicate with me about any issues related to the course. Clear and timely communication can anticipate many standard problems that arise during a course. I am also super happy to just chat with you about topics you find interesting or you are curious about.

### **Grades of "Incomplete"**

You may negotiate an incomplete grade with me when there are specific justifying circumstances, but it is necessary that you have at least completed 70% of the required assignments. When submitting a grade the “I” will be accompanied by the alternative grade that will automatically be assigned after 90 days. These include IB, IC, ID, and IF. If only an “I” is submitted the default grade is F. The completion of the work, evaluation, and reporting of the final grade is due within 90 days after the end of the semester or term; this may not be extended.

### **Cell phones, tablets, and laptops**

Out of consideration for your classmates, please set your cell phone to silent mode during class. Students are encouraged to bring laptops or tablets to class as I will at times assign online activities and readings that will require the use of a laptop or tablet. It is well known that these devices can be extremely distracting to your learning as well as the learning experience of your peers. When you are in class I expect that you are focused on the material and not multitasking by checking email, social media, or unrelated material on your device.

## **Important Information**

### **Academic Honesty**

Academic honesty is an essential aspect of all learning, scholarship, and research. It is one of the values regarded most highly by academic communities throughout the world. Violations of the principle of academic honesty are extremely serious and will not be tolerated.

Students are responsible for promoting academic honesty at Chaminade by not participating in any act of dishonesty and by reporting any incidence of academic dishonesty to an instructor or to a University official. Academic dishonesty may include theft of records or examinations, alteration of grades, and plagiarism, in addition to more obvious dishonesty.

Questions of academic dishonesty in a particular class are first reviewed by the instructor, who must make a report with recommendations to the Dean of the Academic Division. Punishment for academic dishonesty will be determined by the instructor and the Dean of Academic Division and may include an “F” grade for the work in question, an “F” grade for the course, suspension, or dismissal from the University.

For the most up to date information, please refer to the [Academic Honesty Policy](#) on the Chaminade University Catalog website.

### **Title IX and Nondiscrimination Statement**

Chaminade University of Honolulu is committed to providing a learning, working and living environment that promotes the dignity of all people, inclusivity and mutual respect and is free of all forms of sex discrimination and gender-based violence, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. As a member of the University faculty, I am required to immediately report any incident of sex discrimination or gender-based violence to the campus Title IX Coordinator.

### **Nondiscrimination Policy & Notice of Nondiscrimination**

Chaminade University of Honolulu does not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates, as required by Title IX and its regulations, including in admission and employment. Inquiries about Title IX may be referred to the University’s Title IX Coordinator, the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights, or both and contact information may be found at the [Chaminade University Title IX Office Contact Information and Confidential Resources website](#). On-campus Confidential Resources may also be found here at [CAMPUS CONFIDENTIAL RESOURCES](#).

The University’s Nondiscrimination Policy and Grievance Procedures can be located on the University webpage at:

<https://chaminade.edu/compliance/title-ix-nondiscrimination-policies-procedures/>.

To report information about conduct that may constitute sex discrimination or make a complaint of sex discrimination under Title IX, please refer to the [Campus Incident Report form](#). Chaminade University of Honolulu prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates. The NOTICE of NONDISCRIMINATION can be found here: [Notice of Nondiscrimination](#).

### **CUH Alert Emergency Notification**

To get the latest emergency communication from Chaminade University, students' cell numbers will be connected to Chaminade's emergency notification text system. When you log in to the Chaminade portal, you will be asked to provide some emergency contact information. If you provide a cellphone number, you will receive a text from our emergency notification system asking you to confirm your number. You must respond to that message to complete your registration and get emergency notifications on your phone.

### **Assessment for Student Work**

With the goal of continuing to improve the quality of educational services offered to students, Chaminade University conducts assessments of student achievement of course, program, and institutional learning outcomes. Student work is used anonymously as the basis of these assessments, and the work you do in this course may be used in these assessment efforts.

### **Student with Disabilities Statement**

Chaminade University of Honolulu offers accommodations for all actively enrolled students with disabilities in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and the ADA Amendments Act (2008).

Students are responsible for contacting Kokua Ike: Center for Student Learning to schedule an appointment. Verification of their disability will be requested through appropriate documentation and once received it will take up to approximately 2–3 weeks to review them. Appropriate paperwork will be completed by the student before notification will be sent out to their instructors. Accommodation paperwork will not be automatically sent out to instructors each semester, as the student is responsible to notify Kokua Ike via email at [ada@chaminade.edu](mailto:ada@chaminade.edu) each semester if changes or notifications are needed.

### **Kōkua 'Ike: Tutoring & Learning Services**

Chaminade is proud to offer free, one-on-one tutoring and writing assistance to all students. Tutoring and writing help is available on campus at Kōkua 'Ike: Center for Student Learning in a variety of subjects (including, but are not limited to biology, chemistry, math, nursing, English,

etc.) from trained Peer and Professional Tutors. Please check [Kōkua 'Ike's](#) website for the latest times, list of drop-in hours, and information on scheduling an appointment. Free online tutoring is also available via TutorMe. Tutor Me can be accessed 24/7 from your Canvas account. Simply click on Account > TutorMe. For more information, please contact Kōkua 'Ike at [tutoring@chaminade.edu](mailto:tutoring@chaminade.edu) or 808-739-8305.

*This syllabus and course schedule are living documents: they are free to change. I try to adhere as closely as possible, but there will be times in which we will take longer on a particular topic or add or delete a topic to enhance the course. I like to be able to react to you as the course proceeds and go with the flow a bit in order to make the course experience sort of custom fit to you!*

*You are responsible for all of the information in this document: not reading it does not make you exempt from knowing what's in it!*

*Use this syllabus to keep you organized and understand how your grade is determined.*