ENEC 201: Environment & Society

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| Discussion Leadership |

**Discussion leadership description**

Each student will be assigned as part of group that will be responsible for presenting and leading a 30-minute discussion during their assigned recitation period. Selected topics correspond with lecture and readings, so it is your responsibility to cover/synthesize the readings and the lectures for the topic at hand. The discussion should help identify major themes of readings, explore points of contradiction between readings, and help synthesize ideas from different sources. If Dr. Gangi gets behind schedule, you will still cover the assigned readings/topics, and the whole class still needs to be up to date on the readings per the syllabus. **While you should present key ideas, most of the time should be spent leading a discussion! Ideally you will spend no more than 10 minutes TOTAL presenting (can be split up throughout the 30 minutes)**. You are encouraged to bring in outside material, but if you do so, make sure you link them to concepts covered in class and readings so these materials can enrich the discussion without leading us off-topic. Because you might not bring in all readings from your topic, be clear about which readings you are referring to when you are presenting key points.

You will be graded on all elements of your presentation (style, organization, content, presentation skills, etc), but most important is your ability to lead a discussion – I will deduct points if you spend too much time presenting and not enough on the discussion. This means that if you fail to engage your classmates, you will lose points. Think about using creative discussion formats, creative modes of interpretation, and anything you can think of that will help others remember your concepts - this should be fun and lively! I will definitely give better grades to groups that bring energy, enthusiasm, and fun.

As part of your preparation for recitations for other groups, I recommend a pay-it-forward model: you will help your classmates get better grades if you come prepared for their discussions, and then they will do the same for you. If everyone keeps up with the lecture videos and engages in the discussions, everyone will get more value out of recitation and have more fun. Additionally, if students who are not in the presentation group for that week have clarification questions or discussion questions they would like to ask, they should feel free to bring them up during the discussion.

Here are the topics (also listed in the syllabus) with potential questions to explore in the discussion:

Environmental Microeconomics (TA Led)

* What is the Prisoner’s Dilemma? How does it affect the way people make decisions?
* What is a negative externality?
* What are carbon taxes? How or why might they be useful in our world today?

**Environmental Policy-Making: Individuals, Firms, and Democratic Models**

* What is the Bureaucratic Model? What is the Elite Model?
* Why do we need government (or more specifically environmental policy)? What are externalities?
* What are public goods?
* What are the goals of public policy? What policy tools are available to the government to protect/improve the environment?

**Other Policy-Making Models, Macroeconomics, and the Individual**

* What is a market? What assumptions are made in classical economics?
* What are the major macroeconomic schools of thought? Who are their founders?
* What challenges exist to implementing good environmental policy? Have there been any success stories?
* What major factors played into early environmentalism in the US?
* What are some of the moral implications of the market?
* Review Inside Job – how does this movie reflect concepts discussed in the course thus far?

**Demographic Transition**

* What are the stages of the demographic transition? What is the history of the demographic transition? Is it still applicable?
* What is the relationship between the demographic transition and population pyramids?
* What are the consequences of a rapidly growing national population? What are the consequences of a diminishing national population?
* What options are available to achieve desired fertility? How can we change desired fertility?

**Global Energy Transition**

* What is our current system of energy production and delivery?
* What are the pros and cons of this system?
* What are some alternatives to our current system? What is the Smart Grid?
* What role does public transportation play into energy transitions?

**Urbanization and the Built Environment**

* What are some trends of urbanization?
* What are some of the social, political, economic, and/or environmental consequences of urbanization?
* Review Lost Children of Rockdale County – how does this movie reflect concepts discussed in the course thus far?
* What does the future of urbanization look like? What are some possibilities?