

Final essay assignment
ENS216
Autumn 2007

Basic expectations

The final essay is due by 27 January at 23.59. E-mail it to the instructor at vail@fss.muni.cz. Papers received after this time will be considered late and the grade will be reduced. You may submit your essay before the deadline.

The essay should be 2000-2500 words in length.

Put the essay title, your name, UČO, and the date at the top of the first page. Use page numbers.

You may write in either British or American style English. Be consistent with whichever style you choose. Spell-check your essay before submitting it.

Your grade will be based on:

- How well you directly answer the assignment questions
- The quality of your reasoning and analysis
- How you use evidence and theory to support your conclusions
- Your reference to the course's required textbook, articles, and video resources

Essays that include theoretical and historical context and that refer to literature and videos from the course will receive higher grades. Be sure to cite information properly!

When quoting information not written in English, indicate who translated the materials. Include the information in its original language as a footnote to the translated quote.

Essay topics

For this assignment, you should choose to write your paper as an answer to ONE of the following three topics:

1. Read the article called "Economic possibilities for our grandchildren" by an economist named John Maynard Keynes. You can read it at: http://www.phil.muni.cz/elf/file.php/522/Keynes-_econ_possibilities_for_our_grandchildren.pdf

What are the implications of his reasoning for society-environment relations? In responding to this question, you should answer the following questions:

- Do you agree with Keynes that society must pursue economic growth now, and that social and environmental ethics can only be achieved in the future when material standards of living are raised to a higher level?
- Keynes wrote his article in 1930. What empirical evidence in the years since then support or challenge his predictions about economic development and social-environmental ethics?
- Choose a theoretical perspective introduced in this course and explain how it helps you understand and critique (either positively or negatively) Keynes' perspective.

2. Research the current rhetoric and policies advocated by the Czech Communist Party which are related to the environment, and answer the following questions:

- How much does the Party value environmental protection compared with other policy priorities?
- Why does the Party take the positions it does regarding environmental policy?
- How are the Party's environmental positions today similar or different to its positions before 1989?
- How do the Party's philosophical view of the environment and its environment-related policy proposals compare with theories of "green Marxism" as articulated by O'Connor, Foster, Dickens, and Burkett (their articles are available in Moodle)?

3. Identify an industrial company with operations in the Czech Republic. Read literature published by the company, and information about the company from other sources, regarding its values and practices in relation to the environment. Your essay should answer the following questions:

- Describe the company, such as its name, location, product(s), number of employees, annual profits, and other relevant information
- Describe the company's environmental policy: How does the company portray itself in relation to the environment?
- What media does the company use to communicate its environmental policy, and how is this effective (or not effective)?
- In what ways does the company claim to help the environment?
- Can you find judgments about the company's environmental policy or practices from other sources, such as the government or NGOs? If yes, why do they criticize or praise the company?
- Choose a theoretical perspective introduced in this course to explain why the company is motivated to appear environmentally responsible and assess whether the company's policy and practices are actually beneficial for environmental quality.

Please contact me if you have any questions about this assignment.