

GEOG 9120 – Energy and Environmental Justice

Course Outline: Section 001 - Winter 2018

1. Course Information

1.1. Classroom Location:

Class Location and Time:
Tuesday 1:30-4:00pm
SSC 2322E (Pleva Conference Room)

1.2. Contact Information:

Instructor: Dr. Carol Hunsberger
Office: SSC 2409
Office Hours: Monday 2:30-4:00pm
Email: chunsber@uwo.ca

The Department of Geography strives at all times to provide accessibility to all faculty, staff, students and visitors in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 519-661-2147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation.

More information about “Accessibility at Western” is available at: <http://accessibility.uwo.ca>

2. Calendar Description

Course Description

Current patterns of energy production and use are shot through with questions of social and environmental justice. In satisfying the energy demands of today, how can we account for the interests of future generations? How do regulatory institutions define the ‘public interest’ for contested energy projects? How have the politics of climate change shaped energy policies? Through these and other questions, this graduate seminar will explore environmental and social impacts of energy production, equity issues related to energy access, and political and economic forces shaping key energy decisions. Theoretically, the course engages with ideas of justice found in moral philosophy, political ecology and social movements, building on these perspectives to articulate an interpretation of ‘energy justice.’ We will apply this framework to a series of Canadian and international case issues.

Major topics include:

- Philosophical and social movement interpretations of justice and fairness;
- Key pressures and trends in the political economy of energy;
- How energy security discourses link to constructions of national identity;
- Gender inequality, class, and geographical differences in energy access;
- Intersections between energy systems, institutions, and Indigenous rights;
- Ethical issues posed by climate change;
- Competing perspectives on local resistance to energy infrastructure projects; and

- Contemporary social movements and efforts to enact alternative energy systems.

3. Format

We will meet once a week for a seminar discussion. This is a small course where everyone is expected to actively contribute to a lively and respectful shared learning experience.

4. Learning Outcomes

The most important goals of the course are for you to:

- Build a theoretical foundation for evaluating competing claims about energy projects, policies and systems;
- Position your thesis research in a broader political economic context;
- Think deeply about theory and praxis;
- Engage in group discussions, including giving and receiving peer feedback;
- Deliver presentations that synthesize core concepts from readings and communicate the main arguments from your own research paper; and
- Write a paper that immerses you in a key background literature for your research.

5. Tentative Schedule

Date	Topic	Readings – see details at end
Jan 11	Introduction: Energy, development, geography and place	Sovacool 2014 (read after class)
Jan 18	Foundations of justice 1: Ideas from moral and political philosophy	Sandel 2009 Ch 1 Rawls 1993 Ch 1 Sen 2009 Ch 11
Jan 25	Foundations of justice 2: Ideas from environmental justice and political ecology	Peet, Robbins, Watts 2011 Ch 1 (p30-end) Schlosberg and Carruthers 2010 Martinez-Alier 2014
Feb 1	Toward an energy justice framework: Principles and framings	Sovacool and Dworkin 2015 Becker and Naumann 2017 Gross 2007
Feb 8	Energy, identity and nationalism	Bourassa 1985 Ch 1 Desbiens 2013 Ch 1 Davine et al 2017
Feb 15	Energy conflicts	Watts 2001 Ch 8 Le Billon 2012 Ch 3
Feb 22	NO CLASS – READING WEEK	
Mar 1	Energy and Indigenous rights	Waziyatawin 2012 McCreary and Milligan 2013 Powell 2015
Mar 8	Climate ethics	Baer et al 2009 Forsyth 2014 H. Böll Foundation 2017

Date	Topic	Readings – see details at end
Mar 15	Forecasting the future: Impacts of price and demand projections on energy decisions	Muttitt 2017 Pulver & VanDeveer 2009 Examples of recent energy forecasts (OWL)
Mar 22	NIMBY and BANANA: Local resistance to energy projects	Hager and Haddad 2015 (Ch 1 plus one other chapter of your choice) Roberts 2018
Mar 29	PAPER PRESENTATIONS	
Apr 5	Energy justice revisited: progress and efforts to enact alternatives	D’Arcy 2014 Further materials suggested by the class

Students are responsible for material covered in the lectures as well as the assigned chapters/sections in the text. Students are **REQUIRED TO COMPLETE ALL COMPONENTS** of this course. There are no exceptions to this. Extra assignments to improve grades **will NOT** be accepted.

Grades will not be adjusted on the basis of need. It is important to monitor your performance in the course. Remember: You are responsible for your grades in this course.

6. Assignments and Evaluation

Task	Due Date	Weight
Weekly discussion questions (when not presenting)	Ongoing	10%
Presentation: synthesis of week’s readings	TBD	10%
Research paper proposal	Feb 15	20%
Peer feedback on a classmate’s proposal	Mar 1	5%
Final paper presentation	Mar 29	15%
Final paper	Apr 5	40%

Discussion Questions

On the weeks when you are not presenting, you are asked to submit two questions for group discussion. Your questions should build on the assigned readings and prompt analytical engagement with the themes of the course. Questions should be posted in the “Forums” section of the OWL site by midnight on the night before class.

Presentation of the week’s readings

Once in the semester, you will be responsible for delivering a synthesis of the assigned readings and launching the class discussion. The presentation (around 20 minutes) should highlight key arguments from the readings, contextualize them by providing background about the authors and linking to ideas

explored in other weeks, and give your own critical response to the readings. You may wish to use examples from the news or other sources to illustrate and apply ideas from the readings.

Research Paper

The intent of the paper is to connect one or more topics that we cover in class to a detailed review of literature relevant to your thesis research questions (consulting at least 15 significant journal articles or book chapters). For instance:

- What opportunities and limits might arise from trying to apply the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples to contested energy projects – in Canada or elsewhere?
- How can we understand who constitutes “the community” when considering “local” disputes, e.g. over proposed wind turbines or waste-to-energy facilities?
- In what ways has “the public interest” or “national interest” been framed (by government, project proponents, the media, and project opponents) in relation to a particular case?
- How would existing theories of energy justice need to be modified to describe a just and sustainable energy transition relevant to a country in the Global South?

The proposal will indicate a preliminary research outline, lines of exploration, and a working bibliography, and should be 2-3 double-spaced pages plus 8-10 sources. You are encouraged to discuss your proposed topic with the instructor as you work on the proposal. The paper should be a maximum of 15 double-spaced pages, not including references. You will be asked to present a 15-minute, conference-style summary of your research to the class. Detailed guidelines for the proposal, paper and presentation will be provided separately.

7. Statement on Scholastic Offences

Students are directed to read the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence here:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf

8. University Policy Regarding Illness

Illness

Please visit the link to the university policy for more information.

<http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=- Page 12>

If you feel that you have a medical or personal concern that is interfering with your work, you should contact your Instructor, Graduate Program Administrator, Supervisor, or SGPS.

Attendance

It is expected that students will attend all classes. The professor does not provide access to lecture notes. Students are encouraged to obtain missed lecture notes from a fellow student.

9. Scholastic Discipline for Graduate Students

For the complete policy and regulations see: http://grad.uwo.ca/current_students/regulations/13.html

10. Support Services

A note from the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies:

Western provides on campus health-related services to help you engage in healthy living while pursuing your graduate degree. For example, all students receive membership in Western's Campus Recreation Centre. Cultural events are offered throughout the year, for example through the Faculty of Music <http://www.music.uwo.ca/>, and the McIntosh Gallery <http://www.mcintoshgallery.ca/>. Information on health and wellness services for students may be found at <http://www.health.uwo.ca/>. Students with mental health concerns are advised to speak to someone they feel comfortable confiding in, such as their faculty supervisor, graduate chair, or other administrators. Campus mental health resources may be found at: http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/resources.html.

11. Other Information

For a list of Graduate Regulations please visit:

http://www.grad.uwo.ca/current_students/regulations/index.html

For The University of Western Ontario Senate Regulations, please see the Handbook of Academic and Scholarship Policies at: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/academic_policies/index.html