

**WHAT IS THE ANTHROPOCENE?
ЧТО ТАКОЕ АНТРОПОЦЕН?
School of Advanced Studies
Quarter 4, April 13 to June 11, 2020**

Instructor/s: Zachary Reyna z.reyna@utmn.ru

Available for consultation via pre-scheduled Zoom appointment

Contact Hours: 48

Type of Course: Elective

Meeting Times: Tuesday, 10:40-12:10, Thursday, 10:40-12:10, Saturday,
9:00-10:30

Related Minors

This course counts toward the minors in Anthropology & Sociology, Cultural Studies, Life Sciences and Environmental Humanities.

Course Description

Is it still possible to distinguish human culture from the natural world? Or does this conventional distinction make no sense today? In 2000, a group of geologists proposed that we have entered a new geological era that is fundamentally defined by irreversible human activity: the Anthropocene. According to these scientists, human beings have become “planetary actors” in the sense that our actions now no longer simply have consequences for the human social world, or even the organic biological world, but the very ground of our earthly existence: the geophysical systems (hydrological, atmospheric, and geological) of the planet itself. What are the political, legal, and ethical implications of suggesting we now live in the Anthropocene? This course will approach the Anthropocene as a troubling and contested concept linked with geology, biology, and climate change science, as well as underlying diverse political, ethical, and social assumptions. Students will learn to investigate and speak knowledgeably about the relationship between nature and culture, come to understand how this relationship is and always has been changing, and explore the political-ethical implications of these changes.

Course Structure

The course consists of 17 synchronous online Zoom seminars (90 mins) that will be a mixture of short lectures, student presentations, and group discussion AND 7 asynchronous sessions that will consist of keeping a reading journal, commenting on your classmates' reading journals, worksheet groupwork, and individual consultations.

Student Learning Goals

Students who successfully pass this course will be able to:

Learning goals	
Knowledge goal:	Students will be able to explain how the concepts of nature and culture have changed and developed over the course of occidental history.
Knowledge goal:	Students will be able to knowledgeably engage in a discussion about what the Anthropocene is and the major critiques of this literature.
Practical skill:	Students will be able to approach original and theoretically dense texts with a series of techniques for discerning the argument and making sense of the text.

Required Coursework and Evaluation Criteria

The final grade for this course will be calculated as follows:

Assignment or Task	Due date/s	Percent
Participation/Reading Journal	Ongoing	25
In-class presentation	TBD	10
Essay Draft	9 May 2020	20
Essay conference	Week 4	10
Revised and Expanded Essay	6 June 2020	35

This course employs 7-median (the number of grades above 7 and the number of grades below 7 do not differ by more than 1) Failing grades (0-3) are included in the calculation of the 7-rule.

All marks are provisional until the end of the course. The 7-rule WILL NOT be used in assessing individual assignments. It will only be applied to the final course marks, pending overall student performance. If general performance is low, a lower overall median/average may apply – if performance is outstanding, a higher overall median may apply.

Participation (25%)

Participation requires more than your online presence. The seminars will be discussion-intensive, and you should aim to actively involve yourself in these discussions, asking questions, raising problems, responding to your classmates and professor. Your participation grade will also be calculated to include an online reading journal you will keep

for each reading assignment. It will be online and periodically over the course (see schedule below) you will be asked to comment on a classmate's entry. A mid-term participation grade will be given to students at the end of Week 4.

In-class Presentation (10%)

A 10-minute oral powerpoint presentation at the beginning of class introducing the readings and beginning the discussion.

The work will be evaluated based on: presence and readability of powerpoint. The teacher will set the following criteria questions for the evaluation: Did the student simply summarize the reading, or actively engage with the reading? Did the student raise thoughtful questions for class discussion?

Essay Draft (20%)

A 800-1200 word essay draft with complete bibliography and APA style citations developing an original argument drawing on the reading material from weeks 1-3. We will spend some time in class working on this, but this is your first chance to try to express some of the themes of the course in your own words. Due 9 May.

The work will be evaluated based on: language usage; presence of thesis; clear argumentation; bibliography and consistent APA citation style.

Essay Conference (10%)

Individual 10-minute conference with professor discussing essay, my comments on the essay, and plans for revision and expansion. You need to prepare for this meeting. I will expect you to be able to defend your essay and ask clear questions.

The teacher will set the following criteria questions for the evaluation: Did the student show up? Is it clear that the student prepared for the conference?

Final Essay (35%)

A 1200-1500 word revised and expanded final essay using material from the second half of class to consolidate your argument.

The work will be evaluated based on:

- The quality of the thesis statement and research question/goal: its originality, relevance, and how well it is situated in the course literature
- The quality of texts' analysis (the texts should be used analytically and help the student to develop his/her arguments or to pose the problem.) The texts should not be used just to illustrate ideas)
- The quality argumentation supporting the thesis
- Structure and clarity: the essay should be written in clear English and structured in a logical and coherent manner. It should consist of Introduction, Main Part, and conclusion.

Canvas and Other Course Resources

This course has a website on Canvas (<https://canvas.instructure.com/>). You should have received an invitation to join the course on Canvas two weeks before the start of classes. If you did not, double check your SAS email and then follow up with the instructor. All course readings, this syllabus, and any other course materials are available on Canvas.

All written assignments completed outside of class must be submitted via Canvas.

Course Literature

Here is a bibliography of literature that will assist you in studying and writing assignments. See the course schedule below for specific reading assignments.

Chakrabarty, D. (2005). The Climate of History: Four Theses. *Critical Inquiry*, 35.

Connolly, W. (2017). Facing the Planetary. *Duke University Press*.

Cronon, W. (1996). The Trouble with Wilderness; or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature. *Uncommon Ground*.

Crutzen P. & Stoermer, F. (2000). The Anthropocene. *Global Change Newsletter*, 41.

Haraway, Donna., (2016). Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene. *Duke University Press*.

Lewis, S. and Maslin, M. (2015). Defining the Anthropocene. *Nature* 519(7542).

Moore, J., (2017). The Capitalocene: On the Nature & Origins of Our Ecological Crisis. Part I. *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 44(3).

Scranton, Roy., (2015). Learning How to the Die in the Anthropocene. *City Lights Publishers*.

Tsing, A. (2015). The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins. *Princeton University Press*.

Examination Format

The examination consists of a 90-minute test that includes the identification of ten quotations from required course readings and a written essay. For full details on the format and grading, see the SAS policies section below.

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Activity	Topics & Readings	Assignments
0	13.04 - 19.04	-	No classes	-

1	21.04	Zoom seminar	The Idols of Environmental Politics Nietzsche, <i>Twilight of the Idols</i> , preface Crutzen P. and F. Stoermer, "The Anthropocene" in <i>Global Change Newsletter</i> 41 (2000)	Online reading journal
	23.04	Zoom seminar	Latour, B., "Opening Pandora's Box" in <i>Science in Action</i> (1987)	
	25.04	Asynchronous seminar	Creating a reading journal	
2	28.04	Zoom seminar	Dating and Defining the Anthropocene Lewis, S. and M. Maslin, "Defining the Anthropocene" in <i>Nature</i> 519(7542) (2015)	Online reading journal Must comment on at least 1 of your classmates' journal entries
	30.04	Zoom seminar	Ruddiman, W., "The Early Anthropogenic Hypothesis: Challenges and Responses" in <i>Reviews of Geophysics</i> 45(4) (2007)	
	2.05	Asynchronous seminar	Groupwork worksheet and essay topic work	
3	5.05	Zoom seminar	Critiques of the Anthropocene Moore, J., "The Capitalocene: On the Nature & Origins of Our Ecological Crisis. Part I" in <i>The Journal of Peasant Studies</i> 44(3) (2017)	*Essay draft due on Saturday 23.59* Online reading journal Peer review worksheet of classmate's essay draft
	7.05	Zoom seminar	Chakrabarty, D., "The Climate of History: Four Theses" in <i>Critical Inquiry</i> 35 (2005)	
	9.05	Asynchronous seminar	Groupwork worksheet and peer review of essay draft Optional: Braun, B., "New Materialisms and Neoliberal Natures" in <i>Antipode</i> 47(1) (2014)	

4	12.05	Asynchronous seminar	Vansintjan, A., "The Anthropocene Debate" in <i>Uneven Earth</i> (16 June 2015) http://unevenearth.org/2015/06/the-anthropocene-debate/ Haraway, D., "Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Plantationocene, Chthulucene: Making Kin" in <i>Environmental Humanities</i> 6 (2015)	Online reading journal Comment on at least 1 of your classmates' reading journal entries AND a review of film
	14.05	individual paper conferences via Skype-asynchronous	Essay Conferences	
	16.05	film screening-asynchronous	Anna Tsing, <i>Gender & A Feminist Approach to the Anthropocene: Earth Stalked by Man</i> (2015)	
5	19.05	Zoom seminar	Taylor, A. and V. Pacini-Ketchabaw, "Learning with Children, Ants, and Worms in the Anthropocene: Towards a Common World Pedagogy of Multispecies Vulnerability" in <i>Pedagogy, Culture and Society</i> 23(4) (2015)	Online reading journal Work on revising and expanding essay draft
	21.05	Zoom seminar	Connolly, W., <i>Facing the Planetary</i> (2017) selections	
	23.05	Zoom seminar	Grove, K., "Biopolitics and Adaption: Governing Socio-Ecological Contingency Through Climate Change and Disaster Studies" in <i>Geography Compass</i> 8(3) (2014)	
6	26.05	Zoom seminar	Haraway, D., <i>Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene</i> (2016) selections	Online reading journal Complete second draft of essay by class 3
	28.05	Zoom seminar	Haraway, D., <i>Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene</i> (2016) selections	

	30.05	Asynchronous seminar	Groupwork worksheet and peer review of second draft	
7	2.06	Zoom seminar	Scranton, R., <i>Learning How to the Die in the Anthropocene</i> (2015) selections	*Final Essay due on Saturday at 23.59* Online reading journal
	4.06	Zoom seminar	Scranton, R., <i>Learning How to the Die in the Anthropocene</i> (2015) selections	
	6.06	Asynchronous seminar	Groupwork worksheet--telling your own story (Haraway)	
8	9.06	Zoom seminar	Tsing, A., <i>The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins</i> (2015) selections	Online reading journal Comment on at least 2 of your classmates' reading journal entries
	11.06	Zoom seminar	Scranton, R., <i>Learning How to the Die in the Anthropocene</i> (2015) selections	
	13.06	Zoom seminar	Tsing, A., <i>The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins</i> (2015) selections	

SAS Policies for Online Courses

Please note the addition and updating of policies to reflect the realities of online teaching in Q4.

Technical Requirements and Responsibilities for Online Education

Professors and students are responsible for ensuring they have access to a computer and a stable Internet connection during all scheduled class meetings. This is to ensure that students get the most out of the online education format. If you have problems with your Internet, smartphones may be used as a backup option (as a wifi hotspot or to participate in class).

Course materials and all assignments will be made available on Canvas; all synchronous class meetings will be conducted over Zoom. All communication about the course and assignments must happen over Canvas or official email. The use of any supplementary platforms (discussion boards etc.) is at the discretion of the instructor.

Professors are required to post all resources for online teaching via Canvas before the start of each week. This includes: Any nonsynchronous lesson material, the invitations for individual Zoom meetings, and any other materials required to complete the course.

All synchronous classes will be recorded and made available via Canvas on the same day for a minimum of one week. These recordings are only for teaching purposes and should not be shared.

Etiquette for Online Classes

Professors and students should join Zoom a few minutes before class in order to have time to solve any technical problems. When you join a class, your microphone will be muted. Individual professors will decide how to run class discussions and whether to enable such features as chat. As a general rule of thumb, you should mute your microphone when you are not speaking.

In seminars, students are required to make themselves visible. If you have concerns about what is visible, then either take the time to “curate” your environment or consider using the background option in Zoom. During lectures, you are welcome to turn off your video.

Students should feel free to contact the professor or Head of Education (d.kontowski@utmn.ru) to discuss any concerns that may arise concerning online delivery of the course (i.e., technical issues, course material availability, access to apps, communication challenges, and changes to syllabus or schedule). Don't wait until course evaluations to draw attention to your concerns!

Technical Emergencies Protocols

Students who have difficulty getting online to attend a synchronous class or complete an assignment, should contact the professor immediately according to the specific instructions provided in the syllabus (i.e., via telephone, SMS, or email). Follow the below instructions concerning making up classes missed due to technical problems.

If your professor is not online for the start of a class session, keep Zoom open and check your email. If the professor does not come on-line or send a message to clarify the situation within 10 minutes after the official starting time, class is cancelled. Both the professor and a designated student should alert the Head of Education about the situation. Missed classes will be rescheduled; update class times to be shared via Canvas and Moodle.

Attendance and Absences

Zoom has an attendance feature that will be used to record attendance. Attendance is required for all synchronous classes or required online activities (i.e., designated asynchronous tasks, timed assignments, group work meetings, etc.) and will be recorded on a grading sheet. Students can miss up to two classes without an excuse; every further absence will see the final mark lowered by 1 point for each class missed (i.e., a student who misses 6 class meetings without prior approval or a valid excuse cannot pass a course). Missing more than 15 minutes of scheduled online class is considered an absence, unless the student has received prior approval from the Head of Education.

If you plan to miss a class due to a legitimate conflict (i.e. attendance of a student conference), you must apply to the instructor for an approved absence at least seven days in advance and CC Head of Education. Without advanced approval, it will count as a missed class.

If you are sick, email all your instructors and Alyona Bunkova (a.bunkova@utmn.ru) as soon as possible to notify them that you will be missing class. They will follow up with you with any necessary arrangements related to your illness.

If you need to miss a class due to something that arises at short notice (i.e., bureaucracy that needs to be dealt with, an emergency at home), email the instructor as soon as possible to notify them about your absence. Should a student have repeated problems with attendance, the instructor will notify the Head of Education.

Making Up Classes Missed for Legitimate Reasons

Students who miss a synchronous class session to a legitimate conflict, an emergency that arises at short notice, or a technical problem will be required to watch the recording of the class and submit a written summary of the key points of the class, including any questions that you have about the content. This should be sent to the instructor via email within 48 hours of the ending of the class in order to receive credit. If a technical problem emergency situation persists beyond 48 hours, an extension may be granted. Students who are sick should watch the videos of missed classes in order to keep up on courses, but they are not required to submit written summaries.

Extensions for Assignments

All assignments must be submitted by their due dates. Extensions will be granted only when ill health, death of a loved one, or personal difficulties of a serious nature near the due date prevent completion of an assignment. As the due dates for assignments are stated in the syllabus, the pressure of other university work or extracurricular activities will not be accepted as a reason for an extension.

If you require an extension, you must write to your instructor at least three working days in advance. Clearly explain your situation and provide any necessary documentation (such as a medical certificate) to Alyona Bunkova. Your instructor should reply to you within one day; you will be notified by email about whether an extension has been granted.

Late Assignments

Late assignments will be penalized by a full grade deduction for each day of lateness. For example, an essay submitted three days late that received a mark of 7 would be reduced to 4. Late assignments will not be accepted once graded assignments are returned or after June 11. The acceptance of late assignments for minor assessments (worth 10 percent or less of the final mark, including minor tasks completed during class hours) is left up to the discretion of individual instructors.

Rescheduling of Classes or Substitution of Instructor

Should a course be unable to meet at its regular time, the instructor will liaise with Alyona Bunkova to approve the change and to find a different time that suits both the instructor and students. Should this occur, all involved will receive an email notification from Alyona Bunkova about the changed schedule and any schedule changes will appear in Moodle. If the instructor requires a substitute to replace them, students will be notified by email.

Grading

SAS uses a ten-point grading system. Grades from 0 to 3 are failing grades. Grades from 4 to 10 are passing grades. 10 and 9 are excellent grades given in exceptional circumstances.

In most courses, SAS faculty are obliged to follow the 7-rule. This may be calculated either as a "median" (the number of grades above 7 and the number of grades below 7 do not differ by more than 1) or an average (the average final grade for all students should fall between 6.50 and 7.49). The 7-rule may be applied to each assignment OR only to the final course marks. Exceptions to this rule are only granted by the Teaching Council.

Examinations

The examination will consist of a 90-minute written test that includes the identification of ten quotations from required course readings and a written essay. The use of any electronic devices is prohibited. The student must: 1) Attribute the given quotations; identify the sections of the texts (such as a chapter) where the quotations are taken from as well as their authors, titles, and year of publication. 2) Based on the given quotations, write an essay in English (1000–1500 words) analyzing semantic relationships between the texts where these quotations are taken from.

Assessment Criteria:

Satisfactory (C, or 3):	Good (B, or 4):	Excellent (A, or 5):
1) All quotations are attributed correctly;	1) all quotations are attributed correctly;	1) all quotations are attributed correctly;
2) The essay is written in English (no less than 1000 words) in accordance with the following requirements: a) in the essay, there is a sequential logic structure (introduction, body, and conclusion); b) the essay demonstrates satisfactory knowledge and understanding of all texts analyzed; c) the essay contains at least five exact quotations, different from the attributed quotations in assignment 1, illustrating the main ideas of the essay and formatted in accordance with the GOST 2008 (State Standard 2008).	2) the essay is written in English (no less than 1000 words) in accordance with the following requirements: a) in the essay, there is a sequential logic structure (introduction, body, and conclusion); b) the essay demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of all texts analyzed; c) the essay contains at least seven exact quotations, different from the attributed quotations in assignment 1, illustrating the main ideas of the essay and formatted in accordance with the GOST 2008 (State Standard 2008).	2) the essay is written in English (no less than 1000 words) in accordance with the following requirements: a) in the essay, there is a sequential logic structure (introduction, body, and conclusion); b) the essay demonstrates excellent knowledge and understanding of all texts analyzed; c) the essay contains at least nine exact quotations, different from the quotations in assignment 1, illustrating the main ideas of the essay and formatted in accordance with the GOST 2008 (State Standard 2008).

Course Evaluations

Toward the end of the quarter, students will be asked to complete an anonymous evaluation of the course. The results of the evaluations will be reviewed by the instructor, the Head of the Education Office, and the Teaching Council in order to improve education at SAS.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to comply with the SAS Academic Integrity Document (see English version [HERE](#) or Russian version [HERE](#)). Cheating, plagiarism, and disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated and *must* be sanctioned by the instructor in accordance with the document. The use of any translation applications (Google Translate etc.) is highly discouraged. Students are required to cite any sources employed in written assignments using the citation style listed in the syllabus.

Online assignments will be “open book,” meaning that you can look at course reading materials and notes while answering the questions. However, the Academic Integrity still applies. That means: You must not communicate with anyone; your answers will be your own work; and you will not use Google Translate. You are discouraged from searching the Internet for answers, as you will run out of time, may risk violation of the Academic Integrity Policy, and will likely do worse than if you simply answer with the knowledge you already have.

Date Syllabus Last Updated: 16.04.2020