

**CARLETON UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY & ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES
ENST 2001A, FALL 2021**

SUSTAINABLE FUTURES: ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

Instructor:	Jamie Brownlee
Classroom:	Virtual
Class Time:	Tuesday 2:35-5:25pm
Office Hours:	Email or by appointment (see details below)
Email:	jamiebrownlee@cunet.carleton.ca
Phone Number:	613-899-2193
Pre-requisites:	Second-year standing in the Environmental Studies program or permission of the Department

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Human activities have transformed local and planetary ecosystems, resulting in environmental threats and challenges. This course will examine some of the most pressing environmental problems in Canada and around the world, including their history, root causes and consequences. Throughout the course, we will discuss how environmental problems are connected to larger social processes and institutions, such as the structures of global capitalism, state and political systems, culture and ideology, and relations of power and inequality. This course will also support you to critically evaluate different responses and solutions to environmental problems, and review innovative ways that individuals, social movements and institutions are working to protect ecosystems and encourage ecological restoration. Finally, we will examine how the concept of sustainability has been constructed and contested, as well as various conceptions of how citizens, consumers and activists envision a more just and balanced relationship with the natural world.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This is a social science course, so students will be encouraged to think critically about how social, economic and political conditions underlie environmental problems and competing conceptions of ecological sustainability. How are current ecological challenges, and the responses to them, connected to our social and intellectual history? How are powerful groups and institutions able to define particular understandings of sustainability and solutions to environmental problems? What are the connections between social and economic inequality, and environmental degradation and renewal? More generally, this course will challenge students to identify and interrogate their beliefs and assumptions about environmental sustainability, and to identify opportunities for engagement with these issues beyond the boundaries of the classroom.

TEACHING AND LEARNING IN AN ONLINE ENVIRONMENT (PLEASE REVIEW THIS SECTION CAREFULLY)

Asynchronous Course through Brightspace

Because of the ongoing pandemic and the rules in place to ensure physical distancing, this course will be **delivered online in an asynchronous format**. In an asynchronous course, the instructor and students share information in a virtual course space. Asynchronous courses do not have live, scheduled meetings online. Rather, students will access weekly recorded lectures, course readings, assignments and other materials on **Brightspace**. If you have not already done so, please familiarize yourself with the Brightspace platform. For additional assistance, you can access the following support sites:

Brightspace Support Site for Students

<https://carleton.ca/brightspace/students/>

Online Learning Orientation

<https://carleton.ca/online/online-learning-orientation/>

TLS Brightspace Video Channel

<https://mediaspace.carleton.ca/category/Carleton+University+Galleries%3EBrightspace%3EBrightspace+for+Students/204479823>

While there is a scheduled day and time associated with the course (Tuesday 2:35-5:25pm), students can move through the weekly course materials on their own schedule and at their own pace. However, students are expected to pay close attention to assignment deadlines and exam dates.

I will send out a **group email** at the beginning of each week to: summarize the topics and learning objectives for the week; provide a reminder of any important deadlines; outline instructions for assignments and exams; and, more generally, to keep us on track.

Lectures and Readings

Each week, I will be posting a series of **lecture videos** on Brightspace where I present and discuss course content. The lectures will be posted at the beginning of each week, and they will remain on Brightspace for the duration of the term. I have also posted the **required readings** for each week that complement and build upon the weekly lectures.

It will be your responsibility to watch these lecture videos, do the readings, and understand and engage with the content provided. While you can watch (and re-watch) lectures and complete readings on your own time, I recommend that you adhere as closely as possible to a weekly schedule to avoid falling behind in the course.

How to Communicate with Your Instructor and TAs

This course will not have scheduled weekly office hours. However, I am available to answer any questions you may have, to provide feedback and clarification, and to help if you experience difficulties. Please feel free to **email me** at any time with questions about the course (e.g., technical or logistical issues, substantive questions about lecture/reading content, etc.). **I respond to emails promptly**. There are also two teaching assistants (TAs) for this course, and you are welcome to email them with questions as well. Contact information for both TAs will be posted on the Brightspace home page.

Most of the time, course-related questions can be answered by email, so please try this first. However, if you feel you need a more detailed discussion with me, you can contact me **by phone** or we can schedule an appointment for a one-on-one **Zoom meeting**. This will require that you have Zoom installed on your computer.

Please note that any requests for accommodations or alternate arrangements regarding assignments or exams should be made directly to me. Please give me as much notice as possible and I will do my best to accommodate you.

Information and Supports for Students

Below is a list of university resources to support students in online learning at Carleton.

Student Support Resources

<https://carleton.ca/studentsupport/supporting-our-students/>

Carleton Online: supporting students in the online learning environment

<https://carleton.ca/online/>

Centre for Student Academic Support

<https://carleton.ca/csas/>

Mental Health Resources for Students

<https://carleton.ca/wellness/living-well/resources/>

Resource Guide for Mental Health and Well-Being

<https://carleton.ca/studentsupport/wp-content/uploads/Mental-Health-Resource-2019.pdf>

Student Service Information

<https://students.carleton.ca/coronavirus/service-information/>

International Students

Learning online can present a unique set of challenges for international students who may be connecting to courses from their home countries. Please feel free to reach out to me with any concerns or problems you may be experiencing. Below is a list of university resources to support international students at Carleton.

International Student Services Office

<https://carleton.ca/isso/>

The Global PALS (Peer Advisors Lending Support) Program

<https://carleton.ca/isso/globalpals/>

International Student Services Office Newsletter

<https://carleton.ca/isso/services-for-current-students/isso-newsletter-sign-up/>

Online Events and Workshops for International Students

<https://carleton.ca/isso/events-2/>

General Student Assistance and Support

IF A STUDENT NEEDS ASSISTANCE WITH...	REFER TO...	CONTACT INFORMATION
...understanding academic rules and regulations ...choosing or changing their major	Academic Advising Centre “Helping students build a foundation for academic success by facilitating services that foster personal direction	302 Tory Building 613-520-7850 Website No appointment is

...finding a tutor ...academic planning guided by an Academic Advisor ...polishing study skills	and academic competence”	necessary as all students are seen on a walk-in basis.
...developing a coherent pattern of courses in the major and consultation about opportunities for graduate and professional study	Undergraduate Program Advisors	Consult the individual departmental website.
...a learning disability	Paul Menton Centre “Integration, Individualization, Independence”	501 University Centre 613-520-6608 Website Students can call or drop in to make an appointment.
...peer assisted tutoring for pre-identified, notoriously difficult courses ...writing services ...learning support workshops ...online support	Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS)	4th floor MacOdrum Library 613-520-3822 Website For an appointment please email CSAS@carleton.ca
...polishing English conversation skills, or proof reading (International students only)	International Student Services Office	128 University Centre 613-520-6600 Website
...Library and Research help; Learning Support and IT support	Staff at MacOdrum Library (reference services desk)	613-520-2733 Website
...coping with stress or crisis	Office of Student Affairs or Health and Counseling Services	Student Affairs Health & Counselling Services

Special Information about COVID-19 Pandemic Measures

All members of the Carleton community are required to follow COVID-19 prevention measures and all mandatory public health requirements (e.g., wearing a mask, physical distancing, hand hygiene, respiratory and cough etiquette) and [mandatory self-screening](#) prior to coming to campus daily.

If you feel ill or exhibit COVID-19 symptoms while on campus or in class, please leave campus immediately, self-isolate, and complete the mandatory [symptom reporting tool](#). For purposes of contact tracing, attendance will be taken in all classes and labs. Participants can check in using

posted QR codes through the cuScreen platform where provided. Students who do not have a smartphone will be required to complete a paper process as indicated on the [COVID-19 website](#).

All members of the Carleton community are required to follow guidelines regarding safe movement and seating on campus (e.g., directional arrows, designated entrances and exits, designated seats that maintain physical distancing). In order to avoid congestion, allow all previous occupants to fully vacate a classroom before entering. No food or drinks are permitted in any classrooms or labs.

For the most recent information about Carleton's COVID-19 response and required measures, please see the [University's COVID-19 webpage](#) and review the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#). Should you have additional questions after reviewing, please contact covidinfo@carleton.ca

Please note that failure to comply with university policies and mandatory public health requirements, and endangering the safety of others are considered misconduct under the [Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy](#). Failure to comply with Carleton's COVID-19 procedures may lead to supplementary action involving Campus Safety and/or Student Affairs.

READING MATERIALS

- Students are not required to purchase books or a course pack for this course.
- All assigned readings will be available through Brightspace.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION

1. ***SHORT ASSIGNMENT, DUE OCTOBER 12TH*** **20%**

For this assignment, you are to analyze the state of knowledge around a particular environmental problem, with a focus on the kinds of responses that have been proposed or put in place to encourage sustainability. Additional information about the assignment will be provided during the first few weeks of the class. The paper should be approximately 5-6 double-spaced pages. It is due on October 12th and should be submitted electronically via Brightspace. Late papers will be penalized 5 percent per day.

2. ***MIDTERM EXAM, OCTOBER 19TH*** **20%**

The midterm exam is on October 19th and will be a combination of short answer and essay-type questions. It will cover material from both the lectures and the assigned readings (weeks 2 through 5). The exam will be a *take-home, open-book exam* and will be administered through Brightspace. Please note that all take-home exam work must be that of the individual student. Submitting a take-home exam written in whole or in part by someone else is a violation of the university's plagiarism policy.

3. ***FINAL PAPER, DUE DECEMBER 7TH*** **35%**

For the final paper, you are to select your own paper topic, understanding that it must be within the parameters of the issues addressed in the course. While the paper can draw on some of the weekly readings, it should also reference additional academic sources. It should be approximately 12-15 double-spaced pages. Papers will be graded on the quality of your research and writing, strength of your arguments and analysis, and your ability to situate your arguments within existing debates. Additional information will be provided later in the term. Students are invited to discuss paper ideas with me at any point during the term (though this is not mandatory). The paper is due on December 7th and should be submitted electronically via Brightspace. Late papers will be penalized 5 percent per day.

4. ***FINAL EXAM*** **25%**

The final exam will be a combination of short answer and essay-type questions. Please note that the final exam is *not cumulative*. Therefore, it will cover material from both the lectures and the assigned readings in the second half of the course only (weeks 7 through 11). The final exam will be a *take-home, open-book exam*. It will be scheduled by the university in the exam period and administered through Brightspace. Please note that all take-home exam work must be that of the individual student. Submitting a take-home exam written in whole or in part by someone else is a violation of the university's plagiarism policy.

GRADES

In accordance with the Carleton University Undergraduate Calendar (p. 45), the letter grades assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

A+ = 90-100	B+ = 77-79	C+ = 67-69	D+ = 57-59
A = 85-89	B = 73-76	C = 63-66	D = 53-56
A - = 80-84	B - = 70-72	C - = 60-62	D - = 50-52
F = Below 50			

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

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. Carleton provides [academic accommodation to students](#) for reasons of disability, religious observance, pregnancy and/or parental leave, sexual violence, and student activities. In the context of the ongoing pandemic, Carleton also provides accommodations to help students navigate the disruptions caused by COVID-19.

Providing accommodations means providing alternatives to students who cannot perform the essential requirements of their academic programs due to the reasons mentioned above. At no time does academic accommodation undermine or compromise the learning objectives that are established by the academic authorities of the university.

For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For accommodation regarding a formally-scheduled final exam, you must complete the [Pregnancy Accommodation Form](#).

Religious obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details [click here](#).

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact the PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made.

Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

Survivors of Sexual Violence

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and where survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: <https://carleton.ca/equity/sexual-assault-support-services>

Accommodation for Student Activities

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation will be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>

Academic Accommodation Requests Related to COVID-19

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, Carleton has temporarily suspended the need for doctor's notes or medical certificates for academic accommodation requests related to COVID-19. This decision was made in recognition of the fact that alternate course delivery and assessment methods present unique challenges. In place of a doctor's note or medical certificate, students are advised to complete the [self-declaration form](#) available on the Registrar's Office website to request academic accommodation for missed course work including exams and assignments. Students are also encouraged to connect directly with their instructor to discuss required accommodations arising from the COVID-19 situation.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM

Students should familiarize themselves with Carleton's Academic Integrity Policy:

<https://carleton.ca/secretariat/wp-content/uploads/Academic-Integrity-Policy-2021.pdf>

The Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as "*presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one's own.*" This includes reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one's own without proper citation or reference to the original source. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to: books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, art works, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, material on the internet and/or conversations.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else;

- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another's data or research findings without appropriate acknowledgement; and
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's work and/or failing to use quotations marks.

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the course's instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of "F" for the course or even suspension or expulsion from the University.

STATEMENT ON INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Classroom teaching and learning activities, including lectures, discussions, presentations, etc., by both instructors and students, are copy protected and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s). All course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, recorded lectures, outlines, examinations, and other materials, are also protected by copyright and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s).

Students registered in the course may take notes and make copies of course materials for their own educational use only. Students are not permitted to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and other course materials publicly for commercial or non-commercial purposes without express written consent from the copyright holder(s).

COURSE CALENDAR

WEEK ONE – SEPTEMBER 14TH

INTRODUCTION

- Introduction to the course: overview, themes, lectures, readings, assignments and exams
- Teaching and learning in an online environment

READINGS

- Angus, Ian. 2016. “A Second Copernican Revolution” in *Facing the Anthropocene: Fossil Capitalism and the Crisis of the Earth System*. New York: Monthly Review Press. pp. 27-37.

WEEK TWO – SEPTEMBER 21ST

CONFRONTING OUR EXTRACTIVIST LEGACY: COLONIALISM, ENCLOSURE OF THE COMMONS AND THE RISE OF CAPITALISM

READINGS

- Rifkin, Jeremy. 1991. “A Private Nature” in *Biosphere Politics: A New Consciousness for a New Century*. New York: Crown. pp. 38-47.
- Broszmitter, Franz. 2002. “The Modern Assault on Nature: The Making of Ecocide” in *Ecocide: A Short History of the Mass Extinction of Species*. London: Pluto Press. pp. 54-69.
- Klein, Naomi. 2014. “Beyond Extractivism: Confronting the Climate Denier Within” in *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate*. Toronto: Knopf. pp. 161-187.

WEEK THREE – SEPTEMBER 28TH

CORPORATE ENVIRONMENTALISM AND SUSTAINABILITY: THE RISING POWER OF BIG BUSINESS AND THE PROMISE OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

READINGS

- Bakan, Joel. 2004. “Business as Usual” in *The Corporation: The Pathological Pursuit of Profit and Power*. Toronto: Viking. pp. 28-59.
- Dauvergne, Peter. 2018. “Total Destruction?” and “The Business of CSR” in *Will Big Business Destroy the Planet?* Cambridge: Polity Press. pp. 1-14; 38-55.

WEEK FOUR – OCTOBER 5TH

CAPITALISM VERSUS NATURE: EXAMINING THE IMPACTS OF CAPITAL ACCUMULATION AND ECONOMIC GROWTH, AND THE POTENTIAL OF THE DEGROWTH MOVEMENT

READINGS

- Angus, Ian. 2016. “The Great Acceleration” and “Capital’s Time vs. Nature’s Time” in *Facing the Anthropocene: Fossil Capitalism and the Crisis of the Earth System*. New York: Monthly Review Press. pp. 38-47; 111-125.
- Ellwood, Wayne. 2014. “On the Road to Degrowth” in *The No-Nonsense Guide to Degrowth and Sustainability*. Oxford: New Internationalist. pp. 156-185.

WEEK FIVE – OCTOBER 12TH

OUR CONSUMPTION PROBLEM: INEQUALITY, CONSUMER CULTURE AND THE ALLURE OF GREEN CONSUMERISM

READINGS

- Assadourian, Erik. 2010. “The Rise and Fall of Consumer Cultures” in *State of the World: Transforming Cultures, From Consumerism to Sustainability*. New York: Worldwatch Institute. pp. 3-20.
- Beder, Sharon. 2009. “Turning Children into Consumers” in *This Little Kiddy Went to Market: The Corporate Capture of Childhood*. London: Pluto Press. pp. 6-22.
- Pierre-Louis, Kendra. 2012. “The Green Car Myth: Thinking Beyond the Tail Pipe” and “Our Consumption Problem” in *Green Washed: Why We Can’t Buy Our Way to a Green Planet*. New York: Ig Publishing. pp. 70-85; 152-161.

WEEK SIX – OCTOBER 19TH

- MIDTERM EXAM

OCTOBER 26TH – FALL BREAK, NO CLASS

WEEK SEVEN – NOVEMBER 2ND

HOW WE EAT: INDUSTRIAL AGRICULTURE, FOOD SUSTAINABILITY AND THE RISE OF THE FOOD MOVEMENT

READINGS

- Pierre-Louis, Kendra. 2012. “How We Eat” in *Green Washed: Why We Can’t Buy Our Way to a Green Planet*. New York: Ig Publishing. pp. 33-56.
- GRAIN. 2012. “Food and Climate Change: The Forgotten Link” and “The International Food System and the Climate Crisis” in *The Great Food Robbery*. Nairobi: Pambazuka Press. pp. 97-109.
- Roberts, Wayne. 2013. “Seeds of Hope: The Rise of the Food Movement” in *The No-Nonsense Guide to World Food*. Oxford: New Internationalist. pp. 141-175.

WEEK EIGHT – NOVEMBER 9TH

SUSTAINABILITY AND PUBLIC POLICY: CANADIAN ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY FROM HARPER TO TRUDEAU

READINGS

- Turner, Chris. 2013. “Landscape at Twilight” in *The War on Science: Muzzled Scientists and Wilful Blindness in Stephen Harper’s Canada*. Vancouver: Greystone. pp. 17-46.
- Lukacs, Martin. 2019. “How Justin Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the (Alberta Carbon) Bomb” in *The Trudeau Formula: Seduction and Betrayal in an Age of Discontent*. Montreal: Black Rose Books. pp. 95-113; 122-130.

WEEK NINE – NOVEMBER 16TH

A NATION DIVIDED: EXPLORING DEBATES ABOUT TAR SANDS, PIPELINES AND INDIGENOUS RIGHTS IN CANADA

READINGS

- Natural Resources Defence Council. 2014. “Tar Sands Crude Oil: Health Effects of a Dirty and Destructive Fuel.” NRDC Issue Brief. pp. 1-8.
- Poitras, Jacques. 2018. “The Last Thing Out of Town” in *Pipe Dreams: The Fight for Canada’s Energy Future*. Toronto: Viking. pp. 265-282.
- Klein, Naomi. 2014. “You and What Army? Indigenous Rights and the Power of Keeping Our Word” in *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate*. Toronto: Knopf. pp. 367-387.

WEEK TEN – NOVEMBER 23RD

CLIMATE CHANGE AND OUR RENEWABLE ENERGY FUTURE: THE CASE FOR PUBLIC OWNERSHIP, ENERGY DEMOCRACY AND A GREEN NEW DEAL

READINGS

- McKibben, Bill. 2012. “Global Warming’s Terrifying New Math.” *Rolling Stone*, July 19. pp. 1-13.
- Klein, Naomi. 2014. “Public and Paid For: Overcoming the Ideological Blocks to the Next Economy” and “Planning and Banning: Slapping the Invisible Hand, Building a Movement” in *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate*. Toronto: Knopf. pp. 96-119; 120-141.
- Klein, Naomi. 2019. “The Capsule Case for a Green New Deal” in *On Fire: The Burning Case for a Green New Deal*. Toronto: Knopf. pp. 280-291.

WEEK ELEVEN – NOVEMBER 30TH

GREEN CAPITALISM OR SYSTEMS CHANGE? CLIMATE RESTORATION, ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM AND THE GROWTH OF THE CLIMATE MOVEMENT

READINGS

- Klein, Naomi. 2014. “The Leap Years: Just Enough Time for Impossible” in *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate*. Toronto: Knopf. pp. 449-466.
- Klein, Naomi. 2019. “Stop Trying to Save the World All by Yourself” and “Movements Will Make, or Break, the Green New Deal” in *On Fire: The Burning Case for a Green New Deal*. Toronto: Knopf. pp. 129-136; 259-271.

WEEK TWELVE – DECEMBER 7TH

- Course wrap-up
- Submit final papers