Advanced Political Ecology
(Environmental Anthropology)

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Office hours: Mondays 1:00-3:00 PM or by appointment

About the Seminar
Being one of the fastest growing fields in geography and environmental anthropology, political ecology resists an easy definition. Broadly, political ecology lies in a cross-disciplinary domain of research on nature-society relations, which have long scholarly traditions. Simultaneously, political ecology has evolved and emerged into multiple new directions in recent years. In this graduate reading seminar, we will explore a variety of thematic, methodological, and theoretical venues in political ecology. The first half of the seminar focuses on a number of foundational themes in political ecology with readings that are considered classics; the second half focuses on some of the emergent directions in the field, which include Anthropocene, queer approach, more-than-human, and non-Anglophone political ecology (with readings that perhaps are less ‘political’). We begin by asking what political ecology is, but in the end, our broad concern is about what political ecology can do in this world where society and nature and humans and non-humans are becoming intricately entangled to one another.

Seminar structure and requirements
This course is a reading and discussion-intensive graduate seminar. Students are expected to read each week’s material thoroughly and come to class prepared for in-depth discussion.

Attendance and participation (26%): Attendance and active participation in class are required. If you must miss a class for an unavoidable reason, you should email me in advance and later submit a form of evidence (doctor’s note, etc.) that proves your legitimate absence. Out of fourteen classes in this semester, an attendance grade for one class will be dropped from the total grade (2% each).

Weekly reading reflections (26%): Write a 1-2 page reflection (more than 600 words) on the week’s readings and post it on Blackboard (2% each). The reading reflections are NOT a summary of the readings and should consist of two parts: a) a close and critical engagement with the readings and b) up to three questions for discussion in class. I expect you to read others’ reading reflections before class.

Leading discussion (21%): Each week, two to three students will lead the main discussion. This means that each of you will lead the discussion three times (7% each). Students are expected to read the assigned readings and meet ahead of time to prepare discussion.
Final paper (27%): The final paper is designed to help each student to achieve one’s goal for the semester. The themes and formats of the paper will therefore vary depending on what stage of the program each student is at. For example, the final paper can be a literature review, a conceptual framework, a research proposal, or a manuscript of a dissertation chapter. Each student will consult with me and choose a format and a topic in advance.

**Policies**

*Late assignments*
Late assignments will lose 1% of the item grade per day.

*Communication and group work*
Please be polite and responsible when you communicate with me and among your leading discussion team members. Note that little or no contribution to group work will lead to no grade for the item.

*Plagiarism and academic misconduct*
Academic honesty is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. All members of the academic community must be confident that each person’s work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed, and presented. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful. The academic community regards academic dishonesty as an extremely serious matter, with serious consequences that range from probation to expulsion. If you have any questions about the above policy or what constitutes academic misconduct, please contact me or consult FIU academic misconduct webpage at [http://academic.fiu.edu/academicbudget/misconductweb/1acmisconductproc.htm](http://academic.fiu.edu/academicbudget/misconductweb/1acmisconductproc.htm).

**University resources**

*Students with Disabilities*
Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. Please contact the Disability Resource center at 305-348-3532 in GC 190 ([http://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/student-success/disability-resource-center/](http://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/student-success/disability-resource-center/)) to coordinate reasonable accommodations.

*Counseling and Psychological Services*
If you suffer from stress, sleep problems, anxiety, depression, interpersonal concerns or alcohol use that damages your academic performance, you are not alone. Students who have these issues are encouraged to contact the Counseling and Psychological Services at 305-348-2277 in SHC 270 ([http://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/wellness/counseling-and-psychological-services/services/index.php](http://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/wellness/counseling-and-psychological-services/services/index.php)).

*Center for Excellence in Writing*
The FIU Center for Excellence in Writing offers various services that will help improve your writing skills. I highly recommend using these resources for you to be successful in this course. Visit their website ([http://writingcenter.fiu.edu/](http://writingcenter.fiu.edu/)) for making an appointment.
Readings
Several books are either located in the Reserve or available as an e-book of the Green Library.

Books


Articles
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<th>Week</th>
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| Week 1 | August 22  | Introduction: What is political ecology?       | • Course syllabus  
• Robbins, P. (2012), Part I: What is political ecology? (p. 100)  
• Watts, Michael J. in Tom Perreault, Gavin Bridge, and James McCarthy (Eds.). (2004), Ch. 2 |
| Week 2 | August 29  | Degradation & marginalization                   | • Robbins, P. (2012), Ch. 8  
|        | September 5| Conservation & control                          | • Robbins, P. (2012), Ch. 9  
• Neumann, R. P. (1998), Imposing Wilderness                                                                                              |
| Week 3 | September 12| Environmental conflict                         | • Robbins, P. (2012), Ch. 10  
| Week 4 | September 19| Environmental subjects and identities           | • Robbins, P. (2012), Ch. 11  
• Li, T. (2007), Will to Improve                                                                                                           |
| Week 5 | September 26| Political objects and actors                    | • Robbins, P. (2012), Ch. 12  
| Week 6 | October 3  | Reflections on methodologies                   | • Robbins, P. (2012), Part II                                                                                                           |
| Week 7 | October 10 | Anthropocene I                                  | • Tsing, A. L. (2015), The mushroom at the end of the world                                                                             |
| Week 8 | October 17 | Anthropocene II                                 | • Marris, E. (2013). Rambunctious garden                                                                                                |
| Week 9 | October 24 | Anthropocene III                                | • Lorimer, J. (2015). Wildlife in the Anthropocene                                                                                    |
| Week 10| October 31 | Queer perspective                              | • Probyn, E. (2016). Eating the Ocean                                                                                                |
| Week 11| November 7 | More than human I                               | • Van Dooren, T. (2014). Flight ways                                                                                                    |
| Week 14| November 28| Wrap-up: What can political ecology do?         | • TBD                                                                                                                                     |
| Week 15| December 5 | Final paper due                                 |                                                                                                                                          |