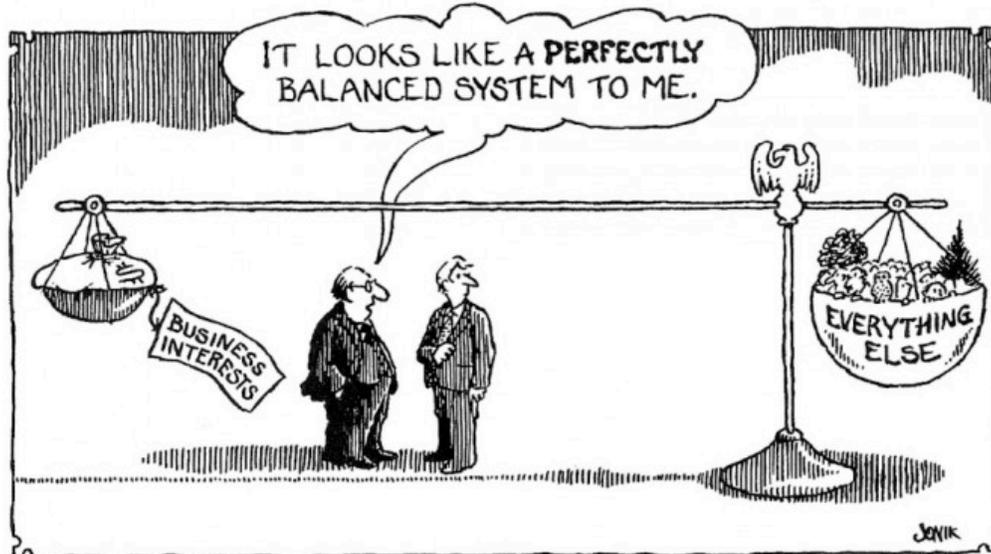


JGE331H1S – Resource and Environmental Theory

Course Syllabus

Wednesdays 2-4pm
Sidney Smith, Room 2110



Instructor: James Nugent

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Office Hours: 4-5pm Wednesdays, 5-6pm Mondays

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Overview

What is the relationship between the environment and the economy?

It may seem apparent that our current economic system is implicated in causing environmental problems such as deforestation, the collapse of fisheries, air and water pollution, biodiversity loss, and climate change. However, scholars, policy-makers, and activists disagree about the relationship between the environment and the economy, and the extent to which the current economic system can be reformed to address these socio-ecological problems.

In exploring the relationship between "the environment" and "the economy," this course addresses some central questions: Why do we now speak of distinct categories for "the environment," "the economy," "the political," and "the socio-cultural"? What narratives do we tell ourselves about environmental degradation? Can the current environmental crisis be solved within a capitalist system or is a radical restructuring of the political-economy necessary? Are there limits to economic growth? Can eco-technologies (driven by capitalist entrepreneurship and competition) find new substitutions and efficiencies that can offset or actually reduce environmental degradations? Should the state have a stronger role in managing natural resources and regulating economic processes in order to address environmental problems? Or is the problem rather that

private property and free market institutions have not yet been extended far enough into the realm of the environment? Can “the market” solve the current socio-ecological crisis, or is it the cause of it? Perhaps environmental problems such as resource scarcities and land degradation are not caused by our (or any) particular economic system, but simply by overpopulation? Is there an inherent trade-off between jobs and the environment? What does feminism teach us about how we value the environment?

These questions are framed by major schools of economic and political-economic thinking, namely: neoclassical and environmental economics; eco-socialism/eco-Marxism; ecological economics; ecological modernization; green economics; free market environmentalism; neo-Malthusianism; and eco-feminism. Paradigms for understanding the environment-economy problem are not neutral; they are based on certain values and worldviews and have political consequences, such as the distribution of environmental goods and bads (i.e. environmental justice). My goal is that you will consider questions of power and justice as we evaluate the strengths and weakness of different paradigms.

I do not expect you to become experts in each of these paradigms. But you will learn to identify which paradigm is being used when you read an academic article or engage in mainstream discourse. You will also learn to compare and contrast the underlying moral, epistemological and ontological assumptions of these paradigms. This will help you form a critical opinion on environmental policies being debated or implemented by the government (e.g. carbon tax/trading), by corporations (e.g. “corporate social responsibility”), and to better think about how to orient your own “lifestyle” and political activity.

Mark Breakdown:

Assignment	Due Date	Mark Value
Book Club & Review OR Strategy Board Game & Review (1200-1500 words)	Book Club or Strategy Board Game group meeting: Before Sunday February 19 th , 11:59pm	10%
	Notes for Review: At group meeting	5%
	Final Individual Review: Sunday February 26 th , 11:59pm	20%
Final Essay (2000 words)	Essay Question & Outline: bring to class March 8 th	
	Essay Draft: bring two printed copies to class March 15 th , 2pm	5%
	Peer Reviews (x2): Due by March 22nd, 2pm	5% (2.5% each)
	Final Essay: Due April 5 th , 11:59pm	25%
Final Written Exam	TBA (April 10-28)	30%

Course Topics Schedule

JGE331 - Resource and Environmental Theory

Important Date	Topic
1. January 11 th	Environmental Degradation Narratives <i>Population vs. Environment? (Neo-malthusianism 'overpopulation')</i> <i>Limits to Growth</i> <i>Tragedy of the Commons? ('Freedom in a commons brings ruin to all')</i> <i>Capitalism: Problem or solution?</i>
2. January 18 th	Environmental Justice I <i>Jobs vs. the Environment?</i> <i>Poverty & the Environment</i>
3. January 25 th	Neoclassical Economics & Ecological Modernization <i>Efficiency, Scarcity, Substitution</i> <i>Natural Resource Economics</i>
4. February 1 st	Neoclassical Economics & "Free-market Environmentalism" <i>Externalities</i> <i>Property Rights Regimes</i> <i>Coase Theorem</i>
5. February 8 th	Environmental Economics I: Putting a Price on Nature <i>Pigouvian Tax</i> <i>Contingent Valuation</i> <i>Cost-Benefit Analysis</i>
6. February 15 th	Environmental Justice II <i>Film: Coal Country (2009). 75min.</i> <i>Film: Canada's Toxic Chemical Valley. (2013). 31 mins.</i> <i>Discussion of LEAP Manifesto</i>
NO CLASS (Feb.22nd)	READING WEEK
February 19th (11:59pm) February 26th (11:59pm)	Last Day to Meet (Board Game/Book Club) Individual Book/Game Review Due
7. March 1 st	Environmental Economics II <i>Cost-benefit Analysis</i> <i>Discounting</i>
8. March 8 th	Governing the Commons <i>Common Pool Resource Management</i> <i>Climate change case study</i>
March 13th	DROP DATE

9. March 15 th	Ecological Economics <i>Second law of thermodynamics, closed vs. open systems, natural capital</i> <i>Bring essay question and outline to class.</i> <i>Essay Draft Due (Blackboard & Turnitin.com) by 2pm</i>
10. March 22 nd	Eco-Marxism I: Is Capitalism Sustainable? <i>Second contradiction of capitalism, metabolic rift</i> <i>Two Peer Reviews must be completed by 2pm</i>
11. March 29 th	Eco-Marxism II
12. April 5 th	Eco-Feminist Economics Final Essay Due 11:59pm (20%)

Required text for this course is:

Molly Scott Cato. 2011. *Environment and Economy*. Routledge: New York.

Available at the UofT Bookstore, or used at www.bookfinder.com ISBN-10: 0415477417

I have also requested this book be placed on course reserves for short-term loan at Robarts Library.

Assignments

There are two assignments for this course. More instructions will be given to you in the second or third week of the course.

Assignment #1 (35%):

The first assignment is a book review OR a review of two strategy board games that address the economy-environment relationship. There are three steps to this assignment. You will submit your rough notes to questions I give you to ask while reading your book or playing your board game (weighted at 5%). You will need to meet in a group (3-5) to discuss the book, or learn and play two rounds of two approved board games (weighted at 10%). You will then write and submit your individual review based on the group discussion and your own ideas and reflections. The final review is worth 20%. You can find a guide for writing a book review here:

<http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/specific-types-of-writing/book-review>. I will give you a separate assignment sheet with more information.

Note: The board game option may sound easier, but the games I have selected are not party games like Monopoly. These are strategy/educational games that take at least one hour to learn and often 2 hours to play, which you will want to do at least twice. You will be asked to

identify concepts from the course that are present in the game, and to make specific suggestions about how to change the game to incorporate other concepts from the course.

Assignment #2 (35%): The second assignment is an essay on a topic that you will choose from a list. You will engage with two or more of the paradigms covered in this course in explaining the causes of the environmental problem and/or to propose a solution. This is not meant to be a research essay but rather a chance to engage deeper with a number of the readings in the course and apply this to an environmental issue that interests you. While you will need to do some background research on the environmental problem or policy that you choose, the focus of your paper will be applying the paradigms covered in this course to your issue. This will also be good preparation for your final exam. Assignment 2 has three stages:

i. Essay Question & Outline

We will spend some time in class on March 2nd to workshop your essay question and outline.

ii. Submit Draft Essay (5%)

Please submit your draft essay on-line through Blackboard and Turnitin.com.

iii. Peer Review (2 x 2.5% = 5%)

As part of your essay assignment, you are required to provide feedback on two draft essays.

iv. Revise and submit final essay (25%)

Submit your final essay on-line through Blackboard and Turnitin.com showing track changes (or edits highlighted with different font colour).

Late Assignments

Assignments submitted late will be deducted 3% per day (including each weekend day) off from the assignment's final mark.

Circumstances always arise which cause some people to legitimately miss deadlines. If you do become ill (or otherwise incapacitated) you must provide me with appropriate documentation. Contact me as soon as possible – and no later than one-week after the original due date. For medical exemptions, only the official U of T “Verification of Student Illness or Injury” form will be accepted (see: <http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca>). For non-medical emergencies, please submit a letter from your college registrar. Be aware that submitting a note that has been altered or obtained under false pretences is considered a very serious offence by the University.

Final Exam (30%)

Each lecture I will give you a set of questions to help guide your reading for the following week's readings. At the end of the course, I will choose from amongst these reading guide questions to make-up the essay portion of the final exam. For the exam, I will expect very high

quality answers that draw extensively on the readings and other overall themes in the course. It will not be sufficient to simply draw on one or two weeks of readings when answering the final exam questions. There may also be some multiple choice questions on the final exam covering the entire course and drawn especially from my lectures.

Expectations:

I expect that you will come to class prepared to discuss the readings and to participate in class activities. I prefer a back-and-forth, participatory learning environment. I know that this can be terrifying for more introverted students, but I hope that as the course progresses, everyone will feel comfortable contributing to classroom discussion. I try to reduce the anxiety of speaking in class by having you work in pairs or groups before presenting to the class. The onus is on the entire class to create a space where everyone can feel comfortable voicing their ideas. I will also be giving you questions to help guide your readings. If you find talking in public terrifying, the best thing you can do is come to class with any comments or questions that arose from the readings. Remember, that I am not evaluating your language skills or oratory showmanship in class; rather, I am most concerned with the substance of your ideas and arguments. Similarly, if you really enjoy talking in class, keep in mind how much space you're taking up so that others can have a chance to contribute.

My goal in this course is that you actually *learn*. This may seem obvious, but it is amazing how easy it is to go through school, even doing well on exams, without actually learning. It will not be enough to simply memorize lecture slides, since learning is a process of *critical engagement* with the course material, other learners, and society more broadly. It is not enough to simply learn "facts." I want you to be able to identify and apply the competing schools of thought or models that are used to explain or justify environment-economy relationships. More importantly, I want you to be able to identify and challenge the assumptions underlying these models in terms of social and environmental justice.

Please note that we will not be grading you on what your opinion is, but rather how well your support your opinion with arguments and evidence.

We will use an iterative learning process as a way for you to develop your critical thinking, writing, and speaking. You will engage at least four times with the readings. First, you will read the readings before lecture, identifying key concepts and questions. Then you will attend a lecture that will be informed by the readings. Third, you use the readings in your final essay. And finally, the final exam will draw directly on the questions I give you each week in class to help guide you through the readings. It should therefore become obvious to you that doing the readings will really help you to learn and do well in this course!

Blackboard

It is your responsibility to check Blackboard frequently (once or twice a week). You **MUST** have a your.name@mail.utoronto.ca (or @utoronto.ca) email address indicated on ROSI to properly receive messages from the instructors through Blackboard. You can access the Blackboard site here: <https://portal.utoronto.ca/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp>

Please note that all assignment will be submitted onto Blackboard AND Turnitin.com, with the exception of the final essay proposal-outline which you will be bringing to class. It is your

responsibility to ensure that your assignment is uploaded properly. Please submit your assignment in two ways: cut and paste the text of your assignment into the text box for the assignment, as well as upload the formatted file to Blackboard as an attachment. We will be marking the attachment so don't worry if your formatting is wrong or not visible for the cut and paste version.

Turnitin.com

Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.

Class ID: 14271289 **Password:** whatisvalue

Prerequisites:

[GGR100H1/GGR107H1/ENV221H1/ENV222H1/GGR222H1/GGR223H1](#)

Exclusion: GGR331H1

If you do not meet these prerequisites, please see me after the first or second class, or come to my office hours in the first or second week.

*Note: No prior courses in economics is necessary to take this course and students who have taken economics will still benefit from taking this course. There will be significant overlap with courses in environmental economics, although this course takes a critical view of environmental economics as a sub-discipline.

Writing and Plagiarism

The University of Toronto is committed to the principles of academic integrity. Please review the University's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters.

There are many tools to help you improve your writing. Please make an appointment with your college's writing centre and check out the following website:

www.utoronto.ca/writing . Plagiarism is a extremely serious academic offence and we will be taking measures to identify plagiarized assignments. It is your responsibility to understand what plagiarism is, and how to avoid it. Please see:

<http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>

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:
disability.services@utoronto.ca or <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility>

Grading

For grading regulations and other rights and responsibilities, consult the course calendar:
<http://www.artsandscience.utoronto.ca/ofr/calendar/rules.htm>

Reading Schedule

Week 1. January 11th *Environmental Degradation Narratives*

Chapter 1 – Available on Blackboard.

Molly Scott Cato. 2011. *Environment and Economy*. Routledge: New York.

Week 2. January 18th *Environmental Justice*

Canadian Labour Congress. 2001. Green Jobs Creation Project: Background Paper. Available on the Blackboard course page under "Readings & Questions Guide" > "Week 2 Readings - Labour & the Environment"

Week 3. January 25th *Neo-classical Economics & Ecological Modernization*

Cato, Chapters 3 & 10

Week 4. February 1st Neo-classical & "Free-market Economics"

Cato, 11.1 (pp.167-171).

Jones, Laura. 2001. A Different Kind of Environmentalist. Fraser Forum. [The Fraser Institute]. April. Pp.4-6. http://oldfraser.lexi.net/publications/forum/2001/04/section_02.html

Smith, Fred. 1993. "The Market and Nature." In Ecology, Liberty and Property: A Free Market Environmental Reader. June 5th, 2000. <http://cei.org/op-eds-and-articles/market-and-nature>

*Mikael Skou Andersen & Ilmo Massa (2000) Ecological modernization — origins, dilemmas and future directions, *Journal of Environmental Policy & Planning*, 2:4, 337-345, DOI: 10.1080/714852820 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/714852820>

OR

*Arthur Mol, Gert Spaargaren, David Sonnenfeld. 2013. "Ecological Modernization Theory: Taking stock, moving forward." In *Routledge International Handbook of Social and Environmental Change* by Stewart Lockie, David A. Sonnenfeld, Dana R. Fisher (eds).

*Available on Blackboard

Week 5. February 8th *Environmental Economics: Putting a Price on Nature*

Cato, Chapter 4 & 8.

Week 6. February 15th – *Environmental Justice II*

*Rees, William E. & Westra, Laura. 2003. When consumption does violence: Can there be sustainability and environmental justice in a resource-limited world? In, Julian Agyeman,

Robert D. Bullard, and Bob Evans. (Eds). Just sustainabilities: Development in an unequal world. MIT Press: Cambridge. pp. 99-124.

*Available on Blackboard

February 22nd - NO CLASS READING WEEK

Week 7. March 1st - Environmental Economics II: Putting a Price on Nature

Chapter 11.2-11.5

Costanza, R., R. D'Arge, et al. (1997). "The value of the world's ecosystem services and natural capital." *Nature* 387(6630): 253-260.

Week 8. March 8th, Ecological Economics

Cato, Chapter 5 & 9

Week 9. March 15th Governing the Commons

Cato, Chapter 14 & 13

Week 10. March 22th Eco-Marxism I: Is Capitalism Sustainable?

Cato, Chapter 7

Week 11. March 29th Eco-Marxism II

*O'Connor, James. 1998. Chapter 8: "The Second Contradiction of Capitalism." *Natural Causes: Essays in Ecological Marxism*. p.158-177.

*Foster, John Bellamy. 1999. "Marx's Theory of Metabolic Rift: Classical Foundations for Environmental Sociology." *American Journal of Sociology* 105, no. 2: 366-405.

You only need to Read pg. 373-390

*Available on Blackboard

Week 12. April 5th Eco-Feminist Economics

Patricia E. Perkins. 2007. Feminist Ecological Economics and Sustainability. *Journal of Bioeconomics*. 9:227–244. DOI 10.1007/s10818-007-9028-z

Cato, Chapter 15

Last updated: January 11th, 2016