

## **GEOG 3441G: Conservation and Development**

### **Course Outline – Winter 2019**

#### **1. Course Information**

##### 1.1. Classroom Location:

Wednesdays, 12:30-2:30pm, room: SSC 3018

Thursdays, 1:30-2:30pm, room: SSC 3006

##### 1.2. Contact Information:

Instructor: Dr. Tony Weis

Office: SSC 1413

Office Hours: Thursdays 2:30-3:30pm or by appointment

Phone: 661-21411 x87472

Email: [tony.weis@uwo.ca](mailto:tony.weis@uwo.ca)

#### **2. Calendar Description**

##### 2.1. Course Description

Examines struggles between conservation and economic development in a North-South context, setting the transformation of natural ecosystems and impoverishment of biodiversity in a political economic context that includes disparities in wealth, consumption, and 'ecological footprints'.

Prerequisites: Third or fourth year status at the University. Two full courses in Geography or equivalent, or enrolment in the Minor in Environment and Culture, in any of the Global Development Studies modules, or permission of the instructor.

##### 2.2. Senate Regulations

Senate Regulations state, “unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you will be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.”

#### **3. Overview**

This course examines struggles over conservation and development in a global context, in relation to the vast and growing inequalities in wealth, power, and resource consumption that exist within and between countries. A basic premise is that efforts to conserve healthy environmental conditions for humans and for other species – including significant space for relatively self-organizing ecosystems – cannot be understood in an historic or political economic vacuum; that is, without attention to the unevenness of development. There is some attention to the colonial roots of the modern world system approaches to conservation, but the primary focus is on the

dramatic economic growth and intensifying global market integration since the Second World War.

A central aim is to provide a foundation for assessing pivotal political economic processes (and associated ways of conceiving 'development') that have driven the relentless transformation of self-organizing ecosystems and the loss of biodiversity. Another core aim is to critically examine the wide variety of responses that fall under the broad banner of environmentalism, and why much of what gets defined as conservation has been critiqued by social movements, organizations, and scholars, who are arguing – and struggling – for more fundamental changes. Particular emphasis here on the environmental justice movement, or what some have called the 'environmentalism of the poor.' In the end, the course seeks to provide a basis for analyzing urgent environmental problems and thinking constructively about what socially just forms of environmentalism could entail. While the array of contemporary environmentalisms might be broadly seen to reflect a 'reform' (working within the status quo) versus 'radical' (working to challenge it) binary, the course also seeks to spark thinking about ways they might intersect.

#### **4. Format**

3 lecture hours per week. You are expected to regularly attend class and keep up with assigned weekly chapters. I will follow the thematic and reading outline, subject to some flexibility with notice. Evaluation is based on a research paper, a mid-term test, and final exam.

#### **5. Learning Outcomes**

By the end of the course, students should:

- be able to understand and explain how pressing environmental challenges and relate to large and growing disparities in wealth and power;
- be able to critically engage with contemporary debates, conflicts, and policy issues surrounding biodiversity, conservation, and environmental justice;
- have a conceptual basis for further studies in subjects relating to political ecology and development studies;
- have advanced their analytical and communication skills;
- be inspired to think about global environmental and development problems in new ways.

#### **6. Readings**

Available via OWL.

## 7. Schedule

Date	Topic
Jan 9-10	Conserving what? The 'Great Acceleration' and Slow Violence
Jan 16-17	
Jan 23-24	What is development?
Jan 30-31	
Feb 6-7	A Golden Age? The post-war economic boom and the rise of modern environmentalism(s)
Feb 13-14	
Feb 18-22	<b>READING BREAK</b>
Feb 27-28	<b>Mid-term test – Feb 27</b>
Mar 6-7	Neoliberalism and the rise of market-based conservation
Mar 13-14	
Mar 20-21	Ocean conservation
Mar 27-28	De-growth, just transitions, and radical alternatives
Apr 3-4	
Apr 10	Study day
<b>Apr. 11.30</b>	<b>EXAM PERIOD</b>

## 8. Evaluation

Evaluation Components	Percentage of Course Grade	Assignment Schedule
Problem identification	10%	Thur. Feb 14
Mid-term test	20%	Wed. Feb. 27
Final paper	40%	Thur. Mar. 28
Final exam	30%	between Apr. 11-30

### Midterm test (20%) and Final Exam (30%)

The midterm test (Wed., Feb. 27) is a combination of short answer and paragraph questions. The format of the final exam (during the exam period in April) will be similar to the mid-term, along with an essay question that demands more integrative thinking between units. Students are responsible for material covered in the lectures as well as the assigned readings. More detailed instructions will be given in advance.

## **Research Paper (50%)**

### Problem identification (10%)

**ROUTE 1:** Consider both the IUCN Red List and Conservation International's Biodiversity Hotspots, and select EITHER a MAMMAL that is critically endangered, endangered, or vulnerable OR a HOTSPOT that especially interests you.

**ROUTE 2:** Visit the Environmental Justice Atlas and select a struggle that especially interests you (you are not limited to these, but this is a great starting point).

For the problem identification, find three relevant academic journal articles and write a concise summary on the scientific basis of the problem you have identified.

LENGTH: For individuals, draw on at least 3 academic articles no more than 250 words or ~1 double-spaced page (plus bibliography); for pairs, draw on *at least* 5 sources and no more than 400 words (plus bibliography).

### Research paper (40%)

Your paper should critically examine the major roots of the conservation challenge or environmental justice struggle you have identified (i.e. what are the key forces driving the deterioration of environmental conditions?) as a basis for understanding the prospects for conservation and/or the pursuit of environmental justice.

It should be guided by a central argument. For this, think about whether your research leaves you hopeful about possibilities, pessimistic about the barriers to change, or somewhere in between, and why.

Your research should involve additional academic sources beyond the ones used in the 'problem identification' (minimum of 3, but ideally more). Academic sources are refereed journal articles, book chapters, or books – not short articles found on the Internet.

The paper will be evaluated based on the quality of the introduction, clarity of the thesis, analysis (i.e. support provided for your argument), style (organization, grammar, and concision of writing), and conclusions. More detail on the assignment is provided on OWL.

LENGTH: For individuals, roughly but not more than 2500 words (~10 pages); For pairs, roughly but not more than 4000 words (~16 pages). counting references),

**Any** plagiarized or copied work will receive a grade of **zero** (see notes on academic offences below).

### **Extensions**

Medical documentation is required for an extension. This documentation must be submitted directly to the Social Science Dean's office and not to the instructor. It will be the Dean's office that will determine if accommodation is warranted.

**Grades will not be adjusted on the basis of need. It is important to monitor your performance in the course. Remember: You are responsible for your grades in this course.**

## **9. Make-up Examinations**

Makeups will be granted with approved documentation only. All documentation for missed exams must be provided the Academic Counselling Office and Instructor within 48 hours of the scheduled exam. For missed exams, you must take your documentation to Academic Counselling within 48 hours of the exam. Otherwise, the instructor will assign a grade of zero. The format and content of make-ups may differ substantially from the scheduled test or examination.

For Western's Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and a downloadable SMC please refer to the [Academic Handbook](#).

## **10. Use of Electronic Devices**

No electronic devices will be allowed during tests and examinations.

## **11. 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](#).

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>).

## **12. Western's Commitment to Accessibility**

The Department of Geography strives at all times to provide accessibility to all faculty, staff, students and visitors in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.

Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 519-661-2147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation. [Information regarding accommodation of exams](#) is available on the Registrar's website.

More information about "[Accessibility at Western](#)" is available.

## **13. Medical Issues**

You can find Western's Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and a downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC) in the [Academic Handbook](#). Student Services also provides information about the University's policy on [medical accommodation](#).

If you are seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for a missed test, exam, or assignment you must apply to the Academic Counselling office in your home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or by the Geography department.

In the event of illness be sure to contact Academic Counselling as soon as possible. Counsellors will determine whether or not accommodation should be requested and will contact instructors about the accommodation. Once a decision about accommodation has been made, the student should contact instructors to determine a new due date for tests, assignments, and exams.

## **14. Mental Health**

If you or someone you know is experiencing distress, there are several resources here at Western to assist you. Please visit Western's [Health and Wellness website](#) for more information on mental health resources.

## **15. Support Services**

[Student Support Services](#)

[Student Development Services](#)

## **16. Important Dates**

January 7: Classes resume

January 15: Last day to add a second term half course

February 14: Geo 3441 problem identification due

February 18: Family Day holiday – Department Office Closed

February 18-22: Spring Reading Week (No classes; Department Office open)

February 27: Geo 3441 mid-term test

March 7: Last day to drop a second term half course without penalty

March 28: Geo 3441 Final paper due

April 9: Classes end

April 10: Study day

April 11-30: Examination Period

April 30: Spring term ends