# ENVS 437 CRN

# Global Learning Program

# Land, Food and People: Addressing Environmental Justice

# through Mutual Aid in Puerto Rico

# Total instructional hours - 100

# 5 credits

## Jan 10th, 24th, Feb 7th, 21st, March 6th, and 20th 2024– Pre-Trip classes, Zoom

## March 23rd – April 1st 2024– Field Study Program, Puerto Rico

## April 10th 2024 – Post-Trip Debrief, Zoom

**Instructor:** Gina Malley Campos, M.Ed. ginnamalleycampos@gmail.com 787-245-5511

## Course Description

This course focuses on environmental justice, decolonization, and community action within the Puerto Rican context of cultural & natural history, agroecology and land-based education. In collaboration with local non-profits in the Caribbean archipelago, this course explores environmental and social change through the lens of a critical pedagogy of place. Students will be introduced to a variety of community groups and initiatives set within diverse ecosystems in Puerto Rico, where spaces for dialogue, service, and reflection will be facilitated. Through visiting farms & community spaces, meeting with local change makers, and experiencing different ways of learning and teaching, this course will expand notions of the interrelationship between colonialism, sustainability, and education.

## Course objectives:

Students who complete this course successfully will:

● Situate historical forces that shape current socio-environmental landscapes in PR–including colonialism, climate change, and disaster capitalism (ENVS 1);

● Transfer academic learning to a real-world context where students will engage reciprocally and collaboratively with a diverse network of environmental and educational initiatives in PR by participating in the analysis of complex problems and creative solution-oriented actions (ENVS 3 & 4);

● Demonstrate effective and personalized leadership and group communication skills while modeling inclusive community values in their actions and language;

● Reflect productively upon their individual and collective roles as members of local/global socio-ecological communities. By the end of the course, students will produce a final presentation that integrates their personal experience and change journey with a critical pedagogy of place and socio-ecological justice (ENVS 2).

WWU Syllabus Policies:Please see the policies for students taking this course through WWU: **https://syllabi.wwu.edu**

## Readings

A reader is provided to contextualize Puerto Rican history and explore current topics in environmental justice, education and community action. Readings paired with audiovisual content aim to support cross disciplinary thinking and encourage critical reflection.

### Excerpts from:

* Aguon, Julian. (2022) The Properties of Perpetual Light. In No Country for Eight-Spot
* Butterflies.
* brown, adrienne maree. (2017) Interdependence and Decentralization. In Emergent Strategy.
* Galeano, Eduardo. (1971) Open Veins of Latin America: Five Centuries of the Pillage of a Continent.
* Klein, Naomi. (2018) The Battle for Paradise: Puerto Rico Takes on the Disaster Capitalists
* Lloréns, Hilda. (2021) Making Livable Words: Afro-Puerto Rican Women Building
* Environmental Justice
* Mcneill, J. R. (2010). Mosquito Empires: Ecology and War in the Greater Caribbean,
* 1620-1914.
* Morales, Ed (2019). A Brief History of US Colonialism in Puerto Rico. In Fantasy Island:
* Colonialism, Exploitation, and the Betrayal of Puerto Rico.
* Schwartz, Stuart B. (2016). Sea of Storms: A History of Hurricanes in the Greater Caribbean from Columbus to Katrina.

### Journals:

* Borges-Méndez, Ramón. Decolonizing Resilience: The Case of Reconstructing the Coffee Region of Puerto Rico After Hurricanes Irma and Maria
* Gruenwald, David A. The Best of Both Worlds: A Critical Pedagogy of Place
* Harrington, E. Typologies of Mutual Aid in Climate Resilience: Variation in Reciprocity,
* Solidarity, Self-Determination, and Resistance

### Articles:

● How the US Dictates What Puerto Rico Eats, New York Times

● Shock Doctrine Comes to Puerto Rico, Naomi Klein

● Decolonizing Decolonization, Yarimar Bonilla

● Forests Protect the Climate. A Future With More Storms Would Mean Trouble, New

York Times

● Rico’s National Park Forest Faces Long Road to Recovery

## Assignments

Pre-Trip

### 1. Pre-Course Assignment (50 pts): Introductions

Prepare an introduction of yourself to our learning community. Please give us a sense of where you are from, who you are now, and what sparks your desire to learn about environmental justice in Puerto Rico. You will be invited to share your work when we introduce ourselves to each other at the beginning of the class –creating something visual will help! One example might be a “tree of ecological literacy” where roots represent social and environmental influences, the trunk is where you are now, and the branches and leaves are how you envision your future. You might bring a map that charts your path, or a timeline that illustrates something important about where you came from and where you are going. Another might be a short narrative or story that you tell. Feel free to be creative and choose a form that best uses your strengths and talents! **The written portion of this assignment should be 2-3 pages.** Please try to incorporate a short section of your inquiry interest while in Puerto Rico. What is it that you are hoping to explore/learn more about?

### 2. Reading Reflections (20 pts each)

Prepare a short reading reflection for each of the main readings for this course. The purpose of this assignment is to elevate the quality of discussion during class meetings and while in Puerto Rico by ensuring that you have completed the readings and are prepared to engage in dialogue. Each reflection should include the following components and be **no more** than two paragraphs long (~250 words) and be submitted in the discussions section in Canvas.

a. What are the main points/arguments of the readings? (~4 sentences)

b. List 2-3 quotes/ideas that stood out to you, were new ideas, and/or you found compelling.

c. Prepare 2-3 questions for discussion. These should be open-ended questions you might ask of the author, or that you might ask to stimulate a conversation about the content of the article during class discussions and/or while visiting community groups in Puerto Rico.

During Trip

### 3. Daily Journal Entries (100pts)

In order to encourage critical and self reflection, as well as to facilitate the process of working towards the final presentation (see below assignment 5), you will be expected to make daily journal entries throughout the trip. Journal entries can be done in a diversity of formats– consider prose, poetry, drawing, timelines, collages, nature journaling, reflective, mind mapping, etc. Ideas and prompts will be shared prior to and during the trip.

### 4. Co-Facilitation: Morning Gathering & Group Reflection (100 pts)

Nourishing positive group communication and participating in meaningful discussions while traveling together as a cohort is an important part of this course. Demonstrating leadership through modeling inclusive community values is a way of personally and directly engaging with the topics discussed in this course: we can model mutual aid, decolonization, and community action in our day to day activities and relationships.

a. Co-facilitate a morning gathering your co-lead

During the trip, each day begins with a morning gathering where the group comes together to check in, prepare for the day, raise questions, etc. As a co-facilitator, you will share the day's agenda and tune into the group's needs. Your morning gathering facilitation should incorporate a reading or excerpt that is relevant to the topic to be explored during that day, the activity we will participate in, or simply something that you find useful or thought provoking. This can be an excerpt from a text that we’ve read together, a poem, a quote or some other source from our library.

b. Co-facilitate an evening group reflection with your co-lead

At the end of the day, you will co-facilitate a group reflection that provides space for the group to share feedback, insights, lows & highs of the experiences shared throughout the day. Feel free to check in with your instructor before your assigned day to go over plans and ideas.

c. Self-assessment

After your day of co-facilitation, you are asked to complete a one page self-assessment. This is an opportunity for you to reflect on how you did, what you still want to learn about co-facilitation and leadership, and assess how you might improve. You and your co-lead will meet with your instructor to debrief the facilitation experience and practice giving and receiving compassionate and constructive feedback.

### 5. Final Presentation (150 pts)

We will be visiting and learning with and from farmers, ecologists, educators, artists and activists in Puerto Rico. Your final assignment, **to be completed by the last day of the immersive trip in Puerto Rico**, asks you to produce a final presentation that integrates reflections on your personal experiences with the concepts and topics presented in the pre-trip readings and guest speaker discussions. Some guiding questions are:

● What themes / topics / perspectives explored during this course have deepened / broadened / clarified / complexified your analysis of socio-ecological problems / solutions?

● In what ways have community group(s) / initiative(s) / issue(s) explored during the trip given you new perspectives / hope / meaning?

● What experience(s) / place(s) / conversation(s) have resonated with you in ways that will inspire / influence / give direction to the next steps of your journey in environmental studies?

● What role do you envision playing in supporting or leading projects rooted in socio-ecological justice?

● Reflecting on the concepts of community resilience and mutual aid: What has the experience in Puerto Rico taught you about the meaning and possibility of community resilience and mutual aid in the context of colonization and climate change?

This assignment can take many formats–not limited to an essay– feel free to explore your creativity and personal voice/expression as far as is practical within the time, space and logistical limitations of cohort travel. There will be time set apart during the trip dedicated to individual reflection and writing/planning for this presentation.

## Tentative Schedule

### Pre-Trip Classes via Zoom:

● **Wed. Jan 10th** - Course introduction, student introductions, & overview of PR trip

● **Wed. Jan 24th** - Guided discussion on assigned readings / Guest Speaker: Dr. Astrid Vanessa Pérez Piñán, Four Stories About Food, University of Victoria: *Global Perspectives on Food Sovereignty and Decolonization*

● **Wed. Feb 7th** - Guided discussion on assigned readings / Guest Speaker: Colibrí Sanfiorenzo, HASER / Camp Tabonuco: *Towards a Socio-Ecological Perspective on Mutual Aid in Puerto Rico*

● **Wed. Feb 21st** - Guided discussion on assigned readings / Guest Speaker: Connor Harron, Caribbean Regenerative Community Development (CRCD): *Smart Agriculture in Puerto Rico: Facilitating Community Development*

**● Wed. March 6th -** Guided discussion on assigned readings / Guest Speaker: Rebekah Sánchez, Plenitud PR: *Agroecology and Education: Holistic Approach to Sustainability*

**● Wed. March 20th -** Final pre-departure orientation and review

\* These 6 sessions of 1 hour each provide 6 hours of pre-departure direct instruction requiring students to do 2 additional hours of work for each hour (e.g. lecture, seminar or discussion).

**Totalling ~18 total student work hours for the duration of the pre-departure portion of the course.**

**Trip - Puerto Rico:**

**● March 23rd, 2024 - April 1st, 2024 -** 10 days total / 8 days of in-country travel

\* There will be 9-10 hours of experiential learning per day during the 8 days of travel within Puerto Rico. This includes direct instruction by faculty member and local guest speakers, as well as directed field work, service learning activities, natural/cultural excursions, group learning activities, community-based projects and group reflections. **Totaling ~ 80 hours of in-country hours of direct instruction.**

**Post Trip via Zoom:**

● **Wed. April 10th -** Trip debrief, reflections, moving forward and next steps

**Overall Sample Rubric – this is how I look at your work – even with P/NP**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | **Excellent** | **Satisfactory** | **Unsatisfactory** | **Poor** |
| **Course Goals****and****Expectations****met (60%)** | Project clearlydemonstratesa high level ofknowledge andarticulates theirunderstandingof EE and thegoals of thiscourse. | Project clearlydemonstrates amoderate levelof knowledgeregarding EEand the goals ofthis course. | Projectdemonstrates alow level ofknowledgeregarding EEand the goals ofthis course. | Projectdemonstrates levelof knowledgeregarding EE andthe goals of thiscourse. |
| **Communication (10%)** | Project clearlydemonstratesa high level ofeffectivecommunicationwith nogrammaticalerrors, concisediscussion,and efficientlanguage use. | Project clearlydemonstrates amoderate levelof effectivecommunicationwith fewgrammaticalerrors, concisediscussion, andefficientlanguage use. | Project clearlydemonstrates alow level ofeffectivecommunicationwith manygrammaticalerrors, wordydiscussion, andinefficientlanguage use. | Project clearlydemonstrates a noeffectivecommunicationwith manygrammatical errors,incomprehensiblediscussion, andinefficient languageuse. |
| **Creativity****(30%)** | Project takesappropriaterisks andexploresalternative andinteractivemedia ininnovative andcompellingways. | Project takessomeappropriate risksand exploresalternative andinteractive mediain compellingways. | Project takes norisks and doesnot presentalternative orcompellingmediatedexperience. | Project is poorlyconceptualizedwith little to nocreative thoughtput to the endproduct. |