Environmental Studies Capstone

Spring 2023

**Instructor:** Nicolas Delon, ACE 303, [ndelon@ncf.edu](mailto:ndelon@ncf.edu)

**Office Hours:** <https://ndelon.youcanbook.me>

**Meeting Times and Location:** Wednesdays, 12:30 –3:20 PM, ACE 217

**Textbook:** George Monbiot, *Regenesis: Feeding the World Without Devouring the Planet*. Penguin Books. 2022.

**Course Objectives:** The final semester, your 3.5-month mission: To finish and distribute a thesis of which you’re proud, to engage in a successful baccalaureate exam, to reflect on your college journey and plan your next adventure, to enjoy your last semester in environmental studies as you collaborate with your friends and colleagues.

The goals of this course include supporting each other towards a successful thesis and baccalaureate experience, reflecting on your career at New College in environmental studies and bringing to bear the concepts and skills you’ve mastered to new environmentally oriented readings and discussions, preparing for life after college, completing your college experience with joy and a sense of wellbeing within your college community. To that end we will focus on exercises to make your thesis and baccalaureate exams better, discussions of readings from *Regenesis* and from each individual’s thesis area, the creation of resources and plans for life after college, and collaborations with each other.

**Evaluation**

Each student will be evaluated on:

1. open-minded and engaged class participation that supports your and others’ goals – please don’t miss class meetings (>2 unjustified absences = unsat);
2. engagement with material from *Regenesis* readings;
3. queries and insights on thesis-student assigned readings;
4. resume/CV, letters, interviewing, career map, etc., related to post-grad;
5. bacc talk & thesis showcase poster/elevator speech (with drafts);
6. teaching/leading the class through your thesis topic with:
   1. an appropriate reading assignment,
   2. an organizational schema for a 30-to-45-min class segment (outline, handout, PPT, questions, as you wish),
   3. an activity that helps you and enlightens us;
7. a significant thesis draft (hopefully the final copy).

**Please refer to Canvas for deadlines and announcements**. You are expected to complete all assignments unless they are marked as optional. Most of the assignments should be submitted to Canvas. Don’t wait until the last minute to submit in case you face technical issues, and always save and back up your drafts. Don’t write in Canvas first; draft, save, and back up on your own device and ideally cloud-based storage, then copy to Canvas. Check your email daily and Canvas frequently. I will communicate with you via your New College Gmail account and Canvas announcements, so make sure it is up and running and that you receive notifications for new Canvas announcements.

**Thesis essentials that you must convey to your audience about your thesis work:**

* The current literature on your topic
* The hole in the literature that your work addresses
* **Your question/problem/focus**
* Your method/approach
* Your results/findings
* What your findings mean & why they matter

***Regenesis* Responses:** Manipulate the material for better engagement, memory, discussions. Choose a way that’s physical (or could be) and works for you (and us). For instance:

* A summary
* An outline
* Discussion questions
* How the material applies to your life
* Artifacts
* Drawings or flow charts
* An activity
* Other options that have worked for you or you want to try (creative attempts welcome!)

**Policies**

**Laptop use is discouraged. Cell phones must be silenced and stowed away**. Electronic devices cause serious distractions for yourself and others, except if they are necessary for note-taking. Handouts will be provided regularly, and slides made available after class. You will need a computer or smartphone for some class activities. I will notify you in advance in such cases.

**Lateness/Extensions**: Out of fairness to other students and out of concern for my schedule, plan ahead and advise early if you anticipate that you will be unable to complete an assignment in time. Extensions will only be granted in exceptional circumstances **and** if requested with a minimum of a week’s notice. As a rule, do not count on extensions as they will only be granted on a case-by-case basis. “Technical issues” will not normally be accepted as excuses (again, plan ahead).

**Attendance** is mandatory. Missing more than three classes without permission will normally result in an UNSAT and any unjustified absence will affect your evaluation. I will keep track of absences. Please email me **before missing class whenever possible (or ASAP after class)**. You are solely responsible for catching up with missed materials and pertinent information. Please seek help from me or your classmates and never hesitate to ask questions, consult resource centers (writing resource center, library, quantitative reasoning). Really, needing help is expected and there are no silly questions. Silly is not asking questions when you need.

**Disability services and accommodation:** I am committed to providing an inclusive and effective learning environment for all students regardless of ability status. I will do my best to provide alternatives for materials and tests when applicable. Students in need of academic accommodations for a disability may consult with the office of Student Disability Services (SDS) to arrange appropriate accommodations (<https://www.ncf.edu/disability-services-ncf>, HCL3, (941) 487-4496, [disabilityservices@ncf.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@ncf.edu)). To ensure that I can work with Student Disability Services to provide the resources that you need, please alert me of your accommodation eligibility as early as possible and request testing accommodation in writing at least 10 days before scheduled date of the exam listed on the syllabus. If obtaining accommodations from the SDS is itself challenging for you, let me know so I can help you. To increase accessibility, especially in the event of students having to stay home for illness or COVID-19 symptoms, I will attempt to record class meetings. I will maintain recordings for at least the entire academic year. Students reserve the right to access the recordings.

**Academic honesty:** Students are expected to be familiar with the college's [academic dishonesty policy](https://www.ncf.edu/advising/academic-dishonesty/). Any violation of this policy, including plagiarism and cheating, may result in academic sanctions, up to and including, dismissal.

**Religious observance:** Please alert me as soon as possible if an assignment is due on a day or at a time when you are prohibited from participating by your religious beliefs. I will gladly accommodate any missed day for religious reasons.

**Title IX:** New College of Florida is committed to equal access to education pursuant to Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972. The law protects all individuals on our campus from gender-based discrimination or exclusion or instances of sexual misconduct. All full-time faculty, full-time staff, and resident advisors are Responsible Employees required to report any known instances of sexual misconduct or gender discrimination to the Title IX Coordinator.Please contact our Title IX coordinator ([titleix@ncf.edu](mailto:titleix@ncf.edu%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)) or visit the [website](https://www.ncf.edu/campus-life/title-ix/) for more information. Sexual assault awareness is important for our community to be vibrant and to have free exchange of ideas in a safe environment. The Victim Advocate number is (941) 504-8599; with 24-hour availability for assistance with crime, sexual assault, and partner violence. Sexual Assault does not discriminate between age, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, ethnicity, or race. It is important to have a clear understanding of what sexual assault is and is not, as well as the resources available for sexual assault prevention and survivor support. More information is at www.ncf.edu/sexual-assault-awareness.

**Equity, Diversity, and Equal Opportunity:** New College’s commitment to academic excellence can only be realized in a learning environment that is inclusive, characterized by openness to diverse perspectives, and marked by mutual respect. Anything short of this aspiration is inconsistent with our commitment. Equal access, and the opportunity to participate fully in all of our programs and facilities, without regard to race, color, creed, religion, political ideology, national origin, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation, is essential to that commitment and will be the standard to which we expect all members of our learning community to adhere.

**HB 233** (“Viewpoint Diversity” bill): Students may record classroom lectures without a requirement for prior notice and without the faculty member’s consent, with specific limitations on where and how those recordings can be use. In particular, “a recorded lecture may not be published without the consent of the lecturer,” and it may be employed only “for a student’s own personal educational use”, “in connection with a complaint to the public institution of higher education where the recording was made”, and/or “as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding”. Recorded lectures used for other purposes may allow the faculty member to seek “damages plus court costs and reasonable attorney fees.” A class lecture does not include student presentations, academic exercises involving student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), or private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the instructor during a class session.

**Community Building:** One of the pleasures of being at NCF is being part of the NCF community. Class meetings help create that community. \*To allow for active participation, please refrain from using computers, phones, etc., during class meetings. \*Any recordings in class must be for your own private use, cannot be published, and cannot include certain student participation (such as student presentations, exercises, assessments, field trips, private discussions, or private conversations that include students) without their express consent. \*You are welcome to pack and bring your lunch to class – just avoid messy or odorous foods that could inconvenience others.

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| Week | **Class Plan** |
| **1**  **Feb 1** | Welcome and introductions |
| **2**  **Feb 8** | Thesis plans, writing, AOC   * AOC checklist and grant * What have you learned? * *Regenesis*: Ch. 1-2 |
| **3**  **Feb 15** | Thesis plans, writing   * Syllabus * Library format * Evidence, style manual, sources/databases * Your thesis calendar, working groups, writing buddies   DUE:   * Your syllabus * Put your thesis in library format (look for it under Resources) |
| **4**  **Feb 22** | Thesis statement  DUE:   * Writing your argument (Belcher) * Thesis statement assignment * *Regenesis*: read Chapter 3 |
| **5**  **March 1** | Library and resources   * Visit by Kelly Lindberg   Thesis reading, activity, discussion: group 1  DUE: Queries & insights on thesis reading |
| **6**  **March 8** | Thesis reading, activity, discussion: group 2  DUE: Queries & insights on thesis reading  The bacc: forms, protocol, talks  Life after college   * Resumes/CVs & transferable skills * Graduate school, internships, jobs * DUE:   + Resume/CV draft & next year’s (vague) plan   + CEO appointment for resume/CV review & mock interview |

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| **7**  **March 15**  **NO CLASS** | Work on your bacc talks   * DUE:   + Bacc talk drafts   + Handout / slides |

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| Week | **Class Plan** |
| **March 22** | **Spring break** |
| **8**  **March 29** | Alumni: the thesis, the bacc, and life after college   * Thesis reading, activity, discussion: group 3   + DUE: Queries & insights on thesis reading |
| **9**  **April 5** | Alumni: the thesis, the bacc, and life after college   * Thesis reading, activity, discussion: group 4   + DUE: Queries & insights on thesis reading |
| **10**  **April 11** | Bacc talks   * Bacc talks (<= 10 mins)   *Regenesis*: Chapters 5-6 |
| **11**  **April 18** | Bacc talks, creating posters   * Creating posters & the “elevator speech” * Bacc talks (<= 10 mins) |
| **12**  **April 25**  **NO CLASS** | Bacc day: attend a bacc!  DUE: Draft poster for thesis showcase (small format) |
| **13**  **May 3** | Epilogue   * Discussion of posters for next time   + DUE: Next draft for thesis showcase & “elevator speech” * *Regenesis*: wrap up   + DUE: Reflection |
| **14**  **May 10** | Thesis showcase (time TBC)   * DUE: Poster/presentation of thesis (with elevator speech) for others |