

Political Economics and Ecological Processes: Pacific Northwest Environmental Studies

MES Core Course - Fall 2009 Syllabus

Political Economic and Ecological Processes is the first core requirement of the MES program. Its role is to provide students with a broad framework for understanding environmental issues from a regional, interdisciplinary perspective. The focus of the class is twofold. One focus is on systems and processes, to build an understanding of how social and natural systems interact to produce environmental problems and affect solutions. The other focus is on environmental studies methodology, to lay the groundwork for first-year graduate students to make the transition from consumers of information to producers of knowledge about environmental problems and solutions. Our principal goal is to develop a contextual framework for analysis that allows for a deeper and more sophisticated understanding of the challenges of environmental problem solving. To understand the complexity of environmental issues, we argue it is necessary to understand the following key matters within an interdisciplinary context:

1. what natural systems are, in terms of typical structural and functional characteristics;
2. principal ways in which natural systems are affected by predominant forms of human occupation and use of the environment;
3. the logic, value commitments, and effects of the capitalist economic system, including markets, property rights, and the distribution of power, costs, and benefits;
4. the value commitments and institutional frameworks of U.S. society, with emphasis on government institutions and public policy;
5. the epistemological basis and value commitments of the natural and social sciences relevant to environmental problem solving;
6. methodological options within environmental studies, drawing upon methodologies within natural science, social science, and the humanities;
7. the generation of scientific knowledge by scientists working within professional conventions and within specific organizations;
8. the uses of scientific expertise in environmental decision-making; and
9. the relationships between environmental problem solving and the scientific, social, political economic, ethical, and historical context of a given society.

Faculty: Frederica Bowcutt, Lab II rm 3272, X 6744, bowcuttf@evergreen.edu
<http://blogs.evergreen.edu/bowcuttf/>
 Office hours: Thursday 3-5 pm
 Martha Henderson, Lab I rm 3018, X 6841, mhenderson@evergreen.edu
<http://blogs.evergreen.edu/marthahenderson/>
 Office hours: Tues and Thursday 3-5 pm or by appt.

Book List:

Required Texts	Optional Texts:
Required Texts: Jackson & Kimerling, <i>Atlas of the Pacific Northwest</i> Kruckeberg, <i>The Natural History of Puget Sound Country</i> Various articles (see program website) Apostol and Sinclair, <i>Restoring the Pacific Northwest</i> Goble and Hirt, <i>Northwest Lands, Northwest Peoples</i> Heilbrunner, <i>The Nature and Logic of Capitalism</i> Brown, <i>Big History</i> Worster, <i>Nature's Economy: A History of Ecological Ideas</i>	Atwood, <i>Chaining Oregon</i> Storey, <i>Writing History</i> Pojar & MacKinnon, <i>Plants of the Pacific Northwest Coast</i>

Weekly Schedule:

Tuesday	Thursday
6-8 pm Lecture LAB I rm 1040	6- 10 pm Workshops LAB II rm 3270 (F) LAB I rm 2270 (M)
8-10 pm Seminar SEM2 rm A2107 (FB) Lab I rm 3033 (M)	

Learning Objectives:

- Learn how to think in an interdisciplinary way about environmental problems and their possible solutions
- Become familiar with the Pacific Northwest region and potential research topics worthy of a Masters in Environmental Studies thesis
- Learn how to seminar effectively
- Hone expository writing skills

Week 1 Sept 27-Oct 3 Introduction & Lowland Coniferous Forests

Reading: Kruckeberg, *The Natural History of Puget Sound Country*, pp. xi-73 and pp. 117-193

Tues, Sept 29

6-8 pm Orientation & Introductions
8-10 pm Lecture: Introduction to the Pacific Northwest Region
(If you can, please bring Jackson & Kimerling, *Atlas of the Pacific Northwest*.)

Thurs, Oct 1

6-8 pm Lecture: Western Washington Forests
8-10 pm Library Research Workshop
(Meet in Library Classroom behind Reference Desk)
Plus assign writing workshop groups

Week 2 Oct 4-10 Puget Prairies

Lecture Reading: Kruckeberg, *The Natural History of Puget Sound Country*, pp. 284-305.

Workshop Reading:

Caplow & Miller, Southwestern Washington: Prairies: using GIS to find rare plant habitat in historic prairies.

Wood, "Memory, Love, Distortion, Power: What is a Map?" Orion Spring 1994.

DUE: Thurs, Oct 8-Two page, typed, double-spaced Kruckeberg assignment turned in to Frederica

Tues, Oct 6

6-8 pm Lecture: Puget Prairies as Cultural Landscapes
8-10 pm Seminar on Kruckeberg

Thurs, Oct 8

6-8 pm

8-10 pm

Lecture: Scientific Mapping

Mapping Workshop

(Meet in Lab I rm 1050)

Week 3 Oct 11-17 *Ecological Restoration*

Apostol and Sinclair, *Restoring the Pacific Northwest*, xxiii-96

DUE: Tues, Oct 13-typed mapping assignment turned in to Martha

Tues, Oct 13

6-8 pm

8-10 pm

Lecture TBA

Seminar on Apostol and Sinclair

Thurs, Oct 15

6:30-9:30 pm Speaker: Vandana Shiva

Meet at South Puget Sound Community College's KJM Center for the Arts

Week 4 Oct 18-24 *PNW Environmental History*

Reading: Goble and Hirt, *Northwest Lands, Northwest Peoples*, pp. ix-94.

Lecture Reading: TBA

DUE: Tues, Oct 20-Two page, typed, double-spaced response to Apostol and Sinclair

Tues, Oct 20

6-8 pm

8-10 pm

Lecture: Environmental History of the Pacific Northwest

Seminar on Goble and Hirt

Thurs, Oct 22

6-10 pm

Discussion of Research Project

Week 5 Oct 25-31

Environmental History & Geography of PNW Forests

Reading: Goble and Hirt, *Northwest Lands, Northwest Peoples*, pp. 173-187, 389-476, 523-528.

Lecture Reading: TBA

DUE: Thurs, Oct 29-(Subgroup A) Three page, typed, double-spaced response to Goble and Hirt
(bring enough copies for everyone in your writing workshop group)

Tues, Oct 27

6-8 pm

8-10 pm

Lecture: Geography of Pacific Northwest Forests

Seminar on Goble and Hirt

Thurs, Oct 29
6-10 pm Writing Workshop on Goble and Hirt essays
(Everyone attends assigned two-hour workshop)

Week 6 Nov 1-7 Research Work

Plan to work at least 30 hours this week on your research project. Some of that time will be meeting with faculty and also with librarian and faculty member Liza Rognas. Sign up sheets for appointment times will be circulated in weeks 4 and 5.

Tues, Nov 3
6-8 pm **Meetings with Faculty and Librarian**

Thurs, Nov 5
6-8 pm **Meetings with Faculty and Librarian**

Week 7 Nov 8-14 Political Economy & the Environment

Reading: Heilbronner, *The Nature and Logic of Capitalism*

DUE: Tues, Nov 10- Two page, typed project description plus annotated bibliography including at least two articles from the scientific literature.

DUE: Thurs, Nov 12-(Subgroup B) Three page, typed, double-spaced response to Heilbronner
(bring enough copies for everyone in your writing workshop group)

Tues, Nov 10
6-8 pm Guest Lecture by MES Faculty Member Ralph Murphy:
"Liberal Democracy, Capitalism and Sustainability"
8-10 pm Seminar on Heilbronner

Thurs, Nov 12
6-10 pm Writing Workshop on Heilbronner
(Everyone attends assigned two-hour workshop)

Week 8 Nov 15-21 Big History

Seminar Reading: Brown, *Big History*

Lecture Reading: TBA

DUE: Thurs, Nov 19-(Subgroup A) Three page, typed, double-spaced response to Brown
(bring enough copies for everyone in your writing workshop group)

Tues, Nov 17
6-8 pm Lecture: Tanoak Environmental History
8-10 pm Seminar on Brown

Thurs, Nov 19

6-10 pm

Writing Workshop on Brown

(Everyone attends assigned two-hour workshop)

THANKSGIVING BREAK Nov 21-29

Week 9 Nov 29-Dec 5

History of Ecological Ideas

Seminar Reading: Worster, *Nature's Economy*

DUE: Thurs, Dec 3-(Subgroup B) Three page, typed, double-spaced response to Worster

(bring enough copies for everyone in your writing workshop group)

Tues, Dec 1

6-8 pm

Research Project & Self Evaluation Workshops

8-10 pm

Seminar on Worster

Thurs, Dec 3

6-10 pm

Writing Workshop on Worster

(Everyone attends assigned two-hour workshop)

Week 10 Dec 6-12

Student Presentations & Wrap Up

DUE: portfolios including final self-evaluation Tuesday, Dec 8th by 5:45 pm. Please deliver to your faculty leader's office.

Tues, Dec 8

6-10 pm

Student Presentations

(Martha's seminar group brings finger food to share)

Thurs, Dec 10

6-10 pm

Student Presentations

(Frederica's seminar group brings finger food to share)

Required papers and portfolio materials:

- Typed Kruckeberg assignment with faculty comments
- Mapping assignment with faculty comments
- three expository essays on seminar texts (must include copies with faculty and peer comments for two of them)
- one revised seminar essay
- two paged, typed project description plus annotated bibliography with faculty comments
- research paper (minimum 10-15 typed, double-spaced pages, plus annotated bibliography including articles from the scientific literature)
- self-evaluation (required for credit in program)

EVALUATIONS WEEK: Dec 14-18 Individual Conferences with Faculty

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Please bring your faculty evaluation to your evaluation meeting.

Credit Equivalencies: TOTAL = 8

4 – Environmental Studies

4 – Pacific Northwest Environmental History