

Environmental Journalism
Spring 2016
Undergraduates: JOU 4930-1F72
Graduate students: MMC 6936-148H
Mondays, Periods 4, 5, and 6 (10:40-1:40)
Weimer Hall (UF's College of Journalism & Communications)
Room 2050

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Sometimes I am traveling on a story so best to make an appointment

Environmental Journalism, the challenge: Living in what some scientists term the Anthropocene Era (*anthropo*: man, and *cene*: new), in which human activities have ever-more serious impacts on our local regions and the planet, it is increasingly important to report on and improve public understanding of climate change; freshwater scarcity; the decline of our oceans, fish, and wildlife; environmental health; sustainable energy, agriculture, and food systems; and more. But complex science and uncertainty, public apathy and politics, well-funded counter-narratives, zealous stakeholders, and what can (incorrectly) appear a lack of news hook for stories playing out slowly in the decades of a comp plan or two centuries of CO2 emissions make Environmental Journalism one of the most challenging specializations in our craft.

Environmental Journalism, the course: This course will introduce you to Environmental Journalism and elucidate the roles and difference between journalism and communications; help you find the most accurate, credible, and timeliest information on science and issues; and ground you in the essentials of environmental reporting – discerning uncompromised expert sources, using descriptive storytelling to relate real-world impact, and tapping the primary databases, records and other tools commonly used by environmental reporters. You will publish your work on our CJC website devoted to Environmental Journalism: <http://stateofwater.org> or even better, in the popular media. Students from this class routinely publish their environmental stories in the *Alligator*, *WUFT*, the *Tampa Bay Times*, and other publications. By semester's end, you'll have a significant, compelling, accurate work of environmental reporting that is relevant for your audiences – and, I hope, an excellent story clip and byline for you.

Each weekly class is divided into two parts. The first hour is lecture format: We'll discuss the craft of Environmental Journalism and its promise and challenges through a topical theme in EJ, often with a guest speaker. The next two hours are devoted to the practicalities: hands-on reporting, developing, funding and publishing your stories. Much of your work will be read not only by me, but by your peers in class. This is a crucial step. The best writers have a "brain trust" to share ideas and gut-check copy before sending it into the editorial ether.

Course readings, participation, assignments and grades:

Readings: Undergraduates are not required to buy any books. Please read the assigned works of journalism each week before class. Most are here on the syllabus and some will be added based on the news of the day; check email Wednesday evening before Monday class for updates. Graduate students are required to pick up Dan Fagin's *Toms River: A Story of Science and Salvation*, winner of the 2014 Pulitzer for nonfiction. **Graduate students only: A 500-word book review of Toms River is due by Monday February 15th, when author Dan Fagin will give an evening lecture at the University of Florida.**

Everyone, please mark this important evening on your calendar!

For all students, our weekly assigned articles and essays are available free online, or through UF's electronic databases. All are also expected to keep up with the Environmental Journalism of the day. This is best accomplished by checking the Society of Environmental Journalists' "EJ Today," a well-chosen collection of top headlines from the beat updated every weekday morning. You do not have to be a member of SEJ to access the daily links, here: www.sej.org/headlines/list. You may want to join (\$25 for students) if considering EJ as a career.

Participation – both in person and online – is part of your grade. Between missing the first Monday in January and the MLK holiday 1/18, we have only 13 sessions together, so it is important to make each one count. For this reason, **class attendance is mandatory, as is social-media engagement, with a minimum of one Twitter post a week.** Twitter has its pros and cons, but it's worth trying this semester for its vigorous discussion of the environment. I will tweet (from @cynthiabarnett) about Environmental Journalism and our class using the hashtag #EJUF. For a good overview of EJ on Twitter, also follow the Society of Environmental Journalists @SEJORG. We also have a class blog on UF's EJ website, www.stateofwater.org to share environmental news and ideas.

Assignments (You have five of them, due over the course of the semester.)

- 1) **EJ Assignment 1: A 500-word personal biography or work of nature writing.** This is the most creative assignment of the semester, so free yourself from any writing rules you've learned in the past. Think about a powerful place you'd like to describe (the power could come from its beauty or its loss); a wild adventure; or a personal ecological narrative in the vein of Leopold's wolf experience. **Due before class Mon. Feb. 1st; we'll read these aloud if you feel comfortable doing so.**
- 2) **EJ Assignment 2: A 300-word written critique of any work of Environmental Journalism you choose, followed-up in class with an informal presentation.** When it's your turn to critique, you'll email me a link to the piece by the Wed morning before our Mon class so that I can distribute it for everyone to read. You'll turn in a 300-word critique of the piece before class, and lead an informal discussion of its strengths and weaknesses during class. **Rolling due dates; we'll schedule these on the first day so you'll know yours.**

- 3) **EJ Assignment 3: A 500-word to 750-word news story on a freshwater topic.** You may choose your topic from our class tip sheet or develop your own story with help from sources, our guest speakers, or your brain trust in class. Your stories will become part of a water series on WUFT.org. **Due Friday Feb. 26th before you leave for Spring Break.**
- 4) **EJ Assignment 4: A 500-word critique of a corporate press release, website, or green campaign.** You may feature a campaign that really is making a difference, or expose one that is greenwashing or pink-washing, ie, pink-ribbon-promoting companies whose products are linked to increased risk of breast cancer, see thinkbeforeyoupink.org. **Due Mon., March 21st before class.**
- 5) **EJ Assignment 5: A minimum 1,200-word long-form environmental story** on a topic of your choosing, due in three parts: **A reported, 500-word story pitch/plan for the piece is due Mon. March 14th. A first draft is due Mon. April 4th. The final (publishable) draft is due Weds. April 20th.** Your other writing assignments in this class or other classes may tie in to your long-form story, especially if they help to deepen the story and build your specialization.

Grades: Your final grade is made up of the five EJ assignments and class participation in person and on-line, as follows:

- A 500-word work of environmental biography or nature writing. **100 points**, due Mon. Feb. 1st 10:30 a.m.
- 300-word critique and informal class presentation on a published work of environmental journalism: **100 points**, due Mon. _____ before class (10:30 a.m.).
- 500-word to 750-word water story: **100 points**, due Friday Feb. 26th midnight.
- A 500-word, reported pitch/plan (as if you are making a pitch to an editor) for your long-form story, **100 points**, due Mon. March 14th midnight.
- A 500-word critique and class presentation on a corporate press release or green campaign, **100 points**, due Mon. March 21st 10:30 a.m.
- A first draft of your long-form environmental story, minimum 1,200 words (Hint: the better on first draft, the easier on final!), **100 points**, due Mon., April 4th midnight.
- The final draft of your long-form environmental story, minimum 1,200 words, **200 points**, due Wed. April 20th midnight.
- Class attendance/participation *and* online engagement made up of at least 13 original tweets with hashtag #EJUF or two short blog posts (send to me and I'll post) to stateofwater.org over the course of the semester, **200 points**.

If you come to class all 13 times and engage at least weekly on social media (through the semester – not 13 Tweets in the final week), you'll earn all 200 points for participation. Excused absences include religious holidays and documented medical excuses.

TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE: 1,000

GRADING SCALE:**930-1,000 points: A****900-929: A-****880-899: B+****830-879: B****800-829: B-****780-799: C+****730-779: C****700-729: C-****680-699: D+****630-679: D****600-629: D-****599 or below: E**

Course schedule and weekly content (Please look for my Weds evening email prior to Monday's class for updates/substitutions, and articles being critiqued by your classmates.)

Week 1, January 11th**Course intro and policies; philosophy and history of EJ; and an homage to**

nature writing: Modern Environmental Journalism has roots in the seventeenth century, when **John Evelyn** writes “Fumifugium, or the Inconvenience of the Aer and Smoake of London Dissipated” (1661), proposing remedies for London’s choking black air: *The immoderate use of, and indulgence to, sea-coale in the city of London exposes it to one of the fowlest inconveniences and reproaches that can possibly befall so noble and otherwise incomparable City. Whilst they are belching it forth their sooty jaws, the City of London resembles ... the suburbs of Hell [rather] than an assembly of rational creatures.* We’ll take a look at the history of this vigorous field from Evelyn to Florida’s own **Marjory Stoneman Douglas** – a journalist and author long before she became an environmental activist at age 76 – and **Rachel Carson**, whose 1962 book *Silent Spring* remains one of the best-known works of Environmental Journalism for its profound impact. *Silent Spring* helped launch the modern environmental movement, spurred the federal government to ban DDT, and helped bring about a remarkable recovery of eagles, falcons and other fish-eating birds then at the brink of extinction.

Douglas and Carson also represent what can be a close relationship between nature writing and EJ. Environmental journalists are journalists working to cover the environment and not environmentalists trying to practice journalism. Still, nature writing has its place in EJ. Lyrical descriptions of sea or forest, personal narratives, sense of place pieces and adventure tales all can help draw new readers to environmental stories.

Read ahead for class: 1) Aldo Leopold, “Thinking like a mountain,” essay from *A Sand County Almanac*, 1949. 2) “Marjory Stoneman Douglas, ‘Voice of the River,’” by Tim Collie, the *Fort Lauderdale Sun Sentinel*, May 18th 1998. 3) “Silent Spring Turns 50,” by Elizabeth Grossman, June 22nd 2012, *Earth Island Journal*. (And check out the linked June 16th 1962 copy of *The New Yorker* with Rachel Carson’s first excerpt of *Silent Spring*.) 4) Sy Montgomery, “Deep Intellect,” *Orion* magazine, October 2011.

Class story meeting: Introductions, environmental interests, brainstorm ideas for your nature-writing assignment, Twitter mechanics, student-interview/storytelling exercise if time.

January 18th Martin Luther King Day. No class as we remember Dr. King: *It really boils down to this: that all life is interrelated. We are all caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied into a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one destiny, affects all indirectly.* —**Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.** (1929-1968), from Christmas Eve sermon, 1967.

Week 2, January 25th

Environmental Journalism, the Beat: (Or, how to get paid to walk in the woods and write about it.) **Guest Speaker: Craig Pittman, award-winning environmental reporter for the *Tampa Bay Times* and author of books on wetland fillers, manatee killers and orchid smugglers.**

Read ahead for class: (All stories from the *Tampa Bay Times*) 1) First story in the interactive investigative series *Vanishing Wetlands*, “They Won’t Say No,” by Craig Pittman and Matthew Waite, May 22nd 2005. 2) Parts 1 and 2 of Craig’s 2010 investigation into the plight of the Florida panther, “Dead Cat Walking.” 3) Craig’s story “Florida’s Vanishing Springs,” November 23rd, 2012. 4) “Legislators approve water farming funding after copter rides, donations,” by Craig Pittman and Michael Van Sickler, May 10th 2015.

Class story meeting: Q&A with Craig Pittman, brainstorm with Craig story ideas for your freshwater and long-form stories; best sources, public records, data, etc.; First batch of Environmental Journalism critiques.

Sunday January 31st Field Trip! Kayaking on the Ichetucknee River.

(Not mandatory, but a great trip if you can make it.) With its limestone outcroppings and turquoise springs, the beautiful Ichetucknee is one of the few places in the United States where you can see what is usually hidden underground: the inextricable links between groundwater and surface water, and those between human over-use and pollution and our freshwater future. Details, directions and contacts by email.

Week 3 February 1st

Covering freshwater: Water lies at the heart of all the planet’s biggest environmental stories – climate change, and human and ecosystems health, along with the competition among water, food and energy. Reporting on freshwater encompasses both quality – nitrates and other pollutants; and quantity, which involves the sustainability of water extraction for human use and equity among different users from ag to utilities (us) – and ecosystems.

Read ahead for class: 1) “Nonprofit ‘Pro-Water’ Site Brings Groundbreaking Journalism, Striking Visuals to Bear on Complex Global Stories,” a Society of Environmental Journalists interview with J. Carl Ganter, Circle of Blue. 2) “California’s Dogged Drought Cutting Off Water Supplies to State’s Poor, by Brett Walton, Circle of Blue, August 2014. 3) “In California’s

Central Valley, Dry Wells Multiply in the Summer Heat,” by Brett Walton, Circle of Blue, June 2015. 4) “Hey, America, It’s Time to Talk About the Price of Water,” by Cynthia Barnett, *Enslia* magazine, 2014. 5) “A Water Ethic for Florida,” by Cynthia Barnett, Collins Center for Public Policy, 2011.

Class story meeting: Environmental Journalism critiques; read nature writing pieces aloud; brainstorm our freshwater stories and series.

Week 4 February 8th

Covering the Oceans Sea stories are among the best read in Environmental Journalism because audiences often already care about beaches, charismatic creatures like dolphins and their favorite seafood dinner. What if the story doesn’t involve a dolphin with a cute name, rather, complexities such as ocean acidification and red tides, or highly politicized issues such as the Apalachicola oyster collapse?

Read ahead for class: 1) “Sea Change: The Pacific’s Perilous Turn,” 2013 *Seattle Times* series on the global impacts of ocean acidification, by reporter Craig Welch and photographer Steve Ringman. Read the seven stories online at the *Seattle Times*’s main link to the project <http://apps.seattletimes.com/reports/sea-change/> so you can view the videos and interactive graphics. 2) “A Little Fish with Big Impact in Trouble on U.S. West Coast,” by Elizabeth Grossman, published June 18th 2015 in *Yale Environment 360*, with funding from the Food & Environmental Reporting Network, a nonprofit investigative journalism organization. 3) “Return of the water wars: As Florida and Georgia fight it out, what story you get depends on which state you’re in,” by Susannah Nesmith, *Columbia Journalism Review*, August 27th 2013.

Class story meeting: Environmental Journalism critiques; finish reading nature writing pieces aloud; work on our freshwater stories and series. Matt Sheehan, director of CJC’s Innovation News Center and news director and executive editor for our seven media properties, will come in the last hour to talk with us about the WUFT water series where your first stories will be published.

Week 5, February 15th

Chemicals Understanding epidemiology & risk, and more investigative reporting on the environmental beat. Chemical pollution lies at the major intersection of environmental, health, and science reporting. **Guest speaker: Joe Delfino, UF Professor Emeritus of Environmental Engineering Sciences.**

Read ahead for class: 1) Toxic Clout series by Ronnie Greene and others, 2013, Center for Public Integrity. (<http://www.publicintegrity.org/environment/pollution/toxic-clout>) Be sure to read, “In new battleground over toxic reform, American Chemistry Council targets the states.” 2) “Cracking Open a Cancer Cluster,” by Elizabeth Royte, *OnEarth* magazine, April 2014, a discussion of Fagin’s epidemiological scholarship in *Toms River*, the story of chemical production and disposal in a small coastal town in New Jersey with scores of children diagnosed with leukemia and cancers of the central nervous system. 3) (Look at) “Chemical Fallout,” a

2007 series in the *Milwaukee Wisconsin Journal Sentinel* about endocrine-disrupting chemicals in household objects from baby's bottles to "microwave safe" containers. By journalists Susanne Rust, Cary Spivak, and Meg Kissinger, the series began to expose the problems of common chemicals that build up in our bodies, especially in children beginning in utero – as well as the epic industry effort to prevent regulation of bisphenol A (BPA). Check out the original series and follow-up stories when FDA reversed its position on BPA as a result of the series: <http://www.jsonline.com/watchdog/34405049.html>.

Class story meeting: Dr. Delfino will stick around for Q&A and discussion with graduate students of *Toms River*, etc. Environmental Journalism critiques. Work on our water story ideas and series.

Week 6, February 22nd

Climate Change, the story of our time: While the science of climate change becomes increasingly certain, the scientific facts have not translated well to the general public. We'll look at the basic science, the IPCC, finding the best experts and research, dealing with skeptics, reporting on mitigation and adaptation, finding relevance for the daily lives and the regions of our audiences – and maybe most importantly, making the climate change story engaging. What are the lessons for how scientists and journalists have communicated climate change over the past 10 years for increasingly complex environmental issues going forward?

Read ahead for class: 1) "Narrating Climate Change," by Alexis Sobel Fitts, *Columbia Journalism Review*, June 2014; 2) Read the series "Exxon: The Road Not Taken," by Neela Banerjee, Lisa Song and David Hasemyer, September 2015, reporting for the Pulitzer Prize-winning nonprofit news site Inside Climate News. 3) Check out Climate Central's "Surging Seas" map at sealevel.climatecentral.org. 4) Read "Good-bye Miami," by Jeff Goodell, *Rolling Stone*, June 2013.

Class story meeting: Discuss the many new climate-change reporting platforms and funding opportunities. Environmental Journalism critiques. Your water stories are due this Friday, so we'll work through any last issues you need help with.

February 29th no class for UF's Spring Break. Be sure to take a real break from your screens and spend some time in nature: *Nature's peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees. The winds will blow their own freshness into you and the storms their energy, while cares will drop off like autumn leaves.* —**John Muir**, (1838-1914), from *Our National Parks*, 1901.

Week 7, March 7th

Agriculture and food: A large and complex beat covering everything from pollution and water/land use to genetically modified crops and the question of how to feed the world. Americans' renewed interest in organic food and urban farming, and their perpetual interest in healthful eating, can make these some of the best-read stories on the environmental beat. How can environmental journalists accurately and fairly report big trade-offs like food vs. fuel, subsidies vs. groundwater extraction, the most productive corn region in the world vs. the Gulf of

Mexico dead zone, etc? Guest speaker, **Anna Prizzia**, UF campus food systems coordinator and co-founder, Alachua County's Forage Farm.

Read ahead for class: 1) "A Race to Save the Orange by Altering its DNA," Amy Harmon, *The New York Times*, July 27th 2013. 2) "Pointed talk: Michael Pollan and Amy Harmon Dissect a GMO controversy," by Nathanael Johnson, GRIST, August 2013. 3) "A Journalist and a Scientist Break Ground in the GMO Debate," by Amanda Little, *The New Yorker*, April 25th 2014. 4) Check out some of the infographics produced by the Food & Environment Reporting Network, thefern.org, particularly, "The Mississippi River and the Making of a Dead Zone."

Class story meeting: Environmental Journalism critiques. Brainstorm, Q&A on the pitch/plan due for your longform story in one week.

Week 8, March 14th

Greenwashing and spin: Is that new housing development really green? How much water will the proposed organic beef operation pump? Is phosphate feeding the world or depleting the Earth? Asking the questions and the follow-up questions... reporting with sophistication and fairness ... and recognizing greenwashing vs. effective corporate social responsibility/sustainability programs.

Read ahead for class: 1) "The slippery business of palm oil," by Fred Pearce, *The Guardian*, November 6th 2008. 2) "BP Labors to Cast Doubt on Spill Study It Dislikes," by Bryan Gruley and Bradley Olson, Bloomberg Business, March 11th 2015. 3) Click around BP's Gulf spill website, The Whole Story, at <https://www.thestateofthegulf.com/the-whole-story/>

Class story meeting: Final Environmental Journalism critiques. Watch Unilever corporate branding campaign with MLK if we didn't get to it in the first hour. Brainstorm ideas for the corporate press release or green/sustainability campaign you'd like to critique.

Week 9, March 21st

Energy: Coverage blends the old-fashioned skill of following the money and the newer challenge of reporting on the sustainability of our energy choices and sources.

Read ahead for class: 1) "Florida utilities say solar doesn't work in the Sunshine State, but it sure does in Georgia," January 30th 2015, and "Utilities their tune on solar power," May 29th 2015, both by Ivan Penn in the *Tampa Bay Times*. 2) "Can Coal Ever Be Clean?" By Michelle Nijhuis, *National Geographic*, April 2014. 3) Read Climate Central series "Pulp Fiction," parts 1, 2, and 3, a five-month investigative series by reporter John Upton on the global trade in wood pellets, revealing renewable energy doesn't necessarily mean clean energy.

Class story meeting: Begin greenwashing class presentations. More on writing mechanics, organizing and structuring longform stories as you begin to think about the shape of your first draft due April 4th.

Week 10, March 28th

Wildlife & biodiversity: Connecting audiences with the web of life. Earth is losing species 100 to 1,000 times faster than natural extinction, a rate that has not occurred since the dinosaurs and many other species disappeared 65 million years ago. Scientists say habitat degradation is the main cause. What are some ways to report on the biodiversity crisis, and make endangerment of Florida's frosted flatwoods salamander as interesting as our charismatic Florida panther? **Guest Speaker: Dr. Tom Hoctor, UF Center for Landscape Planning**, on Florida Wildlife corridors, and efforts to predict and mitigate the effects of sea-level rise and land-use changes on Florida's imperiled species.

Read ahead for class: 1) Watch "We Are the Asteroid," a video by Peter Sinclair, Yale Climate Connections. 2) "The Sixth Extinction: A Conversation With Elizabeth Kolbert," by Robert Kunzig, National Geographic, February 18th 2014. 2) View on-line interactive report, "Florida Wildlife Corridor Expedition," by photographer Carlton Ward Jr. and National Geographic, <http://www.floridawildlifecorridor.org/geostory/>.

Class story meeting: Q&A with Tom Hoctor on Florida environmental issues. Continue greenwashing presentations. Work on long-form stories with the first draft due next week.

Week 11, April 4th

Environmental Justice: Low-income, minority neighborhoods tend to bear the brunt of environmental threats such as exposure to chemical plants, Superfund and other toxic waste sites. A growing body of research "suggests that the chronic stressors of poverty may fundamentally alter the way the body reacts to pollutants, especially in young children," according to the Environmental Health News Network.

Read ahead for class: 1) Martin Luther King III, "Climate change and pollution take away civil Rights," CNN.com, August 13th 2015. 2) "Cancer Alley: Big Industry, Big Problems," Photography by Matt Black, Writing by Trymaine Lee, published on MSNBC, funded by the Pulitzer Center for Crisis Reporting. 3) (Look at) "Pollution, Poverty, People of Color," Environmental Health News Network's U.S. Environmental Justice Series, 2012, 10-day series at <http://www.environmentalhealthnews.org/ehs/news/2012/pollution-poverty-people-of-color-series-summary>.

Class story meeting: Race/poverty issues in environmental reporting; environmental justice. Case study local Plum Creek story: economic development/racial equity as counterpoint to opponents of sprawl and habitat loss. Continue greenwashing presentations. Last questions on longform stories.

Week 12 April 11th

International Environmental Reporting: 21st Century globalism means we're all connected to life, water, and land on other continents, from toxic chemical pollution in China linked to our products and companies to the dumping of our digital waste in Ghana. Climate change, species extinction, water strife, and all major environmental issues are at once local and

global. Making the international connections offers great opportunities for journalists and also requires overcoming lots of assumptions about the rest of the world. (Including assumptions about the p-word, population growth. For example, many studies indicate the developed world's consumption trumps population growth when it comes to contributing to climate change.)

Read ahead for class: 1) “Drowning in plastic: The Great Pacific Garbage Patch is twice the size of France,” Richard Grant, *The Guardian*, April 24th, 2009; 2) View PBS Frontline video, “Ghana: Digital Dumping Ground.” 3) “Famine is a feminist issue,” by Lisa Palmer, Slate, April 10th 2014. 4) “India’s Vanishing Vultures,” by Meera Subramanian, *Virginia Quarterly Review*, Spring 2011. 5) View, “China on the Brink: Photographer Sean Gallagher on an Environmental Crisis,” available on Sean’s website.

Class story meeting: International reporting and resources, grants available for international environment, climate, population and health journalism. Last greenwashing presentations. If time, we’ll watch filmmaker Annie Leonard’s documentary “The Story of Stuff.” Many core issues on the environmental beat, from water to energy to food, circle back to over-consumption and waste.

Week 13 Last class, April 18th

Sustainability and success stories: Humans have turned around major environmental crises, including acid rain at the global level; littering at the national level; the clean-ups of severely polluted water bodies from the Hudson River to Tampa Bay. Reporting on both steady progress and success is crucial to give people a sense of solutions – and hope for the future.

Read ahead for class: 1) “Birds flock to Restored Wetlands Along Kissimmee River,” Tom Palmer, the *Lakeland Ledger*, February 23rd 2010; 2) “When Sewage is Not a Dirty Word,” by Melinda Burns, *The Pacific Standard*, April 3rd, 2010. 3) “Envision 2050: The Future of Cities,” By Todd Reubold, *Ensisia*, June 16th 2014. 4) (Look at) “Great Lakes, Great Peril: A roadmap to restoration,” by Dan Egan of the Milwaukee *Journal Sentinel*. After reporting on threats to the Great Lakes for six years, Egan decided to devote a series to the promise of restoration.

Class story meeting: Getting Published, Promoting Your Work and Careers in Environmental Journalism. The good, the bad, and the ugly of making EJ a career. Also: pitching your story to professional outlets; building your brain trust; finding and keeping professional mentors; social media and how to promote your work without being insufferable.

LAST BUT NOT LEAST ENVIRONMENTAL JOURNALISM CLASS POLICIES

Academic Honesty is expected at all times. As a UF student, you've agreed to comply with the University Honor Code. Please make sure you understand the code and consequences, which are here: <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>. Any violations of this code in Environmental Journalism class will be reported to the Dean of Students. You must also pay special attention to journalistic ethics and issues of plagiarism and copyright; please read and understand UF's College of Journalism and Communications statement on these matters: www.jou.ufl.edu/academics/bachelors/journalism/academic-honesty/

Class attendance and make-up exams: Requirements for class attendance and other work in this course are consistent with UF policies: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Late assignments/quizzes policy: Meeting deadline is crucial to your future success and relationship with bosses/editors, whether in journalism or any other field. On all assignments, your grade will drop one full letter grade for each day overdue.

Food and beverages: No food is allowed in our lab classroom, so I will ensure a lunch and fresh-air break. Beverages in durable, reusable containers are OK. Please, no bottled water or any beverages in disposable containers. We'll talk about why.

Students with disabilities: All reasonable accommodations will be made. Should you need them, please register first with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) and provide appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Please follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Course and instructor evaluations: Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last weeks of the semester; you'll be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available for students at: <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>

Your instructor: Cynthia Barnett is an independent environmental journalist specializing in water, and a visiting professional in UF's College of Journalism. She is the author of three water books: *Rain: A Natural and Cultural History* (2015); *Blue Revolution: Unmaking America's Water Crisis* (2011); and *Mirage: Florida and the Vanishing Water of the Eastern U.S.* (2007). Her work has appeared in the *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *the Atlantic*, *Discover* magazine, *Salon*, *Politico*, *Orion*, *Enzia* and many other publications. She is a UF alumna, with a bachelor's in journalism and master's in environmental history, and spent a year as a Knight-Wallace Fellow at the University of Michigan studying freshwater.