

GEOG/ENST 4022 – Seminar in People, Resources and Environmental Change

**** DRAFT August 2026, final version will be provided in class ****

Instructor: Dr. Emilie Cameron
emilie.cameron@carleton.ca
(613) 520-2600 x 6291
Office Hours: by appointment, usually Wednesday afternoons
Brightspace link: <https://brightspace.carleton.ca/d2l/home/452950>

Course description:

With the election of the Carney Liberal government in 2025, Canada has moved forward with an accelerated program of resource extraction. Framed as a response to the global economic uncertainty caused by the second Trump administration, particularly US withdrawal from various trade agreements and imposition of punitive tariffs, Prime Minister Carney has positioned rapid, large-scale expansion of oil and gas, ‘critical’ minerals mining, and associated infrastructure (roads, ports, pipelines) as essential to Canada’s economic security, but also as an opportunity for ‘economic reconciliation’ with Indigenous peoples. In service of this agenda, the government has redrawn key legal and policy tools governing extraction, impact assessment, and consultation in Canada in order to both speed up and guarantee approval of projects in the ‘national interest’.

In this course, we will aim to understand the broader forces shaping this political-economic shift, its longer history, and how it is playing out on the ground. We will do so by moving between the specifics of one proposed extractive infrastructure project that has been targeted for accelerated approval under the 2025 *Building Canada Act* (the Grays Bay Port and Road/ Arctic Economic Security Corridor proposed for Nunavut/NWT) and immersion in literatures that help illuminate some of the broader structures, histories, movements, and relations shaping the current moment. We will consider histories of dispossession and colonial jurisdiction; struggles over property and land claims; the importance of extraction and financial capital in Canadian political economy; histories of Indigenous legal and political struggle against unwanted extraction; environmental impact assessment; harvesting and relations with wildlife; climate change, and more. Because the course is unfolding at the same time as debate, promotion, and opposition to the Grays Bay project, we will also be following these issues in real time, including engagement with guest speakers directly involved in mobilization around the Grays Bay project.

The course will culminate with group presentations designed to deepen our collective understanding of contemporary struggles over extractive infrastructure, and also explore a range of alternatives to accelerating extractivism (which is being cast, in the current moment, as the only viable option for Canadian economic well-being). Students can expect to deepen their understanding of the complex dynamics shaping resource extraction on northern Indigenous lands; to think both deeply and broadly about how, where, on whose terms, and in whose interests resources are extracted from the earth today; and to immerse themselves in alternative modes of organizing extraction.

Course format:

In-person seminar, 3 hours weekly
Wednesdays 8:35am – 11:25am

Course Readings: Readings are available for download from ARES (estimated printing cost via Carleton Library/ CU on the Go App= \$17-25). **Note that only hard copies of readings will be permitted during in-class writing exercises.**

Course Communications:

Wherever possible course content will be posted and communicated using **Carleton Brightspace**. For any instructor questions regarding assignments, readings, or other course details, please **post your question in the “Ask the Instructor” discussion forum on Brightspace**. Answers will be posted publicly so others can benefit from the information, and students are encouraged to answer each others’ questions too.

If you have questions about your personal circumstances, please email me directly. **Please include the course number in the subject line of any course-related emails** (i.e. GEOG 4022 - subject of email). I will do my best to respond promptly. I respond to emails during regular weekday hours (9am - 4pm).

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will have improved their abilities to:

- Identify arguments and synthesize key ideas from a range of sources, both orally and in written assignments;
- Critique how resource extraction is organized and regulated in Canada, and explain why specific mines and extractive infrastructure are opposed by Indigenous peoples, environmental organizations, and other groups;
- Explain the merits and potential of alternative modes of organizing resource extraction, as well as the barriers to implementing these changes;
- Work effectively as a group to design and deliver a presentation to the class; and
- Engage effectively in a collective learning process, including asking good questions, making connections between a range of topics, and exploring unfamiliar or experimental ideas

Evaluation

Participation (20%):

- Participation is crucial part of a fourth-year seminar. Our capacity to discuss the readings and engage in seminar-based learning rests on all students coming to class prepared, having read the assigned materials closely and having prepared questions and ideas for discussion.
- Participation during group presentations is also essential. Students will be expected to attend every presentation, take careful notes, ask good questions, and use what they have learned from their peers’ presentations in their final assignment.
- Participation will be evaluated based on attendance (including arriving on time), evidence of engagement with the readings and presentations, contributions to discussion, and overall contribution to the class.
- Your contribution to the group project will also impact your participation grade.

Reading Responses (10%)

- Every class between September 16 and October 21 will start with 20 minutes of writing about the assigned readings. Your task will be to: a) summarize the core arguments of the readings; b) reflect on their relevance for understanding the Grays Bay case; c) identify questions for discussion in the seminar. You will be required to do this writing by hand, on paper. You are welcome to bring in hard copies of the readings for this assignment, but will not be permitted to use a computer or device to consult digital readings or transcribe a pre-written response. Please speak with me if you have accommodations involving the use of computers or other devices.
- The goal of this assignment is to encourage close reading of the materials before class, give you an opportunity to generate and communicate your own thoughts on the readings, cultivate skills in critical thinking, writing, and analysis, and to develop collective questions and ideas for discussion or clarification. It will also help you build toward the final assignment, where you will be expected to connect the academic literature we have discussed in class with the Grays Bay case.
- Responses will be evaluated out of 3: responses that meet the basic requirements of the assignment (i.e., they do all three tasks above and are reasonably clear and effective) will be graded 3/3. Responses that are excessively long or short, are of poor quality, or that have been produced via generative AI will have marks deducted accordingly.
- You must submit a minimum of 4 in-class reading responses over the 6 weeks we do this exercise. Your top 4 responses will be used to calculate your grade.

Quiz (10%)

- To ensure everyone is familiar with some basic facts about the Grays Bay project and why some groups oppose it, there will be a short quiz in class on **October 14**.
- A study guide is available on Brightspace.

Group interim report (10%)

- Groups of 2-3 students will be formed in the first two weeks of class. They will work together to create a presentation in the second half of the term. In preparation for these presentations, groups will be required to submit an **interim report** demonstrating their understanding of assigned and additional materials, providing preliminary thoughts on the significance of their topic to the class, and outlining a draft presentation plan.
- Interim reports are due **Friday October 23 at 11pm**. A penalty-free grace period of four days is permitted on group interim reports (i.e., these can be submitted as late as 11pm on Tuesday October 27 without marks deducted for lateness).
- Groups will **meet with the instructor in class on November 4 and 11** to discuss their interim reports.
- Further details are available on Brightspace.

Group presentation (20%)

- There are four group presentations scheduled over the course of the term. Groups of 2-3 students will be formed in the first two weeks of class (finalized by the add/drop deadline of September 15) and the presentations will take place on **November 18 and 25**. Some class time will be devoted to group work over the course of the term.
- Each group will present on a different assigned topic and will be asked to review a range of academic and non-academic sources relating to their topic, as well as to find additional sources. Your task will be to: a) prepare a presentation for the class that summarizes the key

issues, debates, and potential of this approach for how to organize extraction in Canada; b) identify barriers to implementing this alternative as well as success stories; and c) describe the relevance and potential of your topic for opponents of the Grays Bay project.

- Note that your classmates will not have read anything about your topic and so one of your primary objectives will be to **synthesize the key information** the assigned and additional materials contain and **communicate it effectively**. Presentations should ***not*** take the form of describing each of the assigned sources. Rather, they should communicate an overall understanding of the topic to the class and its relevance to the course.
- Presentations should be approximately 45 minutes long (50 minutes maximum) with 10-15 minutes afterward for questions and discussion. All presenting students should be prepared to answer questions.
- Presentations will be evaluated based on the following criteria:
 - Accuracy of information and ideas conveyed (did you read the assigned materials closely and understand their key points correctly? Was your overall presentation an accurate representation of the assigned topic?)
 - Originality and synthesis (did you synthesize the materials effectively? Did you effectively distil information about your topic into a presentation? Did you provide the class with an effective summary of the relevance of this topic to the course and to opponents of the Grays Bay project?)
 - Design, flow, and professionalism of presentation (was your presentation well designed, well timed, and effective in its communication?)
 - Overall group effectiveness (was it clear that your group worked well together and everyone contributed to the success of the presentation?)
- All group members will receive the same grade /20 on the presentation. Variations in contribution to the group presentation will be assessed through self and peer evaluation.
- Detailed evaluation rubric and assignment guidelines are provided on Brightspace.

Self and Peer Assessment (10%)

- Students will be required to evaluate their own contributions to the group projects and the contributions of their peers.
- **In preparation for the group meetings with instructor on November 4/11**, groups will be asked to review the group participation rubric together, discuss group members' contributions so far, identify any issues with group functioning, and make plans to address these issues for the remaining weeks of group work.
- Peer and self evaluations are due **within 1 week of your group presentation**, via Brightspace.
- Self and peer evaluations will be used by the instructor alongside observations of individual and group contributions to assign an individual mark out of 10 for overall contribution to the group project.

Final assignment (20%)

- Over the course of the term, students will have assimilated a great deal of information and ideas about the broader factors shaping resource extraction on northern Indigenous lands, about alternatives to existing modes of organizing extraction, and about the specifics of the Grays Bay project. In the final assignment, you will be asked to consolidate this learning in a final report written for a coalition of organizations opposing the Grays Bay project. Your task will be to:

- summarize what you understand their objections and concerns to be;
- describe the relevance of three alternative approaches to extraction to their struggle, including the potential, risks, barriers, and opportunities; and
- reflect on how your own knowledge and understanding of extraction on Indigenous lands has evolved as a result of the course.
- Reports should be approximately 2000-2500 words (8-10 pages double spaced). References do not count in word limit and must be presented in a consistent and correct author-date style (APA recommended).
- **Draft papers** should be brought to class on **December 2** for discussion and review. **Final papers** are due by **11pm on December 9 in hard copy**. Papers can be left in the departmental drop box.
- Students can take advantage of a **two days grace period** if desired, without penalty. I.e., papers can be submitted up until 11pm on Friday, **December 11** without incurring late penalties. After that, 10% will be deducted per day, including weekends. Papers will not be accepted after 12pm on December 18. **Papers must be submitted in hard copy** unless alternative arrangements have been approved.
- Detailed evaluation rubric will be provided on Brightspace.

Course Schedule and Readings

Week	Date	Topic	Activities/Deadlines	Required Readings
1	Sep 9	Introduction to the course/Grays Bay case background	Groups formed	No readings
2	Sep 16	Primitive accumulation	First group meetings Reading response 1	Hall 2021 Marx 1976
3	Sep 23	Northern colonialism, Nunavut Land Claim	Reading response 2	Inutiq 2024 QTC 2024 Bernauer 2019
4	Sep 30	Grays Bay history/overview	Guest lecture: Lauren Knafelc Reading response 3	Hanke et al 2026 Peres and Stanley 2025
5	Oct 7	Extraction and the Canadian State	Reading response 4	Collard and Dempsey 2026 Scott 2025
6	Oct 14	Infrastructure	QUIZ in class Reading response 5	Johnson et al 2020 LaDuke and Cowen 2020
7	Oct 21	Environmental Impact Assessment	Reading response 6 Interim Reports due Friday October 23	Parlee et al 2018 Bernauer and Cameron 2026
	Oct 28	NO CLASS - READING WEEK		
8	Nov 4	Guest lecture: Andrea Hanke/Amanda Dumond		

		Group meetings with instructor / Group work
9	Nov 11	Group meetings with instructor / Group work
10	Nov 18	Presentations 1 & 2
11	Nov 25	Presentations 3 & 4
12	Dec 2	FINAL REPORT WORKSHOP, bring draft papers
13	Dec 9	Independent work on final reports, final reports due 11pm

Full Reading List:

September 9: No readings

September 16: Primitive accumulation

- Marx, K. 1976. *Capital Volume 1*, Chapters 26 and 27.
- Hall, Rebecca. 2021. Indigenous/state relations and the “Making” of surplus populations in the mixed economy of Northern Canada, *Geoforum*, 126: 461-470

September 23: Northern Colonialism and the Nunavut Land Claim Agreement

- Inutiq, Kunuk. 2024. Devolution in Nunavut: Is this Really Namminiqsurniq (Self Determination)? Yellowhead Institute, February
<https://yellowheadinstitute.org/2024/02/15/devolution-in-nunavut/>
- QTC (Qikiqtani Truth Commission), 2024. *Achieving Saimaqatigiingniq: Final Report of the Commissioner*.
https://www.qtcommission.ca/sites/default/files/2024_revised_reports/CW_24-110_Report-18_QTC_E_v4.pdf, pp 6-26.
- Bernauer, W. 2019. Land rights and resource conflicts in Nunavut. *Polar Geography*, 42(4), 253-266.

September 30 : Grays Bay History/Overview

- Hanke, A., Dumond, A., Kutz, S., & Borish, D. 2026. Evidenced by Indigenous and Western Science: An Arctic Nation Building Project Threatens Caribou and Inuit Harvesting Rights. *bioRxiv*, 2026-04.
- Peres, M., & Stanley, A. 2025. “A true story of national reconciliation”: The Grays Bay Road and Port, Kivalliq Hydro-Fibre Link, and Inuit jurisdiction. *The Canadian Geographer/Le Géographe canadien*, 69(4), e70037.

October 7: Extraction and the Canadian State

- Collard, R. and Dempsey, J. (forthcoming). Chapter 4 in *The Extinction Paradox* (manuscript available from instructor/posted on Brightspace).
- Scott, D. 2025. Infrastructural (dis) entitlement: Tactics of dispossession on the critical minerals frontier. *Journal of Law and Political Economy*, 5: 38-73.

October 14: Infrastructure

- Johnson, C. J., Venter, O., Ray, J. C., & Watson, J. E. 2020. Growth-inducing infrastructure represents transformative yet ignored keystone environmental decisions. *Conservation Letters*, 13(2), e12696.
- LaDuke, W., & Cowen, D. 2020. Beyond wiindigo infrastructure. *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 119(2), 243-268

October 21: Environmental Impact Assessment

- Parlee, B. L., Sandlos, J., & Natcher, D. C. 2018. Undermining subsistence: Barren-ground caribou in a “tragedy of open access”. *Science Advances*, 4(2): 1-14.
- Bernauer, W. and Cameron, E. 2026. What does it take to stop a mine? Indigenous interventions and project rejection in Nunavut, Canada. *Environmental Impact Assessment Review*, 116,

Readings associated with each group project are listed in the Group Project module of Brightspace.

Course Policies

Grades:

In accordance with the Carleton University Calendar, 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			

WDN = Withdrawn from the course

ABS = Student absent from final exam

DEF = Deferred (see below)

FND = (Failed, no Deferred) = Student could not pass the course even with 100% on final exam

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. Standing in the course will be shown by alphabetical grades.

Electronic devices: I am asking us to experiment this year with a non-digital classroom. Although I recognize many of us have developed reading and note-taking habits that are reliant on laptops, tablets, and other devices, there is strong evidence that taking notes by hand deepens learning significantly. I have also noticed a marked impact on class engagement and discussion when we all have laptops open, and a decline in my own understanding of texts that I read online. As such, I am asking that all electronic devices be stowed during class and that students bring hard copies of the readings with them. Audio recording of the class is not permitted. If you have an accommodation that requires the use of electronic devices, please speak with me at the beginning of the semester to discuss how best to support your learning in the course.

Academic Integrity: Academic integrity is constituted by the five core fundamental values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility (see www.academicintegrity.org). These values are central to the building, nurturing and sustaining of an academic community in which all members of the community will thrive. Students are reminded of the seriousness with which Carleton University treats academic dishonesty of any form, particularly plagiarism.

The University Academic Integrity Policy (<http://www2.carleton.ca/studentaffairs/academic-integrity/>) 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, artworks, 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 or assessed content prepared in whole or in part, by someone else, including the unauthorized use of generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT);
- 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;
- submitting a computer program developed in whole or in part by someone else, with or without modifications, as one’s own; 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. ***It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the regulations concerning academic integrity and to ensure that your course work conforms to the principles of academic integrity.***

Statement on generative AI (i.e., ChatGPT):

Generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT, CoPilot, Claude, and Grammarly) are now widely available and are being integrated into many aspects of peoples’ lives. Whether or not you are personally using AI, we all need to maintain and improve our skills in critical thinking, effective communication, discernment, analysis, and ethical judgment as AI expands.

The generative AI policy for this class is designed to **allow intentional, ethical, transparent, and sparing use** of AI that supports, rather than replaces, your intellectual development, **while also ensuring that students who choose not to use AI are not penalized for their choices.** Students are permitted to use generative AI tools for specific tasks and in limited ways, but the core expectation is that you will *not* use AI, and that you will produce original, self-directed work.

You are **permitted** to use AI for the following tasks: brainstorming ideas, improving grammar and sentence structure, requests for information and sources about an assigned topic (however, beware of hallucinated information, sources, and arguments).

You are **not permitted** to use generative AI to: read and interpret assigned readings; generate summaries of assigned readings; generate arguments; generate outline or structure of a written assignment; generate text for your interim and final reports; generate your slides or script for the oral presentation; record and/or transcribe class discussion or presentations.

Any use of generative AI must be declared in a footnote (e.g., “used ChatGPT to brainstorm outline ideas” or “Used Grammarly to suggest sentence rephrasing”). Unacknowledged, excessive, or non-permitted use of AI-generated content—especially when it substitutes for your own work—will not be given a passing grade and may be considered a breach of academic integrity and handled according to university policy.

As our understanding of the uses of AI and its relationship to student work and academic integrity continue to evolve, students are required to discuss their use of AI in any circumstance not described here with the course instructor to ensure it supports the learning goals for the course.

Statement on Student Mental Health: As a University student you may experience a range of mental health challenges that significantly impact your academic success and overall well-being. If you need help, please speak to someone. There are numerous resources available both on- and off-campus to support you. Here is a list that may be helpful:

Emergency Resources (on and off campus): <https://carleton.ca/health/emergencies-and-crisis/emergency-numbers/>

Carleton Resources:

- Mental Health and Wellbeing: <https://carleton.ca/wellness/>
- Health & Counselling Services: <https://carleton.ca/health/>
- Paul Menton Centre: <https://carleton.ca/pmc/>
- Academic Advising Centre (AAC): <https://carleton.ca/academicadvising/>
- Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS): <https://carleton.ca/csas/>
- Equity & Inclusivity Communities: <https://carleton.ca/equity/>

Off Campus Resources:

- Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region: (613) 238-3311 or TEXT: 343-306-5550, <https://www.dcottawa.on.ca/>
- Mental Health Crisis Service: (613) 722-6914, 1-866-996-0991, <http://www.crisisline.ca/>
- Empower Me: 1-844-741-6389, <https://students.carleton.ca/services/empower-me-counselling-services/>
- Good2Talk: 1-866-925-5454, <https://good2talk.ca/>
- The Walk-In Counselling Clinic: <https://walkincounselling.com>

Lateness and Missed Class Policy: Attendance is mandatory in this class. Late arrival and early departure from class will impact participation grades. Students who miss class for medical reasons but are well enough to attend remotely can write ahead of class to request a Zoom link. Late final papers will be deducted 10% per day, including weekends and holidays, after the grace period. See below for policy re: extenuating circumstances. Students assume all risk for lost or missing materials. Please be sure to keep a back-up electronic copy of your assignments.

Extenuating Circumstances: Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with extenuating circumstances (i.e. out of your control). Any requests for deadline extensions should be made to the instructor in advance of the deadline, where possible. In case of missed deadlines due to unforeseen circumstance, a medical note (or other applicable form of documentation, including Carleton's self-declaration form) should be provided within 5 days of the missed deadline in order to negotiate new deadlines. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require accommodation for any other reasons.

Academic Accessibility and Accommodations: This course is intended for all Carleton students, including those with mental, physical, or cognitive disabilities, illness, injuries, impairments, or any other condition that can affect one's equal access to education. If, at any point in the term, you find yourself not able to fully access the space, content, and experience of this course, you are encouraged to contact me by email, phone, or during office hours to discuss your specific needs.

Carleton is committed to providing academic accessibility for all individuals. You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. The accommodation request processes, including information about the Academic Consideration Policy for Students in Medical and Other Extenuating Circumstances, are outlined on the Academic Accommodations website (students.carleton.ca/course-outline).

Additional Resources: There are a variety of ways to get help if you are having difficulties with any of the course material, or managing to meet the requirements of a number of courses at once. In addition to support I can offer you as the course instructor, there are a number of support services and resources available on campus, including: The Centre for Student Academic Support (<https://carleton.ca/csas/>) to help you in achieving academic success in various aspects of your university program; Carleton Writing Services (<https://carleton.ca/csas/writing-services/>) to help you improve your writing skills; and The MacOdrum Library (www.library.carleton.ca) which offers library, research, learning, and IT support. Free counselling is available to students through Health and Counselling Services (<https://carleton.ca/health/counselling-services/>). See also the mental health resources listed above.