



**ERS 225 – Gendering Environmental Politics
Winter 2018
Tuesdays & Thursdays: 1:00 p.m. – 2:20 p.m.**

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 2:30 – 4:30 p.m. EV2 - 2007

Course Description

This course provides students with the tools to analyze gender and other forms of social difference in the context of environmental and resource issues. Drawing from case studies from around the world, this course looks at the ways in which gender, race and class shape access to resources, influence resource management and extraction, and create precarious working and living conditions. This course also examines how governance, policy, and resistance politics can be used to create social and environmental change. Students will become familiar with the academic concept of intersectionality, and how it can be applied to the study of environmental and ecological challenges and policy development. Students will be equipped with the tools needed to ask questions about gender and intersectionality in their future studies.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Define key concepts of gender, race, and class
- Describe how gender, race, class and other social identities shape our interactions with the environment
- Identify various strategies for changing environmental governance and policy
- Analyze environmental issues and politics with attention to gender, race, and class

Academic integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. [Check [the Office of Academic Integrity](#) for more information.]

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read [Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4](#). When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department's administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. [Check [the Office of Academic Integrity](#) for more information.] A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course instructor, academic advisor, or the undergraduate associate dean. For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to [Policy 71, Student Discipline](#). For typical penalties, check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](#).

Appeals: A decision made or penalty imposed under [Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances](#) (other than a petition) or [Policy 71, Student Discipline](#) may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to [Policy 72, Student Appeals](#).

Note for students with disabilities: [AccessAbility Services](#), located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with AccessAbility Services at the beginning of each academic term.

Turnitin.com: Text matching software (Turnitin®) will be used to screen assignments in this course. This is being done to verify that use of all materials and sources in assignments is documented. Students will be given an option if they do not want to have their assignment screened by Turnitin®. In the first week of the term, details will be provided about arrangements and alternatives for the use of Turnitin® in this course.

Course Assignments

Attendance & Participation	10%
In-Class Reading Groups	5% - Throughout the term.
Blog Post	25% - Due Thursday, February 6 th , by 2:30 p.m.
Intersectional Analysis Report	35% - Due Thursday, March 8 th by 2:30 p.m. OR Thursday, March 22 by 2:30 p.m. (see below)
Final Test	25% - Held in class March 29 th

Attendance and Participation – 10%

Each week, classes will be a blend of lectures, videos, discussions, and in-class activities. Students are expected to attend each class having done the readings and be ready to participate in discussions and activities. Each class will also begin with a “News Briefing”, which is a chance for anyone to share anything related to gender and environmental politics over the past week.

Students will be evaluated on the *quality* of their participation in discussions and activities. This grade will be awarded at the end of the term, taking into account all of the in-class participation over the duration of the course. Attendance will be recorded and factored into the final grade,

however, attendance alone will not determine the participation grade. i.e. Perfect attendance does NOT mean a perfect score.

In-Class Reading Groups – 5%

Throughout the term, you will meet with a group of students five (5) times to discuss the readings in small groups. Prior to class, you will each submit **one discussion question** to an online forum. In class, you will pose your question to your classmates and have a short discussion about the readings. Groups will be asked to share their thoughts with the entire class after their discussion.

In order to receive the full 5% of the grade, you must attend all 5 discussion groups AND submit your discussion question **by 11:59 p.m. on the day before** class. The discussion question must reflect an effort to engage with the readings, i.e. by engaging with a key debate, asking about terminology, etc.

Reading Group Dates:

- #1 – Thursday, Jan. 11
- #2 – Thursday, Jan. 25
- #3 – Thursday, Feb. 8
- #4 – Thursday, Feb. 15
- #5 – Thursday, Mar. 22

“Blog Post” – 25% - Due Thursday, February 6 by 2:30 p.m.

Students are responsible for writing one “blog post”. Students will write a short piece (800-1000 words) on the topic of intersectionality. The blog post should:

- Attempt to explain intersectionality in our own words to your blog’s readership;
- Go beyond just describing the topic;
- Raise questions you have about intersectionality or how it makes you view an environmental issue differently;
- Pose a question to your blog’s audience to discuss in the “comment section”.

The blog post may include images or other media that help your reader understand what you are describing, but are not required.

The piece should be written with a general audience in mind, using clear and accessible language. You may write this piece in the first person and incorporate your own thinking about this concept and how it relates to your interests. The blog post does not necessarily have an argument, but it should flow logically and have a central idea. Rather than just write down everything you think and handing it in, make an effort to edit and organize your thoughts.

“Blog posts” will be graded on the comprehension of key concepts, organization, and clarity of writing. Blog Posts will be submitted through UWLEARN, but will not be made visible to the public. Students are free to post their own writing to their personal blogs after their assignments

have been graded. Blog posts should include a reference list and they **must** acknowledge the authors of the ideas they are discussing. Any direct quotes must also be attributed to their author.

Intersectional Analysis & Report – 35%

Due Thursday, March 8th by 2:30 p.m. OR Thursday, March 22 by 2:30 p.m. (see below)

For this assignment, students will use what they have learned about intersectionality to examine a contemporary issue in environmental politics that they have researched independently throughout the term. Students are permitted to pursue topics discussed in class, but they must go beyond the readings outlined in the syllabus. When employing an intersectional lens, students are expected to consider how gender identity interacts with race, class, ability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, and/or other social identities.

Areas of contemporary environmental politics students might analyze include (but are not limited to):

- Climate Change adaptation or mitigation
- Representation in local, regional, or global politics
- Pollution and/or Waste
- Use of Pesticides and Herbicides
- Industrial Agriculture
- Labour Practices in Resource Extraction
- Food Insecurity
- Management of Resources and/or Ecosystems
- Land Grabbing
- Sustainability and Resilience
- Green-washing and/or Consumer Choices
- Patterns of Consumption
- Grassroots Environmental Movements
- Green Revolution
- Agricultural Biotechnology
- International Trade Practices
- Indigenous Land Governance
- Urban Infrastructure
- Mass transit

Your final report should include the following:

- Executive Summary: 200 – 350 words that briefly summarizes your issue, findings, and recommendations
- Description of the issue: an in-depth discussion of the issue you have researched including why it is important.
- Intersectional analysis of the issue and/or political responses to the issue. This should be the bulk of your paper, approx. 1000-1500 words (may be more than 1500 words).
- Conclusions and Recommendations
- References Page (this does not count towards your word count).

Research Reports must be between 2000 - 2400 words long. Writing clearly and concisely is part of the assignment: **do not exceed the 2400 word limit**. Reports shorter than 2000 words require more research or analysis, and will be marked accordingly.

DRAFT – SUBJECT TO CHANGE

All reports should be written in 12 pt. font, using appropriate paragraph structure, correct spelling and grammar, and proper citations. Use APA formatting for your citations and references. Please include a cover page that includes the title of your report, your name, the instructor's name, and the course code.

Note: You can choose *either* of the two deadlines to submit your report. Papers submitted on Thursday, March 8th will receive detailed feedback and will be returned before the final exam. Papers submitted on March 22nd will not be returned until after the final exam, and will not have detailed feedback provided.

Final Test – 25%

The final test will be held in class on March 29th. The final test will cover all of the material in the course: lectures, readings, and discussions. More detail on the format will be available towards the end of the course.