ASSIGNMENT 2

Global Environmental Change and You – A Reflective Essay

Assignment 2 will result in the writing of a reflective essay that connects a personal experience to one of the many facets of global environmental change (GEC) debate. We need not have experienced global environmental change to have been affected by the debate itself. The main reading for this assignment is the “Summary for Policy makers” from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) *Climate Change 2001* report. This text introduces the main issues and concerns brought about by a rapidly changing climate, i.e. warming temperatures, sea level rise, or species extinction.

This assignment will be prefaced by in-class writing activities and discussions, at home reading and short exploratory writing exercises to help you focus on an issue and develop your voice. Each of the activities and exercises listed below will be accompanied by a handout with more details or instructions in class.

**Monday January 8th: in class**
Part 1: In class Activity to identify global environmental change issue

**Monday January 8th: at home**
Part 2a: Journal Entry #1: Getting more familiar with an issue
Part 2b: Exploration into Experience Column

**Wednesday January 10th: in class**
Part 3: Sharing and reflecting on Exploration Column

**ASSIGNMENT 2: DESCRIPTION**

As discussed in class as reflective essay allows your personal experience to take center stage. This in not simply an autobiography; in this assignment the reflective essay allows you to analyze an event, that happened to you or that you witnessed, and explore its meaning. You will have the opportunity to comment on what you have read in the IPCC report and what we have discussed, written, and learned during the first two weeks of class.

Personal inspirations for this paper can come from almost anywhere: personal actions or experiences, family, friends, reading (books, newspapers, and magazines), media such as radio and television, recent movies or political debates. More specific examples include: reactions to the recent film “The Day After Tomorrow” would be appropriate because that film may have altered your view of the climate change debate; personal realization of the impact of current US energy policy every time you fuel up; choosing a new car – hybrid or not – and the decisions involved therein. There are numerous questions you can ask to facilitate writing this reflective essay. What experiences have you had that relate to GEC? How much energy do I use every day (e.g. do I drive to work or ride a bike)? What type of car do I drive, is it fuel efficient? Do I have family near a coast living at or close to sea level? How much did I pay for gas when I started driving vs. how much I pay now? Do I consider myself environmentally friendly, why? How much am I contributing to increasing CO₂ levels? Do I believe the climate is changing?
What experience causes me to believe this? In what ways do I think humans can affect climate? These are just a few examples of the many possible questions that may fuel your reflection.

Since you did such a great job with your exploration column your editor has asked you to write a full fledged essay on the topic of your choice. This means that your audience is the same, the readers of the college newspaper here at UCSC.

What am I looking for?
I’m interested in reading about how the issue you choose is related to our life and experiences. I want to see the exploration of its meaning and the development of your relationship with the issue at hand. You will need to be clear, pay attention to detail, analyze information from the reading and your experiences and provide evidence to support your discussion and opinions. I want you to include a detailed description of your issue, an analysis of how and why it is an issue in the first place, provide a detailed and vivid exploration of your personal experience and/or relationship to the issue. You may also want to conclude your reflection essay with any new insights you have gained through the essay writing process and pose any new questions you may like to explore further.

Why am I making you do it?
This assignment allows you to put your own voice into a piece of writing that comments on an experience or observation you made about the world. You can find this type of writing in magazines such as The New Yorker and newspaper columns. This type of writing differs from most of the writing you may have experienced in high school and other college classes. You are not simply writing about a topic or persuading someone; you are not writing an autobiography. The goal of this type of writing is to make a personal experience, and in this case its relationship to an issue, accessible to others (your classmates and instructor).

Assignment 2 – Reflective Essay Details

Main Reading: “Summary for Policymakers”, Climate Change 2001: The Scientific Basis, IPCC

Your Role: Observer of Environmental Change
Your Assignment: To write an essay that uses an event in your personal experience to investigate your connection to or experience of an aspect of the global climate change debate.

Draft Due: Friday, January 19th, 2006 (4 copies, 2 for peer review, 1 for instructor, 1 copy for you)
Final Draft Due: Wednesday, January 24th (with cover letters)
Form: Reflective Essay
Audience: UCSC Students
Length: 4-5 pages (1250-1500 words)
Format Details: Double-spaced, 12 pt font, Times New Roman 1 ¼ “margins all around, single sided pages.
Format General: Name, date and class I upper left hand corner, title centered and bolded, stapled