

PSCI 5810F
Approaches to Environmental Politics
Mondays 2:35pm to 5:25pm
Please confirm location on Carleton Central

Instructor: Peter Andrée
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Office Hours: Wednesdays 1:00 - 3:00 pm or by appointment (please e-mail)
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Course Description:

The study of environmental politics is concerned with the many and complex relationships between human societies and the natural world. In fact, a key insight of years of study in this field is that ‘society’ and ‘nature’ are inseparable, and that many of the ‘environmental’ issues we face today are exacerbated by social constructs which perpetuate this dualism. For better or worse, however, issues like climate change, massive species’ losses, the current food crisis and skyrocketing energy costs are bringing home just how dependent humans are on well-functioning natural systems, and on the need to develop better ways of interacting with the rest of nature that ensure the long-term viability of these systems. At the same time, growing inequalities between the world’s wealthy and poor, and the way that class, race and gender can affect whether or not you are exposed to carcinogens or have access to water, demonstrate that there are also important human rights and social justice issues which need to be addressed on the way to defining a more ecologically and economically-sustainable paths forward.

Big changes are on the way. On the one hand, we will see experiments with new ways of doing things that still enable material prosperity, and a more equitable sharing of resources, while causing less harm to the ecosystems we are a part of. On the other hand, many of these ecosystems will continue to degrade, we can expect an increase in the scale and impact of natural disasters, and these issues will result in new tensions, new conflicts, new waves of migration, etc. The future will bring fantastic new highs as well as unsettling new lows.

The study of environmental politics is about looking at all of these dynamics through the lens of power relations. This requires a focus, in part, on agency: Who gets access to resources, who does not, and why? Who is involved in making decisions about how to address these issues, and who is not? An analysis of power relations also looks at structures: What are the norms, discourses, or principles that come into play in developing policies to address these issues? What are their origins and effects? For example, how do the material, institutional and ideological structures of neoliberalism shape the way that we engage with world around us, and how governments, companies, and civil society organizations respond to the environmental crisis?

There are many different ways to start addressing these questions. This course, entitled “approaches to environmental politics,” is designed to allow instructors to teach to their strengths, by bringing in those approaches they are most familiar with or interested in. This term, we’ll focus on approaches rooted in discourse analysis, political economy, and political ecology. Simultaneously, this course is designed to enable students to bring in and develop different approaches not already on the instructor’s agenda (such as institutionalism, rational choice, game theory) in relation to individual research projects. To this end, students will undertake a series of short assignments to build research skills and refine their own theoretical approaches. Furthermore, the readings for the latter part of the course are also not set in advance, so that students can set the agenda.

In sum, this course can be thought of in two parts. First, it is a graduate-level introduction to the interdisciplinary field of environmental politics, with an emphasis on specific theoretical approaches, for political science students who may or may not be familiar with this area of research. Second, it is a

“workshop” course, with a series of short assignments (culminating in a final paper) that is designed to build your theoretical acumen, qualitative research skills, as well as presentation and peer-reviewing skills.

Course Organization:

This is a seminar course. There will be little formal lecturing. Both the students and the professor will be engaged in research projects throughout the term, and weekly seminars will be used as an opportunity to share what we are learning in our research and to trouble-shoot research obstacles, in addition to discussing assigned readings. There will be eight policy-research assignments set for this course, each of which will build on previous assignments. You will also be expected to write short commentaries (reading responses) on the readings for 9 of the 11 weeks of assigned readings. Because weekly seminars will be based around student assignments, reading responses and presentations, together these assignments represent a considerable proportion of the final grade (40%).

Texts:

There is one required text for the course, John Dryzek’s (2005) *The Politics of the Earth*, Second Edition. This book can be purchased at Haven Books: <http://www.havenbooks.ca/carletonsite/carletonhome-e.php> It is also on reserve in the Carleton University library. Most of the remaining readings can be found on the course WebCT site and through on-line journals available through Carleton’s library. Three of the four readings for the class on October 20 are from *Liberation Ecologies* (2004), edited by Peet and Watts. This book can be ordered on-line. It is also on reserve in MacOdrum library.

Supplemental reading: For students new to the field of environmental politics, Dryzek and Schlosberg’s (2005) *Debating the Earth: The Environmental Politics Reader* (second edition) provides many of the primary texts that Dryzek comments on in *The Politics of the Earth*.

Evaluation

Participation:	10%
Reading responses	20%
Short research assignments and peer review	30% (see table below)
Final paper	30%
Presentation:	10%

All course requirements must be completed in order to receive a passing grade.

Short research assignments:

Assignment	Due date	% of final grade
1) Identification of field of research and research question	Week 2: September 15	5%
2) Identification of key discourses and the role of government(s) and quasi-governmental organizations	Week 3: September 22	5%
3) Identification and discussion of the role of industry actors	Week 4: September 29	5%
4) Identification and discussion of the role of civil society actors	Week 5: October 6	5%
5) Identification of a theoretical approach and a refined research question	Week 7: October 20	5%
6) First complete draft of essay (bring two copies to class)	Week 10: November 10	-2%/day if not completed on time
7) Reviews of two other student’s essays (make a second copy of your feedback to submit to instructor)	Week 12: November 17	5%
8) Final draft of essays due	Week 13: December 1	30%

Participation: Half of your participation grade will be based on attendance in weekly class. Any more than one absence will only be excused if you can provide suitable documentation (e.g. a doctor's note). The other half of your participation grade is based on the quality of your contributions to class discussions, and your ability to interact with your fellow classmates in a respectful manner. Students will be asked to work in groups on questions related to the readings during class time.

Reading Responses:

By 11pm on Sunday evening before each class for 9 of the 11 weeks for which there are readings assigned, each student should submit a short (100-150 word, excluding references) response to that week's readings to the course WebCT site. This short piece should present your own analysis and insights: a) in response to an issue raised by the author(s); b) by relating the readings to the topic you are researching for the course; c) by picking a representative quote and critiquing it in reference to the rest of the readings or previous week's readings; and/or d) raising questions for further discussion. These reading response papers will not be individually graded, although you may occasionally see responses to them via webCT. The primary purpose for reading responses is to kick-start discussions and to identify issues that need further elaboration. Come prepared to read your response out in class, and to contribute to discussions based on the readings. Students are responsible for submitting responses to 9 of the 11 weeks of assigned readings. Failure to submit nine reading responses to webCT will result in 2 marks taken off of your participation grade for each missing response. Frequent failure to submit these responses can affect your participation grade more substantially, as it will affect the overall quality of your participation. Failure to be present in class, at the appropriate time, to discuss your reading response results in a grade of 0 for that response. Reading responses will not be accepted after 11pm on the Sunday evening before class unless supported by suitable documentation (e.g. a doctor or guidance counselor's note). In those cases, a hard copy of the response, along with a photocopy of the documentation, should be submitted to the instructor.

Presentation:

In the latter half of the term, each student will do a fifteen minute presentation on their research, discussing their main research questions, theoretical framework, methods, challenges they are facing, and preliminary conclusions. Each presenter should provide a handout with an outline of their presentation and key references. Presentation dates will be assigned by the instructor based on the topics students are working on. Two weeks prior to your presentation, and in consultation with the instructor, you are expected to select a journal article that the whole class will read for the week of your presentation. Your presentation should refer to this article (in addition to other references), and discuss how the theoretical approach, methods, and/or substantive conclusions of the journal article relate to your own work. Articles selected should be up to 25 pages, and come from a journal that is accessible on-line through the Carleton library, so that the link can be posted on the course webCT site. After each presentation, there will be up to fifteen minutes available for questions and general discussion on both the presentation and the article. Note: Please begin discussing your ideas on possible articles with me three to four weeks before your presentation date, either in class, in office hours, or via e-mail.

Policy on Late Assignments:

Reading Responses will not be accepted after the beginning of the class that they are due unless you can provide suitable documentation (e.g. a doctor's or counsellor's note). For research assignments (with the exception of the first draft and peer review), late work will be accepted up to one week late with a 5% penalty/day on that assignment. Assignments handed in late may not receive any written feedback from me, only a grade. Please do not submit your first draft of the essay or the peer review late, as this will also affect the ability of your class mates to complete their work on time. **Lateness penalties for these two assignments are 2%/day off of your final course grade.** I do not accept assignments by e-mail except under extenuating circumstances.

Temagami Field Trip:

There is an optional field trip that students in this class are invited to participate in. From Thursday morning on Sept 18th, to Sunday evening of September 21, a group of Carleton Political Science (from PSCI 5810 and PSCI 3801) and Canadian Studies students will join a contingent from Trent University and

several other universities at Camp Wanapitei on the shores of Lake Temagami in Northern Ontario. Part outdoor adventure (with canoeing, hiking, etc.), part academic conference focussed on the history and politics of resource extraction and aboriginal issues in Northern Ontario, this is an event not to be missed! More details can be found at: <http://www.wanapitei.net/trentweekend.asp>. There are also testimonials from students who attended the event last year on the course webCT site.

For Carleton students, the fees are \$125 for the four days plus a share of gas for the vehicles driving up (approximately \$40) and two meals en route. If you are interested in this optional field trip, let me know ASAP. Spaces are limited. Note: For students attending the field trip, Assignment #2 may be submitted on Wednesday Sept. 24 during the instructor's office hours.

Schedule:

Week 1: September 8: Introduction and overview of course.

Week 2: September 15:

- Dryzek, John. *The Politics of the Earth*. p.1-72
- Andr e, Peter. 2005. 'The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and shifts in the discourse of precaution.' *Global Environmental Politics* 5(4): 25-46

Research assignment #1) Describe the area of environmental politics research that interests you and identify one researchable question. Cite four secondary sources. (500 words, single-spaced)
Readings:

Week 3: September 22

- Dryzek, John. *The Politics of the Earth*. p.73-142
- Levy, David L.; Newell, Peter J. 2002. 'Business Strategy and International Environmental Governance: Toward a Neo-Gramscian Synthesis'. *Global Environmental Politics*. 2(4): 84-101,

Research assignment #2) First, what are the dominant governing discourses in the field you are looking at? What assumptions underpin these discourses? How are they embedded in institutional and material structures? Second, discuss the activities of key government, quasi-government or inter-governmental organizations in your field. Cite six government sources. (500-750 words, single-spaced)

Week 4: September 29

- Dryzek, John. *The Politics of the Earth*. p.143-180
- McCarthy, J. and S. Prudham. 2004 'Neoliberal nature and the nature of neoliberalism.' *Geoforum* 35(3): 275-283
- Mansfield, B. Neoliberalism in the oceans: "rationalization," property rights, and the commons question. *Geoforum* 35(3): 313-326

Research assignment #3) Identification and discussion of the role of industry actors
What is the role, and what are the perspectives of, industry actors in your policy area? How do corporations and business organizations try to influence government policy or other actors in this area? Cite four key industry-generated documents (500-750 words, single-spaced).

Week 5: October 6

- Dryzek, John. *The Politics of the Earth*. p.181-236
- Shellenberger, M. and T. Nordhaus. 'The death of environmentalism: Global warming politics in a post-environmental world.' The Breakthrough Institute.
http://thebreakthrough.org/PDF/Death_of_Environmentalism.pdf
- Some of the responses to Shellenberger and Nordhaus archived on Grist:
<http://www.grist.org/news/maindish/2005/01/13/doe-intro/>

Research assignment #4) Identification and discussion of the role of civil society actors

What is the role, and what are the perspectives of, civil society actors such as NGOs, churches, indigenous groups, etc.? How do CSOs try to influence government policy or other actors in this area? Cite four key CSO-generated documents (500 words, single-spaced).

Week 6: October 13

Thanksgiving. No classes!

Week 7: October 20

- Watts, M. and R. Peet. 2004. Liberating Political Ecology. *Liberation Ecologies*, Second Edition. Peet, R. and M. Watts (eds.). Routledge: London p.3-47
- Carney, J. 2004. Gender conflict in Gambian Wetlands. *Liberation Ecologies*, Second Edition. Peet, R. and M. Watts (eds.). Routledge: London p.316-335
- Foryth, T. 2004. Industrial pollution and social movement in Thailand. *Liberation Ecologies*, Second Edition. Peet, R. and M. Watts (eds.). Routledge: London p.422-438
- McCarthy, J. 2002. First world political ecology: lessons from the Wise Use movement. *Environment and Planning A* 34: 1281-1302

Research assignment #5) Identification of a theoretical approach and a refined research question. Discuss the approaches adopted in two journal articles, book chapters, or books that adopt a theoretical framework (or two related frameworks) which you think could be applied to your area of research. What type of primary data does this framework suggest you need to find and analyze in your research? (500-750 words)

Week 8: October 27

Presentations. Readings to be determined by presenters. Consult WebCT

Week 9: November 3

Presentations. Readings to be determined by presenters. Consult WebCT

Week 10: November 10

Presentations. Readings to be determined by presenters. Consult WebCT

Research Assignment #6) Submit first draft of essay (max.3000 words). No title page needed. Please note word count on first page. Bring two copies to class. Also: Find and read the Peer Review guidelines for an academic journal of your choice, and bring a copy to class.

Week 11: November 17

Presentations. Readings to be determined by presenters. Consult WebCT

Research assignment #7) Submit reviews of two of your peer's work (500 words each, in addition to in-any text scribbling). Provide two copies of each review: One for the student and one for the instructor.

Week 12: November 24

Presentations. Readings to be determined by presenters. Consult WebCT

Week 13: December 1

Presentations. Readings to be determined by presenters. Consult WebCT

Final draft of essays due. (3000-4000 words). No title page needed. Please note word count on first page.

Academic Accommodations

For students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities 9500 University Drive) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Registered PMC students are

required to contact the centre, 613-520-6608, every term to ensure that I receive your letter of accommodation, **no later than two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm requiring accommodations**. If you require accommodation for your formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your request for accommodation to PMC by **November 7, 2008**, for December examinations, and **March 6, 2009**, for April examinations."

For Religious Observance: Students requesting accommodation for religious observances should apply in writing to their instructor for alternate dates and/or means of satisfying academic requirements. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist, but no later than two weeks before the compulsory academic event. Accommodation is to be worked out directly and on an individual basis between the student and the instructor(s) involved. Instructors will make accommodations in a way that avoids academic disadvantage to the student. Instructors and students may contact an Equity Services Advisor for assistance (www.carleton.ca/equity).

For Pregnancy: Pregnant students requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact an Equity Advisor in Equity Services to complete a *letter of accommodation*. Then, make an appointment to discuss your needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first academic event in which it is anticipated the accommodation will be required.

Plagiarism: The Undergraduate Calendar defines plagiarism as: "to use and pass off as one's own idea or product, work of another without expressly giving credit to another." The Graduate Calendar states that plagiarism has occurred when a student either: (a) directly copies another's work without acknowledgment; or (b) closely paraphrases the equivalent of a short paragraph or more without acknowledgment; or (c) borrows, without acknowledgment, any ideas in a clear and recognizable form in such a way as to present them as the student's own thought, where such ideas, if they were the student's own would contribute to the merit of his or her own work. Instructors who suspect plagiarism are required to submit the paper and supporting documentation to the Departmental Chair who will refer the case to the Dean. It is not permitted to hand in the same assignment to two or more courses. The Department's Style Guide is available at: <http://www.carleton.ca/polisci/undergrad/Essay%20Style%20Guide.html>

Oral Examination: At the discretion of the instructor, students may be required to pass a brief oral examination on research papers and essays.

Submission and Return of Term Work: Papers must be handed directly to the instructor and will not be date-stamped in the departmental office. Late assignments may be submitted to the drop box in the corridor outside B640 Loeb. Assignments will be retrieved every business day at **4 p.m.**, stamped with that day's date, and then distributed to the instructor. For essays not returned in class please attach a **stamped, self-addressed envelope** if you wish to have your assignment returned by mail. Please note that assignments sent via fax or email will not be accepted. Final exams are intended solely for the purpose of evaluation and will not be returned.

Approval of final grades: Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by an instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

Course Requirements: Students must fulfill all course requirements in order to achieve a passing grade. Failure to hand in any assignment will result in a grade of F. Failure to write the final exam will result in a grade of ABS. FND (Failure No Deferred) is assigned when a student's performance is so poor during the term that they cannot pass the course even with 100% on the final examination. In such cases, instructors may use this notation on the Final Grade Report to indicate that a student has already failed the course due to inadequate term work and should not be permitted access to a deferral of the examination. Deferred final exams are available ONLY if the student is in good standing in the course.

Connect Email Accounts: The Department of Political Science strongly encourages students to sign up for a campus email account. Important course and University information will be distributed via the Connect email system. See <http://connect.carleton.ca> for instructions on how to set up your account.

Carleton Political Science Society: The Carleton Political Science Society (CPSS) has made its mission to provide a social environment for politically inclined students and faculty. Holding social events, debates, and panel discussions, CPSS aims to involve all political science students in the after-hours academic life at Carleton University. Our mandate is to arrange social and academic activities in order to instill a sense of belonging within the Department and the larger University community. Members can benefit through numerous opportunities which will complement both academic and social life at Carleton University. To find out more, please email carletonpss@gmail.com, visit our website at poliscisociety.com, or come to our office in Loeb D688.