

# **IB 110 Race and Environmental Biology**

**FALL SEMESTER 2024**

**MONDAY/WEDNESDAY 3-3:50 PM NHB 2079**

**DISCUSSION SECTIONS: THURSDAY/FRIDAY NHB  
4004**

## **INSTRUCTOR :**

Professor Esther Ngumbi, Department of Entomology; African American Studies  
Department

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Office hours: by appointment

## **Teaching Assistants:**

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## **Learning Management System**

This course uses the Learning Management System Canvas:

<https://canvas.illinois.edu/>

## **Required and Recommended Course Readings**

No textbook is required. All class materials and lectures will be available on  
[canvas.illinois.edu](https://canvas.illinois.edu/)

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## Course Overview

**Prerequisites:** None

**Course credit:** 3 hours

**Course meets requirements for:** Gen Ed Life Sciences **and** Gen Ed US Minority Cultures (USM)

**Text required:** None, but there will be regular readings

### Topics

- Week 1: Introduction
- Week 2-5: Pre-colonialism and early America
- Week 6-9: Growth of America: Racism and Environmental Destruction
- Week 10-13: Lasting Effects of growth: Climate Change and Pollution
- Week 15-16: Modern Environmental Movements

### Course Description

Are environments the same for all people? Can environment be inequitably distributed? Does culture affect interactions between people and their environment? In this class we will explore how the social construct of race can shape individual environment, susceptibility to change and the biology that underpins the interaction. Through case studies, we will discuss environmental threats such as climate change, pollution, habitat degradation and disease and how they interact with US minority communities and cultures. We will also highlight how minority culture and

backgrounds affect interactions with the environment, and how policies and actions create environments and situations detrimental to minority families.

*Race and Environmental Biology* is designed to teach important biological concepts and improve general science literacy to help you better understand current environmental problems and how culture, policy and biology intersect. This course will focus on how environments are shaped by culture and race and how racial disparities can exist in interactions. These skills will form the foundation for your development as a critical consumer of science information and its intersection with society in the media. We will focus on the biological principles involved as we examine these topics in the context of some contentious and confusing issues related to US minority cultures and environmental biology in everyday life.

**Course Time:** MW 3-4 (**in person**) and Discussion Sections for 1 hour weekly **in person**  
(Check your registration for where and when the discussion sections meet)

## Learning Objectives

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Understand how “environment” can be shaped by your individual background
- Research how changes in the environment can affect different people and their biology and health.
- Apply the basic scientific principles in environmental biology to real-world situations like whether to support parks on landfills, how green solutions could leave communities behind and why our hunger for oil contributes to health problems in minority communities.
- Identify and evaluate valid sources of scientific information. Discern and analyze that information to make everyday decisions.
- Integrate ideas and communicate your understanding about biology with others in a format which: is adapted to particular circumstances and audiences; addresses issues in the context of the larger community and environment; and allows you to apply societal ethics to scientific inquiry and findings.
- Learn about yourself and learn to work effectively with others in a group and develop and cultivate an interest in current science issues.

## Course Components

### Lectures

#### *Lecture Readings*

These readings are intended to ensure you gain basic knowledge on a topic and are prepared for the material covered in lecture and discussion. Completing these activities before class allows us to cover more material at greater depth. The assignments are due before the first class of the week. This will ensure you have important background and vocabulary before we start the weeks topics. You can turn these in for 20% reduced credit until they are graded. Each activity will include readings/videos and questions to complete.

**Lecture Readings are due 1 hr before your in-person class, regardless of canvas due dates.**

### ***Lecture Assignments***

Active participation is vital to your success in this course. During lectures, interactive questions and discussion will occur for which you will receive participation points. After lecture there will be a lecture assignment to reflect on the material discussed and covered in lecture. If you cannot participate in the lecture you will be able to earn most of the points through the lecture reading and activity. You do not have to participate in all activities to receive full credit. This allows you to miss lectures without needing to reach out to the instructor.

## **Discussions**

### ***Discussion Readings***

These readings are intended to ensure you gain basic knowledge on a topic and are prepared for the material covered discussion. Completing these activities before class allows us to cover more material at greater depth. The assignments are due 1 hr before the start of your discussion section. You can turn these in for 20% reduced credit until they are graded. Each activity will include readings/videos and questions to complete.

**Discussion Readings are due 1 hr before your in-person class, regardless of Canvas due dates.**

### ***Discussion Activities***

Discussion meets once per week for one hour. During this time, you will learn material and complete activities to further your understanding of biology that will be covered in next week's lecture. Attendance is taken and will count toward your grade. Activities missed during discussion cannot be made up without proper documentation (see Late Work below).

**Discussion activities can typically be started and often finished within Discussion. In the case that there is take-home work, Discussion Activities are due the next Friday following you class, regardless of Canvas due dates.**

For example, if you attend a Thursday Discussion 8/25, your Discussion activity would be due Friday 9/2.

## **Projects**

### ***Unit Projects***

There will be 3 Unit Projects throughout the course to ensure you are following the concepts and building on material. These Unit Projects will be given at the end of each topic to allow you to synthesize the information learned in the previous section. These assessments will be mostly written but may include multiple choice. Each of these will be worth 8.5% of your final grade.

### ***Final Group Project***

You will be expected to work with a small group (3-5) to complete a final project in the course. The project has been broken into several small pieces to assist you in producing the best final project. Groups will be assigned within discussion based on topic interest and assignments are due at the end of discussion periods. If there are problems with your group, please inform the TA and instructor immediately. Also see Group Issues below

## **Grading**

Table explains point breakdown of course.

	<b>Point Total</b>	<b>Percentage of Grade</b>
Lecture Readings & Assignments	500	25%
Discussion Readings & Activities	500	25%
3 Unit Projects	510	25.5%
Final Group Project	490	24.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>100%</b>

## **Grading Scale**

**There will be no (+/-) in this class.** With ample opportunity to earn extra credit, it should be relatively easy to ensure you receive the grade you want. The letter grade breakdown is as follows:

Table describes grading scale.

Range	Letter Grade
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90-100%	A
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80-89.99%	B
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70-79.99%	C
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60-69.99%	D
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<60%	50
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## Late Work

If you are unable to meet a particular deadline, it is your responsibility to make prior arrangements with the instructors for that given week. **Late assignments may be turned in up to 3 days late with a 20% penalty per day it is late.** If you wait until the last minute (<3 hours before something is due, or after 5 PM) we will not be able to help you.

You have control over your schedule and one of the important skills you need to develop is how to organize and manage your time. If you find yourself in an extreme circumstance, please contact Dr. Ngumbi and TA to make appropriate arrangements.

## Accommodations

We are happy to accommodate students that need it. To obtain disability-related academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids, students should contact both the instructor and the Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES) as soon as possible. You can contact DRES at 1207 S. Oak Street, Champaign, (217) 333-1970, or via email at [disability@illinois.edu](mailto:disability@illinois.edu). Please inform the instructor and TA as soon as possible about needed accommodations.

If you require special accommodations, please contact the Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES) as soon as possible. To contact DRES, you may visit 1207 S. Oak Street, Champaign, call 217.333.4603, or email [disability@illinois.edu](mailto:disability@illinois.edu). Please note accommodations are not retroactive to the beginning of the semester, but begin the day you contact your professor with a current letter of accommodation from DRES.

# Technology

Technology is essential to this course and it is your responsibility to ensure you have access to Canvas, the Internet, and can use the programs and resources we assign. Make sure you back up your work to avoid losing it if your computer crashes.

Please contact (ib110-course@illinois.edu) and your TA immediately if you have access issues so we can address them before they impact your course grade.

## Copyright

### *Student Content*

Participants in University of Illinois courses retain copyright of all assignments and posts they complete; however, all materials may be used for educational purposes within the given course. In group projects, only the portion of the work completed by a particular individual is copyrighted by that individual. The University of Illinois may request that students' materials be shared with future courses, but such sharing will only be done with the students' consent. The information that students submit during a course may, however, be used for the purposes of administrative data collection and research. No personal information is retained without the students' consent.

### *Non-Student Content*

Everything on this site and within University of Illinois courses is copyrighted. The copyrights of all non-student work are owned by the University of Illinois Board of Trustees, except in approved cases where the original creator retains copyright of the material. Copyrights to external links are owned by or are the responsibility of those external sites. Students are free to view and print material from this site so long as

- The material is used for informational purposes only.
- The material is used for noncommercial purposes only.
- Copies of any material include the respective copyright notice.

These materials may not be mirrored or reproduced on non-University of Illinois websites without the express written permission of the University of Illinois Board of Trustees. To request permission, please contact the academic unit for the program. In short: no posting of material by the instructor or other students on outside websites is permitted.

## Communications

### *Course Questions*

For questions regarding this course, please contact (ib110-course@illinois.edu)

We will do our best to respond to these within 24 hours.

### ***Emails***

For questions related to this course please email (ib110-course@illinois.edu) . For questions about Discussions, please email your TA. We will do our best to address your emails within 24 hours. If you have not received a response in 48 hours please resend your question.

We will try to respond to e-mail messages of receiving them unless we notify you ahead of time of an inability to do so. **When sending e-mails, include IB 110, your section, and nature of your question.** For example: "IB 110 Section ABE: Unit Project 1 Grading Question".

### ***Announcements***

Announcements will be sent to your Illinois e-mail address, so be sure to check your e-mail.

### ***Personal and Grade-related Questions***

Questions of a personal nature should first be sent to the instructor's e-mail address (listed on the [Instructor Information](#) page). **When sending e-mail, include a subject that identifies the course number and nature of your question.**

### ***Grading Turnaround Time***

Assignments will be reviewed and graded by the instructor[s] within 14 business days. Unit Projects will be graded within 14 business days. If your instructor is unable to meet this timeline, students will be notified.

### ***Emergencies***

If you have an emergency that will keep you from participating in the course, please notify your instructor by using the instructor's e-mail address (listed on the Instructor Information page). Provide callback information in your e-mail (if necessary). You should also notify your program director of any emergencies.

### ***Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)***

Any student who has suppressed their directory information pursuant to Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) should self-identify to the instructor to ensure protection of the privacy of their attendance in this course. See <https://registrar.illinois.edu/academic-records/ferpa/> for more information on FERPA.

## **Behavior & Expectations**

### ***Student Conduct***



Students are expected to behave in accordance with the penal and civil statutes of all applicable local, state, and federal governments, with the rules and regulations of the Board of Regents, and with University regulations and administrative rules.

## **Respect and Civility**

Students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the campus Student Code. This class will explore numerous culture and experiences outside of what your personal experience has been. Because of this it is important to remember to discuss these subjects with the civility and respect you would want someone to discuss a group with which you identify. When writing and discussing other cultures it is important to remember to be thoughtful of perspectives that differ from your own and respectful of the people who are from these communities some of which may be your classmates. Any behavior determined not to comply with the Student Code will result in dismissal from the class and further infractions may result in dismissal from the course.

As a reminder the Campus Integrity Statement states: “The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign expects its faculty, staff, students and guests to conduct themselves in accordance with the community values of civility, respect, and honesty; to maintain the highest level of integrity and exercise critical judgment in all dealings, decisions and encounters; and to maintain and strengthen the public’s trust and confidence in our institution.”

You will receive three warnings if your language and comments are divisive or offensive. After these warnings you will receive a 0 on assignments in which your comments are deemed inappropriate.

- What does it mean to be divisive or offensive? Personal attacks, controversial statements with no basis in fact, demeaning someone's experience to play "devil's advocate", belittling language, broad racial generalizations, and stereotyping are all divisive and offense. If you could not find a credible source to support something you are trying to state as fact it is likely in this category.

## ***In-Class Etiquette***

- The Golden Rule: Treat others as you would like to be treated.
- Refer to your instructors and classmates with their preferred form of address.
- Be attentive when others are speaking. Process their ideas before responding.

## ***Netiquette***

In any social interaction, certain rules of etiquette are expected and contribute to more enjoyable and productive communication. The following are tips for interacting online via e-mail or discussion board messages, adapted from guidelines originally compiled by Chuq Von Rospach and Gene Spafford (1995):

- Remember that the person receiving your message is someone like you, deserving and appreciating courtesy and respect.
- Be brief; succinct, thoughtful messages have the greatest effect.
- Your messages reflect on you personally; take time to make sure that you are proud of their form and content.
- Use descriptive subject headings in your e-mails.
- Think about your audience and the relevance of your messages.
- Be careful when you use humor and sarcasm; absent the voice inflections and body language that aid face-to-face communication, Internet messages are easy to misinterpret.
- When making follow-up comments, summarize the parts of the message to which you are responding.
- Avoid repeating what has already been said; needless repetition is ineffective communication.
- Cite appropriate references whenever using someone else's ideas, thoughts, or words.

## **Attendance & Participation**

Active participation is vital to your success in this course. Depending on the day, you may be asked to engage in discussions and other interactive learning environments that invite your active participation and involvement with other students and your instructor. Attendance is mandatory for all Lectures and Discussions.

If you will miss Lecture/Discussion for any reason and need to make up points, please see the Late Work Section for further details on Make-up Work.

## **Group Issues**

A large part of the grade you earn in this course will come from participation in group projects. We believe that this will help you master the material as well as help you develop communication, technology, and collaboration skills, such as dividing tasks and providing and accepting peer feedback, that you will need in college and your eventual profession.

### ***Firing a group member***

When you work on a group project, it is inevitable that you will contribute differently and it is possible that some team members may contribute more than others. We expect you to work together to collaboratively solve problems, but we are available should you need periodic outside help to navigate and improve your group dynamics.

It can become a critical problem if, over time, one person consistently dominates all group dynamics or demonstrates a lack of commitment to the team (i.e., failing to attend meetings, not completing his or her portion of the group task, or submitting unacceptable work on behalf of the group). In such an instance, we reserve the right to "fire" that member.

Firing involves a twostep process:

1. The team (in consultation with the instructor) gives the wayward member a warning which includes the wayward teammate negotiating with the group how they are going to be a better teammate.
2. If the member continues to behave inappropriately, that individual will be fired from the group by the instructor. If your membership within the group is terminated, you forfeit all team benefits associated with completing the project as a group. You will complete individual assignments and exams from the point of termination to the end of the semester. Bad teammates usually show their tendencies early, so let a problematic group member know their behavior is not acceptable early.

## **Academic Integrity**

The academic integrity policy of University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign states: "It is the responsibility of each student to refrain from infractions of academic integrity, from conduct that may lead to suspicion of such infractions, and from conduct that aids others in such infractions."

The complete policy and procedures are available at: <http://studentcode.illinois.edu/>. As a student at UIUC, it is your responsibility to become familiar with, understand, and abide by the standards outlined in this policy before performing any academic work. Ignorance of these policies is not a defense in cases of infringement.

Any person found using unauthorized assistance (including plagiarism, submitting work for more than one class without obtaining permission from all instructors, copying answers from another student during an individual exam, sharing clickers, or turning in group work to which you did not contribute) will be reported following the procedures outlined in the Student Code, using the FAIR system.

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Examples of academic dishonesty include the following:

- Cheating
- Fabrication
- Facilitating infractions of academic integrity
- Plagiarism (intentional or unintentional)
- Working as a group when not permitted
- Bribes, favors, and threats
- Academic interference
- Impersonation or examination by proxy
- Grade tampering
- Non-original works

Should an incident arise in which a student is thought to have violated academic integrity, the student will be processed under the disciplinary policy set forth in the [Illinois Academic Integrity Policy](#). If you do not understand relevant definitions of academic infractions, contact your instructor for an explanation within the first week of class.

## **Sexual Misconduct Policy and Reporting**

The University of Illinois is committed to combating sexual misconduct. Faculty and staff members are required to report any instances of sexual misconduct to the University's Title IX and Disability Office. In turn, an individual with the Title IX and Disability Office will provide information about rights and options, including accommodations, support services, the campus disciplinary process, and law enforcement options.

A list of the designated University employees who, as counselors, confidential advisors, and medical professionals, do not have this reporting responsibility and can maintain confidentiality, can be found in the [Confidential Resources](#) section. Other information about resources and reporting is available at [wecare.illinois.edu](http://wecare.illinois.edu).

## **Value of Student Diversity**

In this course, students from every background are valued and will be treated with respect. Contributions from international students, students with disabilities, non-traditional students, and students from underrepresented groups are important to course discourse. I expect all of you to help establish and maintain an environment where you and your peers can contribute without fear. Repeated violations will result in the student receiving 0 on every assignment a violation is observed.

## **Support Resources**

### ***Emergency Dean***

“Help is only a phone call away.” A university-wide Emergency Dean is always available to provide you with personal assistance in times of emergency, such as serious illnesses, hospitalizations, accidents, deaths or other major crises. Emergency Dean Service: 217-333-0050.

As members of the Illinois community, we each have a responsibility to express care and concern for one another. If you come across a classmate whose behavior concerns you, whether in regards to their well-being or yours, we encourage you to refer this behavior to the Student Assistance Center (1-217-333-0050) or online at [odos.illinois.edu/community-of-care/referral/](http://odos.illinois.edu/community-of-care/referral/). Based upon your report, staff in the Student Assistance Center reaches out to students to make sure they have the support they need to be healthy and safe. Further, as a Community of Care, we want to support you in your overall wellness.

We know that students sometimes face challenges that can impact academic performance (examples include mental health concerns, food insecurity, homelessness, personal emergencies).

Should you find that you are managing such a challenge and that it is interfering with your coursework, you are encouraged to contact the Student Assistance Center (SAC) in the Office of

the Dean of Students for support and referrals to campus and/or community resources. The SAC has a Dean on Duty available to see students who walk in, call, or email the office during business hours. For mental health emergencies, you can call 911 or contact the Counseling Center.

[Please see the Getting Help page for additional links and resources.](#)

### **Chat GPT or other A.I. text generators**

Please do not use any form of generative A.I. such as ChatGPT. A.I. generated text found on assignments and semester projects will be treated as cheating and/or academic dishonesty.