Human-Environment Relations
GEOG*6340

Winter 2023
University of Guelph
Department of Geography, Environment and Geomatics
M 3:30-5:20p

PROVISIONAL

Instructor
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Hutt 344
Office hours: M 1:30-3:30p

Description
This course surveys key themes and schools of thought in human-environment geography. Students will explore theoretical and empirical elements of it through readings, assignments, and seminar discussions. The course will be tailored to students’ own research interests and as such the final reading and topic list will be designed collectively.

Course Objectives
Through this course, students will:
• Engage with key themes and schools of thought in human-environment geography
• Identify how different philosophical perspectives inform these schools of thought
• Examine their own research interests in relation to human-environment geography
• Enhance their writing skills
• Practice and improve facilitation skills

Assignments
• Weekly reflection posted to Courselink [20%]
  o Each week you’ll make a short post to our Courselink discussion board ahead of seminar, reflecting on the week’s readings and/or raising questions about them. The goal of this is two-fold: 1) to ensure everyone is prepared to engage in discussion during seminar itself; 2) to give everyone an overview and written record of what we found most provoking about the readings – this will be especially important in the weeks where we split the readings and some students will take-on one set of materials while some students take on another.
• Seminars
Leadership
- Depending on enrollment in the course, you will lead or co-lead 1-2 seminars (TBD) [20%]

Participation [20%]
- You will grade your own contributions to our collective endeavour. These contributions aren’t just “minutes spent talking” and include other efforts that contributed to successful discussions and community.

• AAG analysis [15%]
  - You will access a database of abstracts from the American Association of Geographers’ 2023 annual meeting and conduct a mini qualitative analysis of them to: 1) assess their relation to the schools of thought / key themes discussed in class; 2) evaluate what new categorizations / areas / themes / etc. are present.

You will write up your findings in a brief report.

• Final paper
  - Proposal [5%]
  - Paper [20%]
    - You will select a current event or topic and analyze it through one of the human-environment lenses we cover in the course.

Schedule
What follows is only a proposal – a broad but relatively shallow look at a wide variety of human-environment topics and schools of thought. The idea is that half the class would read from one topic/school of thought each week and the other half of the class would read from the other. I’ve tried to pair topics that are generative relative to one another. Your job in seminar would be to present on what you read and learned, and to raise questions, some of which I’ll be able to attempt and answer, some of which the other half of class will have an answer for based on their readings, and some of which will linger for later. Ultimately, we will collectively determine how we want to approach the schedule and the format. Items in **bold** are set in stone.

1. **Introduction**
2. **19th century European human-environment thought | Environmental determinism**
3. **Cultural landscapes**
4. **Risks/hazards geographies | Systems and resilience**
5. **Marxist and structural approaches to nature | Feminist approaches**
6. **Winter break**
7. **Political ecologies | Social constructions of nature**
8. **Indigenous perspectives | Postcolonial geography and abolition ecology**
9. **Hybrid geographies and Actor Network Theory | Animal geographies**
10. **No class – I’ll be at the AAGs. Work on your AAG analysis instead.**
11. **Critical physical geography | Digital natures**
12. **Time for writing final paper**
What you can expect from me

- To help you not only understand but get excited about the material, learning as much as possible! We're all coming from different perspectives and starting points, meaning that it is everyone's responsibility, but especially mine, to work to provide a respectful and engaging learning environment. I'm here to work with you from where you are and build up your understanding of the course content.
- To provide prompt feedback on assignments.
- To give you a sense of the flow of the semester – when the assignment load will be heavier, so that you can prepare appropriately.
- To assist in developing your critical analysis and communication skills, through our assignments.
- To advise you on other elements of grad school and/or your research.

What I expect of you

- To treat each other with respect. Our classroom is a safe space for all students, regardless of sex, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, age, sexual orientation, nationality, ability or disability. Every person is welcome here.
- To communicate with me about what you expect from the course, what you need, and your challenges.
- To put your best possible effort into this class.
University of Guelph Policy Statements

Email Communication
As per university regulations, all students are required to check their <uoguelph.ca> e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the University and its students.

When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement
When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor (or designated person, such as a teaching assistant) in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. See the Undergraduate Calendar for information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration.

Drop Date
Courses that are one semester long must be dropped by the end of the last day of classes; two-semester courses must be dropped by the last day of classes in the second semester. The regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses are available in the Undergraduate Calendar.

Copies of Out-Of-Class Assignments
Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

Accessibility
The University promotes the full participation of students who experience disabilities in their academic programs. To that end, the provision of academic accommodation is a shared responsibility between the University and the student.

When accommodations are needed, the student is required to first register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS). Documentation to substantiate the existence of a disability is required, however, interim accommodations may be possible while that process is underway.

Accommodations are available for both permanent and temporary disabilities. It should be noted that common illnesses such as a cold or the flu do not constitute a disability.

Use of the SAS Exam Centre requires students to make a booking at least 14 days in advance, and no later than November 1 (fall), March 1 (winter) or July 1 (summer). Similarly, new or changed accommodations for online quizzes, tests and exams must be approved at least a week ahead of time.
Academic Misconduct
The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students – to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection.

Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

The Academic Misconduct Policy is outlined in the Undergraduate Calendar.

Recording of Materials
Presentations which are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

Resources
The Academic Calendars are the source of information about the University of Guelph’s procedures, policies and regulations which apply to undergraduate, graduate and diploma programs.

Disclaimer
Please note that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic may necessitate a revision of the format of course offerings, changes in classroom protocols, and academic schedules. Any such changes will be announced via Courselink and/or class email.

This includes on-campus scheduling during the semester, mid-terms and final examination schedules. All University-wide decisions will be posted on the COVID-19 website (https://news.uoguelph.ca/2019-novel-coronavirus-information/) and circulated by email.
Illness
Medical notes will not normally be required for singular instances of academic consideration, although students may be required to provide supporting documentation for multiple missed assessments or when involving a large part of a course (e.g., final exam or major assignment).

COVID-19 Safety Protocols
For information on current safety protocols, follow these links:

- [https://news.uoguelph.ca/return-to-campuses/how-u-of-g-is-preparing-for-your-safe-return/](https://news.uoguelph.ca/return-to-campuses/how-u-of-g-is-preparing-for-your-safe-return/)
- [https://news.uoguelph.ca/return-to-campuses/spaces/#ClassroomSpaces](https://news.uoguelph.ca/return-to-campuses/spaces/#ClassroomSpaces)

Please note, that these guidelines may be updated as required in response to evolving University, Public Health or government directives.