

COURSE DETAIL

AN INTRODUCTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY OF MODERNITY

Country

France

Host Institution

Institut d'Etudes Politiques (Sciences Po)

Program(s)

Sciences Po Paris

UCEAP Course Level

Upper Division

UCEAP Subject Area(s)

History Environmental Studies

UCEAP Course Number

119

UCEAP Course Suffix**UCEAP Official Title**

AN INTRODUCTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY OF MODERNITY

UCEAP Transcript Title

ENV HIST MODERNITY

UCEAP Quarter Units

4.50

UCEAP Semester Units

3.00

Course Description

For the past two centuries, historians have focused their work on understanding the political, economic and social developments that created the modern world. Debates over the growth of trade, the development of institutions, the causes of war and ways to achieve peace, the creation of health systems, and the evolution of ideas formed the basis of the field. History, for most of history, was considered a purely human endeavor. In the past few decades, however, climate change and human impact on Earth's biosphere have demonstrated that this framework is incomplete. Humanity has always been part of and dependent on the non-human world and now, as the Anthropocene debate suggests, the human race is undoubtedly a major cause of changes to Earth systems. The future of humanity and the planet can no longer be separated, which forces us to reconsider the role of non-human environments in the development of modern human societies. To do so, this course relies on the tools of environmental history, a relatively new and rapidly growing historical subfield that studies the human relationship with the natural world. Each session addresses a specific feature of our modern era through an environmental lens, including globalization, industrialization, empires, warfare, food production, and energy use. Sessions are a combination of lectures, source analysis and group discussions. At the end of the course, students are familiar with the broad themes of the environmental history of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and are able to apply this historical methodology to their own interests.

Language(s) of Instruction

English

Host Institution Course Number

AHIS 25A17

Host Institution Course Title

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Host Institution Course Details

<https://syllabus.sciencespo.fr/en/?202520/289528>

Host Institution Campus

Host Institution Faculty

Host Institution Degree

Seminar

Host Institution Department

History

Course Last Reviewed

2025-2026

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