

**Introduction**

This course will begin by examining evidence that there is not equal environmental protection in this country and by analyzing why this inequality exists. Course participants will then review initiatives by activists, regulators and regulated polluters to respond to evidence of environmental injustice, with special attention to the perspectives of grassroots organizations, the U.S. EPA and its state counterparts, and businesses that operate where the problems are most severe. The course will also explore why civil and human rights have become increasingly important aspects of environmental protection activities across the globe. Throughout, this course will examine the often complicated relationship between three defining social justice initiatives of our times – the civil rights, human rights and environmental movements.

I am the Director of the Chicago Environmental and Energy Law Clinic, and teach environmental and energy law courses at Northwestern and Chicago-Kent College of Law. For several years, I worked with Professors and students in Northwestern University’s School of Engineering to devise strategies to solve urban environmental problems. I’ve practiced environmental law for more than 35 years, frequently on behalf of environmental justice organizations, and will bring this “real life” perspective to the course.

**Logistics**

**Class Hours:** Class meets on Fridays from 4:00-6:50.

**Office/Phone/Email:** I can be reached at the Chicago Environmental and Energy Law Clinic, 17 N. State, Suite 1710, Chicago, IL 60602. The phone number is (312) 726-2938. My email address is [kharley@kentlaw.iit.edu](mailto:kharley@kentlaw.iit.edu)

**Your Email:** You are responsible for checking your email on a regular basis. Email will be used every week to communicate important class information.

**Student Obligations and Grading**

Your grade will be based on the following scoring system, which is designed to allow you to control your final grade for the seminar.

Grade	Weekly Reflection Papers, 1-2 pages– 35 points	Attendance and Participation – 20 points	Final Paper, 10 pages – 45 points	Presentation, 10 minutes – 10 point bonus
A	7 weekly papers completed	consistent attendance and participation	an on-time final paper of good-to-excellent quality	a final presentation of good-to-excellent quality
B	6 weekly papers completed	good attendance and participation	an on-time final paper of fair-to-good quality	a final presentation of fair-to-good quality
C or below	5 or fewer weekly papers completed	inconsistent attendance and participation	a late paper and/or a paper of poor-to-fair quality	a final presentation of poor-to-fair quality

**Reading Assignments**

Attached please find a class schedule and corresponding reading assignments for the entire semester. Most of the primary materials are available on our course Canvas site or freely available on the web.

You should purchase: *Environmental Justice (Key Issues in Environment and Sustainability)*, ed. Brendan Coolseat, Routledge, 2021.

**Syllabus Table**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading</b>
4/4	Course Overview From the Grassroots	
4/11	EJ – A Brief History  Prompt – How Is EJ Defined?	Toxics Waste and Race (1987), 1-24 UCC (2007) 16-37, 84-108 Coolseat 6-17  First Prompt Response Due
4/18	EJ and the Traditional System of Environmental Protection in the U.S.  Prompt - Select Steel Case Study – What is An EJ Community?	UCC (2007) 38-83 Coolseat 21-36  <a href="https://www.epa.gov/ejscreen">https://www.epa.gov/ejscreen</a>  <a href="https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/placeandhealth/eji/index.html">https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/placeandhealth/eji/index.html</a>  Second Prompt Response Due
4/25	EJ and the Civil Rights Movement  Prompt - Camden Case Study	naacp.org/climate-justice.resources/  Fumes Across the Fence-Line. NAACP (2017) - <a href="https://www.naacp.org/climate-justice-resources/fumes-across-fence-line/">https://www.naacp.org/climate-justice-resources/fumes-across-fence-line/</a>  Coal Blooded: Putting Profits Before People. NAACP (2013) - <a href="https://www.naacp.org/climate-justice-resources/coal-blooded/">https://www.naacp.org/climate-justice-resources/coal-blooded/</a>  Third Prompt Response Due
5/2	Federal Responses to EJ  Prompt – U.S. EPA’s EJ Strategies: Real Progress or Blah, Blah, Blah?  Paper Topics Due	UCC (2007) 9-14  Executive Order 12898 and Title VI Memo  U.S. EPA EJ 2014 and 2020 Strategies  Fourth Prompt Response Due

5/9	<p>States, Local Units of Government and EJ</p> <p>Prompt - Flint Case Study – What Was The Primary Discriminatory Act?</p>	<p>Local Policies For Environmental Justice: A National Scan. Baptista (2019)</p> <p>NJ S232; CalEPA Environmental Justice Program; IL EPA Environmental Justice Program</p> <p>Weaknesses Delayed Response to Flint Water Crisis. U.S. EPA Office of Inspector General (2018)</p> <p>Fifth Prompt Response Due</p>
5/16	<p>EJ, Business Enterprises and Investors</p> <p>Prompt – Are Sustainability and ESG Enough to Address EJ? If Not, What Else Is Required?</p>	<p>Coolsaet, 107-117</p> <p><a href="https://www.era-environmental.com/blog/sustainability-management-triple-bottom-line">https://www.era-environmental.com/blog/sustainability-management-triple-bottom-line</a></p> <p>Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (1992)</p> <p>Principles of Responsible Investing: <a href="https://www.unpri.org/">https://www.unpri.org/</a></p> <p>ESG: <a href="https://www.investor.gov/introduction-investing/general-resources/news-alerts/alerts-bulletins/investor-bulletins-1">https://www.investor.gov/introduction-investing/general-resources/news-alerts/alerts-bulletins/investor-bulletins-1</a></p> <p>Sixth Prompt Response Due</p>
5/23	<p>EJ and the International Human Rights Movement</p> <p>Prompt – Is EJ the U.S. Version of the Environmental Aspirations of the International Human Rights Movement?</p>	<p>Coolsaet, 37-51, 132-147</p> <p>UCC (2007), 109-123</p> <p>Framework Principles on Human Rights and the Environment (2018); UNEP Factsheet on Human Rights and the Environment; UNEP Environmental Rights Initiative</p> <p>UN Resolution on Human Rights and the Environment, July 2022</p> <p>Seventh Prompt Response Due</p>

5/30	EJ, Climate and the Just Transition  Presentations	Coolsaet, 148-160  Bali Principles of Climate Justice (2002)  <a href="https://yaleclimateconnections.org/2020/07/what-is-climate-justice/">https://yaleclimateconnections.org/2020/07/what-is-climate-justice/</a>  <a href="https://climatejusticealliance.org/just-transition/">https://climatejusticealliance.org/just-transition/</a>
6/6	EJ - from the Biden to the Trump Administration  Presentations	<a href="https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/change/subtopics/coronavirus-and-pollution/">https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/change/subtopics/coronavirus-and-pollution/</a>  Executive Order on Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad (January 27, 2021)  The Inflation Reduction Act of 2022