

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
STEVE HICKS SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

Course Number:	SW 395K	Instructor:	Gretchen Henderson (<i>she/her/ella</i>)
Unique Number:	61350	Email:	gretchen.henderson@utexas.edu
Semester:	Spring 2025	Office Hours:	TBA & by appointment
Meeting Time:	Thursdays 2:30pm–5:30pm CT Online	Meeting Place:	Online/Web/Zoom

**LITERATURE & ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE:
REIMAGINING OUR PLACES IN THE WORLD**

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This seminar explores national and global literatures that intersect environmental justice. Everyone carries narratives shaped by environmental, social, racial, and economic contexts. Literature reflects and refracts diverse perspectives of the world and offers spaces for knowledge exchange. This course engages literatures—broadly defined—as windows onto complex, social and environmental frameworks within which people live. By reading through writing, students will develop critical questions around literatures that carry myriad points of view and foreground/background histories within social-environmental contexts. As we work to deepen place-based communities of practice around Austin, TX, how does “the environment” figure across varied literatures and deepen our relationship with places and coexisting inhabitants? Whose agency is addressed, privileged or neglected through authorship and authority? How do diverse literatures facilitate reimagined spaces for social and environmental work, not only where we live but also farther afield? Special attention will be given to analyzing the moral and ethical complexities of privilege, inequity, social and environmental justice issues, with entangled senses of place/displacement. Acknowledging the possibilities and limitations of a literary approach to social work, seminars will be underscored by antiracism and critical race theory, Indigenous studies, critical disability studies, gender and sexuality studies, activist archives, and other critical frameworks that interconnect (mis)representations on the page with those lived and encountered in the world. **In addition to reading, writing, and fieldwork assignments, special emphasis will be placed on keeping an active notebook where process becomes part of the product.** The professor acknowledges that she is a student of life and welcomes learning alongside her students. Together we will ask questions to collectively reimagine our evolving and entangled places in the world.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Engage with varied literatures (nonfiction, poetry, fiction, written/oral forms, and arts) across diverse perspectives to grow attention to renewable ways of thinking about practices related to environmental and social justice;
2. Demonstrate critical awareness of the complex relationship between cultural narratives of power and issues of (mis)representation, neglect and erasure, and the implications of this relationship on social and environmental justice;
3. Develop a beginning understanding of the strengths and challenges faced by different cultural groups through literary and artistic representations in relation to diversity, inequity, accessibility, and identity;

4. Critically analyze and develop self-awareness about oppression, privilege, identity, diversity, and intersectionality in entangled environmental contexts;
5. Communicate an understanding of cultural, historical, theoretical, and multisensory perspectives of place(s) by interlinking literary readings and writings with evolving practices of social and environmental work; and
6. Work both independently and collectively to deepen a scaled sense of place (locally, regionally, nationally, globally) to support and encourage diverse, place-based communities of practice.

III. TEACHING METHODS

WELCOME TO “Literature & Environmental Justice” VIA ZOOM

Although we might prefer to meet in person, we can all strive to make this class as interactive as possible. Participation is required in order to learn about literature, environmental & social justice—we are all co-creators in this journey. The course is designed to include a variety of teaching and learning methodologies to achieve the course objectives. These methods intentionally draw on diverse pedagogical approaches to be inclusive of a variety of learning styles; activities include readings, writings, discussions, lectures, videos, in-class (Zoom) group activities, peer support, community engagement, and mindful self-reflection. This course will highlight diverse perspectives of thought, and encourages students to engage in new ways of thinking that may be represented by speakers, readings, the professor, and classmates from diverse backgrounds.

ZOOM CLASSROOM CONDUCT:

All classes will be held via Zoom during the scheduled class time. During the Zoom meetings I will ask you to keep your video on and to stay muted unless you are speaking. (Please know that I am mindful of “Zoom fatigue” and try to pace accordingly.) **All assignments will be detailed on Canvas. Please check it on a regular basis as I plan for our class to co-develop some of the lesson plans as we move through the semester, building upon interests, needs, and flexibility around Zoom.**

The primary means of instruction are class discussions and informal lectures when students are encouraged to ask questions, to make comments, to integrate reading-writing-reflection, to be actively present, to facilitate as co-teachers, to lean into models of collaborative leadership and stewardship. This is a highly experiential class. Special attention will be given to processes behind products, to pursue questions beyond answers, to cultivate spaces for reflection and listening, to facilitate mindful communication, action, and care. For smaller groups, we will use Zoom breakout rooms. At times, guest speakers may be invited to augment class sessions. We will use Canvas as a course tool. Therefore, it is expected that students stay apprised of postings on Canvas for supplemental readings or announcements. **Thank you for your presence to adapt to changes.**

IV. REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS

- **Required readings will be posted on Canvas.** Rather than use a bound/singular textbook(s), we will read a variety of genres and forms alongside supplementary arts to expand our sense of storytelling, narratives, and poetics of space and place. Readings are hosted electronically on Canvas. Interact with texts in whatever ways help you to read **closely** (e.g., highlighting quotations, making notes in margins, printing to keep in a binder, or **whatever method works for you—so long as you stay present, attentive, up to date**). Read as a writer to consider interrelationships between form and content. Generate questions as you read. Explore literatures as landscapes, ecosystems with inhabitants, entangling the wider world.
- **Field Book: Use a bound journal or notebook to serve as your Field Book.** This practice will help you regularly exercise your writing muscles. Choose something that makes you want to write. This practice draws on many traditions: from scientific field notebooks, to literary

commonplace books, to artistic sketchbooks, to ethnographic fieldwork, and more. Adapt your current practice however seems helpful. Gather “raw material” and fill pages with notes, questions, quotations, descriptions (landscapes, inhabitants, objects, figures), archival research, sensory associations, interviews, lists, collages, maps, memories—in short, anything that you find stimulating. Sketch, collage (photographs, news clippings), even doodle... whatever tracks your presence and engagement. Take time to notice, and consider juxtapositions as they occur, whether purposefully or accidentally. The emphasis is on process. Cultivate the art of attention. As you proceed, notice your embodiment—the pace of your writing, gestures of your script, sounds of pencil on paper, whatever environments or circumstances support or stifle your writing. As your Field Book starts to unfold, it will take on the life of a textbook that you can revisit in the future. You might consider it a Field Guide (or a Field Guide to Getting Lost), so when you return to it, new associations will occur since the world and you will continue to change. The Field Book will be private, but you will be asked to select page-spreads to photograph/share with the professor and class in order to discuss your evolving field methods and deepening questions, engagements, and shifting attentions. **The more that you put into your Field Book, the more that you will get out of it.** Try to create a daily/regular practice.

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Your grade in this course will be based on weekly field book exercises and assignments, projects (midterm career conversation, intersectional presentation on your practice, and final paper intersecting your commitments), class participation (full group, small groups, conferences with professor, attentive listening to peers, interactions with guest speakers, and more). It is essential that you be present and prepared for discussions with the professor, classmates, and guests. Cultivate care; keep an open mind and heart; take risks; don't be afraid of productive failures. The course requires a mix of critical-creative investigations to support, share, reflect, and deepen your evolving professional practice, indelibly interconnected with your life and the lives around you.

- PAST(S): What brought you here? (To UT? To TX? To this planet? Etc.?)
- PRESENT(PRESENCE): How and why do you show up to your current commitments?
- FUTURE(S): In what capacities do you hope to move forward, individually and collectively?
- How do all these questions intersect “Literature & Environmental Justice: Reimagining Our Places in the World”?

This course moves beyond products to pull back layers of *process*. We will explore the ability of literatures—broadly defined—to harness human experiences and to change, interdependent with a wider world. Read, write, and reflect actively. Be present to your questions. Get lost. Dare to hope and dream. Find your boundaries and cross them to ask new questions. Support, listen, and encourage the minds-hearts of your peers. Respect the questions, ideas, hopes, cares, and vulnerabilities of others. Cultivate the art of attention and intention, both in and out of class.

Weighting: participation, exercises, assignments, presentations, papers will be weighted as follows:

- Participation & Engaged Attendance—30% of final grade
- Field Book & Written Exercises—15% of final grade
- Midterm project (Career Conversation)—15% of final grade
- Presentation (Turning Tables)—20% of final grade
- Final project (Tell Me How It Begins)—20% of final grade
- **Assignments must be turned in on time.**

Respecting each other, environments & cohabitants: Participation in this course requires mutual respect for each other, environments & cohabitants. Lands and inhabitants carry layered histories that

remain alive through living descendants and institutions, to be acknowledged and engaged as we all co-create a shared present/presence with possible futures. Each participant carries a partial perspective of the world, shaded by cultural histories and backgrounds, hindered or benefitting from systemic injustices. Texas, as a state, is inscribed with histories and consequences of colonial-settlement, Indigenous decimation, and African American enslavement. Contemplate your personal presence in this place with humility among fellow participants, so we might facilitate a collective space where everyone feels welcomed and empowered to share and to listen to diverse perspectives.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT: (I) We would like to acknowledge that we are meeting on the Indigenous lands of Turtle Island, the ancestral name for what now is called North America. Moreover, (I) We would like to acknowledge the Alabama-Coushatta, Caddo, Carrizo/Comecrudo, Coahuiltecan, Comanche, Kickapoo, Lipan Apache, Tonkawa and Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo, and all the American Indian and Indigenous Peoples and communities who have been or have become a part of these lands and territories in Texas. For more, visit: <https://liberalarts.utexas.edu/nais/land-acknowledgement/index.php>. To learn which native or Indigenous land you are from/on, visit: <https://native-land.ca/>. Acknowledging Indigenous communities is only the first step in building meaningful relationships, needing to work to recognize damages done by colonialism, to ensure that we do not uphold harmful practices.

VI. GRADING SCALE

[No A+]		87.0 to 89.999	B+	77.0 to 79.999	C+	67.0 to 69.999	D+
94.0 and Above	A	84.0 to 86.999	B	74.0 to 76.999	C*	64.0 to 66.999	D
90.0 to 93.999	A-	80.0 to 83.999	B-	70.0 to 73.999	C-	60.0 to 63.999	D-
				<i>*minimum to pass course</i>		Below 60.0	F

VII. CLASS POLICIES

1. **Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, Inclusion, and Belonging:** Consistent with the values of social work, I am committed to creating a classroom environment that supports and affirms diversity, equity accessibility, and inclusion. Diversity includes the myriad ways in which humans differ in attributes that are visible and invisible, including race, ethnicity, nationality, citizenship, gender and gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, religion, age, socioeconomics, and other backgrounds. Diversity in thought is also encouraged. Equity in access to learning opportunities, and inclusion in virtual and physical learning spaces, is a student’s right. All students are expected to uphold these principles, both individually and collectively. Students are asked to voice concerns directly to me as soon as they arise so that they may be addressed appropriately.
2. **Attendance:** Attendance is expected at all class sessions, and if you must miss for whatever reason, please discuss this with the professor at the beginning of the semester. You must complete all exercises, projects, and assignments. Because this class is interactive and experiential, please attend every class to support our class community and co-create a generous sensibility toward skillsets and ways of knowing. For balance to adapt and support independent work, some classes have been made asynchronous (dates designated clearly on the syllabus). Be aware that more than two unexcused absences could result in a lower overall grade, but also note: This can be discussed (as any person may experience special circumstances: from professional opportunities like conferences to unexpected hardships). The class offers a variety of extra-credit possibilities; just approach the professor with as much notice as possible to discuss.
3. **Student responsibilities:** Students are expected to be prepared for each session and to participate in class discussions, exercises, etc. Failure to submit a paper or being unprepared to discuss your paper, reading, field book, or other exercises/assignments for the week will result in a grade of zero being recorded for that week’s work. It is also expected that students support

their peers' work by active listening, sharing resources, constructive questioning, and thoughtful attention.

4. Please do not use cell phones, text messaging or send or read emails during class.

Throughout the course, we will be cultivating the art of reflection, attention, and intention. Self-monitoring of distractions is expected; cultivating intentionality is a muscle that needs to be constantly exercised.

5. Timely submission of assignments: Each assignment is due at the start of class. **Late assignments will not be accepted unless you have a legitimate and documented emergency.**

If this is the case, please discuss the situation with Dr. Henderson. These will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. We understand that the Covid-19 pandemic can create issues that we might not anticipate. There is no guarantee that we will extend a due date, but please talk with us and we will be as flexible as possible. Other than emergencies created by the pandemic (and approved by the instructor), late assignments will be graded down accordingly.

VIII. UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Grading Scale

[No A+]		87.0 to 89.999	B+	77.0 to 79.999	C+	67.0 to 69.999	D+
94.0 and Above	A	84.0 to 86.999	B	74.0 to 76.999	C*	64.0 to 66.999	D
90.0 to 93.999	A-	80.0 to 83.999	B-	70.0 to 73.999	C-	60.0 to 63.999	D-
				<i>*minimum to pass course</i>		Below 60.0	F

Attendance and Academic Behavior. At the University of Texas at Austin, regular attendance at all class meetings is expected. Instructors are responsible for implementing an attendance policy and must notify students of any special attendance requirements. See more information at <https://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/academic-policies-and-procedures/attendance/>.

Furthermore, students are expected to abide by the Standards for Social Work Education (available at <https://socialwork.utexas.edu/student-resources/bsw/policies-and-procedures/>). The student shows potential for responsible and accountable behavior by being punctual and dependable, prioritizing responsibilities, attending class regularly, observing deadlines, completing assignments on time, and keeping appointments or making appropriate arrangements.

Religious Holy Days. A student who misses classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day should inform the instructor as far in advance of the absence as possible so that arrangements can be made to complete an assignment within a reasonable period after the absence. A reasonable accommodation does not include substantial modification to academic standards, or adjustments of requirements essential to any program of instruction. Students and instructors who have questions or concerns about academic accommodations for religious observance or religious beliefs may contact the Center for Access and Restorative Engagement at <https://community.utexas.edu/care/>. The University does not maintain a list of religious holy days.

The University of Texas Honor Code. The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

Policy on Academic Integrity. Students who violate University rules on academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and / or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, please

visit the Student Conduct and Academic Integrity website at: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct>.

Use of Course Materials. The materials used in this course, including, but not limited to exams, quizzes, and homework assignments, are copyright protected works. Any unauthorized duplication of the course materials is a violation of federal law and may result in disciplinary action being taken against the student. Additionally, the sharing of course materials without the specific, express approval of the professor may be a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty, which could result in further disciplinary action. This sharing includes, among other things, uploading class materials to websites for the purpose of distributing those materials to other current or future students.

University Electronic Mail Student Notification. Electronic mail (email), like postal mail, is a mechanism for official University communication to students. The University will exercise the right to send email communications to all students, and the University will expect that email communications will be received and read in a timely manner. Students can find UT Austin's policies and instructions for updating their e-mail address at <https://it.utexas.edu/policies/university-electronic-mail-student-notification-policy>.

Steve Hicks School of Social Work Policies

Professional Conduct and Civility in the Classroom. The professor expects students to act as professionals in class. This means students should arrive on time for class, be prepared to participate in the class discussion, and show respect for one another's opinions. A course brings together a group of diverse individuals with various backgrounds. Students are influenced and shaped by such factors as race, ethnicity, gender, sex, physical abilities, religious and political beliefs, national origins, and sexual orientations, among others. We expect to learn from each other in an atmosphere of positive engagement and mutual respect. This atmosphere includes working intentionally to recognize and dismantle racism, sexism, heterosexism, and ableism in the classroom. Social Work also deals with complex and controversial issues. These issues may be challenging and uncomfortable, and it would be impossible to offer a substantive classroom experience that did not include potentially difficult conversations relating to challenging issues. In this environment, we will be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometimes we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. Nevertheless, the professor requires that students engage one another with civility, respect, and professionalism.

Classroom Confidentiality. Information shared in class about agencies, clients, and personal matters is considered confidential per the NASW Code of Ethics on educational supervision and is protected by regulations of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) as well. As such, sharing this information with individuals outside of the educational context is not permitted. Violations of confidentiality could result in actions taken according to the policies and procedure for review of academic performance located in sections 3.0, 3.1, and 3.2 of the Standards for Social Work Education.

Unanticipated Distress. Students may experience unexpected and/or distressing reactions to course readings, videos, conversations, and assignments. If so, students are encouraged to inform the professor. The professor can be responsive and supportive regarding students' participation in course assignments and activities, but students are responsible for communicating clearly what kind of support is desired. If counseling is needed, students may contact a service provider of their choosing, including the UT Counseling and Mental Health Center at 512-471-3515 or online at <https://cmhc.utexas.edu/>.

Policy on Social Media and Professional Communication. Public social networks are not private. Even when open only to approved or invited members, users cannot be certain that privacy will exist among the general membership of sites. If social work students choose to participate in such forums, please assume that anything posted can be seen, read, and critiqued. What is said, posted, linked to, commented on, uploaded, subscribed to, etc., can be accessed and archived, posing potential harm to professional reputations and prospective careers.

Social work students who use social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) and other forms of electronic communication (e.g. blogs) must be mindful of how their communication may be perceived by clients, colleagues, faculty, and others. Social work students are expected to make every effort to minimize material which could be considered inappropriate for a professional social worker in training. Because of this, social work students are advised to manage security settings at their most private levels and avoid posting information/photos or using any language that could jeopardize their professional image.

Students are asked to consider the amount of personal information posted on these sites and are obliged to block any client access to involvement in the students' social networks. Client material should not be referred to in any form of electronic media, including *any* information that might lead to the identification of a client or compromise client confidentiality in *any* way. Additionally, students must critically evaluate any material that is posted regarding community agencies and professional relationships, as certain material could violate the standards set by the School of Social Work, the Texas Code of Conduct for Social Workers, and/or the NASW Code of Ethics.

Social work students should consider that they will be representing professional social work practice as well as The University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work program while in the classroom, the university community, and the broader area communities.

Resources, Prevention of Discrimination, and Safety

Disability Accommodation Statement. If you are a student with a disability, or think you may have a disability, and need accommodations please contact Disability and Access (D&A). You may refer to D&A's website for contact and more information: <https://disability.utexas.edu/>. If you are already registered with D&A, please deliver your Accommodation Letter to me as early as possible in the semester so we can discuss your approved accommodations and how they apply in my class.

Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL). If students have concerns about their behavioral health, or if they are concerned about the behavioral health of someone else, students may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone their concerns. This service is provided through a partnership between the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit <https://safety.utexas.edu/behavior-concerns-advice-line>.

Covid-19 Related Information. The University's policies and practices related to the pandemic may be accessed at: <https://protect.utexas.edu/>

Title IX Reporting. In accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the University of Texas at Austin is committed to maintaining a learning environment that is free from discriminatory conduct on the basis of sex <https://titleix.utexas.edu/>. Faculty, field instructors, staff, and/or teaching assistants in their supervisory roles are mandated reporters of incidents of sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence, stalking, dating violence, or any other forms of sexual

misconduct. Students who report such incidents will be informed of University resources. Incidents will be reported to the University's Title IX Coordinator. Further information, including student resources related to Title IX, may also be found at <https://titleix.utexas.edu/>.

Title IX Accommodations for Those Pregnant, Nursing and Parenting. Pregnant, nursing and parenting students, faculty, and staff are eligible for accommodations through the Title IX Office that support equal access to education and work and prevent discrimination. Students may reach out to the Title IX Office for help with accommodations to make up missed classes, complete missed coursework, keep them safe in the classroom, apply for leaves of absence, receive priority registration and other related support. Faculty and staff, including undergraduate students who work on campus and graduate student employees, may reach out for assistance with job or schedule restructuring and obtaining modified or additional work equipment. Visit the [Title IX pregnancy and parenting resource page](#) for more information or contact the [Title IX Support and Resources team](#) connect with a Case Manager.

Campus Carry Policy. The University's policy on campus carry may be found here: <https://campuscarry.utexas.edu>.

Safety. As part of professional social work education, students may have assignments that involve working in agency settings and/or the community. As such, these assignments may present some risks. Sound choices and caution may lower risks inherent to the profession. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and adhere to policies and practices related to agency and/or community safety. Students should notify the professor regarding any safety concerns.

Emergency Evacuation Policy. Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors in the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform the professor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the professor's instructions.
- Do not re-enter a building unless you are given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

IX. COURSE SCHEDULE

This schedule is intended as a guide. **Please be sure to check Canvas regularly for specifics of each class.** Students should complete readings for the date listed, in order to space them throughout the semester, and watch Canvas for additional details as they are announced. This is important as some exercises are synchronous while others are asynchronous. Students are responsible for all readings/viewings whether the material is covered as lecture material or not.

Note: In the first half of the semester, we will engage literature & environmental justice through interdisciplinary, intersectional methods. In the second half of the semester, professor and students will co-develop student-led units around students' professional commitments (paths, questions, interests, aspirations)—listed as TBA to be filled in as the semester progresses. More details available on Canvas.

*The instructor reserves the right to change the syllabus with notice.
Readings here are representative with more details on Canvas.*

Date	Topic	Field Book Exercises/ Assignments	Readings/Videos
01/16	Searching for Questions: Field Books & Placed Attentions	Seeds of Change	<p>TEXTS—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tracking Attentions & Questions (packet of excerpts by Rebecca Solnit, James Walsh, Vladimir Nabokov, Sherman Alexie, Katherine Dunn, Susan Howe, Bhanu Kapil, Joy Harjo, Margaret Atwood) <p>CONTEXTS—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, “The Danger of a Single Story” Camille Dungy, “Is All Writing Environmental Writing?”
01/23	Decentering Selves: Representation-in-Relation	Questions in Practice	<p>TEXTS—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jourdan Imani Keith, “Desegregating Wilderness” Joy Harjo, “Words as Maps” Craig Santos Perez, “understory” Richard Powers, from <i>The Overstory</i> Field Notes on Craft (GH): “Art of Sentences” <p>CONTEXTS—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Andrew Busch, from <i>City in a Garden: Environmental Transformations and Racial Justice in Twentieth-Century Austin, Texas</i> Autumn Asher BlackDeer, “From Settler-Colonialism to Self-Determination: An Indigenous Perspective on Decolonizing Social Work”
01/30	Cultivating Listening: Nourishing Community	Moveable Feasts	<p>TEXTS—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Valeria Luiselli, from <i>Tell Me How It Ends</i> Nina Mukerjee Furstenau, “All Our Tupperware is Stained with Turmeric” <p>CONTEXTS—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rob Nixon, “Slow Violence” Vivian Gornick, from <i>The Situation and the Story</i>
02/06	Living Archives: Presences & Absences	Re-Searching Research	<p>TEXTS—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gloria Anzaldúa, from <i>Borderlands/La Frontera</i> Julia Alvarez, from <i>In the Time of the Butterflies</i> Ashley Farmer, “Archiving While Black” <p>CONTEXTS—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Brief History of Benson Latin American Collection” Yearwood and Barbera, et al., “Dismantling White Supremacy in Social Work Education: We Build the Road by Walking” Definition: “Activist Archives” Edmond Gordon, “Racial Geography Tour of UT”

02/13	Counter-Mapping Meanings: Time in Place	Mapping Meanings	<p>TEXTS—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mark Nowak, Introduction to <i>Social Poetics</i> • “Water in Community-Based Arts Practice” • Richard McGuire, from <i>HERE</i> <p>CONTEXTS—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eve Ewing, “A Map Home” • Amitov Ghosh, from <i>The Great Derangement</i> <p>SKIM: Katherine Harmon, <i>You Are Here</i> and Denis Wood, <i>Everything Sings</i></p>
02/20	Entangled Systems & Senses of Place	Documenting Process	<p>TEXTS—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caroline Finney, from <i>Black Faces, White Spaces</i> • Lauret Savoy, from <i>Trace</i> • Ros Gay, “Catalogue of Unabashed Gratitude” <p>CONTEXTS—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dorceta Taylor, “The future of environmental justice is true equality” • Abrams & Moio, “Critical Race Theory and the Cultural Competence Dilemma in Social Work Education” • Mohai, Pellow, & Roberts, “Environmental Justice”
02/27	Intersectional Ecologies: Here in Elsewhere	Documenting Process	<p>TEXTS—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lauren McGrady, “My Present is Not Your Tombstone” • Sunaura Taylor, “Age of Disability: On living Well with impaired landscapes” • Jim Ferris, “The Enjambed Body” • <i>Add your own readings in preparation for your class presentations.</i> <p>CONTEXTS—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reframing access (medley) • Vanmala Hiranandani, “Towards a Critical Theory of Disability in Social Work” • Environmental Justice resources • <i>My Climate Story</i> (UPenn collective project)
03/06	Knowledges of Ages & Emergent Futures	Documenting Process	<p>TEXTS—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robin Wall Kimmerer, “Nature Needs a New Pronoun: To Stop the Age of Extinction...” • Amanda Gorman, “Earthrise” & more • National Poet Youth Laureate Alexandra Huynh • Greta Thunberg, from <i>Our House is On Fire</i> <p>CONTEXTS—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eric Simons, “Land Back” • Killick & Kaschor, “Indigenous Futurisms” • Lina Nasr El Hag Ali, “Afrofuturism and its Possibility of Elsewhere”
		MIDTERM DUE	<p>TEXTS—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mini-Anthology: Reflecting on Sensory Knowledges & Embodied (un)Making • Juliana Spahr, <i>This connection of everyone with lungs</i>

03/13	Planning Retreat for Final Project: Activating Silences	Career Conversation : Paving the Way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alexis Pauline Gumbs, from <i>Undrowned</i> • Monica Ong, from <i>Silencing Anatomies</i> and “Unsilencing Anatomies” • Sandra Cisneros, “Little Miracles, Kept Promises” CONTEXTS— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • #walkingalonetogether • TBA: Mindfulness resources
03/17-03/22	SPRING BREAK	<i>Pause & Regroup</i>	
03/27	Turning Tables: Students as Teachers	Turning Tables	TBA: community research / student presentations
04/03	Turning Tables: Students as Teachers	Presentations TBA	TBA: community research / student presentations
04/10	Writing Retreat (ASYNCHRONOUS)		TBA: community research / independent writing retreat
04/17	Turning Tables: Students as Teachers	Presentations TBA	TBA: community research / student presentations
04/24	Final Readings & Reflections: Endings as Beginnings	Presentations TBA	Course wrap-up & looking ahead.
	Classes End FINAL DUE MAY 1	FINAL DUE Tell Me How It Begins	

Coda: Syllabus as Itinerary

A semester’s course can barely skim the surface of a subject—let alone one capacious as “Literature & Environmental Justice”—growing from ancient roots and languages, branching over centuries across geographies and cultures. Lineages of environmental writing are widely available, so this syllabus does not include canonical works (by Henry David Thoreau, John Muir, Aldo Leopold, Rachel Carson, etc. to read on your own) and instead considers interdisciplinary contexts around texts that encourage forms of listening. While our locus is American from our common gathering place in Austin, TX, this syllabus is a mere starting point to read & write, think & act on scales—locally, regionally, nationally, globally—to expand in and beyond our class and community, as we are all interconnected.

Our focus will be to start small: in readings and elsewhere, at the level of words and sentences, breaths and horizon lines. As we immerse in varied styles, *read as a writer*: notice topographies of prose and poetic lines, biorhythms behind language, terrains of pages beyond words, cultural histories that shape stories, poems, essays, genres, and arts. Consider readings as invitations to move beyond isolated information; lean into connections; identify gaps to write into; listen more deeply. Also consider the landscape as a text, acknowledging limits of this metaphor. Track your attention as you read *both* literature and landscape, entangled with social and environmental (in)justices.

How do varied reading and writing practices move beyond self-awareness to care about others, human and beyond? Is such movement intellectual, embodied, emotional (e.g., homage, grief, frustration, anger, care, more) or less articulate, as gesture or palpitation? How does a writer craft words to shift background to foreground, to notice overlooked details, to renew registers of knowing? How might we

participate in that process / processing? Unlearn while learning. As we learn together, interconnections will be different for each person. Rooted at UT, the course invites you to see diverse home environments and practices anew, with hopes that the course's end may double as a beginning: renewed.

NOTE: The syllabus is a living document intermixing readings & writings, exercises & assignments in a general schedule. Given global events, much is changing at the SHSSW, UT-Austin, for all of us. Thank you for your openness to learn, adapt, innovate, and care together ~ looking forward to our semester!

X. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

This is a sampling for further reading. More to be shared through GoogleDoc.

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