

Winter 2022

Nature, Environment, and Society (ENST 3000A)

Department of Geography and Environmental Studies

Carleton University

Professor: Luke Struckman, PhD

Office Hours: via Zoom; by appointment only

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Lectures: Tuesdays 08:35 - 11:25

TAs: TBA

I. Course description:

This course provides an introduction to important frameworks used to understand human-environment interactions. The course is built around case studies that examine topics such as indigenous landscape management, agriculture and food production, land contestations, extractive industries, and social mobilization around environmental issues. Case studies are built upon historical and social science research in addition to biophysical data.

Lectures will expand upon and clarify the assigned texts, offering concepts, examples, and contextualization. Each course meeting will include a component which involves the analysis and discussion of course materials. Assignments will challenge students to critically examine conceptualizations of nature (including their own).

II. Prerequisites:

Third year standing in the Environmental Studies program or permission of the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies

III. Texts:

Assigned texts will be available via Brightspace or freely available on the Internet.

IV. Course Delivery

Face-to-face lecture

V. Readings, Mixed Media, and Assignments

Readings, documentaries/videos/recordings, and assignments are designed to complement each other in meeting course objectives. Required readings establish the overall theme for each class and introduce key concepts and issues. Films and other media apply course concepts to case studies. Other activities allow for further reflection and research on course themes and case studies.

VI. Evaluation: Documentary Reviews, Essay Assignments, and Exams:

-Essays (40%)

Two essays will help to keep students current with key course concepts and themes and help to provide feedback.

-Mid-term Exam (30%)

The mid-term exam will be two hours in length and will consist of multiple choice and short and long answer questions.

The mid-term exam will focus on course content between Weeks 1 and 6.

-Final Project (30%)

The final project will be a 3,000 word essay that examines major course themes and concepts using case studies.

Grade Distribution

Please note the grade distribution and important dates for assignments and exams

Component	Important Dates	% of Final Grade
1. Essays	February 01; March 15	30%
3. Mid-term exam	March 1	35%
4. Final Project	April 12	35%

Grades will be posted to Brightspace throughout the term. However, any grades posted to Brightspace are unofficial and will not be finalized until the end of the term.

In accordance with FASS Grading Guidelines:

"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."

If, for any reason, the final exam must be deferred due to a documented illness or a family emergency, the deferred final exam will be identical in format and coverage with the final it is replacing. Deferred finals, which must be applied for at the Registrar's Office, are available ONLY if the student is in good standing in the course.

VII. PLAGIARISM

The University Senate defines plagiarism as "*presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one's own.*" This can include:

- 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;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another's data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in "substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs."

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.

For further information on plagiarism, please see Carleton University's Academic Integrity Policy:

<http://www2.carleton.ca/studentaffairs/academic-integrity>.

VIII. Requests for Academic Accommodations

Academic Accommodation

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at <http://www.carleton.ca/equity/>. 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.

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.

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 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) at

<http://carleton.ca/pmc/students/dates-and-deadlines/>

Course Schedule and Readings

Week 1 - January 11

Introduction

No Assigned Readings

Week 2 - January 18

"Nature"

Cronon, W. 1995. "The trouble with wilderness; or, getting back to the wrong nature." In *Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature*, ed. W. Cronon, 69-90. New York: W.W. Norton

Week 3 - January 25

Political Ecology

Robbins, P. 2019. *Political Ecology: A Critical Introduction*. Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell (Chapter 1)

Video: [How Can Political Ecology Change Policy? The Roles and Limitations of a Social Scientist](#)

Week 4 - February 01

Drylands Development

Davis, D. 2016. *The Arid Lands: History, Power, Knowledge*. Cambridge: MIT Press (pp. 1-21)

Essay 1 due

Week 5 - February 08

(Political) Ecologies of Fire

Steffensen, V. 2020. *Fire Country: How Indigenous Fire Management Could Help Save Australia*. Melbourne: Hardie Grant (Chapter 1)

Podcast: [Fireline - Episode 4: The Gift of Fire](#)

Week 6 - February 15

Indigenous Environmental Relations (courtesy of Carleton Indigenous Learning Bundle)

Kimmerer, R. 2013. *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants*. Minneapolis: Milkweed Editions (pp. 3-32).

February 22 - Winter Break: NO CLASS

Week 7 - March 1

Mid-term Exam

Week 8 - March 8

Domesticated Landscapes

Fraser, J., M. Leach, and J. Fairhead. 2014. Anthropogenic Dark Earths in the Landscapes of Upper Guinea, West Africa: Intentional or Inevitable? *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*. 104(6): 1222-1238.

-OR-

Erickson, C.L. 2008. "Amazonia: The Historical Ecology of a Domesticated Landscape." In *Handbook of South American Archaeology*, eds. H. Silverman and W.H. Isbell, 157-183. New York: Springer.

Week 9 - March 15

Agricultural Commodity Production

Oliviera, G. and S. Hecht. 2016. Sacred groves, sacrifice zones and soy production: globalization, intensification and neo-nature in South America. *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 43(2): 251-285.
(Read ONLY Sections 1, 2, and 3)

Essay 2 due

Week 10 - March 22

Biotechnology and Agriculture

Documentary: [Freedom from Famine](#)

Herring, R. J. 2006. Why did "Operation Cremate Monsanto" fail? Science and class in India's great terminator-technology hoax. *Critical Asian Studies* 38(4): 467-493.

Week 11 - March 29

Dispossession and Resistance

Simpson, L. 2017. "Nishnaabeg anticapitalism." In *As we have always done: Indigenous freedom through radical resistance*, ed L. Simpson, 71-82. Minneapolis: UM Press.

Lennon, M. 2017. Decolonizing energy: Black Lives Matter and technoscientific expertise amid solar transitions. *Energy Research and Social Science* 30: 18-27.

Week 12 - April 05

Nature-Based Solutions to Climate Change

Basche, A. 2017. Turning Soils into Sponges: How Farmers Can Fight Droughts and Floods. Union of Concerned Scientists.

Week 13 - April 12

Course Review and Wrap-up

April 12: Final Project Due