GEOG 3100 (approved for CI)  
Human-Environment Geography  

Spring 2018

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Office Hours: By appointment  
Meeting Time: T, Th 10:30-11:45 a.m.  
Classroom: BNR 360

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Overview  
**USU Catalog Course Description:** This course surveys a breadth of subfields in geography that study human-environment interactions (e.g., political and cultural ecology, hazards geography, land change science, environmental history, environmental justice, and animal geographies).

In this course, we explore a range of conceptual perspectives and methodological strategies used by geographers to study the relation between humans and their environments. We also review a variety of human-environment research and engagement topics. As such, this course serves as an upper-level introduction to, and overview of, human-environment geography.

**Communications-Intensive Course Designation**  
This course has been approved (in Fall 2017) for designation as “communications intensive” and will meet 3-credits of this requirement for University Studies. Students complete a semester-long research project in a human-environment topic and communicate their findings through both a 10-page research paper and a 10-minute, oral, in-class presentation. Students also complete a 3-page written essay. Both the essay and the research paper (outline and first full draft) go through a review and revision process using feedback from a USU Writing Fellow. Strong communication skills are essential in any career, including as a geographer. The communications assignments in this course provide opportunities for you to build your skills in three essential areas: (1) the oral presentation of geographic information, (2) the written communication of research findings, and (3) the written communication of ideas in a briefer format. By requiring a revision process for the written assignments, this course emphasizes the process nature of written communication.

**Course Content Coverage**  
As an overview of human-environment geography, we cover the following recognized subfields of human-environment geography:

1. cultural ecology and political ecology
2. environmental history
3. environmental justice
4. feminist geographies of the environment
5. hazards geography
We also review the topical areas of human-environment geography, including the following topics as defined by our primary textbook:

1. climate, atmosphere, and energy; and climate justice
2. the population-consumption-technology nexus
3. agriculture and food systems
4. biodiversity, conservation, and protected areas
5. water resources and fishing livelihoods

Classroom Format
I teach this course in a format that largely combines overview lectures and classroom discussions of readings and topics, supplemented with a few films. In addition, this course provides an opportunity for students to pursue a human-environment geography topic of individual interest, through a semester-long research project. Near the end of the course, we use classroom meeting-time to interact around each individual student’s research project.

Course Learning Objectives
By the end of the course, you will be able to:

1. Describe and compare a variety of approaches geographers take to researching and understanding human-environment relationships (IDEA Learning Objectives: Learning fundamental principles, generalizations, or theories; Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view).

2. Conduct secondary research on a human-environment geography topic (IDEA Learning Objective: Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view).

You also will have:
3. Experienced multiple opportunities to further your written and oral communication skills (IDEA Learning Objective: Developing skill in expressing oneself orally and in writing).

Under the IDEA student ratings of instruction system, the learning objectives for this course are:
- Learning fundamental principles, generalizations, or theories.
- Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view.
- Developing skill in expressing oneself orally and in writing.

Course Text and Readings
This course carries a high reading expectation. The primary text listed below is available for purchase at the USU Bookstore, but it may also be found online used or at a discount. Reading this text is a required component of class, and I have placed one copy on reserve at the Merrill-Cazier Library. We will begin reading this text immediately for our second class meeting on 11 January, so I suggest you acquire it quickly. However, I have made a photocopy of the first chapter reading assignment and have placed it on Canvas to provide you with some additional time to acquire your own copy. In addition, I assign other articles and book chapters, which I make available through Canvas.
Primary Course Text:

Secondary Course Text:

Small Group and Full Class Reading Discussions
For many of our class meetings, we will divide the class into reading discussion groups. These small groups are ad hoc groups that can change from meeting to meeting in order to facilitate interactions among different sets of students. We will also carry out full class discussions. I expect active and prepared oral participation in discussions. I expect students to arrive to class meetings with readings completed. As this course is designed to include a significant reading and discussion-based component, preparation for, and attendance of, class is essential to the class’s success and to students’ class participation grade. As you read, you should be taking notes. You then should arrive in class, bringing with you both the reading for the day and your reading notes.

Political Ecology Essay
As an early assignment in this course, you will write and submit an essay (3 pages) on a political ecology case study. You will submit an initial draft of this essay to the Writing Fellow (WF). The WF will provide feedback and suggestions for revision. You will then revise the essay for submission to me.

Research Project
In this course, you will carry out secondary research on a human-environment geography topic of interest to you. The final products of your research will be a research paper (10 pages) and a research presentation (10 minutes) to your classmates. We will work on this project throughout the semester, and you will submit an initial topic statement with sources, an outline, and a draft, as well as the final paper. The Writing Fellow will work with you for revision of both the paper outline and the initial paper draft. You will present to your fellow students and me during the final weeks of the semester.

Student Assessment for Final Grade
I assess students for final grade in the course as follows:

- Political Ecology Essay (3 pp) 15 %
- Research Project
  - Topic Statement and Sources (<1 p) 5 %
  - Research Presentation (10 min) 15 %
  - Outline (1-2 pp) 20 %
  - Final Paper (10 pp) 30 %
  - Class Participation 15 %
**Additional USU Policy Information**

*Academic Freedom and Professional Responsibilities (Faculty Code)*
Academic freedom is the right to teach, study, discuss, investigate, discover, create, and publish freely. Academic freedom protects the rights of faculty members in teaching and of students in learning. Freedom in research is fundamental to the advancement of truth. Faculty members are entitled to full freedom in teaching, research, and creative activities, subject to the limitations imposed by professional responsibility. Faculty Code Policy #403 further defines academic freedom and professional responsibilities: [USU Policies Section 403](#).

*Academic Integrity - "The Honor System"*
Each student has the right and duty to pursue his or her academic experience free of dishonesty. The Honor System is designed to establish the higher level of conduct expected and required of all Utah State University students.

The Honor Pledge: To enhance the learning environment at Utah State University and to develop student academic integrity, each student agrees to the following Honor Pledge: "I pledge, on my honor, to conduct myself with the foremost level of academic integrity." A student who lives by the Honor Pledge is a student who does more than not cheat, falsify, or plagiarize. A student who lives by the Honor Pledge: espouses academic integrity as an underlying and essential principle of the Utah State University community; understands that each act of academic dishonesty devalues every degree that is awarded by this institution; and is a welcomed and valued member of Utah State University.

*Grievance Process (Student Code)*
Students who feel they have been unfairly treated [in matters other than (i) discipline or (ii) admission, residency, employment, traffic, and parking - which are addressed by procedures separate and independent from the Student Code] may file a grievance through the channels and procedures described in the Student Code: [Article VII Grievances](#).

*Plagiarism*
Plagiarism includes knowingly "representing, by paraphrase or direct quotation, the published or unpublished work of another person as one's own in any academic exercise or activity without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes the unacknowledged used of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials." The penalties for plagiarism are severe. They include warning or reprimand, grade adjustment, probation, suspension, expulsion, withholding of transcripts, denial or revocation of degrees, and referral to psychological counseling.

*Sexual Harassment*
Sexual harassment is defined by the Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity Commission as any "unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature." If you feel you are a victim of sexual harassment, you may talk to or file a complaint with the Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity Office located in Old Main, Room 161, or call the AA/EEO Office at 797-1266.

*Students with Disabilities*
The Americans with Disabilities Act states: "Reasonable accommodation will be provided for all persons with disabilities in order to ensure equal participation within the program. If a student has a disability that will likely require some accommodation by the instructor, the student must contact the instructor and document the disability through the Disability Resource Center (797-2444), preferably during the first week of the course. Any request for special consideration relating to attendance, pedagogy, taking of examinations, etc., must be discussed with and approved by the instructor. In cooperation with the Disability Resource Center, course materials can be provided in alternative format, large print, audio, diskette, or Braille."
2018 Class Meetings Schedule, Tentative (may be adjusted as required)

Note: The HEG* assigned chapter is listed. I will announce additional articles and book chapters later and make these available on Canvas.

1. **Introduction & the Cultural/Human Geography and Physical Geography Backdrop**
   1.0. 1/9 Introduction to the course, review of syllabus
   1.1. 1/11 What is human-environment geography? (read HEG 1 & Harden 2012 for class)
   1.2. 1/16 The politics of nature (HEG 2)
   1.3. 1/18 The biophysical environment (HEG 3)
   1.4. 1/23 Intro to USU library research resources

2. **Contemporary Perspectives in Human-Environment Geography**
   2.1. 1/25 Cultural and political ecology (HEG 4)
   2.2. 1/30 Political ecology case study (Lawn People)
   *research project topic statements due*
   2.3. 2/1 Film: “The Timbuktu Documentaries” (2003)
   2.4. 2/6 Environmental history (HEG 5)
   *Essay draft due to WF (on PE case study)*
   2.5. 2/8 Hazards geography and human vulnerability (HEG 6)
   2.6. 2/13 Environmental justice (HEG 7)
   2.7. 2/15 No class meeting; Dr. Radel at Virginia Tech
   2/20 NO CLASS: USU follows a Monday schedule
   2.8. 2/22 Human-animal geography
   *Essay final due to me*
   2.9. 2/27 Feminist geographies of the environment
   2.10. 3/1 Land change science and coupled human-environment systems
   *Research paper outline draft due to WF*

3/5-3/9: Spring Break

3. **Topics in Human-Environment Geography**
   3.1. 3/13 Film: “Anthropocene” (2015)
   3.2. 3/15 Discussion of “Anthropocene”
   3.3. 3/20 Climate, atmosphere, and energy (HEG 8); Climate justice
   *Outline final due to me*
   3.4. 3/22 The population-consumption-technology nexus (HEG 9)
   3.5. 3/27 Biodiversity, conservation, and protected areas (HEG 11)
   3.6. 3/29 Agriculture and food systems (HEG 10); Water resources and fishing livelihoods (HEG 12)
   3.7. 4/3 TBA
   3.8. 4/5 Geographic Research (HEG 13)
4. **Conclusion & Sharing Research Projects**

4/10  No class meeting; work on research paper draft: Dr. Radel at AAGs
4/12  No class meeting; work on research paper draft: Dr. Radel at AAGs

4.1.  4/17  Research presentations 1

*Draft of research paper due to WF*

4.2  4/19  Research presentations 2

4.3.  4/24  Research presentations 3

4.4.  4/26  Research presentations 4 and Making a Difference (HEG 14)

*Final of research paper due to me either at last class, or during exams week*