

**REVISED 1/24/17**  
**GEOG 348U: CULTURAL AND POLITICAL ECOLOGY**  
**WINTER 2017**  
**MONDAYS/WEDNESDAYS 10:00-11:50 AM IN CRAMER HALL 413**

Instructor: Lindsay Skog  
Office: CH 424J  
Office Hours: Tuesdays 2:15-3:45, or by appointment  
Email: skog@pdx.edu

**Course Description**

Human-environment relations—including adaption, resource access and management, conflict, and environmental change—are inherently social and political. The goal of this course is to explore both cultural and political ecologies as approaches to understanding these relations. Beginning with cultural ecology, this course will examine the ways in which people have used culture to adapt to their environment and its challenges. We will then consider the ways in which political ecology may be used to unpack the social, political, and economic processes underlying environmental issues, conflicts, and change. This course is lecture and discussion based.

**Student Responsibilities**

You are responsible for your own learning; I am here to share my expertise and experience, guide you in your learning process, and cheer you on as you go! Ultimately, however, you will get out of this class what you put into it. In order to take advantage of all this course has to offer I expect you will:

- Attend all class meetings. Attendance is required and I do take attendance. You are allowed two absences—excused or unexcused. A third absence will result in a 10% reduction from your final course grade. Each subsequent absence will result in a 5% reduction. Chronic tardiness and/or early departures count as absences. Exceptions to this policy will be handled on a case-by-case basis and requests must be accompanied by documentation. Students are responsible for obtaining missed notes, announcements, and lecture material from other classmates.
- Complete all readings and assignments. I do not accept late work.
- Actively and thoughtfully participate. Invest time in this course.
- Ask questions when you do not understand the material or assignment expectations.
- Produce thoughtful and well-written assignments—this means paying attention to content, structure, and mechanics in all written assignments (do not just hit spell check and call it good!)

**Classroom environment**

Students and faculty each have the responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Faculty have the professional responsibility to treat students with understanding, dignity and respect, to guide classroom discussion and to set reasonable limits on the manner in which students express opinions. In short, treat your peers and me with respect at all times and under all circumstances. I encourage you to voice your opinions and perspectives in a constructive and respectful manner. Disrespectful or abusive language or behavior will not be tolerated.

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**Toolkit for a Sustainable Classroom**

In keeping with PSU's commitment to sustainability, below are several ways in which we as a class can encourage the wise use and conservation of resources:

- The majority of resources for this course are available online.
- You are welcome to use a digital device to take notes; however, if your screen use is distracting to other students and/or not germane to our class, I will ask you to put the device away.
- Use the nearest Hydration Station and your own reusable bottle for water.
- All in the Hall: Take any trash, recyclable, or compostable materials out of the classroom and dispose of them properly.

**Grading**

*Reading Responses (50%):* You will prepare five reading responses (3-4 pages each) throughout the term. I will provide guidelines for each response one week prior to their due dates. Reading responses are intended to help you understand the material you are reading and work through the questions and issues at hand.

*Book Project (25%: 15% for individual book analysis, 10% group presentation):* At the end of the second week of class, you will be assigned a political ecology monograph. Ideally, you will be among 5-6 other students selecting the same book. You will individually prepare an 8-10 page book analysis. As a group you will prepare a presentation about the book. More details will be given in class and on D2L about this assignment.

*Final Exam (25%):* The exam details will be covered in class. There will be absolutely no make-ups of the final exam without a legitimate doctor's note (and notification prior to the exam) or arrangements made with Dr. Skog well in advance of the exam date.

Your final course grade will be determined based on the following rubric:

A: 93-100; A-: 90-92; B+: 87-89; B: 83-86; B-: 80-82; C+: 77-79; C: 73-76; C-: 70-72; D+: 67-69; D: 63-66; D-: 60-62; F: 59 or less.

**Required Text**

There is no required textbook for this course. Readings are available on D2L and through the PSU library.

**Other General Course Policies**

*Requests for Academic Accommodation:* Students who have a learning disability that may affect their performance should contact the Disability Resource Center, 116 Smith Memorial Student Union, Phone: 503-725-4150, Email: [drc@pdx.edu](mailto:drc@pdx.edu) Fax: 503-725-4103, TTY or Relay: 503-725-6504. If you have a documented disability and are registered with the Disability Resource Center meet with the instructor as soon as possible so that accommodations can be made.

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*Policy on Academic Honesty:* Any type of academically and ethically dishonest work (plagiarism, copying someone else's work, etc.) may result in an automatic "F" for the assignment and, when appropriate, a report filed with the Office of Student Affairs. The PSU Bulletin includes the following statement on Academic Honesty: "The Student Conduct Code, which applies to all students, prohibits all forms of academic cheating, fraud, and dishonesty. These acts include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, buying and selling of course assignments and research papers, performing academic assignments including tests and examinations for other persons, unauthorized disclosure and receipt academic information, and other practices commonly understood to be academically dishonest."

*Policy on Classroom Guests:* On occasion students may wish to bring guests to class. In many cases such arrangements can be made; however, students must contact Dr. Skog in advance of the class for permission. Unfortunately, minor children are not allowed in our classroom. [Little Vikings flexible daycare program](#) and the [Resource Center for Students with Children](#) are excellent resources for locating childcare.

*Policy on Discrimination and Harassment:* Portland State is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of prohibited discrimination and sexual harassment (sexual assault, domestic and dating violence, and gender or sex-based harassment and stalking). If you have experienced any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment, know that help and support are available. PSU has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and on-campus housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more. Information about PSU's support services on campus, including confidential services and reporting options, can be found on PSU's Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response website at: <http://www.pdx.edu/sexual-assault/get-help> or you may call a confidential IPV Advocate at 503-725-5672.

Please be aware that all PSU faculty members and instructors *are required to report* information of an incident that may constitute prohibited discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence. This means that if you tell me about a situation of sexual harassment or sexual violence that may have violated university policy or student code of conduct, I have to share the information with my supervisor or the University's Title IX Coordinator or the Office of Affirmative Action. For more information about Title IX please complete the required student module [Creating a Safe Campus](#) in your D2L.

**Course Schedule**

Note: This schedule is subject to change. Any changes, including changes to the assigned readings, will be announced in class and posted to on D2L.

Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments Due
<b>I. Overview of Cultural and Political Ecology</b>		
Jan 9	Course Introduction	
Jan 11	Cultural and Political Ecology: An overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Robbins 9-24 (available online through the PSU library)***</li></ul>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fairhead and Leach 1995</li> </ul>
Jan 16	Martin Luther King Jr Day—University Closed	
<b>II. Roots and Branches</b>		
Jan 18	Environmental Determinism and Cultural Ecology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Robbins 25-48</li> <li>• Rappaport 1967</li> <li>• Case study as assigned on D2L</li> </ul>
Jan 23	Environmental Determinism and Cultural Ecology	<b>DUE: Reading Response 1</b>
Jan 25	Population, Hazards, and Adaptation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• O’Keefe <i>et al</i> 1976</li> <li>• Nietschmann 1972</li> </ul>
Jan 30	The Critical Tools I: Critical Cultural Ecology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Robbins 49-81</li> <li>• Watts 1983</li> </ul>
Feb 1	The Critical Tools II: A community of practice takes shape	<b>DUE: Reading Response 2</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Robbins 82-100</li> <li>• Hecht 1985</li> </ul>
Feb 6	Social Construction and Classification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Robbins 122-142</li> <li>• Cronon 1995</li> </ul>
<b>III. Themes in Political Ecology</b>		
Feb 8	Degradation and Marginalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case study: Ariza-Montobbio 2010</li> </ul>
Feb 13	Conservation and Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case Study: Hennessy 2015</li> </ul>
Feb 15	Environmental Conflict	<b>DUE: Reading Response 3</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kosek 2004</li> <li>• Case Study: Turner 2004</li> </ul>
Feb 20	Environmental Subjects and Identities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case Study: Hickcox forthcoming</li> </ul>
Feb 22	Gender and environment Feminist Political Ecology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case Study: Sultana 2011</li> <li>• Mollett and Faria 2013</li> </ul>
Feb 27	Climate change and political ecology: Carbon as a political object	<b>DUE: Reading Response 4</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bumpus and Liverman 2011</li> <li>• Beyner-Farris and Basset 2012, Burgess 2013, Beymer-Farris and Bassett 2013</li> </ul>
March 1	Climate change and political ecology: Risk, Resilience, and Adaptation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ribot 2014</li> <li>• Turner 2013</li> </ul>
<b>IV. Doing Political Ecology</b>		
March 6	Social movements and Environmental Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rangan 2004</li> <li>• Di Chiro 2010</li> </ul>
March 8	Methods and Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>DUE: Reading Response 5</b></li> <li>• Zimmerer 2015</li> <li>• Braun 2015</li> </ul>
March 13	Book Presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>DUE: Book Projects</b></li> </ul>
March 15	Book Presentations	

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**Final Exam: Tuesday, March 21, 8-9:50 AM**