The environmental justice movement seeks greater participation by marginalized communities in environmental policy, and equity in the distribution of environmental harms and benefits. This course will examine the meaning of “environmental justice,” the history of the movement, the empirical foundation for the movement’s claims, and specific policy questions. Although environmental justice is a transnational movement, our primary focus is the United States.

This course satisfies the Social Inquiry, QRE, and Intercultural Domestic Studies curricular requirements.

**Required Texts:**

- McGurty, Eileen. *Transforming Environmentalism*
- Other readings posted on moodle

**Assessment:**

- Paper #1: 30%
- Paper #2: 30%
- Group case study project: 30%
- Participation: 10%

**COURSE OUTLINE**

**Class 1:** Introduction

**Case Studies of Environmental (In)Justice**

**Class 2:** Foundations of Environmental Injustice

Denton & Massey, *American Apartheid* Ch. 4
Cole and Foster, *From the Ground Up: Environmental Racism and the Rise of Environmental Justice Movement*. Ch. 2-3
**Class 3**: History of the Environmental Justice Movement
McGurty, *Transforming Environmentalism*, ch. 1-3
Smith, Case Studies: An Introduction

**Class 4**: McGurty, *Transforming Environmentalism*, ch. 4-end.

**Class 5**: Bullard, *Dumping in Dixie*, Ch 1, 3,4

**Class 6**: Lerner, *Diamond*, Ch 1-6

**Class 7**: Lerner, *Diamond*, Ch. 7-end

**Class 8**: Freudenberg et al, *Catastrophe in the Making*, Prologue -- ch.5

**Class 9**: Freudenberg, *Catastrophe*, ch 6-end

**Class 10**: Designing Good Case Studies
Case Studies: An Introduction (again)

**What Is “Justice”?**

**Class 11**: Justice and collective responsibility
Smith, Kimberly, “Theories of Justice: An Introduction”

**Class 12**: Cont.
***Case selection due in class***
***Case study groups will schedule a meeting with Danya Leebaw next week***

**Class 13**: Environmental and racial justice
Bullard, African American Historical and Cultural Perspectives on EJ
Principles of Environmental Justice
Schlosberg, “The Justice of Environmental Justice,” in Moral and Political Reasoning in Environmental Practice, ed. Light & de-Shalit

**Class 14**: Restorative Justice and Collective Responsibility
Moltchanova, Anna “Gulf Coast Crisis: National Identity and Collective responsibility”

***BREAK***

**Class 15**: Environmentalism and EJ

***Paper #1 due in class***
***First peer evaluations for group project due***
Quantitative Approaches to EJ (QRE section)

**Class 16:** Bullard, *Dumping in Dixie*, ch. 2, 5

**Class 17:** cont.
Cutter, Susan, * Issues in Environmental Justice; Role of Geographic Scale in Monitoring Environmental Justice; Setting Environmental Justice in Space and Place [All from *Hazards, Vulnerability and Environmental Justice*]

**Class 18:** UCC study, Toxic Wastes and Race

**Class 19:** Konisky, ed., *Failed Promises: Evaluating the Federal Government’s Response to Environmental Justice* (MIT 2015), Ch. 7

**Class 20:** Social Vulnerability
Cutter, Susan. *The Geography of Social Vulnerability: Race, Class and Catastrophe*
Cutter et. Al., *Social Vulnerability to Environmental Hazards*

**Applying the EJ framework**

**Class 21:** Fukushima case study: Can the EJ framework apply to Japan?
Cousins, *Temporary Refuge*

**Class 22:** Cont
Shrader-Frechette, *Nuclear Catastrophe, Disaster Related Environmental Injustice, and Fukushima, Japan*
Aldrich “Networks of power: institutions and local residents in post-Tohoku Japan” (in *Natural Disaster and Nuclear Crisis in Japan*, ed. Kingston 2012)

***Paper #2 due in class***

**Class 23:** Flint Water Crisis

“The science behind the Flint water crisis: corrosion of pipes, erosion of trust,” Conversation blogpost by Terese Olson (Civil engineering, UM-Ann Arbor)

“Flint’s water crisis is a blatant example of environmental injustice,” Conversation blogpost by Robert Bullard (Texas Southern University)

“Flint’s Water Crisis is no accident.” Lederman, from *In These Times.*

**Class 24:** TBD

**Class 25:** EJ and the new energy landscape (with guests Bex Klafter, Rafa Soto, & Amy Roach)

***First Draft of Case Study to be posted on moodle forum. Second peer evals due***

**Class 26:** Case study workshop
EJ and the Arts

Class 27: The Poetics of Environmental Justice
   Patterson, We Know This Place
   Mos Def, New World Water
   West, Diamonds from Sierra Leone Remix

Class 28: Conclusion: Discussion of case studies

***Final draft of Papers #1 and #2 due in class

***Case study due Monday March 12 at noon, with your final peer evaluations***
Paper #1: Political philosophy

Robert Nozick argues that involuntary redistribution of money from wealthy to poor citizens can be justified only to rectify some past injustice. Your paper should (1) concisely explain Nozick’s argument, (2) explore how his theory would apply to the case of Diamond, and (3) offer a critical evaluation of the theory.

I expect this paper to be 5-6 pages (double-space, 1-inch margins)

Due Wed Feb 7, in class. Final revision is due on Fri Mar 9, in class.

Paper #2: QRE exercise

The purpose of a Quantitative Reasoning exercise is to understand and demonstrate competently how quantitative reasoning is used in the development, evaluation, and presentation of principled argument. This paper asks you to demonstrate that competency. Using the quantitative studies we have examined, please respond to this question:

In her 1999 paper, “Issues in Environmental Justice Research,” Susan Cutter notes that “there is some skepticism as to whether or not injustices do, in fact, exist.” Do we now have stronger evidence of unequal distribution of environmental harms? What sort of additional research is needed to further substantiate EJ claims?

I expect this paper to be 5-6 pages (double-space, 1-inch margins)

Due: Fri Feb 23, in class. Final revision is due on Fri Mar 9, in class.
Group Case Study

Your case study is aimed at testing the “path of least resistance” theory. The goal of this paper is to learn what’s involved in doing a case study, and to see how a case study can be used to test or develop a theory.

The theory we’re testing states that environmental hazards are disproportionately sited in minority and/or poor neighborhoods, because these communities are disempowered. Siting unpopular facilities in these neighborhoods constitutes the “path of least resistance.”

You will test this theory using a case from the University of Michigan Environmental Justice website:

http://www.umich.edu/~snre492/cases.html

Please choose one of the domestic cases. Your task is to apply the “path of least resistance” theory to this case. The case studies weren’t written with this theory in mind, so you will probably have to do additional research to get all the relevant facts. The process and expectations for the paper are below:

Process:

- During Class 10 (Jan 24), we’ll develop a research protocol.
- On Monday, Jan 29 you will submit a brief write-up of the case you’ve chosen, explaining your case selection logic. (Why is this a good case to use?).
- During week 5, your group will meet with the reference librarian to discuss research strategies.
- On Wed, Feb. 7, you’ll turn in your first nonbinding peer evaluations.
- You will post a draft of your write up on the moodle discussion forum on Fri., March 2, with the second nonbinding peer evaluations. The following Monday we will workshop the case studies.
- You will turn in the final version on Monday, March 12, at noon, with your final binding peer evaluations.

Instructions for the case study write up:

Introduction: Explain the theory you’re testing and the case selection logic (is this a paradigm, typical, or atypical case?). What do you expect to learn from the case study? Also address data collection (be sure to give credit to the SNRE website and author of the original case study).

Narrative: Tell us what happened, focusing on the information that’s relevant to testing the theory.

Analysis: Was the theory supported? Did we discover any limitations in the theory? Or did the case study suggest that some other causal process is at play? Even if the “path of least resistance” theory isn’t supported, was there evidence of some other sort of injustice in the case?