

Political Economy and Environmental Change since 1492 ECON - 3010 (4 credits)

International Honors Program (IHP) **IHP Climate Change: The Politics of Land, Water, and Energy Justice**

This syllabus is representative of a typical semester. Because courses develop and change over time to take advantage of unique learning opportunities, actual course content varies from semester to semester.

Course Description

Political economy studies the creation and distribution of wealth by asking “who gets what, why and with what consequences,” with special attention to the role of governments and public policy. Experiential and comparative learning exposes us to the very “real-world” dynamics of how wealth, material assets, and political assets are distributed across and within countries and challenges us to consider dilemmas of justice and equity across space and time. In this course, we will read scholarly literature that explores concepts such as Marxism, development, and neoliberalism and discuss how they can help us understand the ways that the physical environment has been shaped by the social environment—including governments, laws, policies, private corporations, individuals, social movements, and communities. In this way, we will be looking at political ecology as a subset of or parallel framework to political ecology.

Naming 1492 as a touchstone in the history of the land that is today known as the Americas is our way of flagging our interest in histories and present-day forms of colonialism. By focusing on relationships among capital, labor, and nature, we hope to illuminate the ways that capitalist accumulation strategies dispossess people of their access to natural resources and externalizing the costs of economic growth onto particular people and places, and the earth at large. This includes interrogating ideas such as private property; democracy and decision-making; conflict and resistance; racism, sexism, ableism, caste, faith and environmental degradation.

Throughout the course, students will work to explore these socioenvironmental systems as relate to topics of personal interest, using case studies from our study locations in their research process. The

“application of texts” activities in the course will link up to the research techniques that students practice in ANTH 3500.

This syllabus builds on the work of prior IHP Climate Change and Human Rights faculty, most recently Dugyu Avci.

Student learning outcomes

Students will be evaluated based on how they demonstrate the following capacities in group discussions, submitted assignments, and field activities associated with the course.

- Discuss theories about the relationships among political processes and economic systems, including underdevelopment and wealth inequality
- Relate and apply historical and comparative knowledge to the analysis of communities and current events
- Describe processes of social stratification, their imbrication in the economy, and their consequences for the physical environment
- Appreciate one’s position in socioenvironmental systems and interact with people in different positions in a manner that demonstrates humility and cultivates reciprocity
- Use a political ecology lens to explore a research question about social dynamics in the food-energy- water nexus
- Think, dream, and imagine alternatives to capitalist development and toward climate and social justice

Evaluation

Students can accumulate the following number of points by successfully completing the following activities.

<i>Engagement with classmates and site visits/activities</i> Roughly calculated as participating in eight reading discussions (3 points each – do all nine for bonus points) and 5 overall quality points	29
<i>Engagement with texts</i> Reading journals (for reading discussion #1 only): 3 points Reading circle contributions (3 points x seven – do eight for bonus points): 21 points Overall quality of engaging with texts: 3 points	27
<i>Application of texts</i> Thematic essays (7 points x two): 14 points Integrative essay draft: 6 points Revised integrative essay: 12 points Thematic panel: 12 points (6 points for presenting, 6 for participation)	44

Grading Scale

94-100%	A	Excellent
90-93%	A-	
87-89%	B+	
84-86%	B	Above Average
80-83%	B-	
77-79%	C+	
74-76%	C	Average
70-73%	C-	
67-69%	D+	
64-66%	D	Below Average
below 64	F	Failure

Assignment overview (more detailed instructions to be provided on Canvas)

Reading journals – you’ll just do this once!

Short, relatively quick summaries of each reading—to help you digest and remember the key points that were covered. Start with discussing the author’s main argument (“[Author name] argues . . .”), which is different from the topic of the reading. Then describe the evidence they use for building their argument.

Sometimes it is difficult to identify the evidence base for more theoretical readings; in this case, you would be tracing the intellectual lineage of the argument (who do they cite, who are they agreeing/arguing with).

Conclude with a short discussion of something that was new to you from the reading, a connection you see between the author’s ideas and the real world, a link you can make to another reason, or some other personal insight from your experience of doing the reading. These “journal entries” will be 1-2 paragraphs per reading.

Reading circle

At the beginning of each reading discussion, you will meet with a small group where each person has completed a specific task to help understand the material.

Application of texts

Building on the research skills you are practicing in ANTH 3500, you will be pursuing a research theme related to the themes of ECON 3010. You will identify relevant literature to your line of analysis by writing two shorter essays (thematic essays) and an integrative essay (final project). Along the way, you will sit with peers on a panel—like an academic conference or a talk show—to discuss your research in progress.

Fostering a learning community

Meaningful conversations (adapted from Beth Duckles)

In this class we will deal with perspectives that are controversial, thought-provoking and which may challenge your worldview. In order to address these issues in a scholarly manner, we will operate with a foundation of respect for all persons, acknowledging that there are a variety of viewpoints to be considered. You are always free to express your own opinions, however you must be ready to consider those opinions using a social science lens. You are always free to disagree with the conclusions of your professor, your peers, or the authors you read. Disagreeing with the material does not excuse you from engaging with it, however.

Participation and professionalism

Professionalism takes many forms. Being a good academic citizen requires that you:

- Prepare as fully as possible for class (review readings, write down questions you’d like to discuss)
- Foster a supportive learning environment by engaging in respectful dialog—this includes active listening and awareness of classroom power dynamics!
- Connect your comments to class materials; when bringing in life experience or other courses, make the links explicit
- Seek out and try to understand different vantage points
- Minimize disruptions, be aware of your effects on others, and use technology responsibly
- Address problems in a proactive and productive manner

- Be proactive and flexible and take ownership of your learning experience as individuals and as a group. The experiential model of learning requires that you look forward and back across the semester. The logistics of our time in each country means that coursework will not always develop in a strictly linear fashion.
- Before critiquing others' viewpoints, interrogate your own; listen carefully and speak with humility. Push yourself to take on a new role in the group. (Do you usually speak first? Try waiting! Do you like to spend a lot of time reflecting and generally keep your ideas to yourself? Try sharing an unformed idea with a small group!)
- If you have criticisms, suspicions, or poor impressions of guest speaker or site visit, please save any negative comments for a "reading discussion" session or other IHP-only space rather than directly confronting our guest/host during our time with them.

My teaching philosophy

It is my intent that students from diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity of our learning community be viewed as a resource, strength, and benefit for our class. I aim to present materials and activities that are inclusive of diversity in gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, and culture.

Trauma-awareness

Whether it's recent world events or things that have happened in our life stories, many of us have experienced trauma that affects our capacity to feel safe, build relationships, and learn. Women, racialized and minoritized people, people with disabilities, people who have experienced housing or financial instability, LGBTQ+ people are at elevated risk of experiencing trauma—so paying attention to it is another way of fostering equity. When it comes to teaching, this is a humble journey of trying to lead with empathy, providing structure for students, and empowering them to chart their own course.

Countering oppression

Core to the process of community-based learning is honoring people's dignity and creating spaces that encourage equitable participation and power-sharing. This requires active effort because it is a radically different paradigm from the larger society. I am particularly inspired by the Movement for Black Lives' calls to imagine a more just future. Some ways this manifests in my teaching are efforts to . . .

- Center the margins: seeking out materials authored by and/or depicting the stories of people who have historically been marginalized
- Interrupt oppressive speech: "calling in" people whose actions may be doing (unconscious or otherwise) harm to others
- Recognize the effect of trauma as well as its differential impacts (see above)
- Apply an equity lens to decision-making
- Use a critical race lens to identify and name racism and other structural oppression

For your part, I expect you to be thoughtful about your own identity and attentive to power dynamics in the classroom, contributing to an environment where we strive to build a more just and equitable academe.

Universal accommodations

To help all learners succeed, I provide a variety of universal accommodations:

- Untimed assignments
- Providing electronic versions of slides and worksheets used in class (see student resource folder)
- Automatic no-penalty extensions on most assignments

If you have other officially approved accommodations, I am happy to work with you to use them to support your achievement of the course learning outcomes. If you would like to discuss informal accommodations that do not require going through a disability office for certification, please contact me via e-mail so that we can find a time to discuss your needs.

SIT and instructor policies

Participation

IHP is an experiential learning program, where learning extends well beyond our “reading discussion” sessions. As a result, you are expected to be at all reading discussions, guest lectures, and site visits. Beyond just showing up, we expect you to have prepared for activities (do pre-reading and background research, come prepared with questions, demonstrate gratitude to guests, make connections to readings) and participate in the session—including listening actively—even if it is not what you might have expected.

That said, experiential learning can also be exhausting, so your level of engagement may vary somewhat depending on your health and mood. If you are experiencing difficulty engaging in activities and interacting with your classmates or guest educators, please contact your instructor, the country team, and/or the program director immediately so that we can collaborate on supporting your success in the program!

Failure to attend program activities (reading discussions, guest lectures, field visits) may render a student ineligible for course credit from their home institution, or could result in program dismissal.

Deadlines

Assignment deadlines are a tool for helping students progress with the course material. That said, life does intervene sometimes to make it difficult to complete things in a timely manner. For this reason, you have universal extensions on most assignments – no questions asked, no penalty. The only assignments that don't have extensions are those that require presenting in class or working with classmates.

Assignments are due at 11.59pm, and you have until 9am two days later (e.g., assignment is due on Sunday night, you have an extension until Tuesday morning) if you require an extension. If you are having trouble getting assignments submitted in time, please e-mail the instructor immediately so that we can discuss accommodations to keep you on track in the course! Do not try to “just catch up” on your own, as this is likely to make you miserable.

Academic Integrity

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, obtaining or giving unauthorized aid on an examination, having unauthorized prior knowledge of the content of an examination, doing work for another student, having work done by another person for the student, and plagiarism. Penalties for academic dishonesty can include receiving an F in the course and/or dismissal from the institution/program.

Plagiarism is the presentation of another person's ideas or product as one's own. Examples of plagiarism are: copying verbatim and without attribution all or parts of another's written work, using phrases, charts, figures, illustrations, computer programs, websites without citing the source; paraphrasing ideas, conclusions or research without citing the source; using all or part of a literary plot, poem, film, musical score, computer program, websites or other artistic product without attributing the work to its creator.

Students can avoid unintentional plagiarism by carefully following accepted scholarly practices.

Notes taken for papers and research projects should accurately record sources of material to cited, quoted, paraphrased, or summarized, and follow the American Psychological Association style guide (7th edition).

Violations of SIT Study Abroad academic integrity policy are handled as violations of the student code of conduct and will result in disciplinary action. Please discuss this with your traveling faculty if you have questions.

Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad Student Handbook for policies on academic integrity, ethics, warning and probation, diversity and disability, sexual harassment, and the academic appeals process.

Course schedule and reading assignments

Find readings for all classes in the [reading library](#) inside the student resource folder: tinyurl.com/IHPCCCstudents. You will need to be signed into your personal Google account to access these files. Find assignment instruction and submission folders in the Canvas shell for this specific course.

USA	
<p>READING DISCUSSION 1: Bay Area landscapes Tuesday, Feb. 6th ~9.30am</p>	<p>Required readings: Gomez, A. R. (2023). “We survived this”: California missions, colonialism, and Indigenous belonging. <i>Political Theology</i>, 24(7), 632-649. Mahoney, A. (2023, July 13). Combating climate change begins with reparations, Bay Area residents say. <i>CapitalB News</i>. http://capitalbnews.org/climate-reparations-bay-area/</p> <p>Reading journal due: Sunday, Feb. 4th at 11.59pm California time, but no penalty for submitting it by Tuesday 9am</p>
MOROCCO	
<p>READING DISCUSSION 2: Environmental worldviews Tue., Feb. 13th ~2pm</p>	<p>Required readings: Klein, N. (2014). <i>This changes everything: Capitalism vs. the climate</i>. Simon & Schuster. Chapter 2 – “Hot money” Clapp, J., & Dauvergne, P. (2011). <i>Paths to a green world: The political economy of the global environment</i> (2nd ed). MIT Press. Chapter 1 – “Peril or prosperity?”</p> <p>Learning circle product due: Sunday, Feb. 18th at 11.59pm Morocco time, but no penalty for submitting it by Tuesday 9am</p> <p><u>Guest lectures</u> Feb. 15th – Sara Soujar, “My makhzen and me” documentary screening Feb. 16th – Ibrahim Mustapha, “Figuig struggle against water privatization” Feb. 21st – Mohamed Benata, “Ecological impact of tourist development in the coast of Saïdia”</p>
<p>Friday, Feb. 23rd 11.59pm</p>	<p>Thematic essay #1 due at 11.59pm Morocco time, but no penalty for submitting it by Monday 9am</p>
<p>READING DISCUSSION 3: Colonialism and development Tuesday, Feb. 27th ~9.15am</p>	<p>Required readings: Bernstein, H. (2000). Colonialism, capitalism, development. In T. Allen & A. Thomas (Eds.), <i>Poverty and development into the 21st century</i> (Revised ed., pp. 241-270). Oxford University Press. Arora-Jonsson, S. (2023). The sustainable development goals: A universalist promise for the future. <i>Futures</i>, 146.</p> <p>Learning circle product due: Sunday, Feb. 25th at 11.59pm Morocco time, but no penalty for submitting it by Tuesday 9am</p>
<p>READING DISCUSSION 4: Land and capitalism Friday, March 1st ~9.30am</p>	<p>Required readings: Moore, J. W. (2017). World accumulation and planetary life, or, why capitalism will not survive until the ‘last tree is cut’ <i>IPPR Progressive Review</i>, 24(3), 175-202. Rignall, K. E. (2015). Land and the politics of custom in a Moroccan oasis town. <i>Anthropological Quarterly</i>, 88(4), 2015.</p> <p>Learning circle product due: Wed., Feb. 28th at 11.59pm Morocco time, but no penalty for submitting it by Friday 9am</p> <p>March 1st Guest lecture by Mr. Omar, “Imider case, Amazigh movement”</p>

NEPAL	
March 15 th	Guest lecture: “Climate Justice in Nepal” with Shrishti Singh Bandari
READING DISCUSSION 5 (Econ Nepal session 1): Political ecology & post-development Mon., March 18 th ~9.45-11.15am	Required “readings:” Demaria, F., & Kothari, A. (2017). The <i>Post-Development Dictionary</i> agenda: Paths to the pluriverse. <i>Third World Quarterly</i> , 38(12), 2588-2599. <i>Video lecture (34 minutes):</i> Paige West on “Critical Political Ecology” for the (US) National Socioenvironmental Synthesis Center: https://youtu.be/SAWfggb1ezw Learning circle product due: Sat., March 16th at 11.59pm Nepal time , but no penalty for submitting it by Monday 9am (no submissions thereafter)
READING DISCUSSION 6 (Econ Nepal session 2): Land tenure Sat., March 23 rd	Required readings: Acharya, B. R. (2008). <i>Land tenure and land registration in Nepal</i> FIG Working Week (International Federation of Surveyors annual meeting), Stockholm. Sunderlin, W. D., & Holland, M. B. (2022). A historical perspective on land tenure security. In M. B. Holland, Y. J. Masuda, & B. E. Robinson (Eds.), <i>Land tenure security and sustainable development</i> (pp. 15-41). Learning circle product due: Thu., March 21st at 11.59pm , but no penalty for submitting it by Saturday 9am (no submissions thereafter) ➔ If internet access is not available, paper submissions will be accepted! (Take a photo and scan your document to PDF before giving it to me!)
March 23 rd -24 th	Thematic panels: Research collaboratives present research in progress – each person speaks for 5 minutes about their (individual) findings and future research plans <i>Panel 1:</i> Adhishri, Addie, Ella, Steph, Aranza, Malva (Social Leadership) <i>Panel 2:</i> Annalise, Tyler, Victoria, Nate, Grace (Regional Variation and Implementation)
READING DISCUSSION 7 (Econ Nepal session 3): Multilateral organizations Friday, April 5 th ~2-3.30pm	Required readings: Babb, S., & Chorev, N. (2016). International organizations: Loose and tight coupling in the development regime. <i>Studies in Comparative International Development</i> , 51(1), 81- 102. Learning circle product due: Wed., April 3rd at 11.59pm Nepal time , but no penalty for submitting it by Friday 9am (no submissions thereafter)
Sunday, April 7 th 11.59pm	Thematic essay #2 due Sunday, April 7th at 11.59pm Nepal time , but no penalty for submitting it by Tuesday 9am (no submissions thereafter – talk to me BEFORE the 7 th if you are facing challenges!)
Tuesday, April 9 th after methods class	Thematic panel 3: Martha, Kavisha, Connor, Sammy, Jake, Kaylee, Audrey (Health and Behavior)

ECUADOR	
<p>READING DISCUSSION 8: Extractivism</p> <p>Wed., April 17th 10-11.30am</p>	<p>Required readings: Galeano, E. (1973/1997). <i>Open veins of Latin America: Five centuries of the pillage of a continent</i> [Las venas abiertas de América Latina] (C. Belfrage, Trans.). Monthly Review Press. <u>Chapter 1 (“Lust for Silver, Lust for Gold”) only!</u></p> <p>Learning circle product due: Mon., April 15th at 11.59pm Ecuador time, but no penalty for submitting it by Wed. 9am (no submissions thereafter)</p>
<p>READING DISCUSSION 9: Current issues in Ecuador</p> <p>Mon., April 29th 11.30-1pm</p>	<p>Required “readings”:</p> <p>1) Mowbray, S. (2022, April 4). All coked up: The global environmental impacts of cocaine. <i>Mongabay</i>. https://news.mongabay.com/2022/04/all-coked-up-the-global-environmental-impacts-of-cocaine → Can read PDF on Google Drive or online version (whichever is easier) → video [5 min.] covering most of the ideas: https://youtu.be/321Q0exJzdA</p> <p>2) Then: read, watch, or listen to Thea Riofrancos: Riofrancos, T. N. (2016). <i>Proleptic protest: Local resistance to new extractive projects in Ecuador (Working Paper 415)</i>. Kellogg Institute for International Studies. Martindale, D. H. (Host). (2022, April 22). Resource radicals: Thea Riofrancos on democracy, our extractive economy, and Indigenous resistance (Season 1, Episode 6) <i>In Storytelling animals</i>. https://shows.acast.com/storytelling-animals/episodes/resource-radicals-thea-riofrancos-ecuador-extractivism [80 min.] Urban Democracy Lab. (2021, May 20). <i>Resource radicals: From petro nationalism to post-extractivism in Ecuador</i> [YouTube video]. New York University. https://youtu.be/inZonZg01ws [90 min.]</p> <p>3) Optional article to skim for people who can read Spanish: Lyll, A. (2020). Resistencia en retrospectiva: La multitemporalidad del extractivismo en la Amazonía. <i>Íconos - Revista de Ciencias Sociales</i>(69), 17-34.</p> <p>Learning circle product due: Sat., April 27th at 11.59pm Ecuador time, but no penalty for submitting it by Mon. 9am (no submissions thereafter)</p> <p>Thematic panel 4 @ 2pm (Arts and Spirituality research collaborative): Sabrina, Devon, Kieli, Isaac, Eve, Maddy</p>
<p>Tue., April 30th 2-3.30pm</p>	<p>Thematic panel 5 (Policy and Governance research collaborative): Reihan, Ari, Koe, Josh, Shayna, Gibran</p>
<p>Sunday, May 5th 11.59pm</p>	<p>Draft integrative essay due at 11.59pm Ecuador time, no penalty for submitting it by Tue. 9am BUT you need to have some writing to share at the peer review workshop</p>
RESEARCH WEEK	
<p>Mon.-Tue. May 6th-7th</p>	<p>Peer review workshops, revising writing based on peer feedback</p>
<p>Wed-Thu. May 8th-9th</p>	<p>Final presentations (ungraded!), revising writing based on peer feedback</p>
<p>Friday, May 10th 11.59pm</p>	<p>Revised integrative essay due at 11.59pm Ecuador time No-penalty extension available only until 9am SATURDAY May 11th!!!!!! (This is so you can truly retreat from schoolwork on the retreat.)</p>