

**School of the Environment, University of Toronto**

**ENV222H Interdisciplinary Environmental Studies  
Winter term, 2017**

**Syllabus**      January 6, 2017

**Lectures:**      Tuesdays 2:00 – 4:00 pm  
Lecture Hall 1050 Earth Sciences 5 Bancroft Ave.

**Instructor:**    Douglas Macdonald, PhD, Senior Lecturer, School of the Environment  
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Office hours: Tuesdays, 4:00 - 6:00 pm

**Teaching Assistants:** Laura Eastham, Head TA      laura.eastham@mail.utoronto.ca  
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Cris Ches      c.ches@utoronto.ca  
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**Subject:**                      Human activity is causing major changes to nonhuman earth systems, with resulting adverse effects for both other species and humans themselves. The problem is getting worse, not better. Why is that so and what can we do about it? To address these questions, the course examines these topics: elements and theoretical understanding of the problem; major stages in the historical evolution of human impacts on nature; actions currently being taken to address the problem; and, briefly, possible solutions.

**Course format:**              The course material is presented in three ways: the required course readings; weekly lectures; and discussion in three tutorials, which is centred on the three short papers students will write. Notes or power-point presentations for lectures will be provided on the Blackboard course website.

**Learning Objectives:**      The course is intended to give students an introductory, comprehensive overview of causes and current actions to address the environmental problem which will provide a foundation for subsequent environmental studies courses. As noted in the Assignment Instructions, the course is also intended to help develop research, analysis, verbal presentation and writing skills.

**Tutorials:**                      Each student will attend three tutorials. The educational objective of the tutorials is to give students an opportunity to further learn by discussion of the course subject matter. To that end, tutorial discussion is closely linked to the three written assignments. Tutorials will be led by teaching assistants (three tutorials each) and the course instructor (two tutorials). Attendance is required to ensure good marks on the three short assignments, each of which must include reference to tutorial discussion. Tutorials will be held on Wednesdays and Thursdays, on these days:

Feb 1 and 2                      March 15 and 16                      March 29 and 30

A schedule showing time and place for each student's tutorials will be provided on the course website in early January.

**Links between tutorials and assignments** First, in tutorial students will have the opportunity to briefly present the draft analytical argument they are developing for their short assignment and receive comments and suggestions from other students and the tutorial leader. Secondly, as set out in the separate instructions, each short assignment must reference a discussion from the relevant tutorial.

**Required readings:** Readings for each class are listed in the Lecture Topics section below. Some are available electronically, and the remainder are in the course reader. Addresses for the electronic readings are shown with the reading citation. The course reader is available for purchase in the U. of T. bookstore. Two copies will be on reserve in the Noranda Library, second floor, ES 5 Bancroft Ave. (above the ES 1050 lecture hall).

**Assignments and distribution of marks:** The three written assignments must be submitted electronically by 11:59 pm of the due date to avoid a late penalty. Each assignment is to be written on one of two possible topics. Instructions are provided in a separate document.

|  |                        |     |
|--|------------------------|-----|
| 1. Short assignment #1<br>800 words maximum, not including list of works cited | due Feb. 7             | 20% |
| 2. Short assignment #2<br>800 words maximum, not including list of works cited | March 21               | 20% |
| 3. Short assignment #3<br>800 words maximum, not including list of works cited | due April 4            | 20% |
| 4. Mid-term exam<br>25 multiple choice questions; 45 minutes                   | Feb. 28 3:15 – 4:00 pm | 15% |
| 5. Final exam<br>50 multiple choice questions; 120 minutes                     | exam period            | 25% |

**Criteria used for evaluation of the written assignments**

- 1) Mechanics: freedom from minor factual errors and spelling or grammatical errors.
- 2) Writing style: clarity, precision, lack of ambiguity, ease with which reader can understand what you want to say.
- 3) Structure: use of the stipulated format.
- 4) Precision and accuracy: saying exactly and specifically what you mean, avoiding ambiguity and vague generalities (precision); absence of major factual errors (accuracy).

5) Analysis: use of facts to support the analysis; presentation of a credible analytical argument; originality of thought.

### **Plagiarism**

Please note that according to the University's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters, it is an offence for a student to:

1. "represent as one's own any idea or expression of an idea or work of another in any academic examination or term test or in connection with any other form of academic work, i.e., to commit plagiarism."
2. "submit, without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom it is submitted, any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course or program of study in the University or elsewhere."
3. "submit for credit any academic work containing a purported statement of fact or reference to a source which has been concocted."

See "Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters" on the U. of T. Governing Council website at this address: <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>

See also the handout "How Not to Plagiarize," Margaret Proctor, July 14, 2010, available online at <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>

Cases of suspected plagiarism will be addressed in accordance with the procedure established by the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters.

### **Late penalties**

No due dates will be extended. Penalty for late work will be 2% of the assignment mark per day late, including weekends. The only exemption from this penalty will be for work which is late for health reasons, if a University of Toronto Student Medical Certificate is provided or other personal reasons, with documentation provided from a College Registrar or Accessibility Services.

### **Medical Certificate & Documentation**

Students must use the University's official **Verification of Student Illness or Injury Form** as the standard documentation requirement for medical-based extension requests. A copy can be found on the web at:

<http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca/getattachment/index/Verification-of-Illness-or-Injury-form-Jan-22-2013.pdf.aspx>

### **Appeal of marks**

If you disagree with the mark given your paper, you have a right of appeal. The procedure is as follows: 1) the student meets with the TA or course instructor who marked the paper, and that person explains the rationale for the mark; 2) if not convinced, the student writes an argument for a higher mark, using the evaluation criteria provided in this syllabus; 3) if marked by a TA, the course instructor will review the paper and that argument and assign the final mark to the paper – if marked by the course instructor, the Head TA will review the paper and that argument and

assign the final mark. That final mark may be higher, lower or the same as that given by the TA or course instructor.

## **Lecture topics and required readings**

### **1. Jan. 10**

- . Introduction
- . What does the environmental problem mean for me?

UNEP (June 6, 2012). GEO 5 World Remains on Unsustainable Track Despite Hundreds of Internationally Agreed Goals and Objectives.

[http://web.unep.org/geo/sites/unep.org/geo/files/documents/geo5-global\\_pr\\_en.pdf](http://web.unep.org/geo/sites/unep.org/geo/files/documents/geo5-global_pr_en.pdf)

17 Sustainable Development Goals 2015

<http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

## ***Section A: Elements of the problem***

### **2. Jan. 17**

- . Environment as a physical problem

Hulme, Mike (2009). Chapter 3. "The Performance of Science." Why We Disagree About Climate Change: Understanding Controversy, Inaction and Opportunity. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp. 72 - 108.

*course reader*

- . Environment as a moral problem

Attfield, Robin (2003). Chapter 1. "Environmental Problems and Humanity." Environmental Ethics. Cambridge, Polity. pp. 1-30.

*course reader*

### **3. Jan. 24**

- . Environment as a policy problem
  - 1) Collective action problems
  - 2) Other policy challenges

Carter, Neil (2001). Chapter 7: "The Environment as a Policy Problem." In The Politics of the Environment: Ideas, Activism, Policy. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp. 161-168.

*course reader*

Meyer, William B. (1996). "Chapter 2 Changes in Population and Society." In Human Impact on the Earth. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp. 39 – 50

*course reader*

## ***Section B: Theoretical understanding of the problem***

### **4. Jan. 31**

- . Coupled Human and Natural Systems

Liu, J. et al (2015). Systems integration for global sustainability. Science, Feb. 27, 2015 Vol 347, Issue 6225, pages 963- 1258832-9.

<http://getit.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/access?http://myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/login?url=http://science.sciencemag.org>

. “Key changes in the evolution of the Human-Nonhuman relationship over the past 200,000 years” Macdonald and Eastham, in progress  
Reading to be supplied on Blackboard.

### ***Section C: Historical evolution of the problem***

#### **5. Feb. 7**

. Palaeolithic 30,000 years ago - language and technology  
Christian, David (2004). Chapter 7. The Beginnings of Human History.” In Maps of Time: An Introduction to Big History. Berkeley: University of California Press. pp 170 – 203.  
*course reader*

Jurmain, Robert, Lynn Kilgore, Wenda Trevathan and Russell L. Ciochon (2014). “Technology and Art in the Upper Paleolithic.” In Robert Jurmain et al, Introduction to Physical Anthropology. Belmont. CA: Wadsworth. pp. 380 – 386.  
*course reader*

. Neolithic 10,000 years ago - causes, implications  
Ponting, Clive (2007). Chapter 4. "The First Great Transition." A New Green History of the World: The Environment and the Collapse of Great Civilizations. New York: Penguin Books: pp. 36-66. *course reader*

#### **6. Feb. 14**

. Western European Renaissance 500 years ago:  
1) emergence of the empirical method, modern science  
York, Richard (2009). "Chapter 7: The Science of Nature and the Nature of Science." In Kenneth A. Gould and Tammy L. Lewis, eds. Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology. New York: Oxford University Press. pp. 85 – 94  
*course reader*

2) emergence of the modern state  
Spruyt, Hendrik (2002). "The Origins, Development and Possible Decline of the Modern State." Annual Review of Political Science 5, 127-49.  
*available electronically:*  
[http://journals2.scholarsportal.info/myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/pdf/10942939/v05i0001/127\\_to\\_dapdotms.xml](http://journals2.scholarsportal.info/myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/pdf/10942939/v05i0001/127_to_dapdotms.xml)

### **Reading week Feb 21**

#### **7. Feb. 28**

3) Emergence of capitalism

Saunders, Peter (1995). Chapter 1. "The Growth Machine." Capitalism: A Social Audit. Buckingham: Open University Press. pp. 1-28.  
*course reader*

*Mid-term: 3:15 – 4:00 pm*

### **8. March 7**

. The Industrial Revolution in the United States, 1750 – 1920

Olson, James A. and Shannon L. Kenney (2015). "Introduction." In The Industrial Revolution: Key Themes and Documents. Santa Barbara, Cal.: ABC-CLIO. pp. xiii – xxvii.

. Current, 1945 – 2017

1) Population and affluence

Dodds, Walter K. (2008). "Chapter 2: The Insidious Explosion." Humanity's Footprint: Momentum, Impact and our Global Environment. New York: Columbia University Press. pp. 11 – 33. and pp. 236 – 238.

### **9. March 14**

2) consumerism

Smart, Barry (2010). Chapter 1: "Consuming: Historical and Conceptual Issues." Consumer Society: Critical Issues and Environmental Consequences. Los Angeles: Sage.

*available electronically*

<http://dx.doi.org.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/10.4135/9781446251300>

3) globalization

Glenn, John (2007). Chapter 1. Introduction. In Globalization: North-South perspectives. London: Routledge. pp. 1 – 28.

*course reader*

## ***Section D: Current actions to address the problem***

### **10. March 21**

Actions being taken in civil society:

1) Environmentalism

Harper, Charles L. (2001). "Chapter 9: Environmentalism: Ideology, Action and Movements." Environment and Society: Human Perspectives on Environmental Issues. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall. Pp. 345- 384.

*course reader*

2) The individual

Kennedy, Emily Huddart et al (2009). "Why We Don't 'Walk the Talk': Understanding the Environmental Values/Behaviour Gap in Canada." Human Ecology Review, Vol. 16, No. 2. pp 151 – 160.

*course reader*

**11. March 28**

Actions being taken in the state:

1) Domestic

Meadowcroft, James (2012). "Greening the State?" In Paul F. Steinberg and Stacy D. VanDeveer, Comparative Environmental Politics: Theory, Practice and Prospects. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press. pp. 63-87.

*course reader*

2) International

Speth, James Gustave and Peter M. Haas (2006). Chapter 3 "From Stockholm to Johannesburg: First Attempt at Global Environmental Governance" in Global Environmental Governance Washington: Island Press. pp. 52- 81.

*course reader*

***Section E: Conclusion***

**12. April 4**

- . Possible solutions: 1) Mainstream – pricing carbon
- 2) Visionary – ending economic growth

World Bank Group (2016). State and Trends of Carbon Pricing. Executive Summary, pp. 10 – 16. <http://www.ecofys.com/en/publications/state-and-trends-of-carbon-pricing-2016/>

Victor, Peter (Nov. 18, 2010). "Questioning economic growth." Nature. 468, pp. 370-71, published online Nov. 17, 2010. (page numbers are as appear in Nature citation)

*course reader*

- . What does this all mean for me?

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***Accessibility Needs:***

*The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations for a disability, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom or course materials, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible:*

<http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/Contact-Us.htm> and get information about its services at:

<http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/>

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