

UNIV*1200*24: The Social Life of Garbage

Instructor: Dr. Kate Parizeau
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Class meetings: Mon/Wed 2:30-3:50pm (MCKN 313)
Office hours: **TBD** and by appointment (HUTT 343)

Course Description:

Garbage can tell us a lot about society: what we value economically, how we organize our interactions with the environment, and what we culturally push out-of-sight and out-of-mind. This course will discuss the broader social context of waste in North America: Why do we waste so much? Who decides how our waste is managed, and what influences those decisions? Does 'waste' mean the same thing to everyone? Why are some people affected by waste and related pollution more than others? What can we do to prevent waste in our everyday lives? Themes of the course include how consumer culture encourages widespread waste; citizen activism as a key driver of waste policy; and the diverse afterlives of waste in our environments, our bodies, and our society.

Course Learning Objectives:

- Demonstrate familiarity with assigned readings on waste and its management through class participation and written assignments;
- Describe the social factors that influence waste generation through class participation and written assignments;
- Identify the 'problematique' at the core of diverse waste management policies through class participation and written assignments;
- Apply ethical reasoning to the resolution of social and environmental justice quandaries associated with waste management practices through class participation, written assignments, and a group presentation;
- Develop teamwork and oral communication skills through the preparation and delivery of an interactive one-hour group presentation on a topic chosen in consultation with the instructor;
- Identify, synthesize and evaluate diverse sources of knowledge and topics of debate relevant to waste management through written assignments and a group presentation;
- Synthesize course themes and secondary research into an argument-based research paper on a topic chosen in consultation with the instructor.

Class Format:

This course will be conducted as a seminar. I will provide a contextual overview of the weekly topics at the beginning of each class, but most of our class time will be dedicated to discussion. This class will also involve field trips to local waste management sites. All students are expected to have completed the assigned readings before the class meetings, and to come prepared with observations, reflections, and questions from the readings. Student participation will be assessed through multiple means, including written reflections, class participation, and the completion of class activities. The assignments and term paper will assume knowledge gained from both the text and the lectures, so class attendance is highly recommended. We will be using Courselink as an electronic resource for announcements, accessing course materials, and submitting assignments.

Evaluation:

Assignment or Test	Due Date	Contribution to Final Mark (%)
Academic reflection on Field Trip #1	Week 5	10%
Case study: place-based elaboration of one of the weekly topics (Weeks 2-9)	Week after the in-class discussion of chosen topic	15%
Research paper proposal	Week 7	Pass/ Fail
Group presentation related to Week's topic (Weeks 10-12)	Weeks 10-12	20%
Research paper on topic of student's choice	Week 13	25%
Class participation	N/A	30%

Late work will be penalized 5% per day that it is overdue. I am open to granting extensions: please come and speak with me well in advance of deadlines for accommodations.

Readings and Course Schedule:

The readings for this course consist of peer-reviewed academic articles that are available in the University of Guelph library system, as well as relevant readings from the media and civil society (which will be posted as the course progresses to ensure that the content is contemporary). Access to these readings is available through Courselink.

Week	Date	Topic	Readings
1	Jan. 7, 9	Overview of waste generation and management trends in North America	M: TBD W: TBD
2	Jan. 14, 16	Histories of waste facility siting and environmental justice	M: TBD W: TBD
3	Jan. 21, 23	Tracking our waste: where does it come from, where does it go?	M: TBD W: TBD
4	Jan. 28, 30	Local waste management systems; Field trip: Guelph Waste Resource Innovation Centre	M: TBD W: TBD
5	Feb. 4, 6	The myths of the 3Rs	M: TBD W: TBD
6	Feb. 11, 13	Consumer culture and waste: plastics and planned obsolescence	M: TBD W: TBD
READING WEEK: No classes Feb. 18-22			
7	Feb. 25, 27	Food waste and food rescue; Field trip: local food rescue organization	M: TBD W: TBD
8	Mar. 4, 6	The urban governance of informal recycling in high-income countries	M: TBD W: TBD
9	Mar. 11, 13	Technological innovation for waste management; group presentations	M: TBD W: TBD
10	Mar. 18, 20	Waste trends in low- and middle-income countries; group presentations	M: TBD W: TBD
11	Mar. 25, 27	Social movements to address waste and consumption; group presentations	M: TBD W: TBD
12	Apr. 1,3	Conclusions, synthesis, ideas for future actions	M: TBD W: TBD

University of Guelph Policies and Practices

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.

I check my e-mail every weekday, and at least once on the weekends. Expect that I will respond to your e-mails within 48 hours; if I do not, please resend your e-mail. If your question or concern is complicated, I may ask that we meet during office hours or at another scheduled time to address the issue in person. To ensure that your e-mail reaches my inbox, be sure to use a University of Guelph e-mail address. Include the course code and the nature of your question/comment in the subject line of the e-mail.

Drop Date:

The last date to drop one-semester courses, without academic penalty, is the 40th class day (**Friday March 8th, 2019**). Please see the Schedule of Dates in the Undergraduate Calendar. For regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses, see the Undergraduate Calendar.

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 (SAS) as soon as possible. For more information, contact SAS at 519-824-4120 ext. 56208 or visit the [SAS website](#).

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 in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. See the Undergraduate Calendar for information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration.

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.

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 detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar.

Turnitin:

In this course, your instructor will be using Turnitin, integrated with the CourseLink Dropbox tool, to detect possible plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration or copying as part of the ongoing efforts to maintain academic integrity at the University of Guelph. All submitted assignments will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com site.

A major benefit of using Turnitin is that students will be able to educate and empower themselves in preventing academic misconduct. In this course, you may screen your own assignments through Turnitin as many times as you wish before the due date. You will be able to see and print reports that show you exactly where you have properly and improperly referenced the outside sources and materials in your assignment.

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 [Undergraduate Calendars](#) are the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations which apply to undergraduate, graduate and diploma programs.

Additional Student Resources:

If you are concerned about any aspect of your academic program: make an appointment with a Program Counsellor in your degree program. If you are struggling to succeed academically: There are numerous academic resources offered by the Learning Commons including, Supported Learning Groups for a variety of courses, workshops related to time management, taking multiple choice exams, and general study skills. You can also set up individualized appointments with a [learning specialist](#).

If you are struggling with personal or health issues:

- [Counselling services](#) offers individualized appointments to help students work through personal struggles that may be impacting their academic performance.
- [Student Health Services](#) is located on campus and is available to provide medical attention.