

# SAVE THE EARTH!

## Metropolitan University Scholar's Experience (MUSE) Seminar (D1)

Bus 12D - Fall 2006

Professor Annette Nellen

### Class Basics

Class location	Room 122 Clark Hall
Class meeting time	MW 10:30 – 11:45 a.m.
Office hours	9:30 - 10:20 a.m. on M&W AND noon – 1 pm on W and by appointment. You may also call or send e-mail at any time.
Office	BT 955 (top floor of the Business Tower)
Phone	(408) 924-3508
E-mail	<a href="mailto:anellen@sjsu.edu">anellen@sjsu.edu</a>
Website – more class info provided here	<a href="http://www.cob.sjsu.edu/nellen_a/muse2006.htm">www.cob.sjsu.edu/nellen_a/muse2006.htm</a>
Peer Mentor and email address	Taylor Johnson <a href="mailto:tj_rj@sbcglobal.net">tj_rj@sbcglobal.net</a>
Peer Mentor Center	Clark Hall Academic Success Ctr, (408) 924-2198 Mon -Thur 10am-3:45pm, Tues eve 6-8pm
Librarian liaison and email address	Diana Wu <a href="mailto:Diana.Wu@sjsu.edu">Diana.Wu@sjsu.edu</a>

### Introduction to MUSE

University-level study is different from what you experienced in high school. The Metropolitan University Scholars' Experience (MUSE) is designed to help make your transition into college a success by helping you to develop the skills and attitude needed for the intellectual engagement and challenge of in-depth university-level study. Discovery, research, critical thinking, written work, attention to the rich cultural diversity of the campus, and active discussion will be key parts of this MUSE course. Enrollment in MUSE courses is limited to a small number of students because these courses are intended to be highly interactive and allow you to easily interact with your professor and fellow students. MUSE courses explore topics and issues from an interdisciplinary focus to show how interesting and important ideas can be viewed from different perspectives.

### Course Overview

Individuals engage in a variety of activities that harm our environment. This course will look at the interaction of human behavior, governments, and the environment with an emphasis on the use of education and economic incentives to change human behavior to protect the environment. We will focus on two environmental problems together and develop and test ways to resolve them. You will also select an environmental problem of your choice, study it, and develop at least two ways to help resolve the problem (as part of an individual research project). The solutions will include a public education campaign and a tax solution (which is what most states and countries use as an economic incentive). You will also learn how to use economic principles to evaluate the proposed solutions. You will gain a deep understanding of three environmental problems, the role of governments and individuals in solving them, and how to create an appropriate and workable solution.

You will be exposed to controversy in this class which you will find will enrich the learning experience. The environment and taxation are two big topics where people have interpreted data and theories in a variety of ways and where many opinions exist. For example, some people say that environmental regulation is not needed and sometimes harms the environment. There are also differences of opinion as to the degree of concern that should be given to some issues, such as global warming, levels of natural resources, and waste. People also have differences of opinion as to the weighting of the environment versus the economy. For example, when it comes to protecting an environment for a particular animal species versus developing the area to create jobs there can be fierce arguments made for both sides. Also, to solve an environmental problem, there are numerous solutions – all with differing impacts, depending on how they are analyzed.

In this class we will explore a variety of ways to look at environmental issues and remedies that will help to both understand why there are so many different perspectives on these matters and how one can try to reach appropriate answers to solving some of these problems. Our focus will be on the use of tax structures, incentives and education to modify human behavior as remedies.

### **Learning Objectives and Activities for this Course**

This course qualifies as an Area D1 (Social Sciences-Human Behavior) course in your General Education requirements. It is designed to enable you to achieve the learning outcomes listed below. These General Education learning outcomes are further explained in your Course Reader and will be discussed in class along with the purpose of the entire GE curriculum.

- To identify and analyze the social dimension of society as a context for human life, the processes of social change and social continuity, the role of human agency in those social processes, and the forces that engender social cohesion and fragmentation. [GE]

How – We will explore a few environmental problems caused by and affecting humans, why they arose, and different techniques for reducing the problems. We will also look at the pros and cons of six broad techniques for resolving environmental problems and how to analyze each technique in the context of their likely impact on human behavior and why there is varying impact.

- To:
  1. Place contemporary developments in cultural, historical, environmental, and spatial contexts;
  2. Identify the dynamics of ethnic, cultural, gender/sexual, age-based, class, regional, national, transnational, and global identities and the similarities, differences, linkages, and interactions between them; and
  3. Evaluate social science information, draw on different points of view, and formulate applications appropriate to contemporary social issues. [GE]

How – We will explore why certain environmental problems, such as those caused by consumption of gasoline arose and how governments, communities, organizations, and individuals have worked to understand and reduce the problems. We will look at data that measures the problems, differing views of the problems among different segments of society, and trends and their underlying causes. We will look at the issue of gasoline consumption from the global perspective down to the community perspective. We will learn about different approaches for resolving environmental problems and design and test a solution to get a better understanding of aspects of human behavior that must be considered in designing solutions.

- To recognize the interaction of social institutions, culture, and environment with the behavior of individuals. [GE]

How - Because many of the techniques for addressing environmental problems, such as laws and special tax provisions, are created by the federal government, it will be one of most frequently discussed social institutions in this class. We will also look at actions taken by some businesses, environmental groups, and local communities in addressing certain environmental problems. We will look at a few solutions that have been in place to reduce gasoline consumption and how they have worked and why, with a focus on how the solutions have affected human behavior and how human behavior shapes the design and impact of solutions.

- To understand the learning process and their responsibility and role in it. [MUSE]

How – We will discuss the purpose of a college education; lifelong learning; the roles of SJSU, professors and students in the learning process; and how to be a successful student and to graduate. Students will complete “My Plan” to help them learn more about and design a first draft of their plan for a successful SJSU experience and to graduate.

- To know what it means to be a member of a metropolitan university community. [MUSE]

How – We will discuss how to know what activities and events are going on at SJSU and how and why to get involved. Students will attend at least 2 MUSE workshops and 2 campus events (including one tied to the campus reading of *The Kite Runner*) and write reflective papers on each.

Course learning objectives - The particular subject matter of this course will enable students to:

- § Gain an appreciation of how humans and societies have adversely impacted the environment, why such problems arose and challenges in addressing these problems at the local, state, national and international levels.
- § Understand the broad nature and types of “environmental problems.”
- § Understand six categories of techniques for addressing environmental problems. An understanding of these categories will also require students to:
  - Understand basic economic principles, such as supply and demand, allocation of resources, externalities, cost-benefit, and incentives.
  - Understand different types of taxes and ways to compare and contrast them with a focus on their impact on the economy, society, the environment and intergovernmental relations.
  - Understand the basic principles of good tax policy.
- § Analyze and develop solutions to environmental problems using a social science framework that considers societal factors (income, education, etc.), culture, history, natural resources, politics, and stage of economic development in determining how to affect human behavior to protect the environment. In analyzing tax proposals, students will learn how to apply the principles of good tax policy. Students will learn to use additional analytic approaches including linkage and ethical decision-making.
- § Define common environmental terms and concepts including conservation, CAFÉ standards, and “cap-and-trade” program.
- § Understand the basics of three environmental problems including possible solutions: Gasoline conservation, reduced usage of plastic bags, and one students select for their individual research project.

How – Reading, class discussion, group work in class, a class project to design and test a solution to an environmental problem, and an individual research project on an environmental problem each student selects on their own (but not one already covered in class).

The following content and activities are also part of this course:

- Diversity: We will consider the subject matter of this course in varying perspectives including countries students are connected to, indigenous peoples, and various groups within California.
- Writing: at least 1500 words in a manner appropriate to the social sciences discipline. This will consist of questions based on the reading, in-class writing, reflective papers on four activities, and a research paper.
- Social sciences: Content to promote all of the above GE learning objectives (see the course learning objectives listed above).
- University scholar: MUSE course activities are designed to enable students to improve critical thinking skills, information competencies, critical writing and reading skills, and group interactions. Readings and discussions will focus on understanding the purpose of a university education and how to get the most out of it so graduates are well prepared for lifelong learning and succeeding in the 21<sup>st</sup> century global community. Students will complete “My Plan” (explained later in this syllabus) and attend 2 MUSE workshops.
- University life: Students will attend workshops and campus activities and participate in group activities to learn about university resources and activities and to improve in areas they have identified. Students are to do the “SJSU event” activity with a classmate.

## Course Text and Materials

### From Spartan Bookstore

- ü Course Reader – which includes Professor Nellen’s materials, government reports, university policies and information on what it means to be a university scholar/lifelong learner. (CR)

### From Professor Nellen (to be handed out in class)

- ü *A Spartan Scholar from the Start* (SS)
- ü *Communicating About the Behavioral Dimensions of Grades* (CG)

### Other

- ü Course website with links to information relevant for assignments
- ü Materials to be obtained from the King Library and other sources for class discussion and student research project
- ü *The Kite Runner* – Campus Reading Program book selection for summer/fall 2006 (students received this book at Orientation and should have read it during the summer)

## Course Grading Guidelines

Assignment	Points
Letter of introduction	20
Homework questions (in the CR)	30
Country Questionnaire on country assigned	10
SJSU Paper Journal	10
3 online library tutorials	*
Current event presentation	10
Reflective paper & attendance at 2 MUSE workshops	40
Reflective paper & attendance at 1 SJSU event	20
Reflective paper & attendance at 1 <i>Kite Runner</i> event	20
Midterm	120
In-class writings and presentations	20
Visit and discussion of student projects during office hours	*
“My Plan” (multi-part assignment)	50
Research project (multi-part assignment)	100
Final exam	<u>200</u>
Total	650

\* The library tutorials and visit to Professor Nellen’s office are very important, but not appropriate for letter grading or points. The incentive to complete these four activities is not only the knowledge and skills to be gained but the loss of 10 points for each one missed.

+/- grading will be used

### Students with Special Needs

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with DRC to establish a record of their disability.

### Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is essential to the mission of San José State University. As such, students are expected to perform their own work (except when collaboration is expressly permitted by the course instructor) without the use of any outside resources. When practiced, academic integrity ensures that all students are fairly graded. Violations to the Academic Integrity Policy undermine the educational process and will not be tolerated. A person without integrity demonstrates a lack of respect for oneself, fellow students and the course instructor and can ruin the university’s reputation and the value of the degrees it offers.

Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San José State University, and the University’s Academic Integrity Policy requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the Office of Judicial Affairs. The policy on academic integrity can be found at <http://www2.sjsu.edu/senate/S04-12.pdf> and in your Course Reader.

## Professor Nellen's Philosophy of Teaching and Learning

The role of a university professor is to help facilitate student learning by building upon the knowledge and skills students already have. Students will learn best when they are actively involved in the learning process. Students will learn by applying the new information they are exposed to in class, integrating it with existing knowledge, and learning not only from their professor and course materials, but also from their fellow students. In a classroom where everyone is prepared and engaged, we will all learn and broaden our perspectives and understanding of the world.

University learning should be challenging and standards should be high. A professor should set high expectations so that higher levels of learning and engagement can be achieved and everyone will find that their time was well spent. As a facilitator for student learning, a professor is responsible for providing assistance and a variety of learning activities and experiences to help meet the varied learning styles of students.

Students should also set high standards for their learning experiences. University students have a high level of responsibility for their learning and must be prepared for class, attend class, ask questions, produce work that they can truly be proud of, and get engaged in the learning process.

## Class Meetings, Assignments and Activities

**NOTE** – All papers are due at the beginning of class in person unless other arrangements have been made ahead of time with Professor Nellen. For each day (not just class days) that a paper is late, 10% of the total point value will be lost.

The goal is to follow the reading and assignment dates listed in the chart below. Any adjustments deemed necessary by Professor Nellen will be noted in class.

Class Date	Topic	Reading	What is Due
8/23	Welcome Introduction to classmates, Peer Mentor, MUSE and this course Where do we come from? What do we know now about environmental problems and solutions?		
8/28	What does it mean to be a university student and at SJSU? Civil discourse and academic freedom Creating a positive learning environment	SS – pages 4-5, 11-13 CR – pages 1 – 7, 13 - 22	Letter of introduction Background survey
8/30	What are “environmental problems” and what is their relevance to individuals and society? Overview to possible ways to address environmental problems.	CR pages 53 - 87	Questions 3, 5, 7 Country questionnaire
9/4	Holiday – no class		

9/6	Scholar skills – how to learn, studying, reading course materials, note taking, learning styles “My Plan” introduction The Environment and the Social Sciences	SS – page 16 - 19 CR - skim pages 35 - 42 CR - pages 93 - 116	Questions 15. 16. 18
9/11	Research Project introduction How to select a problem you are interested in What does D1 mean?	CR – skim pages 43 – 51 CR – 9 – 12, 191 - 194	Questions 11, 12, 13
9/13	Scholar Skills – setting goals and managing your time, grades, grading, integrity, seeking assistance How to analyze data	SS – page 15, 26 CG CR – pages 23 – 30, 33 CR – skim pages 117 – 125, 149 - 161	Have <i>Plagiarism Tutorial</i> completed Questions 20, 22, 24
9/18	Three of six techniques for addressing environmental problems with focus on reduced gasoline consumption.	CR – pages 163 – 172, 195 - 202	Research Part A
9/20	Application of techniques for addressing environmental problems	CR 203 - 249	Questions 26, 29, 30
9/25	Applications of techniques for addressing environmental problems – continued Taxation basics and good tax policy	CR – pages 293 - 313	Have <i>Library Basics Tutorial</i> completed
9/27	Taxation basics and good tax policy – continued, with practice in applying the 10 principles	CR –pages 323 - 342	Research Part B
10/2	Conserving gasoline + review of relevant data and techniques	CR – skim pages 251 - 292	“My Plan” – I, II & III
10/4	Is there an oil crisis?	Prepare for class discussion	Discussion notes
10/9	Review for midterm		MUSE Workshop Paper #1
10/11	Midterm		
10/16	Go over midterm Ethical decision-making Personal and corporate values for solving environmental problems	CR – pages 167, 173 - 176	Questions 27, 32, 33
10/18	Scholar Skills – using the library. <b>We will meet in the King Library Room 217.</b>	SS – pages 22 - 23	Have <i>Finding Books Tutorial</i> completed
10/23	Information and education technique for addressing environmental problems Diversity and the environment – considerations of political affiliation and ethnicity	CR – pages 172 - 176 CR – skim pages 149 - 161	Questions 28 and 34
10/25	New technologies technique for addressing environmental problems		Research Part C

10/30	Review of the six techniques and their application	CR – review pages 165 - 188	Question 31
11/1	What does it mean to be a lifelong learner and how does college help	CR – pages 13 - 18	Research Part D
11/6	Scholar Skills – selecting your courses and major/minor	SS - 24	
11/8	Plastic bag conservation	Find, review and bring in information you found, as assigned	
11/13	Design a test of a solution for reducing gasoline consumption or plastic bag usage		MUSE Workshop Paper #2 SJSU Paper Journal
11/15	Design continued		My Plan – IV & V
11/20	Test the design during class	Test the design on fellow students outside of class	
11/22	Evaluation of our test of the design		Research Part E
11/27	Diversity and environmental concerns of indigenous people of the Arctic region and relevance to solving environmental problems	CR – pages 351 - 387	Questions 38 & 39 “Event” paper
11/29	Review – Purpose of a university education Group activity Questionnaire		My Plan – VI and VII (and all other parts with any corrections made)
12/4	Student presentations (conference)		<i>The Kite Runner</i> event paper
12/6 Last class before final exam	Student presentations (conference) What do we know now about environmental problems and solutions?		Research Project (all of it)
12/11 9:45 - noon	Final exam – comprehensive		

Last day to drop a class: September 5  
 Last day to add a class: September 12

## Assignments & Projects

### Assignments

Description	Due Date
Letter of Introduction addressed to Professor Nellen (up to 2 typed pages) – see example handed out in class Background survey form	8/28
Country Questionnaire – form to be handed out in class; use CIA World Factbook to complete; based on country selected on first day of class	8/30
Visit Professor Nellen during office hours to ask any questions and discuss the two class projects. See the office hours listed on this greensheet. Do not wait until the end of the semester. This assignment must be completed during normally scheduled office hours or by appointment.	Before 11/29
Questions	Various – see above schedule and CR
SJSU Paper Journal  How much paper do SJSU freshmen get from their professors during the course of a semester? Each student will keep track of the number of pages of all handouts, exams, and other materials received from professors this semester. The information will be used to determine if the class thinks there is too much paper being used and whether the data collection approach was useful and appropriate.	Keep track daily. Journal will be checked periodically and collected on 11/13
Current event presentation – find a news article from a newspaper or magazine (paper or online) about an environmental problem. Prepare a 1 – 2 minute summary of the article + turn in the article.	Sign up for a presentation date in class.
Plagiarism online tutorial	9/13
Library Basics online tutorial	9/25
Finding Books and Articles online tutorial	10/18
Reflective papers and attendance at 2 MUSE workshops (due 10/9 and 11/13 or earlier) – Review the MUSE workshop schedule and select at least two workshops to attend. After the workshop, prepare a 2 - 3 page, well-organized essay which includes:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ Workshop details (title, name of presenter, date)</li> <li>§ Description of the workshop (topic, content, etc.)</li> <li>§ Which of the following category(ies) did the workshop fall into: (1) academic success, (2) university life, or (3) healthy mind-body-spirit?</li> <li>§ Something you found especially interesting</li> <li>§ Something you might do differently because of the workshop</li> <li>§ What question or questions do you still have after attending the workshop</li> <li>§ Your evaluation of the workshop with supporting explanations (was it helpful, delivered well, what would have made it better)</li> </ul>	#1 - 10/9 or earlier  #2 - 11/13 or earlier

<p>Reflective paper and attendance at 1 SJSU “event” such as an athletics game, theater arts play, noontime concert, etc. Check the SpartaGuide in the <i>Spartan Daily</i> or the SJSU events website calendar for ideas. If you have any doubt as to whether your event is appropriate, ask your professor. After the event, prepare a 1 - 2 page, well-organized essay which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ Details of the event (what, where, when, who presented it or performed)</li> <li>§ Your critique of it (as if you were a journalist reviewing it for the Mercury News)</li> </ul> <p>*** You will attend the event with a classmate and write up one paper together on the event.</p>	11/27 or earlier
<p>Reflective paper and attendance at 1 event tied to <i>The Kite Runner</i>. There are many events tied to the Campus Reading Program book – discussion groups, lectures and films. The calendar can be found at <a href="http://www.sjsu.edu/ugs/reading">http://www.sjsu.edu/ugs/reading</a>. After the event, prepare a 1 - 2 page, well-organized essay which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ Details of the event (what, where, when, who presented).</li> <li>§ What did you learn from the event and how did your perspective on the story or book change from attending the event.</li> </ul>	12/4 or earlier

## Projects

These two projects will be discussed in more detail in class. One project, called “My Plan,” is based on the “university scholar” elements of a MUSE course and getting to know SJSU and setting a plan to graduate. The other – the Research Project, is based on the social science aspects of this course. There will be instruction and practice in using the University Library as part of the Research Project.

Parts of each project will be due throughout the semester to help in budgeting time for completing the project and to allow for professor feedback in order to gauge progress and make improvements as needed. Students can also use the posted office hours to discuss the projects with Professor Nellen as needed.

### My University Scholar Plan (“My Plan”)

In this project, students have the opportunity to learn more about their major, career goal, future profession, and course of study at SJSU. Possible activities and experiences that will help students achieve their goals for becoming a university scholar will be identified. A template will be provided to help in gathering and organizing the information needed for the plan and for reflection on how to make the plan work and what will be gained from completing the plan. The plan will be something students will want to refer to often, and modify as needed, throughout their university experience.

Parts of the plan will be due throughout the semester to help in time management in preparing the plan and in incorporating professor feedback. The template provides a more thorough explanation of what is needed for each of the 7 parts of the assignment.

- I, II, & III - Major (or possible major if undeclared), its learning objectives and other “major” information indicated on the template – DUE 10/2
- IV & V - List of possible out-of-class activities, experiences and information sources + the courses needed for degree completion – DUE 11/15
- VI & VII – Interview + out-of-class activities + turn in the complete plan with corrections made – DUE 11/29

### Research Project

For this project, each student selects an environmental problem of interest to them to study (but not one already covered in class). The report will begin with background information on the problem that can be obtained using library and Internet (such as EPA) sources. Think of the background information as addressing the “who, what, where, why and how” questions. Students will then find solutions to the problem using each of the six techniques

discussed in class. Students will also need to research and identify and explain the societal, geographical (natural resource), economic, political and cultural aspects of the problem that will impact the design and effectiveness of solutions. For the tax solution, the ten principles of good tax policy are to be applied to determine how effective the solution is and how it could be improved.

There must be at least four references to scholarly materials with appropriate citations. A template is provided on the course website to help with the format of the report. The following items are due throughout the semester to help you move along with the project and get instructor feedback along the way. You can also visit your professor during office hours for additional guidance or send an email with questions that come up in your research and writing.

A. DUE 9/18 (1 typed page)

- § Name and explain the environmental problem you want to do your research paper on
- § Explain why you selected this problem
- § Provide two website URLs you looked at in making your decision and getting some basic information on the problem

B. DUE 9/27

- § Identify and briefly explain the societal, geographical (natural resource), economic, political and cultural aspects of the problem that you think may impact the design and effectiveness of solutions. You should be able to identify several by just thinking about the problem. Also examine websites that have information on the problem to help you.
- § Identify and briefly explain a “command and control” technique that is used to address your problem.
- § Identify and briefly explain a tax solution technique (“market-based approach) to address your problem.

C. DUE 10/25

- § Use the tips you learned about using library databases to find a scholarly article about your problem that is helpful to your research project because it explains the problem and/or a technique for resolving it or a cultural or societal or geographic aspect of the problem.
- § Read the article and take notes as you do so. The notes should be items that should help in writing your report.
- § Turn in a copy of the article, your notes and in which database you found the article.

D. DUE 11/1

- § Complete the tax technique segment of your report (the explanation of the tax solution, the chart analyzing it under the 10 principles of good tax policy, and the “linkage” explanation). (see the template on the course website)

E. DUE 11/22

- § Complete the personal and corporate values segment of your report (see the template on the course website).
- § Information for the conference brochure to be created for the presentations on 12/4 and 12/6:
  - Title of your paper
  - A one-two sentence explanation of your topic
  - A one- two sentence biography of you

COMPLETE REPORT - DUE 12/6 - Turn in your complete project, following the template and incorporating any changes recommended in professor comments on Parts A - E.

Many books on environmental policy can be found on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of the King Library at HC79.E5, as well as a few other places. Relevant materials can also be found in journals and some of the library's online databases, as well as websites, such as for the EPA. You will learn how to use the library's online databases through completion of an online tutorial (by 10/18) and through a demonstration with a librarian during class on 10/18 (to be held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the King Library).