GEOG 431 Culture and Natural Resource Management

Fall Semester 2014

Dr. Martha Geores, instructor

Class time and place: MW 12-1:15, Tydings 1114

Office hours: Monday and Thursday 2-3; and by appointment

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**Course Syllabus**

­Purpose and Goals -

Culture and Natural Resource Management is an upper level geography course taught within the framework of Political Ecology. Political ecology focuses on a critical examination of the relationship of people and institutions to natural resources. One consistent theme of the study of political ecology is an emphasis on justice in the resource use pattern. To come to any conclusion of what is just in certain cases you must understand natural resources and the cultures of all relevant stakeholders and how they relate to each other on multiple scales.

Goal:

The goal of the course is to enable you to evaluate critically natural resource management patterns.

Learning Outcomes:

1. To learn to define natural resources in a social, cultural, and political context.
2. To understand the impact of the spatial distribution of natural resources.
3. To understand the role of scale in natural resource management.
4. To be able to critically evaluate natural resource use.
5. To identify the role of conflict in making natural resource management decisions.
6. To understand the concept of resource ownership as a fluid concept along a continuum from private ownership to public ownership.
7. To formulate a framework for evaluating environmental justice in natural resource management.

­Accommodations, university rules, and classroom rules

Students are expected to **attend** every class and **complete all assigned work**.

If you have **disabilities**, learning or otherwise, you should visit the Disability Support Office to fill out appropriate forms that will tell me what accommodations to make. I will make every effort to accommodate students who are registered with the Disability Support Services (DSS) Office and who provide me with a University of Maryland DSS Accommodation form which has been updated for the Fall 2011 semester. This form must be presented to me no later than October 1, 2011. I am not able to accommodate students who are not registered with DSS or who do not provide me with documentation which has been reviewed by DSS after October 1, 2011.

Campus Senate policy requires students who are **absent due to illness/injury** to furnish

Documentation, which only needs to be a doctor’s note when the absence is for a major graded event. You must provide written documentation verifying your illness/injury immediately upon your return to class. You will not be allowed to turn in missed assignments or make up quizzes, tests, papers, etc. if you have not provided this documentation. Documentation not presented to me in a timely manner will not be accepted. In addition, if it is found that you have falsified the documentation provided, I will refer you to the University’s Student Conduct Office. It is also the University Policy that if you are sick stay home.

An effort has been made to avoid scheduling tests of assignments on religious holidays, however, if you have a religious conflict with any due date you must make a written request for a make-up exam contact me by September 15, 2011, students request for a make up exam in writing. Please refer to the Online Undergraduate Catalog Policy on Religious Observance.”

Academic honesty

**Plagiarism** is the use of another person’s work as if it was your own and will not be tolerated. If University rules require that any cases of suspected plagiarism be referred to the Student Conduct Office. On each assignment you must write and sign the **honor pledge**. “I have neither given nor received any unauthorized help on this assignment.”

University rule on completion of work

The University requires that all work must be **completed** in order for you to pass the course.

Classroom rules

This is an upper level class and I expect that there will be no classroom decorum issues, however, just in case, you should know my policy. **Cell phones, pagers, instant messaging, IPODS, Blackberries, alarm clocks … must** all be in their **off** positions. These devices are annoying, rude and make me lose my train of thought – and you don’t want to do that! If a cell phone rings or pager rings …., I will ask you to leave class for the day.

Many of the issues we will be discussing are **“politically charged.”** All views are welcome and should be freely expressed; that is what classroom discussion is all about. Voicing different opinions is part of class participation, and please, do not be silent if you have a view or an opinion that will challenge others. There are no right or wrong answers.

Students are expected to treat each other with respect. Disruptive behavior of any kind will not be tolerated. Students who are unable to show civility with one another, the teaching assistants, or myself will be subject to being referred to the Office of Student Conduct or to Campus Police. You are expected to adhere to the Code of Student Conduct.

**Speak up**! I’m deaf, no kidding. I have also found that when I can’t hear there are others in the class who also cannot hear because you speak too softly, mumble, cover your mouth, and/or do not face the class when you talk. If I cannot hear you and have to ask you to repeat what you are saying on two occasions I will not call on you again.

**No Final Exam**

# Course Requirements

# This upper level course requires substantial reading, writing and class participation. There will be readings assigned and students will be asked to present the readings, while others will bring in current examples and fun facts.

Evaluation criteria:

Each assignment will be evaluated based on an understanding of the question, knowledge of the course materials, a critical analysis of the materials as they apply to the question, and a defendable answer to the question.

With the exception of the capstone project all of the completed assignments will be posted on Elms.

# Assignments:

1. A reading journal. Each week a question will be posed that you should answer based on the readings. The length of the answer will be included in the assignment and will vary according to the readings.
2. Class participation – 25% attendance, 75% contributions to discussion
3. An essay on the role of scale in conflicts over natural resource management.
4. A book review of one of the books on the approved book list
5. A midterm exam
6. A capstone project. The subject of the capstone project is The Political Ecology of Rivers. The 4 rivers used for case studies are the Mississippi, the Danube, Mekong, and Nile. The capstone project will be explained more during the semester, however you will work in teams to address a natural resource management issue. In addition to the group product, you will have the opportunity to submit your own paper on the topic.
7. A final exam

# Books

Required:

Robbins,P. 2004 ­Political Ecology: Critical Introductions to Geography. (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing) ISBN 978-1-4051-0266-7.

Peet, R. et als (editors) 2011. Global Political Ecology (NY: Routledge) ISBN978-0-415-54815-1

Lyon, Coffee and Community: Maya Farmers and Fair Trade Markets (Denver: University of Colorado Press) ISBN 978-1-6-0732057-9

On line articles from Course Reserves section of Blackboard class site.

Videos – some will be shown in class and others must be viewed via the Elms site.

For **Grading** purposes the course is worth 1065 Points.

**Midterm** = 175 points

**Scale essay** 100 point

**Book review** 125 points

**Capstone Project 500 points**

**Class participation**= 100 points, 25 based on attendance and 75 for contributions in the discussion. Contribution may take the form of volunteering to be prepared for questions in class.

**Reading Journal** 150 points Each of you is expected to keep a class journal. In this journal you will answer the questions posed on the syllabus based upon the readings assigned for that day. Writing in this journal will help you clarify your thoughts about the readings before coming to class. Journal entries must be posted by 11:55pm on the day they are due.

The syllabus and assignments are on Elms.

**OUTLINE OF THE COURSE**

**I. Introduction to the course**

September 3

Introductions:

Discussion on 3 favorite natural resources

Video

# **Josh Fox on Gasland Part 2, the Fracking-Earthquake Link & the Natural Gas Industry's Use of Psyops**

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LhIPMTTyEVIDiscussion

Sept 8. Introduction to Scale

**Global warming bringing tensions in Arctic region, a special report** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6uJAa0ZjDRk>

**II. Political Ecology**

Sept. 10 The strengths of political ecology as a lens

Robbins Chapter 1 and 2

Sept 12 Peet et als, pages 23-47”Global Nature”

Reading journal: Write 3 paragraphs on whether political ecology will help answer the environmental questions facing us.

Sept. 15 The basics of political ecology and natural resource management

Robbins Chapter 4 pages

Chapter 11

Sept 17 Political Ecology in actual situations.

Peet et al, chapter 9: Johnson, “Climate change and the risk industry” pages 185-202

Chapter 10: Bumpus and Liverman “Carbon Colonialism” pages 203-224

**Reading journal: Write 4 paragraphs on whether you think that political ecology would be more effective if it was value neutral. Post 9/21 at 11:30 pm**

**III Scale**

Sept 22, Focusing the issues: scale and conflict, D. W., W. Adger, F. Berkes, P. Garden, L. Lebel, P. Olsson, L. Pritchard, and O. Young. 2006. Scale and cross-scale dynamics: governance and information in a multilevel world. *Ecology and Society* **11**(2): 8.

[online] URL: <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol11/iss2/art8/>

Sept 24 Interlude, Capstone Project, taking stock of where we are.

**Scale Essay**

Scale is one of the most important concepts in geography and in natural resource management. Nothing exists in just one scale; scales are interlocking and intersecting and scale is an active concept, as is the framing of natural resources and their management. There are different types of scales: temporal, cartographic, observational and operative, to name a few. Culture is also an active concept that can be observed on many scales. Managing natural resources is highly scale dependent. In addition to considering scale, you must consider that all actions and relationships are recursive.

At the beginning of the semester, you watched a video on fracking in North America and the opening of the Northwest Passage in the Arctic Region. Each situation has more scale issues than one can count. For this essay, chose one of the topics and pick out 4 scale issues. In your essay, you should not just identify them; you should show how they complicate the situation. Analyze your chosen situation using scale factors.

The essay should be 7 double spaced pages, 12 point type.Post by 9/28 at 11:30 pm.

**IV. Studying Natural Resource Management**

Sept. 29 Robbins, Chapter 3 The Critical Tools , Chapter 9 Environmental Conflict,

In our own Backyard

October 1 Examples of conflicts presented by students

Oct 6 Capstone discussion

**Examining ownership**

Degrees of ownership

October 8 Schlager and Ostrom, Property Rights Regimes and Natural Resources ( in file folder)

Pacheco, P., and Pacheco, D. 2004. The Commons in an Age of Global Transition: Challenges, Risks and Opportunities, the Tenth Biennial Conference of the International Association for the Study of Common Property. Oaxaca, Mexico.

October 13 Peet, Chapter 4, Mansfield, “Modern” industrial fisheries and the crisis of over-fishing.

Robbins, Chapter 8,

Video: Lighting the Seventh Fire, on Elms

**Reading journal: Write 5 paragraphs on why the controversy in Mansfield’s article is similar to the controversy in “Lighting the Seventh Fire” Post by 10/13 at 11:55**

**October 15 In Class Midterm**

October 20 and 22 Merging Agriculture, Environmentalism, and Development COFFEE

Lyon, Coffee and Community Chapter 1, Introduction

Chapter 2 Historical Convergence of Local Livelihoods, the Global Economy, and International Politics.

Peet et als Chapter 8: Eden, “The politics of certification: consumer knowledge, power, and global governance”

“Buyer be fair   [videorecording] : the promise of product certification” /   a documentary by Fox Wilmar Productions in association with American University Center for Environmental Filmmaking ; producer, Hana Jindrova ; director/writer, John De Graaf.  … c2006. HF1413 .B89 2006. On elms

**Reading journal: Write 5 paragraphs relating your own knowledge about fair trade products and how these readings expand the way you will look at labels.Post by 10/22 at 11:55 pm**

October 27 Capstone discussion

October 29 – Agriculture as Development

Lyon, Chapter 3 “Trade not Aid”

In class exercise, exploring coffee.

**Book reviews due 10/31 by 11:55 pm**

Nov. 3 Community Management

Coffee:Lyon, Chapter 4 “Obligatory burdens”

Chapter 5 “The political economy of Organic and Shade-grown coffee certification”

Peet Chapter 12: Peluso and Vandergeest, “Taking the jungle out of the forest”

Nov. 5 Power in community

Lyon, Chapter 6, “Managing the Maya: Power in the Fair-Trade Market”

**Reading Journal: Write 5 paragraphs on why Fair-Trade coffee will never be a vehicle for economic development. Post Nov 9 by 11:55p,**

Nov 10 Chapter 7 “Marketing the Maya”

Chapter 8 “Conclusion: A Fairer Future”

Nov 12 Robbins, Chapter 8

**Reading journal: Write 5 paragraphs on what it is about the Maya culture that allows them to work collectively. Post 11/12 by 11:55**

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**Nov 17 -26 Capstone work**

**Dec 1, 3, 8, 10 Presentations**

**Individual papers due 12/19 at noon**

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**Course Evaluations**

Fall 2011 courses between Tuesday, November 29, and Wednesday, December 14.

Students can go directly to the website ([www.courseevalum.umd.edu](http://www.courseevalum.umd.edu)) to

complete their evaluations. You will be alerted about these dates and provided more information closer to that time, andstudents will be alerted via their official University e-mail account.

Students who complete evaluations for all of their courses in the

previous semester (excluding summer), can access the posted results via

Testudo's CourseEvalUM Reporting link for any course on campus that has

at least a 70% response rate.