

Blue Humanities: Oceans, Humanity, and the Future

Prof. Rasmus Grønfeldt Winther

History of Consciousness 169

Fall Quarter, 2021-2022

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:00 am - 11:30 am

(Online Course)

COURSE NARRATIVE

As steerers of planetary climate systems, loci of biodiversity, sources of food, and cradles of inspiration to poets, philosophers, artists, and society in general, the oceans are essential to our future. This "Blue Humanities" course combines history, philosophy, literature, and cinema, using them as lenses through which to analyze, understand, and effect positive change on troubled oceans. Such a course fits well with a university near the ocean, that also has a marine campus.

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Prof. Rasmus Grønfeldt Winther

Email: rgw@ucsc.edu

[Webpage \(teaching\)](#)

I care deeply about the relation between scientific knowledge and the way humans see ourselves and our place in a complex and endangered world. Therefore, my research addresses questions about scientific representation (and misrepresentation); the irreducible political and ethical content of all that we think and do; and the potential and limits of every grand narrative of what it means to be human. I work primarily in the history and philosophy of science, biology, and race, and have strong interests in history, literature, anthropology, feminism, and multiculturalism. My interests in natural science and technology span the biological sciences, physics and mathematics, oceanography, psychology, and computer science.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will be able to describe, relate, and recognize socially and politically significant scientific content about the oceans. Students will develop strong analytical skills to integrate a plurality of views, from a variety of disciplines, about the oceans, and to intervene in and critique topical current discussions of climate change, biodiversity loss, social upheaval, and ecological collapse.

REQUIRED MATERIALS, TEXTBOOKS AND TECHNOLOGY

There are no books for purchase in this course. All reading materials are linked below, and can be found either online or in Canvas.

You are expected to be able to see four movies, and various videos. Some small costs may be incurred.

COMMUNICATION

Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 9 am-9:30 am, and by appointment.

Please use this link:

<https://ucsc.zoom.us/j/96476418725?pwd=c0VxQTZKN01xQUhJVFc1c1ZsMzB4dz09>

You can always reach me by email. I will try to respond within 2 days, but often more quickly than that. In general, I respond to emails Monday-Fridays.

ASSIGNMENTS & ASSESSMENT

1. Four 300-word maximum **THINK PIECES** (30% of grade; due on alternate Thursdays)

Think pieces are analytical and critical reactions to the course readings and movies. I will provide direct comments and feedback on your assignments.

You always have the option of **redoing** any think piece. In that case, turn in the old think piece with my comments and grade on it together with your revised work. Do not expect further comments. Grades almost always improve.

2. **MIDTERM** (25% of grade; made available on Thursday October 28, and due on Thursday November 4.)*
3. **FINAL** (25% of grade; cumulative, though the second half of the course will be emphasized; Thursday December 9, 12 noon–3 pm; the final will be given as a time-limited quiz on Canvas -- more details to follow.)*

*The midterm and final consist of three sections, which are intended to evaluate that you have made progress in meeting the learning outcomes (see above) of this course: (1) 10 definitions, (2) 3 short answer questions (prompts are provided), and (3) a single longer final essay (prompts are provided). Each of these is weighted equally. Ample time is built into the examinations for students to reflect, take notes, and write out their answers.

4. **In-class participation, exercises, and quizzes (20% of your grade)**

GRADING POLICY

All assignments are mandatory.

In general, late assignments **will be deducted one half grade per day late**: e.g., an A- becomes a B after 2 days late.

Attendance is mandatory. Attendance will be taken at every session. Although I do NOT recommend that you do so, you may miss up to three classes, no questions asked. After that, you must write or talk to me. (Since classes are online, and COVID-19 protocols in action, reasonable accommodations and leeway will be granted, but I need to hear from you.)

INSTRUCTOR FEEDBACK

I will provide direct comments and feedback on your assignments. [Please click here to learn how to access my comments in Canvas. \(Links to an external site.\)](#) For major assignments, I will include a grading rubric that will be available to you prior to submitting your work. [Please click here to learn how to access grading rubrics for assignments \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

STUDENT FEEDBACK



At the end of the quarter you will be asked to complete a Student Experience of Teaching survey for this course. SETs provide an opportunity for you to give valuable feedback on your learning that is honest and constructive. This anonymous feedback will help me consider modifications to the course that will help future students learn more effectively.

I also welcome feedback during the course, and you are welcome to contact me about any feature of the course that you wish to discuss.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Reading and Activities	Deliverables*

One	<p>Week 1 (Sept 28 and 30) Introduction to Course Themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hau’Ofa, Epeli. 1993. Our Sea of Islands. In <i>A New Oceania: Rediscovering Our Sea of Islands</i> (Links to an external site.), edited by Vijay Naidu, Eric Waddell, and Epeli Hau’ofa. Suva: School of Social and Economic Development, The University of the South Pacific, pp. 2-16. • Have a go at this nice, reaction piece (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.) to Hau'ofa's essay: https://nyufoodlandpower.wordpress.com/author/dsl370/ (Links to an external site.) 	
Two	<p>Week 2 (Oct 5 and 7) Why Oceans?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blum, Hester. 2010. “The Prospect of Oceanic Studies” <i>PMLA</i> 125(3): 670-677. • United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. 2002. "Oceans: The Source of Life.” Download Oceans: The Source of Life." 	TP1
Three	<p>Week 3 (Oct 12 and 14) How Oceans?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul Scott Anderson. 2020. “More Evidence that Europa’s Ocean is Habitable” https://earthsky.org/space/europa-ocean-habitable-goldschmidt-conference (Links to an external site.) • Rasmus Grønfeldt Winther “Awakenings” Draft Chapter 1 for <i>BLUE: Towards a Philosophy of the Oceans</i>. 	•

Fo ur	<p>Week 4 (Oct 19 and 21) Oceans and Environmentalism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jill Lepore. 2018. "The Right Way to Remember Rachel Carson. Download The Right Way to Remember Rachel Carson." <i>The New Yorker</i> March 26, 2018. • <i>Jacques Cousteau</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>The World without Sun</i> (1964). Watch from the Beginning!World Without Sun von Jaques Cousteau (Links to an external site.) <div style="text-align: center; margin: 20px 0;">  </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Life at the End of the World" from the TV series <i>The Undersea World of Jacques Cousteau</i>. Note <i>especially</i> the visit to the Qawashqar people (starts after 25:00).Life at the end of the world, Episode 30 of 37, Jacques Cousteau Odyssey, The real Life Aquatic (Links to an external site.) <div style="text-align: center; margin: 20px 0;">  </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch DDT-Rachel Carson (Links to an external site.)<i>Silent Spring (Links to an external site.)</i> (10 Minutes) • Watch <i>Anote's Ark</i> here: HISC 169 Media Reserves (Links to an external site.) 	TP2
----------	---	-----


Week 5 (Oct 26 and 28) Marie Tharp: The Woman Who Gave Us the Ocean Floor


- Tharp, Marie. 1999. "[Connect the Dots: Mapping the Seafloor and Discovering the Mid-Ocean Ridge. \(Links to an external site.\)](#)" In L. Lippsett (ed.), *Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory: Twelve Perspectives on the First Fifty Years, 1949-1999*. Palisades, NY: Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory of Columbia University.
- Ryan, W.B.F. 2012. [Review of Soundings: The Story of the Remarkable Woman Who Mapped the Ocean Floor](#) Download Review of Soundings: The Story of the Remarkable Woman Who Mapped the Ocean Floor, by H. Felt. *Oceanography* 25(4):75-77.
- Winther, Rasmus G. 2019. "[Mapping the Deep Blue Oceans](#) Download Mapping the Deep Blue Oceans" *The Philosophy of GIS* (Timothy Tambassi, ed.), Springer, pp. 99-123.
- Watch two videos about Marie Tharp:
 - "[How One Brilliant Woman Mapped the Secrets of the Ocean Floor \(Links to an external site.\)](#)."
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vE2FK0B7gPo> (Links to an external site.)

Five



- "[Marie Tharp's Ongoing Legacy in Global Seabed Mapping Efforts.](#)" (Links to an external site.)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mB0fghNXkzI (Links to an external site.) 	
Six	<p>Week 6 (Nov 2 and 4) Oceans and Cultural Studies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guest Lecturer: Melody Jue (November 4, 10-10:20 am only) (Links to an external site.) • Subramani. (2001). The Oceanic Imaginary Download The Oceanic Imaginary. <i>The Contemporary Pacific</i>, 13(1), 149-162. • Chua, C. 2016. “The Container: Stacking, Packing, and Moving the World.” (Links to an external site.) In Lambert, L. (ed.), <i>The Funambulist</i>. Issue 6: Object Politics. • Jue, M and Ruiz, R. 2020. “Time is Melting: Glaciers and the Amplification of Climate Change” Download “Time is Melting: Glaciers and the Amplification of Climate Change” in <i>Resilience: A Journal of the Environmental Humanities</i> 7.2/7.3 (May 2020). • Watch <i>from the beginning</i>: In Conversation with Melody Jue, author of Wild Blue Media (Links to an external 	Midterm

	<p>site.https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DRQNkbyX0Nw</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p>(Links to an external site.)</p>	
Seven	<p>Week 7 (Nov 9) Oceans and Literature</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read each one of the ten excellent poems (Links to an external site.) about the sea/oceans here: https://interestingliterature.com/2017/08/10-of-the-best-poems-about-the-sea/ (Links to an external site.) • <i>The Hungry Tide</i> by Amitav Ghosh. Read as much of the book as presented here (Links to an external site.): https://books.google.dk/books/about/The_Hungry_Tide.html?id=4Xlh66eedeYC&redir_esc=y (Links to an external site.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Read this (Links to an external site.) and this (Links to an external site.) reaction to the book. ○ https://weneedtotalkaboutbooks.com/2019/11/19/the-hungry-tide-by-amitav-ghosh-a-review/ (Links to an external site.) ○ https://www.amitavghosh.com/thehungrytide_r.html (Links to an external site.) • Watch <i>Whale Rider</i> here: HISC 169 Media Reserves (Links to an external site.) 	•
Eight	<p>Week 8 (Nov 16 and 18) Oceans and the Future</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guest Lecturer: Norman Johnson (November 18) (Links to an external site.) His chapter on "Challenges in the Oceans" from his forthcoming <i>Darwin's Reach</i>. Download "Challenges in the Oceans" from his forthcoming <i>Darwin's Reach</i>. • Various. "Envision 2050: The Future of Oceans" (Links to an external site.) 	TP3

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nereus Program 2015 "Predicting Future Oceans: Climate Change, Oceans, and Fisheries Download Predicting Future Oceans: Climate Change, Oceans, and Fisheries." • Watch <i>Seaspiracy</i>. https://www.seaspiracy.org/ (Links to an external site.) 	
Ni ne	<p>Week 9 (Nov 23) Oceans and Philosophy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Döring, Annika and Rasmus Grønfeldt Winther. 2020. "The Human Condition is an Ocean: Philosophy and the Mediterranean Sea Download The Human Condition is an Ocean: Philosophy and the Mediterranean Sea," Download "The Human Condition is an Ocean: Philosophy and the Mediterranean Sea" in <i>Words and Worlds: Use and Abuse of Analogies and Metaphors within Sciences and Humanities</i> (S. Wuppuluri and A.C. Grayling, eds.), <i>Synthese</i> Library Series. • Watch <i>Step Into Liquid</i> here: HISC 169 Media Reserves (Links to an external site.) 	•

Te n	<p>Week 10 (Nov 30 and Dec 2) Emergent Themes</p> <p>Connery, Christopher. (2006) "Download "There Was No More Sea: The Supersession of the Ocean, from the Bible to Cyberspace" _Download There Was No More Sea: The Supersession of the Ocean, from the Bible to Cyberspace." <i>Journal of Historical Geography</i> 32: 495–511</p> <p>On "Oceans and Capitalism":</p> <p>https://www.resilience.org/stories/2020-02-14/blue-acceleration-capitalisms-growing-assault-on-the-oceans/ (Links to an external site.)</p> <p>https://jacobinmag.com/2021/05/oceans-seas-shipping-logistics-global-capitalism-suez-canal-review-capitalism-and-the-sea-campling-colas (Links to an external site.)</p>	TP4
---------	---	-----

** In addition to ongoing, in-class quizzes and exercises.*

FINAL EXAM DATE AND TIME

Thursday December 9, 12 noon–3 pm.

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 pageLinks to an external site.](#) at the [Division of Undergraduate EducationLinks to an external site.](#).

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.

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 officeLinks to an external site.](#)

PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY

The University of California, Santa Cruz expressly prohibits students from engaging in conduct constituting unlawful discrimination, harassment or bias... [More hereLinks to an external site.](#) 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.

RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY STATEMENT

In a statement I applaud, echo, and follow, **Professor Lynn Hernandez** (Brown University; <https://vivo.brown.edu/display/lh15> ([Links to an external site.](#))) writes:

It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students’ learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that the students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender identity, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, nationality, religion, and culture. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated. Please let me know ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally, or for other students or student groups.

TITLE IX/CARE ADVISORY

The [Title IX Office Links to an external site.](#) is committed to fostering a campus climate in which members of our community are protected from all forms of sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, sexual violence, and gender-based harassment and discrimination. Title IX is a neutral office committed to safety, fairness, trauma-informed practices, and due process.

Title IX prohibits gender discrimination, including sexual harassment, domestic and dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. If you have experienced sexual harassment or sexual violence, you can receive confidential support and advocacy at the Campus Advocacy Resources & Education (CARE) Office by calling (831) 502-2273. In addition, Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) can provide confidential, counseling support, (831) 459-2628. You can also report gender discrimination directly to the University's Title IX Office, (831) 459-2462. Reports to law enforcement can be made to UCPD, (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.

CONTENT ADVISORY

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 room for a significant time, please make arrangements to get notes from another student or see me individually to discuss the situation.

STUDENT SERVICES

[Counseling and Psychological Services](#)[Links to an external site.](#)

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](#)[Links to an external site.](#)

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](#)[Links to an external site.](#) 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](#) [Links to an external site.](#)

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](#)[Links to an external site.](#) Office at 831-459-4446 or you may send us an email at deanofstudents@ucsc.edu.

Slug Help/[Technology](#)[Links to an external site.](#)

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](#)[Links to an external site.](#). For all other help and support, including the health center and emergency services, start [here](#)[Links to an external site.](#).

Always dial 9-1-1 in the case of an emergency.