

Economics Department  
Faculty of Social Sciences

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# ECONOMICS OF NATURAL RESOURCES

ECO 6143

[Louis Hotte](#)

Winter 2023

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## COURSE INFORMATION

**Class schedule:** Wednesday, 2:30PM-5:20PM room TBT 0021  
(in person only – no recording)

**Professor's office hours:** Tuesday, 10:00AM-noon (please email me before coming)

**E-mail:** [louis.hotte@uOttawa.ca](mailto:louis.hotte@uOttawa.ca)

**Course website:** <https://aix3.uottawa.ca/~lhott3/>

Before emailing a question, please read this syllabus fully and consult the course website. Allow two business days for responses to inquiries.

## OFFICIAL COURSE DESCRIPTION

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The concept of scarcity rents in static and dynamic settings. Basic property regimes: open access, exclusive access, and common property. Policy instruments. The importance of transaction costs. General-equilibrium and political-economic aspects of property regimes. Conflict. Elements of dynamic optimization. Renewable and non-renewable resources.

## Course Learning Outcomes and Methods

A main learning objective is to understand the mechanisms that underlie the mismanagement of natural resources and their larger economic consequences, such as conflict, wealth, and income distribution. The approach is meant to be relevant for both developed and developing economies, as well as for economic history.

We begin by introducing fundamental theoretical concepts in natural-resource economics, such as rents, property rights, transaction costs, time discounting, stock-flow dynamics, and bio-economics. Armed with these concepts, we can then extend the theoretical analysis to various issues such as: natural resource abundance and conflict; common-property resources and cooperation; local communities and the role of the state; trade openness and resource overuse; resource privatization and income distribution; or the industry supply curve for a renewable resource.

The theoretical analysis makes heavy use of the micro-economic tools that students have acquired in their undergraduate studies. Given the unavoidable importance of strategic behavior between users of natural resources, game theory provides an especially insightful analytical approach. When it comes to intertemporal trade-offs and stock-flow dynamics, basic concepts in capital theory are similarly called for. In some instances, reviews will be conducted in class.

As a graduate course, another learning objective consists in introducing the student to the research process. This is done by writing a term paper. The paper will contain a theoretical argument which will be empirically tested. The theory builds directly from the analysis done in class or through assigned problems. The student is asked to synthesize it as part of the term paper. To this end, simulations will be performed throughout the semester with the help of the mathematical software MAPLE. The empirical part will be performed with the use of the statistical software STATA. Due to time limitations, ready-to-use data will be provided. Note that various sections of the paper are to be *built* throughout the semester, with periodical deadlines, so that students will receive feedback before submitting the final version. Therefore, by the end of the semester, students will mostly have to put together the various sections, consider the feedback, and then write an introduction and a conclusion.

## Required Material

Readings will be based on journal articles and the professor's classnotes, all freely available. Students will need to use two softwares: STATA and MAPLE. STATA is available for free for students from the Economics Department's website. A six-month MAPLE license can be bought for C\$60 plus taxes.

## Assessment Strategy and Late Assignments

There is a total of 100 points to *accumulate*:

- Two mid-term **oral** examinations (15 points each) to take place during the **week of**

**February 8** and the **week of March 29**. A schedule will be provided. Regular classes will not take place during that week. (Absences are subject to the same rules as per the written mid-term examinations.)

- A term paper due **April 19th, 2023**. The work for the term paper counts for 50 points overall; however, some points will be accumulated throughout the semester with the intermediate reports. (1 point is removed for each day late on any submission.)
- Weekly assignments for a total of about 5 or 6 throughout the semester, mostly at the beginning (20 points total). No late submission is allowed because solutions must be posted promptly.

The oral examinations will be based on the material covered in the previous classes, the assigned readings, as well as the assignments. They will last a maximum of 15 minutes each and will take place individually between the professor and the student, in a room to be announced.

Specific details about the term paper will be provided in the third week of the semester. It involves an empirical investigation using STATA and simulating a fictitious economy using MAPLE.

Keep in mind that although a course in natural-resource economics can be somewhat technical, it remains a course in economics as a *social science*. Much emphasis is thus put on interpreting the results and discussing their implications for society and economic policy. The evaluation always reflects this.

The ability to interpret and discuss results can only be achieved through long-term maturation of concepts and theory. Students are thus expected to be up-to-date with the weekly material. For this reason, exercises and readings are assigned regularly. An *individual and hand-written* copy of the answers to exercises is to be submitted in class on the following week, *before the class begins*. Detailed solutions will then be posted but individual copies will not be corrected in detail. I will mostly look at honest attempts to solve and interpret the problems.

### **Policy on the EIN grade (incomplete)**

In all economics courses, students who fail to complete work (either a single piece of work or a combination of work) worth a total of 25% or more of the final grade will receive a grade of EIN in the course. The EIN grade is equivalent to a failure mark (F). See regulation 10.6 (<https://www.uottawa.ca/about-us/policies-regulations/academic-regulation-i-10-grading-system>) for details. Please note that a denied request for a deferral may therefore lead to a failure mark.

## THEMES

The order of the following themes corresponds roughly to their chronological appearance in the course. However, readings, references, and their timing are subject to change. Interspersed within the themes will be discussions about the term paper and the associated econometric analysis with STATA, model simulations with MAPLE, and discussions of homework problems.

Starred items will probably not be covered in the Winter 2023 semester in order to make time for the term paper discussions. I chose to still mention them because I believe that they are fundamental to a proper understanding of natural resource economics. Students who want to specialize in the field should cover them eventually.

1. Introduction
2. What makes natural resources different? (Hotte 2013, pp. 161 to 163.)
  - The concepts of appropriability and nonreplicability.
3. Natural resources and scarcity rents
  - Locational land rent (Hartwick and Olewiler 1998, ch 3)
  - Dynamic rents: A two-period non-renewable resource extraction problem
4. **Review:** Elements of game theory  
*This review is to be done by yourself. It is especially important for those who have done little game theory before. Students are invited to go over chapter 15 of Varian (1992), especially sections 1 to 4 in the first week of classes.*
5. Exclusive property and free access (Cheung 1970) (Gordon 1954, Hardin 1968) (Dasgupta and Heal 1979, ch 3)(Eggertsson 1990, chap 4)(Hartwick and Olewiler 1998, ch 3)(Smith 1968, Brooks, Murray, Salant and Weise 1999, Hardin 1968)
  - The open access fishery (Gordon (1954))
  - Free access: A game-theoretical analysis of property regimes with two users (Cheung 1970)(Dasgupta and Heal 1979, ch 3)
  - Free access with multiple users (Cheung 1970)(Dasgupta and Heal 1979, ch 3)
6. **Review:** Elements of capital theory (Hanley, Shogren and White 1997, ch 7)(Clark 1976, chapter 3)(Nicholson 1992, chapter 24)
7. Empirical paper I: *Does Free Trade Increase Deforestation? The Effects of Regional Trade Agreements* Abman and Lundberg (2019)
8. The dynamics of a renewable resources
  - A bio-economic model of a fishery (Perman, Ma, McGilvray and Common 2003, Karp 2017)

- The industry supply curve: Property regimes compared (Copes 1970, Hartwick and Olewiler 1998)
9. \*The pigovian tax solution to the free access problem
    - The smoking factory example (Coase 1960)
    - The multiple user pasture example
  10. \*The Coase theorem and transaction costs (Coase, 1960; Coleman, 1990, chap. 3)
    - The negotiated solution in the smoking factory example (Coase 1960)
    - Transaction costs: The airport with night flights example
    - Pigovian taxation, property rights and transaction costs
  11. General equilibrium and property regimes (Cohen and Weitzman 1975)(Weitzman 1974) (Samuelson 1974, de Meza and Gould 1992)
    - The fixed-factors model (Cohen and Weitzman (1975))
    - Income distribution and resource privatisation in general equilibrium
  12. Empirical paper II: *Does International Trade Cause Overfishing?* by Erhardt (2018)
  13. Trade, natural resources and property rights (Hotte, Long and Tian 2000)(Pethig 1976, Chichilnisky 1994)(Margolis and Shogren 2009)(Garfinkel, Skaperdas and Syropoulos 2008)(Hotte 2013) (Copeland and Taylor 2009)(Brander and Taylor 1998)
    - Trade and open access in the resource sector
    - Trade and endogenous property rights (Hotte 2000)
  14. Resource privatization in general equilibrium with mobile capital (Congar and Hotte 2021; Manning, Taylor, and Wilen 2018)
  15. Empirical Paper III: *Credit Markets, Property Rights, and the Commons* by Noack and Costello (2022). (Other relevant references: Assunção et al. (2020); Anderson (2017); McWhinnie (2009); Agnew et al. (2009); Sumaila et al. (2007); Costello et al. (2008); Brander and Taylor (1997); Cull and Morduch (2018))
  16. Fishery dynamics and the discount rate
  17. \*Fishery dynamics and present-value maximizing in discrete time (Hartwick and Olewiler 1998, Perman et al. 2003, Karp 2017)
  18. \*Commodities trade and conflict: rural wages and predation effects
    - An empirical application to the civil war in Colombia (Dube and Vargas 2013)
  19. \*Topics on property rights

- Conflict, state presence, and natural-resource use (Hotte (2001) )
- Theft versus trespass as different manifestations of property right issues (Hotte, McFerrin and Wills 2013)

## References

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## Indigenous Affirmation

### **ANISHINÀBE**

*Ni manàdjiyànànig Màmìwininì Anishinàbeg, ogog kà nàgadawàbandadjig iyo akì eko weshkad. Ako nongom ega wìkàd kì mìgiwewàdj.*

*Ni manàdjiyànànig kakina Anishinàbeg ondaje kaye ogog kakina eniyagizidjig enigokamigàg Kanadàng eji ondàpinangig endàwàdjìn Odàwàng.*

*Ninìsidawinawànànig kenawendamòdjig kije kikenindamàwin; weshkinìgidjig kaye kejeyàdizidjig.*

*Nìgijeweninmànànig ogog kà nìgànì sòngideyedjig; weshkad, nongom; kaye àyànikàdj.*

[Listen to the audio file](#)

### **ENGLISH**

We pay respect to the Algonquin people, who are the traditional guardians of this land. We acknowledge their longstanding relationship with this territory, which remains unceded.

We pay respect to all Indigenous people in this region, from all nations across Canada, who call Ottawa home.

We acknowledge the traditional knowledge keepers, both young and old.

And we honour their courageous leaders: past, present, and future.

## Inclusion

The University of Ottawa aims to be an equitable and inclusive institution, actively participating in ensuring the wellbeing of students, personnel and faculty members. The University is committed to eliminating obstacles to student inclusion in accordance with the [Ontario Human Rights Code](#). The *Code* provides that every person has the right to equal treatment with respect to goods, services, facilities, housing, contracts and employment as well as membership in trade or professional associations and unions without discrimination because of “Race, Ancestry, Place of origin, Colour, Ethnic origin, Citizenship, Creed, Sex, Sexual orientation, Gender identity, Gender expression, Age, Record of offence (in employment only), Receipt of public assistance, Marital status, Family status, Disability”.

The [Human Rights Office of the University of Ottawa](#) adds “although the Human Rights Code does not provide a definition of discrimination, the notion of discrimination covers unfair treatment on the basis of race, disability, sex, or any other personal characteristic. It can take many different forms, can target a single person or a group and can be part of a system.”

If you have experienced discrimination or harassment, you can seek confidential assistance through the University Human Rights Office to discuss your situation and/or [to file a formal complaint](#).

The following uOttawa Campus based services are available to you and your fellow students:

- [uOttawa Counselling Service](#) including Individual Counselling provided by uOttawa Counsellor, Pierre Bercy who specializes in anti-black racism;
- University of Ottawa Students’ Union (UOSU) [Resources for/from the Black Community](#), [Centre for Students with Disabilities](#), [Racialized and Indigenous Students Experience Centre](#), [Womxns Resource Centre](#) and [uOttawa Pride Center](#)
- Anti-racism student committee (Email: [car.arc.uottawa@gmail.com](mailto:car.arc.uottawa@gmail.com))

- Mashkawaziwogamig: [Indigenous Resource Center](#)
- [University of Ottawa's Human Rights Office](#) including [policies on accessibility](#).

## Assessment Policies and Expectations

### Language Expectations

This course is delivered in English. It is expected that students can read and write clearly in English at a level that corresponds to a university student. Failure to do so may lead to a failure in the course.

### Late Assignments

All assignments are to be submitted by their due date and time.

Exceptions are made only for illness or other serious situations deemed as such by the instructor. University regulations require all absences from exams and all late submissions due to illness to be supported by a medical certificate. Absence for any other serious reason must be justified in writing, to the professor, within five business days following the date of the exam or submission of an assignment.

The Faculty reserves the right to accept or refuse the reason; **reasons such as travel, jobs, or any misreading of the examination timetable are not acceptable.**

### Missed exams and requests for deferral

An absence from an evaluation without a valid reason will result in a mark of 0. As of September 2022, according to [Academic Regulation I-9.5](#), students can request to be excused from only one evaluation per course. Students who wish to be excused for an absence must complete a [deferral form](#) and submit credible external documentation within five working days of the evaluation. The Faculty reserves the right to accept or refuse the reason. Students whose request is approved will be required to write a deferred evaluation.

The date of the deferral form for the final exam is 2022-07-05 to the 20, 2022

### Exam conflicts

- Any conflict with a midterm exam schedule should be reported to the Professor at the beginning of the term. This request is especially applicable to the type 3 conflict (two in-class exams back-to-back) for students with special learning needs.
- Any conflict with a final exam schedule should be reported to the Faculty's undergraduate office as soon as the final examination schedule is released.

# Regulation on Academic Fraud

## Preamble

Academic integrity is a fundamental value at the core of all academic activities. [The regulation on academic fraud](#) defines the acts that can compromise academic integrity and outlines the various sanctions and consequences of such acts, and the procedures for handling allegations and setting sanctions. Further information on academic integrity is available on the [website of the Provost and Vice-President, Academic Affairs](#).

## Definition

1. Any act by a student that may result in a distorted academic evaluation for that student or another student. Academic fraud includes but is not limited to activities such as:
  1. plagiarizing or cheating in any way;
  2. submitting work not partially or fully the student's own, excluding properly cited quotations and references. Such work includes assignments, essays, tests, exams, research reports and theses, regardless of whether the work is in written, oral or any other form;
  3. presenting research data that are forged, falsified or fabricated in any manner.
  4. attributing a statement of fact or reference to a fabricated source;
  5. submitting the same work or a significant part of the same piece of work in more than one course, or a thesis or any other piece of work submitted elsewhere without the prior approval of the appropriate professors or academic units;
  6. falsifying or misrepresenting an academic evaluation, using a forged or altered supporting document or facilitating the use of such a document;
  7. taking any action aimed at falsifying an academic evaluation.

## Sanctions

1. Students who commit or attempt to commit academic fraud, or who are a party to academic fraud, are subject to one or more sanctions ([full list](#)), such as:
  1. a written warning;
  2. zero for part of the work in question;
  3. zero for the work in question;
  4. zero for the work in question and the loss of additional marks for the course in question;
  5. zero for the work in question, with a final grade no higher than the passing grade for the course in question;
  6. an F or NS grade for the course in question.

# University Policies

## Intellectual property right of course content

The materials you receive for this course are protected by [copyright](#) and must be used for this course only. You do not have permission to disseminate these materials, regardless of the means of dissemination including the uploading of these materials to any website or mobile application. These

materials include but are not limited to, any course notes provided by the professor, their Powerpoint presentations, and any lecture recordings you may have.

If you require clarification, please consult your professor.

© [Instructor name] All rights reserved.

### **Regulation on Bilingualism at the University of Ottawa**

Every student has the right to require that a course be given in the language used to describe the course in the course calendar ([Academic Regulation I-2](#)).

Except in programs and courses for which language is a requirement, all students have the right to produce their written work and to answer examination questions in the official language of their choice, regardless of the course's language of instruction.

### **Prevention of Sexual Violence**

**If you feel unsafe, call 9-1-1 or reach out to Campus Protective Services at 613-562-5411.**

The University of Ottawa has a zero-tolerance policy for any sexual act or act targeting a person's sexuality, gender identity or gender expression. This includes both physical and psychological acts that are committed, threatened, or attempted against a person without the person's consent, such as sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, indecent exposure, voyeurism, sexual exploitation, and cyberbullying. The University, as well as various employees and student groups, offers a variety of services and resources to ensure that all uOttawa community members have access to confidential support and information, and to procedures for reporting an incident or filing a complaint.

## **Student Services & Resources**

### **Faculty Student Experience Centre**

The goal of the [Student Experience Centre](#) is to help students with their academic and social well-being during their time at the University of Ottawa. Regardless of where a student stands academically, or how far along they are in completing their degree, the Student Experience Centre is there to help students continue on their path to success.

A student may choose to visit the Student Experience Centre for very different reasons. Younger students may wish to talk to their older peers to gain insight into programs and services offered by the University, while older students may simply want to brush up on study and time management skills or learn about programs and services for students nearing the end of their degree.

In all, the Student Experience Centre offers a place for students to talk about concerns and problems that they might have in any facet of their lives. While students can voice their concerns and problems without fear of judgment, mentors can garner further insight in issues unique to students and find a more practical solution to better improve the services that the Faculty of Social Sciences offers, as well as the services offered by the University of Ottawa.

## [Academic GPS](#)

The *Academic GPS* hub is a one-stop shop for academic support. Whether you're an experienced student or just starting out, you'll find some great resources to help you succeed.

### **With the Academic GPS, you can:**

- chat with a mentor seven days a week
- register for study groups
- take part in study methods workshops (note taking, time management, exam preparation, stress management, Academic Integrity Session, etc.)
- book an appointment with a mentor

## [Health and Wellness](#)

Your wellness is an integral part of your success. If you don't feel well, it can be hard to focus on your studies.

Dedicated professionals and fellow students who care about you are always ready to provide advice and support. Depending on your needs, many activities and services exist to accompany you during your academic journey.

Services include:

- opportunities to connect;
- counselling sessions
- peer support;
- physical activity;
- wellness activities and workshops;
- spiritual guidance.

If you want to connect with a counsellor, you can book an appointment online or go to their walk-in clinic at 100 Marie-Curie, fourth floor.

You can also drop-in to our wellness space, chat online with a peer helper, or access 24/7 professional help through the website.

## [Academic accommodations](#)

The [Access Service](#) tries to make sure all students with disabilities have equal access to learning and research environments, the physical campus and University-related programs and activities. The Academic Accommodations service works with other campus services to create an accessible campus learning environment, where students with disabilities have an equal opportunity to flourish.

We offer a wide range of services and resources, provided with expertise, professionalism and confidentiality.

### **Some services we offer**

- Help for students with disabilities in making the transition

- Permanent and temporary accommodation measures
- Learning strategy development
- Adaptive exams
- Transcriptions of learning material
- Interpretation (ASL and LSQ)
- Assistive technologies

If you think that you might need any of our services or supports, [email the Academic Accommodations service \(adapt@uOttawa.ca\)](mailto:adapt@uOttawa.ca).

### **Human Rights Office**

The mandate of the [Human Rights Office](#) is to provide leadership in the creation, implementation and evaluation of policies, procedures and practices on diversity, inclusion, equity, accessibility and the prevention of harassment and discrimination.

**Contact information:** 1 Stewart St. (Main Floor – Room 121) - Tel.: 613-562-5222 / Email: [respect@uOttawa.ca](mailto:respect@uOttawa.ca)

### **Career Services**

[Career Services](#) offers various services and a career development program to enable you to recognize and enhance the employability skills you need in today's world of work.

## **uoSatisfACTION**

Do you have any comments on your university experience or suggestions on how to improve it? [Tell us!](#)