

Instructions for the main examination assignment in Global Environmental History (distance course)

Article assignment: What can we learn from history?

The main part of the examination for the course will be writing an article. Based on the given framework, you will choose what you want to write about, with feedback from the course administrators. The main focus of the task is to relate a historical process or explanation model to a contemporary challenge in the area of sustainability. This task also includes a short oral presentation of your work. You will also practice giving constructive feedback to your classmates as well as receiving feedback on your own article from your fellow students and the course administrators.

Assignment:

Choose a process in environmental history or an explanation model concerning the emergence and decline of one or more societies. In your article, you should start with a concise and comprehensive account of this process or explanation model. You should also describe why you have chosen this particular subject.

Relate the environmental historical process or explanation model you have decided to write about to an area of contemporary sustainability issues. **What could we learn from history today?** Do you think any of our contemporary challenges could be solved or changed by looking back at history and learning from the environmental historical process or explanation model you have chosen to write about? What has influenced a historical society positively or negatively according to the example you have chosen, and how might this relate to one or more of today's challenges in sustainability? **Use the course material, literature and online lectures when you examine these issues but don't forget to reason and argue well for your own ideas.** Remember to distinguish between your own thoughts and references to other sources in your article!

Your article should be structured as follows:

A presentation of the environmental historical process or explanatory model you have selected

An analysis of how this environmental historical process or explanation model relates to one or more challenges in today's sustainability challenges

Discussion and Conclusion: What can we learn from history? Argue well for what you think we can learn from the historical example(s) you have chosen to write about. What could favor or disfavor our society today compared to your historical examples? What lessons from history could we benefit from today?

List of references

The text should be compiled as an article and should contain 3000 - 4000 words per person **excluding** reference lists and any cover page and table of contents. Use font size 12 and line spacing 1.5. Enter your name and date in the header. Please write all the course details and your name as the document name, for example: Karinmodig_article_geh.doc

All references and citations must be clear and consistent. You can follow the academic tradition you have used previously. It is important to distinguish between your own experience, thoughts and opinions, and the ideas and conclusions of the author/movie/article.

In addition to these requirements we also require a minimum of 1 reference to each of the following sources (a total of 5)

Radkau, Joachim, 2008: *Nature and Power: A Global History of the Environment*

Ponting, Clive, 2007: *A New Green History of the World*

Berg, Lasse, 2011: *Dawn over the Kalahari- how humans became human*

An online article from the course content

One of the online video lectures from the course content

Optional task:

Each article may be illustrated through an art project which lasts for a few minutes during the presentation in Uppsala at December 15th. You can, for example, illustrate the article by image, installation, poetry, music, video or something else entirely - you choose!

Important dates:

It is important that you begin working with your article early on in the course so that you will be able to finish it on time.

26/10 Submit the following assignment: *Ideas and plan for the article assignment*. You can find the instructions for this assignment on the course website.

During week 44 You will receive feedback on the assignment: *Ideas and plan for the article assignment* from the course management.

15/12 Article presentation and discussion in Uppsala. The article assignment "*What can we learn from history?*" should be ready enough to present and discuss with the other classmates. During this you will receive constructive feedback on your article and give feedback to your fellow students on their articles. Instructions for how to do this you will be given at the presentation.

19/12 Final deadline: **Submit the finished article assignment:** *What can we learn from history?* Submit the article through **www.studentportalen.uu.se**