



ERS 225 – Gendering Environmental Politics
Winter 2021
Wednesdays 1:00 – 2:20 p.m. Eastern Time

Instructor: Professor Andrea M. Collins

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Office Hours: By Appointment

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 examples 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 politics can be used to create social and environmental change. Students will be equipped with the tools needed to ask questions about gender and inequality in their future studies.

Course Objectives

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

- Define key concepts related to the analysis of gender, race, and class
- Describe how gender, race, class and other social identities shape our interactions with the environment
- Understand how gender is a critical variable in decision-making processes
- Identify gendered power relations, including within environmental governance and policy
- Analyze environmental issues and politics with attention to gender and other social identities

Required Materials:

Detraz, Nicole. *Gender and the Environment*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2017.

- Available in the UWaterloo Bookstore.

Additional Materials, as specified below. All additional reading and viewing materials are available for free via the UWaterloo Library or freely available online.

Suggested Text:

MacGregor, Sherilyn (ed.). *Routledge Handbook of Gender and Environment*. London: Routledge, 2017.

- E-Book available from the UWaterloo Library.
- Select chapters from this book are assigned in the course; other chapters may be useful for research and further reading.

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®) may be used to screen assignments in this course. Turnitin® is used to verify that all materials and sources in assignments are documented. Students' submissions are stored on a U.S. server, and are subject to the USA PATRIOT ACT, 2001; therefore, students must be given an alternative (e.g., scaffolded assignment or annotated bibliography) if they are concerned about their privacy and/or security. Students will be due notice, in the first week of the term and/or at the time assignment details are provided, about arrangements and alternatives for the use of Turnitin® in this course.

Course Assignments

Attendance/Discussion Board	10% - All term
Mid-Term Test	25% - Held Online in Week 6
Research Essay	35% - Due Friday, March 19 th at 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time
Final Take Home Exam	30% - Released Wed. April 7 th . Due Wed. April 14th

Live Q&A Attendance and/or Discussion Board – 10%

Every week, there will be a live question and answer (Q&A) and discussion session for 50-80 minutes. This is your opportunity to meet with me and your fellow students for a live discussion. You can participate via chat or unmute yourself if you prefer, and you will have the option to turn on webcams in breakout groups, if you prefer. Only portions of the live session will be recorded, so I hope you will feel as though you can participate as if it were an in-person class when we have open discussion. If you attend for all or most of the time (i.e. 50-75% of the session), you will earn 1 point.

However, I do realize that you may not be able to attend live sessions during the term. Or you may simply not want to attend. If that is the case, you can also choose to participate in a discussion board. Only those posting in the discussion board can see the posts. If your post answers the discussion prompt and reflects your engagement with the material, you will earn 1 point. The discussion board post must be made before Friday at 5 p.m. Eastern Time to earn a point.

You can earn only 1 point per week, but you are welcome to both attend class and participate in the discussion board if you want (though you may find it repetitive). Do note that there are 9 weeks to earn points, but you only need to participate in 8 weeks to earn 100% (Learn will automatically drop the lowest grade).

If at any point during the term you are concerned about your attendance grade, please contact me. It is best to discuss with me early in the term to resolve any issues or concerns so that we may come up with alternatives if need be.

Mid-Term Test – 25% – Held online in Week 6

The Mid-term test will assess students' understanding of the lectures and readings up until this point in the term. More detail on the format and scope of the test will be available towards the date of the test.

Research Essay – 35% - Due Friday, March 19th by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time

For this assignment, students will use what they have learned about gender and other forms of social inequality 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 studying this issue, students are expected to use the concepts and/or analytical tools from ERS 225. This should include consideration of gender identities, expectations, roles and/or

responsibilities are relevant to understanding the social, political, economic, cultural and/or ecological dynamics of this issue.

More information about the assignment will be available on LEARN.

Final Take Home Exam – 30%

The final exam will be released on the day of the last class of ERS 225 (Wednesday, April 7th) and will be due 7 days later (Wednesday, April 14th). The final exam will assess your understanding of material throughout the entire term. More detail on the format and scope of the exam will be available towards the end of the course.

Grace Period:

Life happens and often interrupts our best laid plans for the term. This is always true, but more obvious during the COVID-19 pandemic. For this reason, both of the written assignments – *the research paper* and *the final take home exam* – have an automatic 3-day grace period following the listed due date. This means that there will be no penalty applied for assignments handed in within 72 hours of these due dates. You do not need to provide documentation to take advantage of this grace period – these days are just to acknowledge that things happen, and sometimes you need this breathing room.

The Grace Period **does not apply to the mid-term test.** There is already significant flexibility built into the test period, so there is no additional grace period.

If you have or develop long-term issues that affect your academic performance and you need more than the 3-day grace period to stay caught up, you should contact me, your Undergraduate Advisor and/or AccessAbility Services to help you arrange for accommodations. In SERS, the Undergraduate Advisor is Patti Bester. She is amazing.

Late Policy:

After the 72-hour grace period, all late essays and study notes will be deducted **5% per day** and will not be accepted 10 days after the initial due date. Late submissions will be returned later than submissions made on time.

The Final Take-Home Exam will not be accepted outside of the 72-hour grace period as these need to be graded in order to submit the final grades on time.

Course Outline

PART ONE: CORE CONCEPTS FOR GENDER ANALYSIS

Week 1 – Wed. Jan. 13 - INTRODUCTION & CORE CONCEPTS

- **Introduction to the course – expectations and assignments**
- **Sex, gender and the F-word:** *Who wants to be a feminist? What is environmental politics?*

Key Concepts: Sex, gender, sexuality, “waves” of feminism.

Required Reading:

- Detraz, Ch. 1. “Introduction: How are Gender and the Environment Connected?”
- Gay, Roxane. “Introduction: Feminism (n.): Plural” pp. ix - xiv in *Bad Feminist*. Available on UW Learn

Week 2 – Jan. 20th - GENDER, FEMINISM AND ENVIRONMENTALISM

- **Core Concepts for Feminist Research**
- **The Emergence of Ecofeminism and Key Debates**

Key Concepts: Gendered Knowledge, Feminist critiques of science, Ecofeminism, and Feminist Political Ecology

Required Reading:

- Detraz, Ch. 2, “Sustainability and Sustainable Development as Gendered Concepts.”
- Leach, Melissa. “Earth Mother Myths and Other Ecofeminist Fables: How a Strategic Notion Rose and Fell.” *Development and Change* 38, no. 1 (2007): 67–85.
- Arora-Jonsson, Seema. 2011. “Virtue and Vulnerability: Discourses on Women, Gender and Climate Change.” *Global Environmental Change* 21 (2): 744–51.

Suggested Reading:

- Shiva, Vandana. “Chapter 11. Women’s Indigenous Knowledge and Biodiversity Conservation” in *Ecofeminism* by Vandana Shiva and Maria Mies, 164-173. New York: Zed Books, 2014.

Week 3 – Jan. 31st – GENDER & ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS: FORMAL AND INFORMAL

- **Who speaks for whom? Governments and Representation**
- **The Push and Pull of Environmental Politics & Protest**

Key Concepts: Critical Mass, Formal Politics, Informal Politics, Role of the Media

Required Reading/Viewing:

- Bashevkin, Sylvia. “Introduction” in *Women, Power, Politics: The Hidden Story of Canada’s Unfinished Democracy*. Pg. 1-20. Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Seager, Joni. “‘Hysterical Housewives’ and Other Mad Women: Grassroots environmental organizing in the United States,” in *Feminist Political Ecology: Global Issues and Local Experiences*, edited by Dianne Rocheleau, Barbara Thomas-Slayter and Esther Wangari, 1996. Pg. 271-286
- *Miss Representation* Documentary. Director: Jennifer Siebel Newsom, 2011.
 - <https://stream-mcintyre-ca.proxy.lib.uwaterloo.ca/uofwaterloo/title/18366>

Week 4 – Feb. 3rd – ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE & GENDER

- **Race, Class, & Intersectionality**
- **Gender and Environmental Justice**

Key ideas: Intersectionality, Race, Class, Environmental Justice, Environmental Racism

Required Readings/Viewing:

- Detraz, Ch. 3. “Revealing Gender in Environmental Justice”
- Environmental Justice in Mi'kmaq & African Nova Scotian Communities | Ingrid Waldron | TEDxMSVUWomen (19:20):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=itRiNmo3hq8>
- 'A community of widows': How African-Nova Scotians are confronting a history of environmental racism <https://www.cbc.ca/radio/thecurrent/features/facing-race/a-community-of-widows-how-african-nova-scotians-are-confronting-a-history-of-environmental-racism-1.4497952>
- The Urgency of Intersectionality, a TED talk by Kimberlé Crenshaw:
https://www.ted.com/talks/kimberle_crenshaw_the_urgency_of_intersectionality

Week 5 – Feb. 10th – GENDERED RIGHTS, ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Gender Roles and Responsibilities: Food and Agriculture**
- **Gendered Rights: Water and Sanitation**

Key Concepts: Gendered divisions of labour, Care Work, Management of Household Resources, Public and Private Spaces, Stress.

Required Reading:

- Barndt, Deborah. “Whose “Choice”? “Flexible” Women Workers in the Tomato Food Chain,” In *Women Working the NAFTA Food Chain: Women, Food & Globalization*, edited by Deborah Barndt, 62–80. Toronto: Second Story Press, 1999.
- Khanna, T., & Das, M. (2016). Why gender matters in the solution towards safe sanitation? Reflections from rural India. *Global public health*, 11(10), 1185-1201

READING WEEK – FEB. 15 – 19 – NO CLASSES

Week 6 – MID-TERM TEST: Tuesday, Feb. 23 – Thursday Feb. 25

PART TWO: USING GENDER ANALYSIS IN ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS

Week 7 – Mar. 3rd – GENDER & POPULATION

- **The Population Bogeyman**
- **Overpopulated?**

Required Reading:

- Detraz, Ch. 4. “Too Many People? Gender and Population Debates”
- Sasser, Jade. “Sexual Stewardship: Environment, development, and the gendered politics of population” in *Routledge Handbook of Gender and Environment*, edited by Sherilyn MacGregor, pg. 345-356. New York: Routledge, 2017. Link to e-Book on LEARN.
- Coleman, David and Daniel Bogado. *Don't Panic: The Truth About Population*. Wingspan Productions, 2013. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-UbmG8gtBPM> (59 minutes).

Week 8 – Mar. 10th – GENDER & CONSUMPTION

- **Understanding Gender and Patterns of Consumption**
- **How can we consume differently?**

Required Readings:

- Detraz, Ch. 5. “Too much stuff? Gender and Debates about Consumption,”
- Weller, Ines. “Gender Dimensions of Sustainable Consumption,” in *Routledge Handbook of Gender and Environment*, edited by Sherilyn MacGregor, pg. 331-344. New York: Routledge, 2017. Link to e-Book on LEARN.

Week 9 – Mar. 17th – GENDER, GLOBALIZATION & RESOURCES

- **Gender Roles and Land Rights**
- **Energy, Resource Extraction and Gender: Canada and Abroad**

Key Concepts: Types of resource rights: legal and customary, Gender and Global Supply Chains, Revisiting gender and development, global inequality.

Required Readings:

- Chu, Jessica. “Gender and ‘Land Grabbing’ in Sub-Saharan Africa: Women’s Land Rights and Customary Land Tenure.” *Development* 54, no. 1 (2011): 35–39.
- Filipovic, Jill. “A Fair Stake in the Ground.” *Dispatch* Foreign Policy (2014). <http://foreignpolicy.com/2014/04/21/a-fair-stake-in-the-ground/>.
- Boomtown, USA, <http://www.cbc.ca/player/play/2323100750>

Week 10 – Mar. 24th – GENDER & URBAN ENVIRONMENTS

- **Sex and the City: Privilege and Safety in the City**
- **Sex and the City 2: Building Inclusive Communities**

Key Concepts: Urbanization, Informal Settlements, Privilege, Urban Planning, Mobility, Exclusion.

Required Reading:

- Doan, Petra L. 2010. “The Tyranny of Gendered Spaces – Reflections From Beyond the Gender Dichotomy.” *Gender, Place & Culture* 17 (5): 635–54.
- Greenspan, Elizabeth. “It’s a new day in the Gayborhood.” *The New Yorker*. August 8, 2014. <http://www.newyorker.com/business/currency/new-day-gayborhood>

Week 11 – Mar. 31st – GENDER AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Key Concepts: Revisiting Care Work and Household Responsibilities, Divisions of labour, inequality in resource access, Gendered organizations and politics

Required Readings:

- Detraz, Ch. 7 “Conclusion: Gendered Sustainability and Justice in Climate Change Debates”
- Terry, Geraldine. “No Climate Justice Without Gender Justice: An Overview of the Issues.” *Gender & Development* 17, no. 1 (2009): 5–18.

Week 12 – Apr. 7 – CONCLUSION & REVIEW: WHY GENDER MATTERS