

Contact Time	Two weekly 1.5 hour sessions per week
Format	Lectures, exercises, discussion based on key texts and case studies, podcasts, videos.
Class Assessment	(1) Participation (weekly attendance and check-in submissions): 25% (2) Active journal (weekly exercises, best 10/11): 25% (3) Critical Case Study (proposal and research paper): 50%

COURSE OVERVIEW

"We need acts of restoration, not only for polluted waters and degraded lands, but also for our relationship to the world" – Robin Wall Kimmerer. This course explores the entanglements of environments and societies, focusing on critical geographies of the Anthropocene. Drawing from several streams of human and historical geography, this course invites you to think critically and creatively about some very deeply ingrained assumptions concerning nature and the environment as they appear in social, political, cultural, and ethical debate. The theoretical material to be covered in the course is challenging, and students will be expected to read widely and critically. Theory will be related to 'real world' environment-society problems and solutions, for instance: the unequal geographies of pollution and (un)natural disasters; colonial cultures of 'nature' exploration and collection; and the problems of environmental 'fixes' like de-extinction and carbon offsetting. The course will build towards a substantive independent research paper, where students will follow their own ethical, political, and geographical curiosities to apply course themes and theories to an environment-society case study of their choice.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Exercise a critical and historical understanding of key geographical concepts related to nature and environment.
- Apply skills to evaluate the social and political relationships that structure these concepts.
- Explore and challenge the ways that 'taken for granted' understandings of nature shape our world.
- Build independent critical research skills by applying course concepts to historical and contemporary case studies.

COURSE TOPICS

Topics may include (but are not limited to): Environmental injustice; Historical geographies of nature and governance; The trouble with wilderness; (Un)Natural disasters; Ecofeminism; Social construction; Ecological grief, doom, and hope; (De-)Extinction; Urban natures; Green capitalism; Waste flows.

COURSE READINGS

There is no textbook for this course, but assigned readings will be drawn from diverse scholarship in human geography, political ecology, environmental history, and beyond. These are subject to change, but may include sources such as (citations abridged):

Belcourt, B. (2015). Animal Bodies, Colonial Subjects: (Re)Locating Animality in Decolonial Thought. *Societies*, 5.

Collard et al. (2013). Life for sale? The politics of lively commodities. *Environment and Planning A*, 45.

Fevrier, K. (2022). Informal Waste Recycling Economies in the Global South and the Chimera of Green Capitalism. *Antipode*, 54 (4).

Fletcher, M-S. et al (2021). Indigenous knowledge and the shackles of wilderness. *PNAS*, 118 (40).

Jerolmack, C. (2008). How Pigeons Became Rats: The Cultural-Spatial Logic of Problem Animals. *Social Problems*, 55 (1).

Liboiron, M. (2021). *Pollution is Colonialism*. Duke University Press.

Moore, J. (2016). *Anthropocene or Capitalocene? Nature, History, and The Crisis of Capitalism*. PM Press.

Nixon, R. (2011). *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*. Harvard University Press.

Sandlos, R. & Keeling, A. (2016). Toxic Legacies, Slow Violence, and Environmental Injustice at Giant Mine... *The Northern Review*, 42.

Waldron, I. (2018). *There's Something in The Water: Environmental Racism in Indigenous & Black Communities*. Fernwood Publishing.