

Sociology and Natural Resources (SOCI 360)
University of British Columbia
Instructor: Autumn Knowlton, autumn.knowlton@ubc.ca
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Course meeting times: Tuesday and Thursday, 11:00 AM-12:20 PM
Office hours: Tuesday and Thursday, 12:30-1:30 PM (or by appointment)
Office location: ANSO 153

Course Description

In this course we consider the relationships between humans, non-humans, and the environment through three principal lenses: capitalism, Marxism/anti-capitalism, and indigenous worldviews. We look at how each of these paradigms constructs and/or challenges notions of commodification, natural resource management practices, and development, and their relationship to individual and community well-being. We closely examine the discourses of environmental sustainability, political ecology, development, cultural and human rights, profit, and modernization that permeate these conversations.

This class is global in scope, and considers natural resources within several local, national, and transnational contexts. We compare proposals from different stakeholders (such as international financial institutions, academics, activists, corporations, and non-governmental organizations) as to how to effectively resolve conflicts and disagreements over natural resources. We focus on the struggles of indigenous Q'eqchi' Mayas in Guatemala as a case study in order to consider the implications of competing paradigms in relation to land, development, and natural resources.

In this course we attempt to answer the following questions:

- What are the implications for considering the environment in terms of nature vs. natural resources?
- Who should be able to make decisions about the use of natural resources? For example, how can we weigh claims by individuals, communities, corporations, non-governmental organizations, and the state for control of these decisions?
- What are the structures underlying unequal access to natural resources?
- How can indigenous peoples' worldviews on land, ecology, nature, and the other-than-human contribute to mainstream natural resource management practices?

Your final mark in the class will be based on the following:

Attendance and participation	20%
Group presentation (15-20 minutes)	10%
Hard copy of presentation	10%
On-line discussion board (4 posts)	10%
Event write-up (2-3 pages)	10%
Final research paper (8-10 pages)	40%

Readings

- The majority of the readings are available electronically at the UBC Library; I'll post electronic copies of the others on Connect.

Requirements for Written Assignments

All assignments need to be submitted as a hard copy to the instructor at the beginning of class on the due date. All written assignments must:

- be in 12 point Times New Roman or Arial font
- use 1" margins
- be double spaced
- contain the title of your paper, your name and student ID, and the date you are submitting the paper
- have page numbers in the bottom right hand of each page
- follow the citation guidelines for the American Psychology Association (APA)
(For basic guidelines see <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>)

If you are absent from class the day an assignment is due, you must submit a digital copy of the assignment by the end of class that day and a hard copy the following class. I deduct 5% from the total mark for each day an assignment is late; papers are considered late if they arrive after 12:20 PM (the end of class) on the day they are due. An exception may be made if a student provides a doctor's note to account for their absence.

Course Requirements

Attendance and participation: Every student's regular attendance and active engagement with the class materials is essential to making this course a success. Come to each class prepared to contribute to the discussion.

Group presentation: Between February 23rd and March 4th groups of 4-5 students will present for 15-20 minutes on a local, national, or global topic related to natural resources. I encourage you to present on issues we will not explore in-depth during the course, such as climate change, protected areas, oil pipelines, and food and water security. In the presentation students will outline the problem as they see it, provide a brief overview of the context, including the actors and institutions involved, and outline at least two solutions to the problem.

Students will have some class time to prepare their presentations, however work outside of class will also be required. Students will be evaluating each other's presentations as part of their participation grade during these two weeks. On the day that each group presents, the group will submit one hard copy of the presentation (script, PowerPoint presentation, etc.).

On-line discussion board: Your contribution to on-line discussions on Connect is an important element of your participation in class discussions. Students need to post at least two questions and/or reflections and one substantive responses (at least 50 words) to others' posts between Weeks 2 and 12. Use this space to bring up issues we don't get around to discussing in class, to add thoughts that occur to you after class, or to respond to others' comments. You should expect to spend approximately one hour per week reading others' posts and writing your own. At Tuesday's class I'll expect everyone to be caught up on the previous week's posts.

Between Weeks 2 and 12 each student is also responsible for sharing one media item (video clip, newspaper article, magazine article) on Connect related to the week's theme. When you post a media item you should explain why you think it is relevant and interesting.

Event write-up: Once during the term students are required to attend an event related to natural resources, such as a lecture, art exhibit, conference, etc. Your 2-3 page (12 font, DS, APA reference style) event write-up should include the details of the event itself, as well as your reflections on the relevance of the event to course topics. Students should explicitly address how they see their own role/responsibilities in relation to the themes under discussion at the event. The assignment is due on **March 10th**, but I recommend that you turn it in as soon as possible after attending the event so as not to forget the details. I will post events on the course Connect site throughout the semester.

Final research paper: At the final class on **April 7th** students will turn in an 8-10 page research-based paper on a topic related to the course material. Students can turn in a traditional paper or they can explore alternative paper formats, such as a policy paper. The paper needs to draw on at least two course readings as well as at least three other academic sources, for a minimum of five academic sources.

I recommend that you communicate with me about your final paper idea at least three weeks before the paper is due in order to make sure that you are on the right track. If you are proposing an alternative format or if you're interested in conducting interviews as part of your final project you need to meet with me in person to discuss your idea well in advance of the due date.

Class Schedule and Assigned Readings

All readings need to be completed before class the day they are listed in the course outline.

Nature or natural resource?

January 5th

- Overview of course materials, assignments, expectations

January 7th

- Thoreau, H. D. (1854/2009). Solitude. *Walden and on the duty of civil disobedience* (pp. 170-183). Auckland, NZ: The Floating Press. (ebook)

January 12th

- Arias-Maldonado, M. (2015). Introduction. *Environment and society: Socionatural relations in the Anthropocene* (pp. 1-16). Springer (ebook)

January 14th

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

Political ecology

January 19th

- Robbins, P. (2011). Introduction and Chapter 1. *Political ecology: A critical introduction*, 2nd edition (pp. 2-24). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons. (ebook)

January 21st

- Moore, D. S. (2002). Marxism, culture, and political ecology: Environmental struggles in Zimbabwe's eastern highlands. In R. Peet & M. Watts (eds.), *Liberation ecologies: Environment, development, social movements* (pp. 125-147). London and New York: Routledge. (ebook)

January 26th

- Fischer, H. W. & Chhatre, A. (2013). Environmental citizenship, gender, and the emergence of a new conservation politics. *Geoforum*, 50, 10-19.

January 28th

- Paci, C. D. J. & Krebs, L. (2004). Local knowledge as traditional ecological knowledge: Definition and ownership. In B. Hosmer & C. O'Neill (eds.), *Native pathways: American Indian culture and economic development in the twentieth century* (pp. 261-282). Boulder: University of Colorado (ebook)

Ecological knowledge as a web of relations

February 2nd

- Green, J., Green, R. & Green, M. (2013). Haisla Nuuyum: Cultural conservation and regulation methods within traditional fishing and hunting. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society*, 2(2), 57-82.

February 4th

- Marker, M. (2006). After the Makah whale hunt: Indigenous knowledge and limits to multicultural discourse. *Urban Education*, 41(5), 1-24.

Development paradigms

February 9th

- World Bank. (2014). The World Bank: Promoting opportunity, growth, and prosperity. *World Bank Annual Report 2014* (pp. 14-28). Washington, DC: World Bank.
<http://www.worldbank.org/en/about/annual-report>
- Read one regional report from the *World Bank Annual Report*

February 11th

- Arsel, M. (2012). Between 'Marx and markets'? The state, the 'left turn' and nature in Ecuador. *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie*, 103(2), 150–163.
- Gudynas, E. (2011). *Buen vivir: Today's tomorrow*. *Development*, 54(4), 441-447.

No Class- Reading Week (February 15th-19th)

Group presentations

February 23rd-March 4th

When culture, politics, and economics collide: Extractive industries in Guatemala

March 8th

- Grandia, L. (2012). Introduction. *Enclosed: Conservation, cattle, and commerce in the Q'eqchi' Maya lowlands* (pp. 3-28). Seattle: University of Washington Press. (ebook)

March 10th

- Ybarra, M. (2013). "You cannot measure a *tzuultaq'a*": Cultural politics at the limits of liberal legibility. *Antipode*, 45(3), 584-601.

**EVENT WRITE-UP DUE

March 15th

- Einbinder, N. & Nolin, C. (2010). Voices from the edge. *Cultural Survival Quarterly*, 34(3), 28-33.
Watch *Defensora* in class (documentary)

March 17th

- Dougherty, M. L. (2011). The global gold mining industry, junior firms, and civil society resistance in Guatemala. *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, 30(4), 403-418.

The ethics of consumption

March 22nd

- Carrier, J. G. (2010). Protecting the environment the natural way: Ethical consumption and commodity fetishism. *Antipode*, 42(2), 672-689.

March 24th

- Portman, A. (2014). Mother Nature has it right: Local food advocacy and the appeal to the “natural.” *Ethics and the environment*, 19(1), 1-30.

The environment and social justice movements

March 29th

- Mares, T. M. & Peña, D. G. (2011). Environmental and food justice: Toward local, slow, and deep food systems. In A. H. Alkon & J. Agyeman (Eds.), *Cultivating food justice: Race, class, and sustainability* (pp. 197-219). Cambridge: MIT Press. (ebook)

March 31st

- Di Chiro, G. (2003). Beyond ecoliberal “common futures”: Environmental justice, toxic touring, and a transcommunal politics of place. In D. S. Moore, J. Kosek, & A. Pandian (Eds.), *Race, nature, and the politics of difference* (pp. 204-232). Durham, NC: Duke University Press (ebook)

April 5th

- Sâkhitowin Awâsis. (2014). Pipelines and resistance across Turtle Island. In T. Black, S. O’Darcy, T. Weis & J. K. Russell (Eds.), *A line in the tar sands: Struggles for environmental justice* (pp. 253-266). Toronto: BTL Books.

April 7th

- Course wrap up

****FINAL PAPER DUE**