Course Description: This course examines social justice questions in the practice of conservation. We will critically assess epistemological, methodological, and practical issues in nature-society relations, and thus trace the emergence of the interdisciplinary approach known as political ecology. The field emerged from a key conjunction: in the field, there was an explosion of international development and conservation projects that came to be known as “sustainable development.” In the academy, researchers started asking questions about the relationship between poverty and environmental degradation. While political ecology has expanded to broader questions of nature-society relations, a core concern remains inequalities—political ecologists ask how social justice issues alter environmental transformations. It is my hope that you will be able to use insights from this class in careers in research, public policy, conservation and international development.

Student Learning Outcomes: By the end of the semester, students will understand political and epistemological debates in political ecology, and the implications for the practice of conservation. Through essays on their case study, students will demonstrate: proper scholarly citations, secondary research, and arguments that span a range of explanatory and normative theories in politics.

Course Requirements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Three essays</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio-Visual Presentation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Essays: Together, three essays account for 75% of the course grade. Before you begin writing your essays, you will choose your case—for most students, this will be natural resource management in a country in Africa, Asia, Latin America or the Middle East. Your short case proposal is due in the third week of class. If you would like help choosing a case study, or want to propose a case outside the broad parameters mentioned above, please talk to me in office hours.
For each essay, you will consider the debates and ideas from the course themes in relation to your case study. You may switch cases at any point during the semester, but you will have to submit a new short case proposal that is subject to my approval.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Word Length (± 100 words)</th>
<th>% of Final Grade</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Property &amp; Power</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>T Oct. 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrating Nature</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>R Nov. 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Either Conservation &amp; Development or Liberation Ecologies</td>
<td>3,500</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>M Dec. 12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Completed assignments must be handed in at the beginning of class on the day they are due. Late assignments lose 10% per day.

**Audio-Visual Presentation:** Is there a connection between how we represent nature and how we act on it? You will choose a text (movie clip, work of art, commercial/ad) that represents an environmental problem or opportunity related to your case study. In a 5-7 minute presentation, you will present the text and explain its significance, including how it shapes the trajectory of political action.

**Class Participation**
To get the most out of this class, we will all need use the course materials to prepare, come to class, and discuss.
- To prepare for class, you will submit a one page (maximum) reaction paper on WISE Forums, no later than 10:00pm the night before we meet as a class. *Reaction papers are not summaries.* Reaction papers should engage with the readings—what questions do you have; how does it relate to your case study; how does it speak to other texts?
  - All students may miss two reaction papers without penalty.
- In accordance with the Bishop Wellness Center’s policy, I do not accept medical notes for excused absences.
- When you miss class, please let me know by email. It is your responsibility to check with your classmates and the WISE site to keep up with the class.

**Accommodations:** If you observe a religious holy day that prevents you from attending class (or part of class), please notify me during the first two weeks of class. Likewise, if you have a disability and you need accommodations, please notify me during the first two weeks of class. You will also need to verify eligibility and make arrangements through Disability and Learning Services (www.willamette.edu/dept/disability).

**Academic Honesty:** In fairness to students who put in an honest effort, cheaters will be punished. The College’s Plagiarism and Cheating Policy is available at: http://www.willamette.edu/cla/catalog/resources/policies/index.php. Any evidence of cheating or plagiarism (i.e., representing someone else’s work as your own) will earn a zero on the assignment in question and will be reported to the CLA dean’s office.
If you do not know if you have provided adequate citation for your research, you are responsible for asking me before the assignment is due. *Ignorance of the rules is not an acceptable defense.*

**Readings**

**Required Books**


I will also post required readings on our WISE site. Please bring a copy of the readings to class on the day they are assigned.

For foundations and methodologies, I recommend:


**COURSE OUTLINE:**

*Our course schedule is a work in progress.*

*I will announce changes to readings in class and update the syllabus on the WISE site as necessary.*

*I will make every effort to stick to paper due dates (you should, too!).*
PART I: PROPERTY AND POWER

Q’eqchi’ farmer shows me cultivated coffee plants marking his land claims inside a park (Guatemala).

T Aug. 30: Course Introduction

R Sep. 1: Power of Parks
• Brockington, Ch. 2-4

T Sep. 6: Boundary Work

Additional Sources
R Sep. 8: Debating the Commons

  **Recommended Source(s)**

T Sep. 13: Enclosures & Primitive Accumulation
  • Skim: Li, TM Indigeneity, Capitalism, and the Management of Dispossession. *Current Anthropology* 51: 385-414

  **Recommended Source(s)**
  • Marx, Karl. “The secret of primitive accumulation and the expropriation of the agricultural population.” Chapters 26 & 27 of Capital, Volume I

R Sep. 15: Crimes against Nature

T Sep. 20: No Class Meeting
  → Read at least one article/book chapter related to your chosen case study
  → Case Study Proposals due on WISE

Case study proposals (1-2 pages, single spaced) are due on WISE by the end of the day on September 20. Your proposal should include the following elements:

1) **What do you propose to research? Why is it significant?** For most students, this will be something related to natural resource management in a developing country.

2) **Write a brief review of the article/book chapter on your case study.** How does the work relate to your case? What questions does it raise that you would like to explore? Alternatively, does it propose a hypothesis you would like to test?

3) **What other sources do you plan to use?** If you have already conducted significant background research, just list your top 3-4 sources. If you have previous experience (for example, from studying abroad) that you plan to draw on, note it here. Alternatively, let me know if you are just getting started looking for sources (it’s okay at this stage).

If you have any concerns about finding adequate scholarly sources, please let me know!

**Proposed Make-up Class -- M Sep 26: Can we achieve social justice through the Bank?**
PART II: NARRATING NATURE

Amazon as the lungs of the world, Conservation International “Lost There, Felt Here” campaign.

T Sep. 27: What’s at stake for nature?
• Skim: “The Trouble with Cronon” and his response.

R Sep. 29: Biodiversity, Hotspots and other just so stories
• Celebrity and the Environment: pp. 6-58 (required); 132-151 (recommended)

Additional Sources

T Oct 4: Essential natures
• Fortmann, L. 2005. “What we need is a community Bambi.” In J. Peter Brosius, Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, and Charles Zerner (editors). Communities and Conservation: Histories and Politics of Community-Based Natural Resource Management. Walnut Creek: Alta Mira Press. 195-205

Paper 1 due in class & on WISE

R Oct 6: US Environmentalism
Politcal Ecology
Fall 2011

T Oct 11: Situating knowledges

R Oct 13: Do we make lawns, or do lawns make us?
• Robbins, pgs. 1-44

T Oct 18: What do lawns need?
• Robbins, pgs. 45-95

R Oct 20: Turfgrass Subjects
• Robbins, pgs. 96-138

Part III: Conservation and Development

Same park as image from Part I, taken on an ecotourism hike.

T Oct 25: International Conservation
• Brockington, Ch. 8-9
• West, pgs. 15-26

R Oct 27: Claiming Territories
• Skim: West, Ch. 4
• Read in preparation for in-class discussion, paper by Elizabeth Calixtro

T Nov. 1: Trusteeship
• West, pgs. 74-89, 111-124
R Nov 3: Commodification
• *Skim*: Brockington, Ch. 7
• West, pgs. 32-51

Paper 2 due in class & on WISE

T Nov 8: First World – Third World Imaginaries
• *Skim* West, Chapter 5

R Nov. 10: Conservation-as-Development
• West, Ch. 6

T Nov. 15: Conservation’s Contradictions
• West, Ch. 7

**PART IV: LIBERATION ECOLOGIES**

R Nov. 17: Social Movements in Markets?
• Jaffee, pgs. 1-35
• *Listen*: [Why US Taxpayers are Paying Brazilian Cotton Growers](#)

T Nov. 22: Liberating Political Ecology

*No class meeting R Nov. 24 -- Thanksgiving Break*
T Nov. 29: Growing Coffee in Economic Crisis
   • Jaffee, Ch. 2

R Dec. 1: Sustainability
   • Jaffee, Ch. 5

T Dec. 6: Scaling up, or Selling Out?
   • Jaffee, Ch. 7

R Dec 8: Making Trade Fair
   • Jaffee, pgs. 247-266

Monday, December 12 at 12:00pm

Paper 3 due: 318 Smullin & on WISE