

Ecofutures

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Associate Chair, Department of Performance, Play and Design

Summer Session 2 2022, Online Course

07/25/22 - 08/26/22

Class: 1:00PM – 4:30PM PST Monday and Wednesday (see schedule below)

Studio (Office) Hours: 1:00PM – 3:00PM Tuesdays. ([sign up here](#))



Niya B, *Deep Trash*, performance at Ecofutures Festival London 2019

Draft Syllabus Subject to Change

Course Description

In this class, we will study the fields of ecofeminist art, climate fiction, virtual environmental art, Afrofuturism and Indigenous futurism, and create digital games relevant to these fields. Projects in this class focus on interactive performance art videos in an online web based game format. Students will learn about the ways climate change is affecting our local region, and the ways that social movements are responding. The dual global crises of climate change and covid-19 have forced a reevaluation of the idea of the human through a confrontation with the realities and histories of global colonialism and white supremacy. In response, social movements

and artists have created artistic strategies which can envision futures beyond the horizon of the imagination of capitalism.

UCSC COVID Statement

What we can expect from each other:

Each individual at UC Santa Cruz should act in the best interests of everyone else in our community. Please take care to comply with all university guidelines about masking in indoor settings, performing daily symptom and badge checks, testing as required by the campus vaccine policy, self-isolating in the event of exposure, and respecting others' comfort with distancing. Please do not come to class if your badge is not green. If you forget your mask, you can ask me for one; there is a limited supply of disposable masks in each classroom. If you are ill or suspect you may have been exposed to someone who is ill, or if you have symptoms that are in any way similar to those of COVID-19, please err on the side of caution and stay home until you are well or have tested negative after an exposure. Let me know that you're not feeling well and I'll respond about how best you can keep learning.

What you can expect from me:

I have designed our course following campus guidance and with current public health guidelines in mind. However, these guidelines may change in accordance with shifting infection rates or the emergence of new variants. If updated public health recommendations and university requirements make our current course format unfeasible, or if I experience a need to self-isolate, I will alter the format. This may include moving in-person sessions onto Zoom, modifying course assignments to work in a remote format, and reconfiguring exams (if applicable). I will communicate clearly with you via email or Canvas announcement about any changes that occur. I will provide as much advance warning as possible and give you all the information you need to transition smoothly to the new format. If you have questions about the changes, please reach out to me so I can answer them.

What I expect from you:

If you experience an illness or exposure that requires you to miss class sessions or to attend remotely, please communicate with me as soon as possible and I will provide you with options to allow you to continue making progress in the class.

Learning Objectives

Students in this course will:

- Gain a deeper understanding of climate change as a global issue that is immediately present in our local environments.
- Learn to use digital technologies to create art including performance and digital media.
- Learn how to create art that explores the intersections of environmental justice and social justice.
- Optionally, learn to collaborate on teams through virtual collaboration.

Readings

Books

All We Can Save, edited by Ayana Johnson and Katharine K. Wilkinson

Playing Nature, Alenda Y. Chang

Arts of Living on a Damaged Planet, edited by Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, Heather Anne Swanson, Elaine Gan, and Nils Bubandt

Racial Ecologies, edited by Leilani Nishime and Kim D. Hester Williams

Grading

This course is graded by self-evaluation, according to a rubric that we will collectively write together as a class. Self-evaluation is a test of your honesty and integrity. I am asking you to honestly evaluate the amount and the quality of work you put into this class. You should expect the class to be just as difficult as any other advanced undergraduate course in Feminist Studies, Computer Science, Critical Race and Ethnic Studies or Art, as this class blends all of those disciplines together, which is its own additional challenge! Your self-evaluation paper must be well written, refer to the learning objectives, and request a specific letter grade. I may adjust the grade based on my evaluation of your performance in the class, but only in extreme circumstances will it change more than a letter grade.

To read more about this grading method and the research behind it, see:

<https://www.jessestommel.com/ungrading-a-bibliography/>

Assignments

Week 1, Creative Climate Response Map – Create an artistic map of your local ecology using either paper and pen, markers or paint, or using a digital tool like Google Maps, which you screenshot and then draw on in a program like Procreate. To do so, identify areas threatened by major climate events such as wildfires, hurricanes, sea level rise, ocean acidification, flooding or ice loss. Provide links to articles on these events in your region from news or academic sources.

Use a creative approach! Make your map a pirate's treasure map, or a [psychogeographic map](#), or an [emotional cartography](#). Consider how maps are a colonial technology and a colonial viewpoint and redraw the map how you want! This is not just a simple screenshot of a Google Map, it is an artwork.

Your map should include actual locations that will be in your art project or game, either in a video or as an actual site you will use, depending on the format you choose for your project.

Mid-Term Project: Project Proposal in the form of Slides – present the concept for your creative climate response art project or game. Must include:

- Presentation slides
- At least three quotes from the readings
- At least two artists who we have discussed in class, who your project is responding to
- Creative climate map
- Map of characters and the relationships, including the environment as a character

Mid Term Self Evaluation Papers – 1pg

Write an honest 1 page (roughly 250 word) self-evaluation of your performance in class so far. Discuss the course learning objectives and how well you are meeting them. Consider your participation in Zoom discussions, discussion forums and your work on your project. Request a specific letter grade. I will use this self-evaluation to assign your letter grade, only changing it if necessary, such as if the evidence in Canvas does not support your evaluation.

Final projects envisioning ecofutures, you can choose one of the two following formats:

- **Online interactive video game.** Create a web-based game using Twine, Google Sites or another online publishing platform. Each page of the game must include a photo or a video. You must have at least three 3 minute performance art videos in your game, or 5 one minute performance art videos. Present the player/user with meaningful choices to be able to navigate a story about climate justice.

Examples of this format include:

[Redshift and Portalmetal](#)

[Her Story](#)

[Black Mirror: Bandersnatch](#) (*Trigger warning for self harm*)

- **Alternate Reality Game / Immersive Theater / Site-Specific Artwork.** Create a game/story/artwork in real physical space. Your local region is your game board or game level. Choose a meaningful place near you where you can tell a story in real space. Make a map with different locations where the player will go to receive different parts of the story. Try to introduce physical mechanics or challenges, but also be aware of making your game physically accessible to a wide range of players. You can also create and print out QR codes and place them at your game sites to link to web pages with game content. Get creative! Think of a haunted house, a scavenger hunt or an alternate reality game!

Examples of this format include:

[Ulrike and Eamon Compliant](#)

[Pokemon Go!](#) (a more high tech version of this type of game, similar idea)

[I Love Bees](#)

[Site Specific Theater](#)

Final Self Evaluation Papers – 2pg

Write an honest 2 page (roughly 500 word) self-evaluation of your performance in class. Discuss the course learning objectives and how well you are meeting them. Consider your participation in Zoom discussions, discussion forums and your work on your project. Request a specific letter grade. I will use this self-evaluation to assign your letter grade, only changing it if necessary, such as if the evidence in Canvas does not support your evaluation.

Zoom Meeting Room

<https://ucsc.zoom.us/j/93113769998?pwd=OWQ4dzdOczYxOHlDa0NWc2JqeEZiZz09>

Meeting ID: 931 1376 9998

Passcode: 837292

One tap mobile

+16465588656,,93113769998#,,,,*837292# US (New York)

+16469313860,,93113769998#,,,,*837292# US

Zoom meetings will be recorded for students who cannot attend at the class time, but you are strongly encouraged to join us for zoom meetings. If you do not attend the class, you must watch the entire recording, and please be aware that Canvas does record exactly how much of the recording you watch, and what parts you watch.

Attendance and Participation

This class is designed around a feminist pedagogy which is student centered, and which requires your active participation. If you miss more than two zoom sessions, and do not watch the recordings, you cannot pass this class. If you miss more than two discussion posts, you cannot pass this class. The discussion posts are a replacement for live class sessions, to make this class more accessible for students for whom Zoom is difficult. If you have to miss class, inform me via email.

Schedule

Week 1

Monday, July 25 – Zoom meeting, to get to meet each other and get familiar with the basic concepts of the course. This first meeting will include an introduction to the terms and fields, with major artworks in these areas being presented by the professor, artists can include Ana Mendieta, Blast Theory and Pinar Yoldas.

Wednesday, July 27 – Online, discuss readings from *All We Can Save* and article “Artist Jakob Kudsk Steensen on how VR can bring us closer to nature”

Optional: “Ecofutures Study Room Guide”, <https://cuntemporary.org/ecofutures-srg-dossier/>

Due: Annotated Climate Map

Due: discussion post

Week 2

Monday, August 1 – Asynchronous video lecture and online discussion questions about the Introduction to *Playing Nature* and Ursula K Le Guin’s essay “The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction”.

Wednesday, August 3 – Online, discuss chapter 1 from *Playing Nature* and performance art works online.

Due: discussion post

Week 3

Monday, August 8 – Meet on zoom for playtesting / peer review feedback.

Due: Project proposal slides

Due: Mid-Term self-evaluation paper

Wednesday, August 10 – Online, discuss chapters from *Arts of Living on a Damaged Planet*.

Due: discussion post

Week 4

Monday, August 15 – Asynchronous short lecture about Introduction chapter from *Racial Ecologies*

Wednesday, August 17 – Online, discuss chapters from *Racial Ecologies* and

“A New Wave of Indies Are Using Games to Explore Climate Change”,
<https://www.theverge.com/2020/2/13/21135321/video-games-climate-change-beyond-blue-bee-simulator-temtem-ending>

Due: discussion post

Week 5

Monday, August 22 – Online discussion forum, post project draft and respond to two other student’s drafts

Due: post draft of final project in discussion forum and respons to other student’s drafts

Wednesday, August 24 – On Zoom, present final projects

Due: final projects

Due Friday, August 26: Final self-evaluation essay

Policies and Procedures

COMMUNICATION

If you email me with questions about class, I will respond within 48 hours. I don’t respond to email over weekends. Please include the course code ARTG 143 in the subject line.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

All members of the UCSC community benefit from an environment of trust, honesty, fairness, respect, and responsibility. You are expected to present your own work and acknowledge the work of others in order to preserve the integrity of scholarship.

Academic integrity includes:

- Following exam rules
- Using only permitted materials during an exam
- Viewing exam materials only when permitted by your instructor
- Keeping what you know about an exam to yourself
- Incorporating proper citation of all sources of information
- Submitting your own original work

Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Disclosing exam content during or after you have taken an exam

- Accessing exam materials without permission
- Copying/purchasing any material from another student, or from another source, that is submitted for grading as your own
- Plagiarism, including use of Internet material without proper citation
- Using cell phones or other electronics to obtain outside information during an exam without explicit permission from the instructor
- Submitting your own work in one class that was completed for another class (self-plagiarism) without prior permission from the instructor.
- Violations of the Academic Integrity policy can result in dismissal from the university and a permanent notation on a student's transcript. For the full policy and disciplinary procedures on academic dishonesty, students and instructors should refer to the [Academic Misconduct page](#) at the [Division of Undergraduate Education](#).

ACCESSIBILITY

UC Santa Cruz is committed to creating an academic environment that supports its diverse student body. If you are a student with a disability who requires accommodations to achieve equal access in this course, please submit your Accommodation Authorization Letter from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to me privately during my office hours or by email, preferably within the first two weeks of the quarter. At this time, I would like us to discuss ways we can ensure your full participation in the course. I encourage all students who may benefit from learning more about DRC services to contact the DRC by phone at 831-459-2089 or by email at drc@ucsc.edu.

You can find further examples of accessibility and inclusivity statements in [CITL's Sample Syllabus Language](#).

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

The materials in this course are the intellectual property of their creators. As a student, you have access to many of the materials in the course for the purpose of learning, engaging with your peers in the course, completing assignments, and so on. You have a moral and legal obligation to respect the rights of others by only using course materials for purposes associated with the course. For instance, you are not permitted to share, upload, stream, sell, republish, share the login information for, or otherwise disseminate any of the course materials, such as: video and audio files, assignment prompts, slides, notes, syllabus, simulations, datasets, discussion threads. Conversely, any materials created solely by you (for example, your videos, essays, images, audio files, annotations, notes) are your intellectual property and you may use them as you wish.

RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION

UC Santa Cruz welcomes diversity of religious beliefs and practices, recognizing the contributions differing experiences and viewpoints can bring to the community. There may be times when an academic requirement conflicts with religious observances and practices. If that happens, students may request the reasonable accommodation for religious practices. The instructor will review the situation in an effort to provide a reasonable accommodation without penalty. You should first discuss the conflict and your requested accommodation with your

instructor early in the term. You or your instructor may also seek assistance from the [Dean of Students office](#).

PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY

Instructors may want to involve students in the preparation of principles of community for your course. This allows students to be partners in deciding what guidelines you will collectively follow to ensure free, open, and respectful discussions. A sample of such principles appears below:

The University of California, Santa Cruz expressly prohibits students from engaging in conduct constituting unlawful discrimination, harassment or bias... [More here](#). I am committed to providing an atmosphere for learning that respects diversity and supports inclusivity. We need to work together to build this community of learning. I ask all members of this class to:

- be open to and interested in the views of others
- consider the possibility that your views may change over the course of the term
- be aware that this course asks you to reconsider some “common sense” notions you may hold
- honor the unique life experiences of your colleagues
- appreciate the opportunity that we have to learn from each other
- listen to each other’s opinions and communicate in a respectful manner
- keep confidential discussions that the community has of a personal (or professional) nature
- ground your comments in the texts we are studying. Refer frequently to the texts and make them the focus of your questions, comments, and arguments. This is the single most effective way to ensure respectful discussion and to create a space where we are all learning together.

TITLE IX/CARE ADVISORY

Instructors are encouraged to include a Title IX and CARE (Campus Advocacy, Resources & Education) statement in their syllabi to address their reporting responsibilities and to provide students with information on resources and support services. You are welcome to use the text below or may prefer to alter this statement to suit your own needs; however, at a minimum, it is suggested that you inform students of the following: (1) University policy requires you to report Title IX misconduct, and (2) the CARE office offers confidential support. This sample statement was created in collaboration with the UC Santa Cruz Title IX Office and leadership at CARE.

UC Santa Cruz is committed to providing a safe learning environment that is free of all forms of gender discrimination and sexual harassment, which are explicitly prohibited under Title IX. If you have experienced any form of sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking, know that you are not alone. The Title IX Office, the Campus Advocacy, Resources & Education (CARE) office, and Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) are all resources that you can rely on for support.

Please be aware that if you tell me about a situation involving Title IX misconduct, I am required to share this information with the Title IX Coordinator. This reporting responsibility also applies to course TAs and tutors (as well to all UCSC employees who are not designated as “confidential” employees, which is a special designation granted to counselors and CARE

advocates). Although I have to make that notification, you will control how your case will be handled, including whether or not you wish to pursue a formal complaint. The goal is to make sure that you are aware of the range of options available to you and that you have access to the resources you need.

Confidential resources are available through [CARE](#). Confidentiality means CARE advocates will not share any information with Title IX, the police, parents, or anyone else without explicit permission. CARE advocates are trained to support you in understanding your rights and options, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more. You can contact CARE at (831) 502-2273 or care@ucsc.edu.

In addition to CARE, these resources are available to you:

- If you need help figuring out what resources you or someone else might need, visit the [Sexual Violence Prevention & Response \(SAFE\) website](#), which provides information and resources for different situations.
- [Counseling & Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#) can provide confidential counseling support. Call them at (831) 459-2628.
- You can also report gender discrimination and sexual harassment and violence directly to the University's [Title IX Office](#), by calling (831) 459-2462 or by using their [online reporting tool](#).
- Reports to law enforcement can be made to the UC Police Department, (831) 459-2231 ext. 1.
- For emergencies, call 911.

DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS

In our in-class and online discussions and dialogues, we will have the opportunity to explore challenging, high-stakes issues and increase our understanding of different perspectives. Our conversations may not always be easy. We sometimes will make mistakes in our speaking and our listening. Sometimes we will need patience or courage or imagination or any number of qualities in combination to engage our texts, our classmates, and our own ideas and experiences. We will always need respect for others. Thus, an important aim of our classroom interactions will be for us to increase our facility with difficult conversations that arise inside issues of social justice, politics, economics, morality, religion, and other issues where reasonable people often hold diverse perspectives. This effort will ultimately deepen our understanding and allow us to make the most of being in a community with people of many backgrounds, experiences, and positions.

REPORT AN INCIDENT OF HATE OR BIAS

The University of California, Santa Cruz is committed to maintaining an objective, civil, diverse and supportive community, free of coercion, bias, hate, intimidation, dehumanization or exploitation. The Hate/Bias Response Team is a group of administrators who support and guide students seeking assistance in determining how to handle a bias incident involving another student, a staff member, or a faculty member. To report an incident of hate or bias, please use the following form: [Hate/Bias Report Form](#).

CONTENT ADVISORY

Consider including a content advisory if your course includes highly charged content. Content advisories give people the forewarning necessary for them to make use of the strategies that will decrease the harmfulness of encountering triggering material. They are not intended to censure instructors nor invite students to avoid material that challenges them. On the contrary, warning students of challenging material can help their engagement by giving them the ability to take charge of their own health and learning. Consider including a content advisory for content that may cause intense physiological and psychological symptoms. These samples are adapted from educators at UC Santa Cruz.

This course examines some texts, images, and videos that contain descriptions of violence and/or scenes depicting violence. I will do my best to provide individual warnings on the syllabus for course materials and in presentation slides for class content that are particularly sensitive. My hope is that these notifications will help your engagement by allowing you to prepare to work through challenging material. I encourage you to do what you need to care for yourself. If taking care of yourself means that you need to step outside during class, either for a short time or for the rest of the class, you may do so without academic penalty. If you do leave the class for a significant time, please make arrangements to get notes from another student or see me individually to discuss the situation.

In addition to a general statement, instructors may consider adding “tags” to specific course materials:

I've included tags for [X, Y, and Z] next to specific course materials on the syllabus. If you have concerns about encountering anything specific in the course material that I have not already tagged and would like me to provide warnings, please come see me or send me an email. I will do my best to flag any requested triggers for you in advance.

STUDENT SERVICES

[Counseling and Psychological Services](#)

Many students at UCSC face personal challenges or have psychological needs that may interfere with their academic progress, social development, or emotional wellbeing. The university offers a variety of confidential services to help you through difficult times, including individual and group counseling, crisis intervention, consultations, online chats, and mental health screenings. These services are provided by staff who welcome all students and embrace a philosophy respectful of clients' cultural and religious backgrounds, and sensitive to differences in race, ability, gender identity and sexual orientation.

[Student Success and Engagement Hub](#)

The Division of Student Success provides campus-wide coordination and leadership for student success programs and activities across departments, divisions, the colleges, and administrative units.

[Tutoring](#) and Learning Support

At Learning Support Services (LSS), undergraduate students build a strong foundation for success and cultivate a sense of belonging in our Community of Learners. LSS partners with faculty and staff to advance educational equity by designing inclusive learning environments in

Modified Supplemental Instruction, Small Group Tutoring, and Writing Support. When students fully engage in our programs, they gain transformative experiences that empower them at the university and beyond.

[Slug Support Program](#)

College can be a challenging time for students and during times of stress it is not always easy to find the help you need. Slug Support can give help with everything from basic needs (housing, food, or financial insecurity) to getting the technology you need during remote instruction.

To get started with SLUG Support, please contact the [Dean of Students](#) Office at 831-459-4446 or you may send us an email at deanofstudents@ucsc.edu.

Slug Help/[Technology](#)

The ITS Support Center is your single point of contact for all issues, problems or questions related to technology services and computing at UC Santa Cruz. To get technological help, simply email help@ucsc.edu.

On-Campus Emergency Contacts

Slug Help/[Emergency Services](#). For all other help and support, including the health center and emergency services, start [here](#). Always dial 9-1-1 in the case of an emergency.

Gender Neutral Restrooms

A complete list is maintained by the Cantú Center, here:

<https://queer.ucsc.edu/education-resources/all-gender-restrooms.html>