

Geography 2450f

Introduction to Resource and Environmental Management

Fall 2014

Instructor: Dr. L. Graham Smith
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Meetings:

Mondays: 3:30pm - 5:30pm WL 258 and
Wednesdays: 10:30 am - 11:30am UCC 61 **or**
Wednesdays: 11:30 am - 12:30pm SSC 3010

Calendar Description:

A geographical introduction to natural resources and their management, the juxtaposition of global and Canadian resources and environmental conditions and the human management response.

Prerequisite(s): 1.0 course from [Geography 1100](#), [1300A/B](#), [1400F/G](#), [1500F/G](#), [2131A/B](#), [2153A/B](#) (taken after September 2012), or the former Geography 020E or [Economics 1021A/B](#) and [1022A/B](#), or [Economics 1020](#).

Scope:

In the mid-1980s, **sustainability** emerged as an integrative paradigm and strategic response to global changes in environment, economy and society. The concept has endured but not without considerable debate regarding its utility, defining ideology and requirements for implementation. In the meantime, **globalization** has replaced the Cold War as the defining international system, providing an integration of information, capital and technology that has irrevocably transformed environment, economy and society for the new millennium.

In discussing resource management, this course focusses on the interaction between environment, economy and society, and examines the prospects for **sustainable globalization**. The philosophy advocated in the course challenges individuals and communities alike to be accountable take responsibility and implement a new social vision for integrity as a transformative shift to a globally sustainable future.

Its vision is practical, not theoretical. It provides hope for the future based on a spirit of optimism, renewed spirituality and an understanding of the information age, compassionate capitalism, abundance mentality, individual empowerment and the facilitation of community stewardship.

Thus, the course focuses upon understanding:

- the changing nature of resources, their quantity and quality due to technological advancement
- the human dynamics involved in the development and management of resources
- globalization as the dominant process affecting environment, economy and society

Required Texts:

Lomborg, B. (2001)

The Sceptical Environmentalist: Measuring the Real State of the World Cambridge University Press: Cambridge

Paul, R. And L. Elder (2006)

The Miniature Guide to Critical Thinking. Foundation for Critical Thinking: CA

Ridley, M. (2010)

The Rational Optimist: How Prosperity Evolves. Harper: New York.

Internet Sources:

Websites that reflect the alternative, dynamist perspective covered in the course include:

- [ecomylths](#)
- [Rational Optimist](#)
- [reason](#)
- [spiked](#)
- [Questions and Observations](#)
- [Samizdata](#)
- [Climate Resistance](#)
- [The Divergence Imperative](#)

These sites are not intended to be definitive but, rather, to stimulate and encourage you to develop and expand your own personal bookmarks beyond this listing.

Structure and Evaluation:

A central focus of the course is **inquiry-based learning**, an educational paradigm which focuses upon problem-based learning and active learning. To facilitate these learning styles, the course adopts a highly interactive structure with a large component of small-group interaction and workshop exercises. Emphasis is placed upon the development of skills (e.g. oral and written presentations, awareness, problem-solving, dispute resolution, and group interaction) as well as

the specific content of the subject matter. The course structure is specifically intended to facilitate **independent learning**. Structured feedback is provided for each class session in response to two central issues:

- What did I learn today?
- What questions do I have?

Grading in the course is based on five components:

○ Concept Map: Resources Management: 10%: Due: September 29, 2014

- What is your concept of resource management?
- When someone uses the phrase "resource management" what does it imply to you?
- What constructs are imbedded in your understanding of "resource management"?
- Why?

Students are required to graphically organize their conception of resource management and its components into either a concept map or a mind map. Submissions should be in **jpeg, gif** or **pdf** file formats and should be submitted directly within Owl. Students must use their assigned **UWO email account**. Computer software may be used in the development of the concept map and links for both VUE and Cmap are included within Owl for Geography 2450.

○ Discussion Paper 1: Defining Resources: 20%: Due: October 20, 2014

The discussion paper should be a **maximum of 5 typed pages of text**. Your text need not be referenced on a proposition by exposition basis, but the paper must have a bibliography of sources used in its preparation. It is expected that you will utilise the recommended readings and internet sources as a comparative basis for other readings, journal articles and texts. However, the emphasis in the paper should not be on the reiteration of any one source but on the contemplation, consideration and discussion of the value of its ideas in regards to your own thinking.

Choose one topic from the following list:

- Discuss the contention that there are no inherent limits to growth.
- People often perceive scientific assumptions to be absolute truths when in reality they are illusions accepted as truths. Discuss this proposition with respect to the role of information in the achievement of sustainability.
- Wealth is green. Wealth, not poverty, supplies the means to conserve wilderness. Discuss.

○ Discussion Paper 2: Green Governance: 20%: Due: November 17, 2014

The discussion paper should be a **maximum of 5 typed pages of text**. Your text need not be referenced on a proposition by exposition basis, but the paper must have a bibliography of sources used in its preparation. It is expected that you will utilise the recommended readings and internet sources as a comparative basis for other readings, journal articles and texts. However, the emphasis in the paper should not be on the reiteration of any one source but on the contemplation, consideration and discussion of the value of its ideas in regards to your own thinking.

Choose one topic from the following list:

- Globalization is predicated upon the democratization of knowledge, investment and communication. How do these three democratizations influence the prospects for sustainability?
- Capitalism is the only solution to effective, long-term resource management. Discuss.
- Delineate the key characteristics of sustainability from the perspective of dynamic change and individual responsibility. How is this vision of sustainability distinct from the perspective of control, collectivism and central governance?

○ **Final Examination, 50%:**

- Held after the completion of the course, the final exam covers all materials introduced during the term, including your own concept map or mind map.
- The exam features an essay format and its structure focuses on creative thinking and critical awareness developed through the course.
- The exam is **open book**: you are free to utilise any and all readings as you wish during the exam. The emphasis is on your understand of material, not your memorization of it.
- Scheduled during the examination period **December 6-17, 2014**

Caveats:

- The professor reserves the right **not to grade** any material submitted after its due date without his prior approval.
- The course is specifically designed to provoke participants to question, assess and formulate their thinking, beliefs, ideology and/or philosophy: a premium is placed on the development of thought rather than a reliance upon pre-existing opinion. However, it is not a requirement of the course that students agree with, or subscribe to, the beliefs, ideology and/or philosophy of the professor.

A statement on Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Students in geography are expected to conduct themselves in a polite and civil manner. Students are reminded of the University Code of Conduct for Students: <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/board/code.pdf>

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Support Services

Registrarial Services: <http://www3.registrar.uwo.ca/index.cfm>

Student Development Services: <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf

Downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC): <https://studentservices.uwo.ca> under the Medical Documentation heading

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department.

Mental Health Website

If you or someone you know is experiencing distress, there are several resources here at Western to assist you. Please visit <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for more information on these resources and on mental health.