

PSCI 5810 - W  
Approaches to Environmental Politics  
Tuesdays 11:35-1:05pm  
This course will be held remotely online

## I General information

Instructor: Peter Andrée

On-line Office Hours: *Wednesdays, 10-12 via zoom (sign up for 15-minute spots via culearn)*

Email: [Peter.Andree@carleton.ca](mailto:Peter.Andree@carleton.ca) (*I will respond within 48 hours*)

All email communication is to be via official Carleton university e-mail accounts and/or cuLearn, not personal emails.

## II 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 the human/more-than-human dualism. Climate change, extinctions, desertification, and food crises bring home just how dependent we all are on well-functioning natural systems. Growing inequalities between the wealthy and poor, and the fact that class, race and gender can influence whether or not you are harmed by carcinogens or have access to clean water, demonstrate that there are important social justice issues which must be addressed on the way to defining more 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 potentially destabilizing new lows.

Environmental politics is about looking at these issues through the lens of power. Who has access to resources? Who does not? What are the origins of the relevant norms and institutions? How do these factors structure the way that governments, companies, social movements and civil society organizations respond to environmental issues, whether in Canada or elsewhere?

This course can be thought of in two parts. First, it is a graduate-level introduction to the interdisciplinary field of environmental politics for political science students who may or may not be familiar with this area of research, but open to students from other disciplines too. This course goal is met through a focus on a core text written by John Dryzek, and by discussing podcasts produced by the professor along with Prof. Ryan Katz-Rosene of the University of Ottawa (<https://www.ecopoliticspodcast.ca/>). 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, research skills, as well as presentation and peer-reviewing skills. The course is designed to allow students to bring in a range of theoretical approaches to the study of power relations and politics (whether domestic or international) that they would like to gain more experience with. To that end, the readings for the latter part of the course are not all set in advance, so students can help set the agenda.

## III Course Format

This is a seminar course. There will be no 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 is a series of research assignments set for this course, each of which will build on previous assignments. You will also be expected to write short responses to the podcasts and readings for 5 weeks of material.

During COVID, this course is delivered as a mix of asynchronous and synchronous content. The asynchronous component involves listening to 1 or 2 podcasts each week. The synchronous component (90 minutes/week) will take place each Tuesday from 11:35 am

to 1:05pm via zoom. Students are expected to attend the class, with cameras on when possible, contributing to class discussion and giving an online pecha kucha presentation once during the second half of the term.

**IV Learning outcomes**

- *By the end of this class, students should be able to:*
- Characterize the field of environmental politics/ecopolitics, including major topics, fields of research, and issues of contention.
- Critically analyze a variety of environmental political positions using Dryzek’s approach to discourse analysis as well as other approaches introduced through course readings.
- Plan and execute a research project that includes preparing a pecha kucha presentation, a series of short written assignments and a final course essay.
- Undertake constructive peer reviews of the research and writing of fellow graduate students.

**V Texts**

There is one required text for the course, John Dryzek’s (2013) *The Politics of the Earth*, Third Edition. Oxford University Press. The remaining readings can be found through on-line journals available through Carleton’s library.

**VI Evaluation**

Participation	10%
Podcast/Reading/Video responses	20%
First two research assignments and peer review	30% (see table below)
Final paper	30%
Presentation	10%

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

**VII Assignments**

**Research assignments:**

Assignment	Due date	% of final grade
1) Identification of field of research and research question. Present and discuss the role of key actors (government, industry, civil society) including their positions <i>and</i> actions on the issue. (max. 1500 words via culearn)	Week 4: February 2	10%
2) Refined research question, along with a discussion of a theoretical approach (what to examine and why? What have others employed this approach to study and with what results? What are the challenges associated with this approach?) (max. 1500 words via culearn)	Week 7: March 2	10%
3) First complete draft of essay (3000 words, submitted to me and your peer reviewers via cuLearn site)	Week 10: March 23	-2%/day if not completed on time
4) Reviews of two other student’s essays (500 words plus comments in the margins, shared through cuLearn)	Week 11: March 30	10%
5) Final draft of essays due (3000-4000 words via culearn).	Week 14: April 13	30%

**Participation:** Half of your participation grade will be based on attendance in the weekly synchronous portion of the class. Any more than one absence will 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 occasionally be asked to work in small groups during class time using the zoom breakout room function.

### **Podcast/reading/video responses:**

Before each class for 5 of the 12 weeks, each student should submit a short (300-500 words, excluding references) response to that week's podcasts, videos AND readings to the course cuLearn site. This short piece should present your own analysis and insights: a) in response to an issue raised by authors, films and/or podcast guests; b) by relating the readings or podcasts to the topic you are researching for the course; c) by picking a representative quote and critiquing it in reference to the rest of that week's material; and/or d) raising questions for further discussion. I also expect all responses to include some critical analysis of the way environmental issues are framed by authors or podcasts guests using Dryzek's discourse approach by, for example, situating what is said in relation to one or more of his environmental discourses, and by drawing attention to underlying ontological and epistemological assumptions, as well as key metaphors and rhetorical devices (see the first chapter of the text). The primary purpose for reading responses is to kick-start discussions and to identify issues that need further elaboration.

Responses should meaningfully incorporate references to each of the required readings, podcasts or videos for that week, but don't have to systematically analyze all required resources, nor do they need to touch on the optional resources (though they may). Come prepared to share your response in class, and to contribute to discussions in all classes you attend based on the readings and podcasts scheduled for that week. Students are responsible for submitting a total of 5 responses. Podcast responses will not be accepted after the start of class unless supported by suitable documentation (see below under Accommodations during COVID). If students submit more than 5 responses, I will count the top 5 grades of up to 7 responses.

### **Presentation:**

In the latter half of the term, each student will do a pecha kucha presentation on their research, discussing their main research questions, and work completed to date, including preliminary arguments and conclusions. About half of the presentation should focus on your chosen theoretical approach. Presentation dates will be assigned by the instructor based on the topic students are working on. Presentations will be done in a pecha kucha format (20 slides, 20 seconds each, for a total presentation time of 6 min and 40 seconds (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PechaKucha>). Rehearse well especially if this is your first time presenting using this format! There are lots of tips available online (e.g. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vIDV0gCbeXA>). Presenters should use slides (e.g. PowerPoint or Prezi) and post them to the course cuLearn site before the presentation. Grading will be based on both content and style. 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. The article should speak to the theoretical approach you are taking to your topic and does not need to be focused on the same substantive issues you are researching. Your presentation should refer to this article (in addition to other references) and discuss how the approach taken by the article's author(s) relates to your own work. Articles selected should be 10 to 20 pages long and come from a journal that is accessible on-line through the Carleton library, so that the link can be posted on the course cuLearn 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 well in advance of your presentation date, ideally during office hours.

### **Policy on Late Assignments:**

Podcast/reading/video responses will not be accepted after the beginning of the class that they are due unless you can provide suitable documentation (see below under Accommodations during COVID). For research assignments (with the exception of the first essay 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 classmates to complete their work on time. **Lateness penalties for these two assignments are 2%/day off your final course grade.** I do not accept assignments by e-mail except under extenuating circumstances.

## **VIII Course schedule**

### **Week 1: January 12: Introduction**

**Required:** Podcasts: Ecopolitics series 1, episodes 1 (Introduction) and 2 (James Meadowcroft)

**Optional:** David Attenborough's film 'A Life on our Planet' (2020) available through Netflix.

### **Week 2: January 19: Foundational concepts and debates; discourse analysis**

**Required:** Dryzek, John. 2013. *The Politics of the Earth*. p.1-72 (Limits to growth and the promethean response)

Podcasts: Ecopolitics series 1, episode 5 (environmental political history in Canada) and 4 (Environmental Racism and Justice in Canada)

Video: Six miles deep / Six milles à l'horizon (2010) written and directed by Sara Roque; produced by Lea Marin. National Film Board of Canada [https://www.nfb.ca/film/six\\_miles\\_deep/](https://www.nfb.ca/film/six_miles_deep/)

**Optional:**

Video: Lester Brown. 2012. Perspectives on Limits to Growth: World on the Edge <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KPfUqEj5mok>

Video: The PRC Forum: Julian Simon. [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uLQoa\\_FA\\_zo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uLQoa_FA_zo)

Video: Bjorn Lomborg. 2005. Global priorities bigger than climate change <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dtbn9zBfJSs>

**Week 3: January 26: Environmental governance and politics**

Dryzek, John. *The Politics of the Earth*. p.73-121 (administrative rationalism, and democratic pragmatism,)

Podcasts: Ecopolitics series 1, episodes 6 (federalism) and 15 (ENGO Voices)

**Optional:**

Andrée, Peter. 2011. 'Civil society and the politics of GMO failures in Canada: A Neo-Gramscian analysis.' *Environmental Politics*. 20(2): 173-191

**Week 4: February 2: Economic rationalism and neoliberalism**

First research assignment due

**Required:**

Dryzek, John. *The Politics of the Earth*. p.122-144 (Economic rationalism)

Podcasts: Ecopolitics series 1, episodes 11 (Environmental political economy) and 13 (Corporate sustainability)

**Optional:**

McCarthy, J. and S. Prudham. 2004 'Neoliberal nature and the nature of neoliberalism.' *Geoforum* 35(3): 275-283

Ecopolitics podcast 14 (corporate social responsibility)

Videos: Cradle to Cradle: "Be good, not less bad" Interview with Michael Braungart <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1B8fTujfL30>

Eco-Innovation Summit 2011: Philips Lighting's Harry Verhaar <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1F4Fl4rXiYY&feature=relmfu>

Joel Kovel. 2011. The Relevance of Karl Marx in the 21st Century. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SKuXwIOBeBk>

**Week 5: February 9: Global ecopolitics**

**Required:**

Dryzek, John. *The Politics of the Earth*. p.145-183 (sustainable development and ecological modernization)

Video: 1972 UN Conference on the Human Environment <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mJUk70tfELA>

Podcasts: Ecopolitics series 1, episodes 7 (Canadian environmental law) and 16 (Sustainable Food Systems)

**Optional:**

Simpson, Leanne. 2008. Looking after Gdoo-naaganinaa: Precolonial Nishnaabeg Diplomatic and Treaty Relationships. *Wicazo Sa Review* 23 (2): 29-42

Meadowcroft, James. 'Reaching the limits? Developed country engagement with sustainable development in a challenging conjuncture', *Environment and Planning C*, 31(6) (2013): 988 –1002.

Banerjee, Subhabrata Bobby. 2003. Who Sustains Whose Development? *Sustainable Development and the Reinvention of Nature. Organization Studies* 24(1):143-180

**Week 6: February 16 (reading week: no classes)**

**Week 7: February 23: Treaty politics of the environment**

**Required:**

Podcasts: Ecopolitics series 1, episodes 8 (Indigenous environmental knowledge) and 10 (treaty relations)

Videos: 1) Stiegman, Martha. In Defense of our Treaties. National Film Board (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AelOZMtcolo>)

2) Stiegman, Martha and Sherry Pictou. We Story the Land. V Tape. (<http://westorytheland.ca/>)

**Week 8: March 2: Decarbonization?**

Second Research Assignment due.

**Required:**

Podcast: Ecopolitics series 1, episode 12 (politics of decarbonization)

Video: Naomi Klein. 2014. This Changes Everything/Bioneers. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jdaxehd0cFO>

Presentations today. Additional readings to be determined by presenters. Consult cuLearn

**Week 9: March 9: Decolonize the mind?****Required:**

Dryzek, John. *The Politics of the Earth*. p.185-229 (green consciousness and green politics)

Podcast: Ecopolitics series 1, episode 9 (ecofeminism and queer ecologies)

Video: Vandana Shiva. 2014. Decolonize the mind. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-rV0soljRQk>

Presentations today. Additional readings to be determined by presenters. Consult cuLearn

**Optional:**

Video: Gaia Hypothesis - James Lovelock. 2007. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GIFRg2skuDI>

Video: Arne Naess and the Deep Ecology Movement (short version). 2015. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GJz2zVW9WHM>

Massicotte, Marie-Josée. 2010. La Via Campesina, Brazilian Peasants, and the Agribusiness Model of Agriculture: Towards an Alternative Model of Agrarian Democratic Governance. *Studies in Political Economy* 85: 69-98

**Week 10: March 16: Ecological democracy**

Presentations.

**Required:**

- Dryzek, John. *The Politics of the Earth*. p.231-239 (Ecological democracy)

**Required:** Podcasts, TBD

Presentations: Additional readings to be determined by presenters. Consult cuLearn

**Week 11: March 23**

First draft of essays due (3000 words) Please note word count on first page.

**Required:** Podcasts, TBD

Presentations. Readings to be determined by presenters. Consult cuLearn

Also: Find and read the Peer Review guidelines for an academic journal of your choice.

**Week 12: March 30**

Research assignment 4) Submit reviews of two of your peer's work (500-750 words each, in addition to in-any text comments).

**Required:** Podcasts, TBD

Presentations. Readings to be determined by presenters. Consult cuLearn

**Week 13: April 6**

**Required:** Podcasts, TBD

Presentations. Readings to be determined by presenters. Consult cuLearn

**Week 14: April 13**

Final draft of essays due. (3000-4000 words). Please note word count on first page.

**Required:** Podcasts, TBD

**IX** Accommodations during COVID

Due to COVID, instructors will not request or require a doctor's note when students seek accommodation for missed term work or exams due to illness. Instead, students will be asked to complete the self-declaration form available here:

[https://carleton.ca/registrar/wp-content/uploads/COVID-19\\_Self-declaration.pdf](https://carleton.ca/registrar/wp-content/uploads/COVID-19_Self-declaration.pdf)

**X** Academic AccommodationsPregnancy

Please contact your instructor 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, visit the Equity Services website:

[carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf](https://carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf)

Religious obligation

Please contact your instructor 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, visit the Equity Services website:

[carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf](https://carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf)

### Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) at 613-520-6608 or [pmc@carleton.ca](mailto:pmc@carleton.ca) for a formal evaluation or contact your PMC coordinator to send your instructor your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term. You must also contact the PMC 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 your instructor as soon as possible to ensure accommodation arrangements are made.

### 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 its 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: [carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support](http://carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support)

### 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 must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor 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>

For more information on academic accommodation, please contact the departmental administrator or visit: [students.carleton.ca/course-outline](http://students.carleton.ca/course-outline)

### Plagiarism

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentional 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 which cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct 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 may include a mark of zero for the plagiarized work or a final grade of "F" for the course.

More information on the University’s Academic Integrity Policy can be found at: <https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>

### Intellectual property

Student or professor materials created for this course (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the author(s). They are intended for personal use and may not be reproduced or redistributed without prior written consent of the author(s).