enviro·stories

into (global justice) narrative

ARCH 242
Social & Environmental Justice

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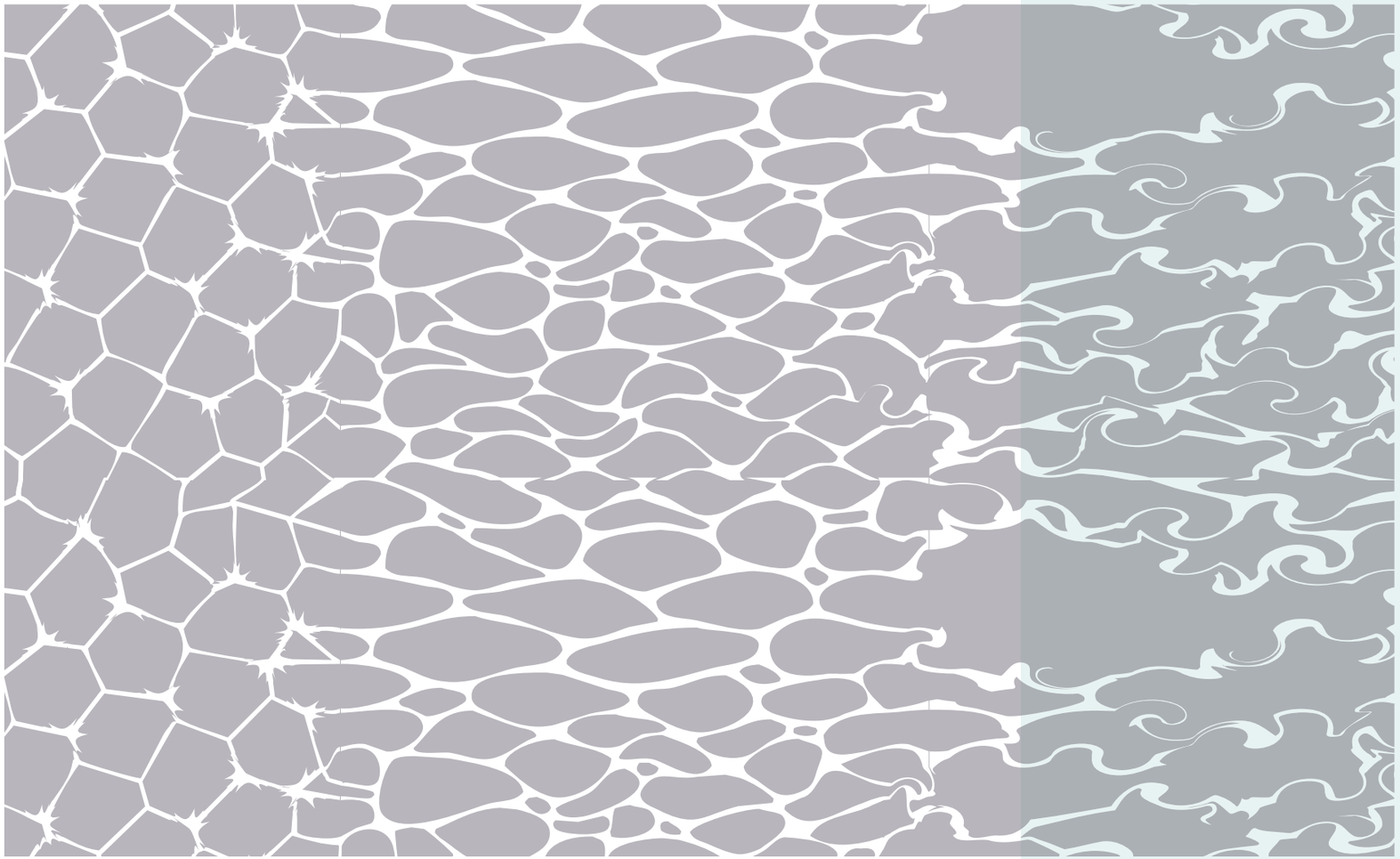
Contents



Course Description

This course introduces students to the essential role that architecture plays in promoting socially and environmentally just communities by acknowledging the values of human rights, social equity, and the dignity of every human being. This module puts special emphasis on the history and theory of environmental justice in the United States, as it pertains to questions of race, gender, class, sexuality, nationality, ethnicity, and species. The module is premised on the notion that environmental problems and social ethics are intimately intertwined.

How is it that some people consider their daily experiences of live, work, learn, play, and worship an intrinsic part of a healthy, prosperous, and instagram-able 'good life', whereas others plainly cannot? Without much thought, some people consume the majority of the world's key environmental resources at the expense of many, many others. Why is it that some people have had limited access to energy, water, fresh air, sanitation, education, healthy food, gainful employment, and green space? Why do some people deem their daily encounters with the built environment a risk or even threat to their well-being? Why is it that some humans feel they should determine the fate of all other species on earth? This module aims to address these questions in the context of the environmental justice movement in the United States and beyond.

Course Objectives

This survey course outlines the essential role that architecture plays in promoting socially and environmentally just communities, by acknowledging the values of human rights, social equity and the dignity of every human being. The learning objectives of this module are:

Objective 1: Acquire knowledge of the different perspectives on the history and theory of the 'environmental justice' ;

Objective 2: Develop an understanding of the conceptual vocabulary underpinning environmental justice as a knowledge-area, particularly notions of framing, claim-making, and the different concepts of 'justice';

Objective 3: Develop an ability to appreciate how multiple worldviews as well as different social, economic, political, and cultural positions enable people to interpret the built environment differently;

Objective 4: Acquire the ability to identify the ways in which historical and contemporary environmental justice groups have facilitated social change integrated with the design of the built environment;

Objective 5: Acquire an appreciation of the value of a multi-disciplinary approach to social and environmental justice as it relates to the design of the built environment in providing for the health, safety, and welfare of all human beings;

Objective 6: Use research and collaboration to develop the capacity to understand the critical linkage between environmental injustice and climate change, responsible and equitable use of natural resources, sustainability, inclusiveness, and quality-of-life issues for the citizens of the world.

Course Outcomes

Understanding

- story-telling toolsets
- the value of a variety of arguments
- the built environment as a multi-sensory just/unjust experience

Analyzing

- places from a larger macro perspective

Applying

- evidence-based research for creative and analytical purposes
- knowledge of artifacts

Evaluating

- the quality of information in different types of source material

Creating

- new knowledge based on disciplinary knowledge and methods/tools

Course Methods

This course employs teaching methods dialogic, didactic, contemplative, critical, multi-media, and project based. The course material is disseminated thematically on the history and theory of environmental justice. Each week you will have two learning sessions to engage with people, ideas, and places affiliated to the top social and environmental justice cases within and beyond the USA.

Course Format

The ARCH course number series 241, 241, 243 are three 4.5-week long social and environmental justice modules. The format of our "enviro-stories" learning sessions will vary. The typical week may include one synchronous information session (Tuesday) and one asynchronous "off-campus" (Thursday) independent learning, research, and creative time session.

The synchronous meetings may include a multi-media information session on social and environmental justice case studies. The sessions will offer time for the review and analysis of relevant primary and secondary sources, interviews, film clips, news reports, articles, podcasts, and films that can inform in-class exercises, discussions, assignments, and presentations. You will work individually as well as in groups in this class. This multi-media format allows us to see and hear diverse people, ideas, and places that reflect lived individual and collective experiences within USA.

Each information session is followed by a work sessions that offer flex time for independent research, contemplative inquiry, creativity, design feedback, and for working on your course assignments. Work sessions are a good time to work on assignments. First, consult the weekly course folder. Here you can review the photo dossier from the information session. You can also explore additional media on recent and other relevant US and International social and environmental justice case studies. They too may appear in your assignments.

Assignments

During this "enviro-stories" module, you will create an Artifact and Artist statement that express your growing awareness of local (USA) and international Social and Environmental Justice cases/ topics/ movements/ communities/ societies/ activists/ frameworks/ or literatures that appears in the weekly course file.

Be creative. Be bold. Have fun!

ar•ti•fact | ˈärdəˌfak(t) | (artefact British English)

noun

1 an object made or modified by a human being, typically one of cultural or historical interest: *ex. the new exhibition featured such artifacts as photo-essays, printed documents, drawings, collage, sculpture, paintings, diagrams, music, typography, comics, object assemblages, infographics, models, maps, scores, tools, a journal, ready-mades, poems, videos, and other media.*

ORIGIN

mid 17th century: from Latin *arte* by or using art' + *factum* 'something made' (neuter past participle of *facere* 'make').

Art•ist state•ment | ˈärdəst ˈstātmənt |

noun

1 a written description that accompanies the efforts of a person who creates paintings, drawings, or any of the various creative arts, such as sculpture, novels, poetry, or film: *ex. The designer of the artifact included an artist statement or a brief text that is for, and in support of, their own work. It was made with the intention to give the viewer a better understanding of the knowledge embedded in the work produced. The artist statement is descriptive, didactic, or reflective in nature and aims to inform or to situate the creation in its historical and contemporary contexts, and thus to present the basis for the work.*

ORIGIN

mid 16th century (denoting a craftsperson): from French *artiste*, from medieval Latin *artista*, from Latin *ars, art- art1:* see -ist.

Rubric

Total Points per Module: 100

50% the quality and craft of your physical artifact

50% 8 meaningful references in your artist statement (1 US-based, 1 international for each week).

Instructor Notes

- *Balance matters — Equal weight is given to making and explaining.*
- *References are non-negotiable — Missing any required weekly references will directly lower the score.*
- *Boldness is rewarded — Experiment with form, materials, and storytelling approaches, but ground the work in accurate research.*
- *Justice focus is essential — Always connect artifact and statement to both local (US) and international perspectives, and address multiple dimensions of justice.*

Grading Scale

90–100: Consistently exemplary work; fulfills and exceeds all course objectives and outcomes.

80–89: Proficient work; meets objectives with minor gaps or areas for deeper exploration.

70–79: Developing work; meets minimum expectations but lacks depth, creativity, or consistency.

Below 70: Insufficient; fails to meet core requirements.

Letter Grade Range

A 100% - 94%
A- <94% - 90%
B+ <90% - 87%
B <87% - 84%
B- <84% - 80%
C+ <80% - 77%
C <77% - 74%
C- <74% - 70%
D+ <70% - 67%
D <67% - 64%
D- <64% - 61%
F <61% - 0%

Criteria	*Exemplary (Full Points)*	*Proficient*	*Developing*	*Insufficient*
1. Craft, Quality, & Originality of Artifact (20 pts)	*Highly skilled, well-crafted, and inventive artifact; excellent use of chosen medium; communicates a compelling environmental justice story that shows bold creative risk-taking.*	*Well-executed artifact with thoughtful design; communicates story effectively; minor technical or conceptual limitations.*	*Artifact meets minimum standards of craft; concept present but underdeveloped; little creative risk.*	*Poorly constructed; unclear or absent conceptual focus; minimal effort.*
2. Connection to Social & Environmental Justice Themes (15 pts)	*Demonstrates deep understanding of environmental justice history/theory; artifact meaningfully engages with both US-based and international contexts; integrates course frameworks on race, gender, class, nationality, and species.*	*Engages with justice themes and connects to both US and international contexts; some connections could be more explicit or nuanced.*	*Justice themes touched on but superficial or uneven; one context (US or international) underdeveloped.*	*No meaningful connection to justice themes; context missing or irrelevant.*
3. Multidisciplinary & Sensory Storytelling (15 pts)	*Employs storytelling toolsets across disciplines; effectively integrates visual, tactile, auditory, or other sensory modes; communicates a multi-sensory just/unjust experience of the built environment.*	*Includes multiple storytelling approaches; sensory dimension present but not fully integrated.*	*Primarily single-medium or descriptive approach; limited sensory engagement.*	*Lacks storytelling depth; no sensory or multidisciplinary dimension.*
4. Depth & Accuracy of References in Artist Statement (20 pts)	*8 meaningful, well-integrated references (4 US-based, 4 international) from course content; shows strong understanding of source material and how it informs the work; accurately cited.*	*All 8 references included, mostly relevant and accurate; integration into statement could be more seamless.*	*Missing 1–2 references or includes weakly relevant sources; limited connection to artifact.*	*Missing 3+ references; references irrelevant, inaccurate, or absent.*
5. Analytical & Comparative Insight in Artist Statement (20 pts)	*Insightfully interprets, compares, and applies course frameworks to both local and global contexts; reflects on multiple worldviews and social positions; makes strong ethical and conceptual arguments.*	*Good comparative analysis; recognizes multiple perspectives; ethical discussion present but could be expanded.*	*Limited or surface-level comparison; perspectives unevenly addressed; minimal ethical reflection.*	*No meaningful comparison or perspective-taking; ethical dimension absent.*
6. Clarity, Structure, & Presentation of Artist Statement (10 pts)	*Statement is clear, concise, and well-organized; effectively situates artifact in historical/contemporary contexts; accessible to general and academic audiences.*	*Statement is understandable and organized; situates work adequately; some sections less polished.*	*Statement is difficult to follow in places; context incomplete or vague.*	*Statement unclear or incoherent; no clear context provided.*

University Policies and Statements

We are committed to ensuring that all members of the community are welcome, through valuing the various experiences and worldviews represented at Ball State and among those we serve. We promote a culture of respect and civil discourse. If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please contact the instructor of record as soon as possible. Ball State's Disability Services Office coordinates services for students with disabilities; documentation of a disability needs to be on file in that office before any accommodations can be provided. Disability Services can be contacted at 765-285-5293 or dsd@bsu.edu.

Freedom of Expression

In this course, we are committed to fostering a learning environment that values intellectual diversity, encourages free expression, and promotes open inquiry. As members of the Ball State Community, we treat each person in the Ball State community with civility, courtesy, compassion, and dignity and respect and learn from differences in people, ideas, and opinions. Please review Ball State University's Statement on Freedom of Expression, the resources on Ball State's Freedom of Expression webpage, and Ball State's Beneficence Pledge.

Attendance

Only the instructor of this course can excuse absences, and adjustments are at their discretion. Where possible, and with sufficient documentation, your instructor will likely support student educational activities.

• students are expected to notify all their instructors once they anticipate being absent for any reason (e.g., funeral) or after the absence begins (e.g., unexpected injury or illness). The student should provide documentation (with confidential information redacted when appropriate) to the instructor.

Title IX

Ball State University is committed to providing a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students. If you or someone you know has experienced sexual harassment—including sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking, please know that you are not alone. The University offers support services and resources. For more information or to report an incident, please visit bsu.edu/titleix or contact the Title IX Coordinator at 765-285-1545 or at titleix@bsu.edu

As your instructor, I am a mandatory reporter under the Title IX policy and required to report any information I receive about possible sexual harassment. This includes information shared in class discussions, assignments, or private conversations.

What happens after I report? The Title IX Coordinator will email the person who experienced sexual harassment (complainant) and invite them to schedule a meeting. If the complainant chooses to meet with the Title IX Coordinator,

• Title IX Coordinator will offer supportive measures (e.g., counseling, extensions on deadlines, course-related adjustments, changes to work or class schedules, and/or referrals to campus offices), review the policy, and discuss options to move forward.

• If a complaint is filed by the complainant or the University, an investigation will begin following University policy.

University Grade Appeal Policy

If you believe you received a final course grade that does not reflect your performance due to fairness or a procedural issue, you have the right to file an appeal within 5 school days after final grades are posted by the Office of the Registrar. Review the University Grade Appeal Policy and Process.]

Student Academic Ethics Policy

Honesty, trust, and personal responsibility are fundamental attributes of the university community. Academic dishonesty and other forms of academic misconduct threaten the foundation of an institution dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and will not be tolerated. To maintain its credibility and reputation, and to equitably assign evaluations of scholastic and creative performance, Ball State University is committed to maintaining a climate that upholds and values the highest standards of academic integrity. Visit the VPAA's academic integrity website (Students tab) for resources on understanding academic integrity, citing sources properly, and avoiding inadvertent academic dishonesty. To learn about BSU's academic integrity expectations and students' rights, please read the University Student Academic Ethics Policy.

Academic integrity violations include giving or receiving an unfair academic advantage (cheating), presenting someone else's ideas or work as your own (plagiarism), and falsifying academic records. Unless otherwise indicated, you must work independently by yourself. Check with your instructor if you are unsure whether something constitutes academic dishonesty. Examples of academic integrity violations include but are not limited to:

- Using resources not authorized by the faculty member (including devices, AI tools, hidden notes, and open books)
- Using commercial study websites to find answers to graded assignments (Chegg, Course Hero, StudyPool, OneClass, etc.).
- Without the instructor's written permission, giving away, buying, or selling graded assignments class notes, exams, study guides, or other course materials to other students or to third-party vendors (Course Hero, Chegg, 24HourAnswers, etc.).
- Working with another person on any assignment other than authorized group projects.
- Sharing or allowing others to access your files, whether done with permission or not.
- Reusing your own work from another semester, course, or section.
- Sharing answers with others during exams (passing notes, texting, whispering, gesturing)
- Discussing exam questions and answers with students who have not taken the exam.
- Soliciting others to complete work for you.

Generative AI Statement

Broader Use of Generative AI Permitted/Encouraged Within Specified Guidelines

The use of Generative AI tools, including ChatGPT, is encouraged/permitted in this course for students who wish to use them. You may choose to use AI tools to help brainstorm assignments or projects or to revise existing work you have written. However, you must cite any AI-generated material that informed your work. Using an AI tool to generate content without proper attribution constitutes a violation of Ball State University's Student Academic Ethics Policy.] Remember that all work herein is designed to encourage you to relay your personal perspectives on the content presented in the course. Assignments herein prompt you to produce meaningful and personal, that is to say, unique physical objects, the design and production for which you are solely responsible.

Student Support Services

The Learning Center

The Learning Center offers free Tutoring and Academic Coaching for many courses at Ball State. Students can make appointments for online (Zoom) or in-person (NQ 350) appointments. To make an appointment, visit myballstate.bsu.edu and click on "Navigate" in the Academic

Tools section, or just go directly to bsu.navigate.eab.com.

Testing accommodations for students with disabilities are available for students who have received the appropriate documentation from Disability Services. Tests may be administered in the Learning Center.
Supplemental Instruction is available in select courses. If you have an SI leader for your course, that person will provide students with information the first week of school regarding weekly study sessions. For more information about Learning Center programming, visit bsu.edu/learningcenter or call 765-285-1006. Follow us on Instagram: BallStateLC.

The Writing Center

All writers improve with practice and feedback, so as a student in this course, you are encouraged to use the Writing Center (in Robert Bell 295 during weekdays, Bracken Library First Floor West in the evenings, or online during any of our regularly scheduled hours) to get additional feedback on your writing.
The Writing Center offers free planning, feedback, and accountability sessions (in person and online) to all students composing essays, reports, reflections, research projects, web content, lesson plans, slideshows, poster presentations, resumes, and other digital or print texts. To schedule a free appointment to discuss your writing, go to bsu.edu/writingcenter. Online and in-person appointments are available; however, plan ahead because appointments book quickly!

The Basic Needs Hub

If you are having difficulty affording enough food, do not have a safe and reliable place to sleep, and/or experiencing an emergency or crisis, help is available through the Basic Needs Hub. The Basic Needs Hub has information, resources, and provides individualized support to students. To talk with a supportive staff member about your experience, receive one on one assistance, or learn more about resources, you can submit a Basic Needs Assistance Form.

The Counseling Center

The Ball State University Counseling Center offers free and confidential services to all students. The Counseling Center is located in Lucina Hall, Room 320. To schedule an appointment, you can contact us at 765-285-1736. Ball State also offers a 24/7 Crisis Line, which can be reached at 765-285-HOPE (4673). The Crisis Line is a mental health resource for those who are struggling with any mental health concerns, including thoughts of self-harm and/or suicide.
At the Ball State Counseling Center, we see students for a variety of reasons, some of which include homesickness, relationship concerns, anxiety, and depression. At your first appointment, you will work with a therapist to create a plan that will connect you with resources that best fit your needs. We assist students with getting connected to therapy at our Center as well as connecting students to self-help resources, other on-campus resources, and community-based resources. All Ball State students also have access to several on-demand, self-help resources through a variety of different platforms. All of these resources, including a direct link to our website, can be found here.

The Speaking Center

The Speaking Center is a free resource available to all members of the BSU community wanting to improve their public speaking abilities. We offer personalized coaching designed to help you become a more confident and effective speaker. Our trained coaches provide constructive feedback and support throughout the entire speech preparation process, whether you are in the early stages of

brainstorming ideas and organizing your thoughts, or you need to practice your delivery and refine your message. The Center is in the David Letterman Communication and Media Building, room 302. To schedule an appointment, please access us through your Navigate app or use this direct link to sign up for a time. Appointments are available both in person and on Zoom. Appointments are available in person, on Zoom, and in virtual reality (VR) for those interested in practicing in an immersive speaking environment.

Canvas and Student Privacy

Canvas provides a user experience that is easy, simple, and intuitive. Special attention has been paid to making Canvas screen-readable. The Rich Content Editor encourages users to create accessible content pages (i.e. text formatting is accomplished using styles). Canvas is designed to allow limited customization of colors and schemes to be accessible for all users. The National Federation of the Blind granted Canvas the Gold Level Web Certification in 2010. Find more information by visiting the Canvas Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT).

FERPA and Privacy

As a student, your educational records are considered confidential. Under FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act), your records are confidential and protected. Under most circumstances, your records will not be released without your written and signed consent. However, some directory information may be released to third parties without your prior consent unless a written request to restrict this is on file. You can learn more about student rights to privacy by reading Ball State's FERPA and Privacy and Protection.

Video Conferencing Recording

In this class, software may be used to record live class discussions. As a student in this class, your participation in live class discussions may be recorded. These recordings typically will be made available only to students enrolled in the class, to assist those who cannot attend the live session or to serve as a resource for those who would like to review content that was presented. Students who prefer to participate via audio only will be allowed to disable their video camera so only audio will be captured. Students who prefer to listen only must disable their audio capability and visual camera. If you have concerns, please discuss these options with me.

Plagiarism Detection

The campus subscribes to Turnitin, a plagiarism prevention service, through Canvas. You may need to submit written assignments to Turnitin. Student work will be used for plagiarism detection and for no other purpose.

Course Expectations and Policies

Course Participation Expectations

- This course is designed with weekly activities, discussion, and other forms of regular collaboration and communication.
- It is recommended that you log into your Canvas course 3 to 4 times a week and check your official Ball State email account daily to view announcements and prepare for class.
- Complete all assignments, quizzes, tests, and any other activities by the stated due dates.

Feedback Policy

• I will respond to email from your official Ball State email address within 36 hours during week days (Monday-Friday) and within 48 hours on the weekend.
• I will read every assignment but I will not always personally comment on them.
• I will grade assignments in due course.
• Contact me directly if you have questions or concerns about your performance in class.

Late / incomplete Assignment Policy

• All assignments are due as scheduled (at the end of each module).
• Shall you miss a review session or display incomplete work, you will have 48 hours after the missed/incomplete review date to email your teacher. You will remind your teacher of your circumstances/the reasons for missing the review or displaying incomplete work. You will also propose three separate times/dates that you are available on the following week, from which your teacher or graduate assistant will select for your make-up review meeting. You will lose the opportunity to earn credit for a missed module review if you do not schedule and attend a make-up session.

Assignment Submission Policy

• All assignments should be submitted as described above.

Grading Policy

• Your teacher and/or graduate assistant will be the key decision-maker on the assignment of grades.

Engagement Expectations

To support a respectful and engaging academic community that encourages the free exchange of ideas and civil discourse, we will follow these ground rules:
• Respect different perspectives. Share your ideas and let others share theirs.
• Your teacher is a credential professional and has designed this course to give you opportunities for independent research and expression.
• Challenge ideas, not people. Disagree respectfully. No personal attacks or put-downs. Focus on exploring ideas critically and constructively.
• Listen to understand. Stay curious, ask questions to understand, and give others space to speak.
• Assume good intentions. Approach discussions and your instructor with curiosity and compassion, not judgement.
• Keep it private. What is shared in class stays in class. Do not share others' words or work without permission: especially on social media.
• Be respectful. Avoid hurtful language, stereotypes, or content that may demean others. Keep feedback constructive. Be open to constructive feedback. Your teacher is a credential professional.

course schedule

Week 1: August 17–23
module 1

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Week 2: August 24–30

Week 3: August 31–September 6

Week 4: September 07–13

Week 5: September 14–20

Week 6: September 21–27
(module 2 begins Tuesday)

Week 7: September 28–October 4

Week 8: October 05–11
No class October 7th

Week 9: October 19–25
No class Fieldtrip week

Week 10: October 26– November 01
(module 3 begins Tuesday)

Week 11: November 02–08
No class November 4–11

Week 12: November 09–15
No class November 4–11

Week 13: November 16–22

Week 14: November 23–29
No class 25-30 November Thanksgiving recess

Week 15: November 30– December 06

Week 16: December 07–13
finals