

## **GEOG \*6340: ENVIRONMENT-SOCIETY RELATIONS**

Dr Anna Stanley

Winter, 2025

Thursdays 11:30-2:20pm

Hutt 248 (second floor seminar room)

Office Hrs (Hutt 347): by appointment

### **Introduction and Course Overview:**

The purpose of this course is to develop a critical understanding of environment- society relations. Through close reading of important texts (including recent works of fiction) we will engage the structural causes of environmental crises with an empirical focus this year on climate crisis. In so doing students will gain familiarity with a critical approaches to understanding environment-society relations and awareness of the origins of and potential solutions to environmental crises.

### **Objectives:**

- To develop a critical understanding of the structural causes of environmental problems, including capitalism, colonialism & white supremacy
- To gain familiarity with critical approaches to understanding environment-society relations
- To develop and improve reading and analytical skills— in particular to develop and refine the ability to read closely and critically, to concisely synthesize and deconstruct arguments, to participate and lead in-class discussion, and to learn through informed and respectful discussion with classmates.
- To read widely and gain familiarity with relevant literatures about environment-society relations and environmental crises

### **Course Format:**

We meet once a week for three hours, with a short break provided approximately half-way through. We will proceed through close reading and seminar style discussion of important texts. The purpose of our meetings will be to discuss, share, and develop our understandings of the readings, as well as to distil, and together build on the arguments and insights they contain. Our task (as a class) will be to develop a shared critical analysis of environment-society relations, with a focus this year on climate crisis. Each meeting you will be expected to attend class prepared to discuss the readings with your peers.

### **Readings:**

Readings for this course consist mainly of journal articles, book chapters and three books. Full bibliographic references for the readings are listed below. All required readings will be

made available through the Ares/course link system at least 1 week in advance. We will begin the course by reading *The End of this World* (weeks 2 &3), followed by *Ducks* (Week 4) and *Oil People* (Week 5). The University of Guelph library has an unlimited subscription (e-book) to *The End of this World*, and a limited (3 persons at a time) e-book subscription to *Ducks*. The library currently has one print copy of *Oil People*. (I have a personal copy of this book that I am willing to lend). Hardcopies of all three books, should you wish to purchase them are available from the university and co-op bookstores.

### **Assignments:**

- **Weekly reading response:** due by 8am each Thursday on course link (45%)
- **In-class participation:** throughout (30%)
  - **Includes Student presentation of articles:** weeks 8 &9 in class (2X5%)
- **De-brief presentations:** in class week 12 (10%)
- **Critical Reviews of 2 Geography Department Seminars.** (2X 7.5%=15%)

1. Weekly Written Responses (45%). These are to be turned in on course-link by 8am Thursday, and differ from week to week. Please see Weekly Written Response Guidelines document (course link Assignments Folder) for details.

2. In-class Participation (30%). We will spend most of our course meeting time discussing the readings. You are expected to come to class regularly, to have prepared the readings in advance (including completion of Written Responses), and to participate in class discussions about themes and topics pursued in the readings. In addition to actively participating in discussions, during weeks 8 &9 students will be responsible for preparing and presenting assigned readings to the group (2X5%). Presentations should focus on the content (arguments, insights and their implications) of the article and make connections to previous weeks' readings and discussions. Presentation content will be discussed further in class.

This is your class and I want you to get as much out of these meetings as possible. Please feel free to raise questions and topics for discussion, and contribute your understanding of course themes, arguments, concepts and connections during the discussion. Participation also involves listening to other people's comments, thoughtfully engaging with their views, not interrupting, and letting other people express themselves. This does not mean that it is out of bounds to challenge a colleague on their views or to disagree about how to interpret a text, but rather that you do so respectfully and politely and in a manner that helps us all learn. There is a distinction between contributing to discussion (where your comments build on others' comments, generate further discussion, and contribute overall to the class achieving a more comprehensive understanding of the readings) and making self serving or arrogant comments that embarrass others and shut down lines of communication. The purpose of

these discussions is that we learn from each other and come to a deeper understanding of the readings by reading and discussing together. In these meetings you have a responsibility to your classmates to be prepared, to actively contribute to discussions and to be courteous and respectful; you also have a right to expect the same of them.

**3. Student De-brief presentation (10%) Due in class week 12**

During our final class meeting (Week 12) students will make a brief presentation outlining the most important insights they have gained about environment society-relations and climate change. Presentations will be no longer than 10 minutes and may employ creative/and or visual aids. (power-point slides are welcome but not a requirement). The presentation should demonstrate familiarity with course themes, readings and concepts and a comprehensive, critical understanding of the structural causes of environmental problems (such as climate change). The presentation should conclude with identification of one or more relevant resource/s (fiction or not fiction/book, journal article, film etc.,) that will advance our understanding of the aspects of environment-society relations you focused on in your presentation.

**4. Critical review of 2 Departmental Seminars (15%) due by Thursday April 3.**

Students will attend and critique two departmental seminars. The seminar schedule will be posted to Course link and shared via departmental email. You are encouraged to attend all the seminars, and will complete and submit 2 'seminar worksheets' (see course link assignments folder) for any two of these seminars (2X7.5%).

**Schedule:**

**Week 1 (Jan 9): Introduction**

Readings: Course syllabus/Assignment guidelines

**Week 2 (Jan 16): '*The End of This World*': I**

Readings: *The End of this World* (chapters 1-3)

Due: Written Response 1

**Week 3 (Jan 23): ‘The End of this World’: II**

Readings: *The End of This World* (chapters 4 -7)

Due: Written Response 2

**Week 4 (Jan 30): ‘Ducks’**

Readings: ‘Ducks’ (entire book)

Due: Written Response 3

**Week 5 (Feb 6): ‘Oil People’**

Readings: ‘Oil People’ (entire book)

Due: Written Response 4

**Week 6 (Feb 13): Capitalism, Colonialism & White Supremacy: I**

Readings: Koch et al., (2019); Malm (2013); Malm & Hornborg (2014); Moor (2017); Eichen (2018)

Due: Written Response 5

**Week X: READING WEEK—NO CLASS**

**Week 7 (February 27): Capitalism Colonialism and White Supremacy II**

Readings: Whyte (2018); Todd (2022); Davis & Todd (2017); Klein (2019)

Due: Written Response 6

**Week 8 (March 6): Deep Dive: Colonialism, Capitalism & Nature**

Readings: All: Pasternak & Scott (2020); One of, as assigned: Curran et al (2020); Laduke and Cowen 2020; Scott (2020); Pasternak (2020); Benton-Conell& Cochrane (2020); Ceric 2020; Pictou (2020)

Due: Written Response 7; Article Presentation #1

**Week 9 (March 13): Deep Dive: Racial Capitalism & Nature**

Readings: All: VanSant, Milligan & Mollett (2021); Mollett (2021); One of, as assigned: Summerville (2021); Bosworth (2021); Van Sant (2021); Curley(2021); Gooding (2021); Vasudevan (2021); Wright (2021).

Due: Written Response 8; Article Presentation #2

**Week 10 (March 20): NO CLASS—TIME IN LIEU**

**Week 11 (March 27): ...And Heteropatriarchy**

Readings: Acha (2020); Rice et al., (2022); Dagget (2018)

Due: Written Response 9

**Week 12 (April 3): De-brief & Course Wrap-up**

Due: de-brief presentations; final day to submit Critical Reviews

## Required Readings:

Acha, Majandra (2020). Climate Justice Must be Anti-Patriarchal or It Will Not be Systemic In R. Santisteban ed. (2020) *Indigenous Women and Climate Change*. International Work Group For Indigenous Affairs. IndigenousWomenandClimateChangeIWGIA2020-libre.pdf. pp105-112.

Alook, Angele et al., (2023). *The End of This World: Climate Justice in So-called Canada. Between The Lines*.

Beaton, Katie. (2022). *Ducks: Two Years in the Oil Sands*. Drawn & Quarterly

Benton-Connell, Kylie & D. T. Cochrane. (2020). "Canada Has a Pipeline Problem": Valuation and Vulnerability of Extractive Infrastructure. *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 119 (2): 325–352.

Bosworth, Kai (2021). "They're treating us like Indians!": Political Ecologies of Property and Race in North American Pipeline Populism. *Antipode* 53(3): 665-685

Ceric, Irina. (2020). Beyond Contempt: Injunctions, Land Defense, and the Criminalization of Indigenous Resistance. *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 119(2):353-367

Curley, Andrew. (2021). Unsettling Indian Water Settlements: The Little Colorado River, the San Juan River, and Colonial Enclosures. *Antipode* 53(3):705-723

Curran, Deborah, Eugene Kung; Ġáġvi Marilyn Slett. (2020) Ġvi!ás and Snəwayəł: Indigenous Laws, Economies, and Relationships with Place Speaking to State Extractions. *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 119(2):215-241

Dagget, Cara. (2018). Petro-masculinity: Fossil Fuels and Authoritarian Desire. *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 47(1):25–44

Davis, Heather & Zoe Todd. (2017). On the importance of a date, or decolonizing the Anthropocene. *ACME* 16(4):761-780.

Eichen, Joshua. (2018). Cheapness and (labor-)power: The role of early modern Brazilian sugar plantations in the racializing Capitalocene. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 0(0):1–18

Goodling, Erin (2021). Urban Political Ecology from Below: Producing a “Peoples’ History” of the Portland Harbor. *Antipode* 53(3):745-769

Huebert, David. (2024). *Oil People a Novel*. Penguin Random House.

Klein, Naomi. (2019). Let them drown: The violence of othering in a warming world. In *On Fire: The Burning Case for a Green New Deal*. Knopf, Canada pp 149-168

Koch, Alexander et al., (2019). Earth system impacts of the European arrival and Great Dying in the Americas after 1492. *Quaternary Science Reviews* 207(1):13-36

LaDuke, Winona & Deborah Cowen. (2020). Beyond Wiindigo Infrastructure. *The South Atlantic Quarterly*. 119(2):243-268

Malm, Andreas. (2013). The Origins of Fossil Capital: From Water to Steam in the British Cotton Industry. *Historical Materialism* 21(1):15–68

Malm, Andreas & Alf Hornborg. (2014). The geology of mankind? A critique of the Anthropocene narrative. *The Anthropocene Review* 1(1)

Mollett, Sharlene. (2021). Hemispheric, Relational, and Intersectional Political Ecologies of Race: Centring Land-Body Entanglements in the Americas. *Antipode* 53(3):810-830

Moore, Jason. (2017). The Capitalocene, Part I: on the nature and origins of our ecological crisis. *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 44(3)

Pasternack, Shiri., & Dana Scott. (2020). Getting Back the Land: Anticolonial and Indigenous Strategies of Reclamation. *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 119(2):205-213

Pasternak, Shiri. (2020). Assimilation and Partition: How Settler Colonialism and Racial Capitalism Co-produce the Borders of Indigenous Economies. *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 119(2):301-324

Pictou, Sherry. (2020). Decolonizing Decolonization: An Indigenous Feminist Perspective on the Recognition and Rights Framework. *The South Atlantic Quarterly*. 119(2):371-391.

Rice, Jennifer, J. Long & A. Levenda. (2022). Against climate apartheid confronting the persistent legacies of expendability for climate justice. *EPE: Nature and Space* 5(2 )625-645

Scott, Dyna. (2020) Extraction Contracting: The Struggle for Control of Indigenous Lands. *The South Atlantic Quarterly*. 119(2):269-299

Sommerville, Melanie. (2021). Naturalising Finance, Financializing Natives: Indigeneity, Race, and “Responsible” Agricultural Investment in Canada. *Antipode* 53(3):643-664

Tood, Zoe. (2022). Fossil Fuels and Fossil Kin: An Environmental Kin Study of Weaponised Fossil Kin and Alberta’s So-Called “Energy Resources Heritage. *Antipode* 0(0): 1–25

Van Sant, Levi., Richard Milligan & Sharlene Mollette. (2021). Political Ecologies of Race: Settler Colonialism and Environmental Racism in the United States and Canada. *Antipode* 53(3):649-642

Van Sant, Levi. (2021). “The long-time requirements of the nation”: The US Cooperative Soil Survey and the Political Ecologies of Improvement. *Antipode* 53(3):686-704

Vasudevan, Pavithra. (2021). An Intimate Inventory of Race and Waste. *Antipode* 53(3): 770-790

Whyte, Kyle. (2018). Indigenous science (fiction) for the Anthropocene: Ancestral dystopias and fantasies of climate change crises. *Environment and Planning E: Nature and Space*. 1(1–2):224–242.

Wright, Willie Jamaal. (2021). As Above, So Below: Anti-Black Violence as Environmental Racism. *Antipode* 53(3):791-809

### **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. The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Graduate Calendar:

<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/general-regulations/academic-misconduct/>

If you are confused about how to attribute sources (or have any other questions related to referencing or plagiarism), please feel free to see me for assistance. For tips and resources on referencing and writing, see:

<https://www.lib.uoguelph.ca/writing-studying/writing-resources-workshops/citation-bibliography-resources-style-guides/>

## **Standard Course/Department Policies**

### E-mail 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. \*Please also check Course link regularly, as this will be used to distribute course materials.

### 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 instructor in writing (by email) as soon as possible. See the graduate calendar for information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration:

<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/general-regulations/grounds-academic-consideration/>

### Drop Date

The last date to drop one-semester courses, without academic penalty, is **November 29, 2024**. Refer to the Graduate Calendar for the schedule of dates.

### 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 of Guelph is committed to creating a barrier-free environment. Providing services for students is a shared responsibility among students, faculty and administrators. This relationship is based on respect of individual rights, the dignity of the individual and the University community's shared commitment to an open and supportive learning environment. Students requiring service or accommodation, whether due to an identified,

ongoing disability or a short-term disability should contact Student Accessibility Services as soon as possible.

For more information, contact SAS at 519-824-4120 ext. 56208 or see the website:

<https://wellness.uoguelph.ca/accessibility/>

### Recording of Materials

Presentations which are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded in any electronic media without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate or guest lecturer.

### Resources

The Graduate Calendar is the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations which apply to graduate programs:

<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/>

Most importantly, if you have any questions or concerns, please let the instructor know!