



Environmental Studies (ENVS) 689

The Political Ecology of Global Environment Change (Revision 2)

Status:

Replaced with new revision, see the [course listing](#) for the current revision

Delivery mode:

Grouped study with eText

Credits:

3

Area of study:

Arts

Prerequisites:

None

Precluded:

None

Faculty:

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Notes:

Students in Grouped-Study courses are advised that this syllabus may vary in key details in each instance of the course. Always refer to the Moodle site for the most up-to-date details on texts, assignment structure, and grading.

Overview

ENVS 689: The Political Ecology of Global Environmental Change offers a comprehensive exploration of the intricate relationships between the environment and politics in the context of global change. The course delves into the dynamic interplay between human activities, ecosystems, and institutions, fostering an understanding of how environmental issues are shaped by power dynamics, social structures, and policy decisions. The curriculum is designed to provide students with a robust theoretical foundation and in-depth case-study analyses.

Outline

ENVS 689 is divided into four units spread over 15 weeks, with each week exploring a different topic:

Unit 1: Introduction to Political Ecology and Its Critics

- Week 1: Introduction to Political Ecology—Its Past and Present
- Week 2: Criticisms of Political Ecology

Unit 2: Key Concepts to Assess Case Studies in Political Ecology

- Week 3: The Emergence of Political Ecology—History of a New Discipline
- Week 4: Challenges in Social Construction and the Degradation Thesis
- Week 5: Conservation and Environmental Identities

Unit 3: Methodologies, Case Studies, and the Future of Political Ecology

- Week 6: Identifying the Politics in Political Ecology
- Week 7: A Future for Political Ecology?
- Week 8: Analyzing the Political Ecology of Climate Change
- Week 9: Gender and the Environment
- Week 10: Policy and Environmental Control
- Week 11: Social Hierarchies Defining Geopolitical and Global Relationships

- Week 12: The Politics of the Forest
- Week 13: Reassessing Political Ecology

Unit 4: Researching a Thesis


- Weeks 14 and 15: Preparing a Comparative Case-Study Analysis

Learning outcomes

After completing ENVS 689, you will be able to achieve the following intended outcomes.

- **Theoretical Proficiency:** Students will grasp the core theories and frameworks of political ecology, enabling them to critically analyze and evaluate complex environmental issues.
- **Case-Study Mastery:** Through in-depth case studies from diverse regions, students will develop a nuanced understanding of real-world environmental challenges and the political dimensions that underpin them.
- **Policy Insight:** Graduates will be equipped to contribute to informed policy discussions and decision-making processes related to global environmental change and sustainability.
- **Interdisciplinary Approach:** By synthesizing concepts from ecology, politics, economics, and sociology, students will be prepared to engage in interdisciplinary research and collaboration.
- **Critical Analysis:** Students will hone their ability to critically assess existing literature, data, and narratives, thereby fostering a reflective and analytical approach to environmental issues.


Evaluation

To receive credit for ENVS 689, you must complete and submit all of the assignments and meet participation expectations. You must achieve a minimum grade of C- (60 percent) for the course. Students should be familiar with the Master of Arts—Interdisciplinary Studies [grading system](#) . Please note that it is students' responsibility to maintain their program status. Any student who receives a grade of "F" in one course, or a grade of "C" in more than one course, may be required to withdraw from the program.



The following table summarizes the evaluation activities and the credit weights associated with them.

Activity	Weight
Participation in Weekly Online Discussions	30%
Assignment 1: Case-Study Analysis	20%
Assignment 2: Case-Study Analysis	20%
Final Assignment: Comparative Case-Study Analysis	30%
Total	100%

Materials


Robbins, P. (2020). *Political ecology: A critical introduction*. (3rd ed.). Wiley-Blackwell.  (eText)

eText





Registration in this course includes an electronic textbook. For more information on **electronic textbooks** , please refer to our **eText Initiative site** .

Online Materials

All other readings are available online and can be accessed through the Digital Reading Room. These texts are linked at the appropriate locations in your Study Guide.

Athabasca University Library: Students are encouraged to browse the Library's website to review the Library collection of journal databases, electronic journals, and digital reference tools: <http://library.athabascau.ca> .

Important links

- › [Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies](#) 
- › [Focus Areas](#) 
- › [Courses](#) 
- › [Fees and Funding](#) 

Athabasca University reserves the right to amend course outlines occasionally and without notice. Courses offered by other delivery methods may vary from their individualized study counterparts.

Opened in Revision 2, May 1, 2024

Updated September 12, 2024

View **previous revision** 
