

University of Toronto
POL 413-2213: Global Environmental Politics
Dr. Kate Neville, Assistant Professor, Political Science & School of the Environment
Spring 2017, Monday 12-2pm, Gerald Larkin Building (LA) 214

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Course overview

Description: This course on global environmental politics borrows from a collected set of articles on the environmental politics of sacrifice, and takes as its framing questions the following: does global environmental protection require sacrifice? Who and what must be sacrificed to address environmental integrity? Who and what are already being sacrificed?

Through this course, with an international relations lens on transnational relationships, global political economy, and state-society interactions, we will investigate the nature of—and responses to—global environmental challenges. We will focus on the trade-offs embedded in our individual and collective decisions around environment and society, considering both analytic and normative questions and assumptions. In the process, we will also examine a number of key areas of study of the field of global environmental politics, including international environmental governance arrangements, private and market-based alternatives, activism and transnational networks, and environmental justice.

Objectives: The goals of this course are four-fold: 1) to expand your knowledge of the politics of addressing global environmental challenges (*learning content*); 2) to enhance your critical analysis and research skills through reading, peer reviews, book reviews and current event analysis, and research papers (*undertaking analysis*); 3) to strengthen your abilities in varied forms of verbal and written communication, through oral presentations of research and leading class discussions, as well as writing multiple types of assignments (*enhancing communication*); and 4) to question normative assumptions in discussions of environmental challenges, with a view of making visible otherwise-invisible voices and concerns (*decentering assumed ideas and practices*).

Format & Portal: Classes are two-hour sessions, with readings and assignments outside of class hours. We will maintain a course Portal (Blackboard) site for readings, course announcements, course materials, and discussions. Please check in frequently with this site.

Readings: The core book for this course is an edited book, *The environmental politics of sacrifice*, by Michael Maniates and John M Meyer (2010). This will be made available on course reserve at Robarts Library. Additional readings are available online through the Portal site. Books for the critical book review assignment will also be made available via course reserve.

Overview:

Week 1: Jan 9: Problem definition: global environmental politics and the politics of sacrifice

Week 2: Jan 16: Environmental values

Week 3: Jan 23: Environmental optimism and technological fixes

Week 4: Jan 30: The shadows of technology

- *book review choice must be approved by this week*

Week 5: Feb 6: Environmental justice: making sacrifice visible

- *reflection paper on unplugging (10%)*

Week 6: Feb 13: How to organize sacrifice: from above/from below

- *critical book review or blog post due (25%)*

Reading week: Feb 20: NO CLASS

Week 7: Feb 27: How to organize sacrifice: markets and CSR

Week 8: Mar 6: Nature for people? Trading off environment and labour

Week 9: Mar 13: Peer review session

- *draft essay due by start of class (5%)*

Week 10: Mar 20: Sacrifice as gain: logic of sufficiency

- *peer review due (10%)*

Week 11: Mar 27: Alternate economies

Week 12: Apr 3: Rights, ethics, and values: reframing the debate

- *final paper due (30%)*

Assignments (details at end of syllabus)

I: Critical reading reflection and discussion, 20%

variable deadlines

Each student will be assigned to one week in the course to provide a critical reading summary (500-800 words) prior to class, including discussion questions. These students will also be responsible for guiding in-class discussions that week (2 or 3 students will be assigned to each week, with the exceptions of weeks 1, 7, and 11).

II: Unplugged challenge and reflection paper, 10%

week 5 (February 6)

500-word reflection piece on 24-hours of screen-free life.

II: Critical book review or academic/policy blog post, 25%

week 6 (February 13)

- a) Undergraduate students: critical book review or blog post
- b) Graduate students: critical book review

III: Research project (staged), 45%

- a) Submission of draft essay to peer (due in class) 5% week 9 (March 13)
- b) Feedback to peer (400-600 words) 10% week 10 (March 20)
- c) Final research paper 30% week 12 (April 3)

Policies and Expectations

In general

As a seminar class, this course is heavily focused on discussion—I will not be lecturing, and so your experience depends significantly on what you and your classmates bring to each class in terms of preparation and thought. In this course, you can expect that I will strive to be fair, respectful, prepared, responsive, and enthusiastic. In return, I anticipate you will be respectful of your classmates and of me, be prepared and on time for class, and meet deadlines for assignments. I hope that together we can foster a safe and engaging space for thinking about big questions, and I will be relying on all of you to help create that space.

You are expected to complete each week's required readings and actively contribute to class discussions. The reading load is heavy, as expected for an upper-year undergraduate seminar and for a graduate course, but I anticipate these readings will inform and enrich your discussions. Active participation includes both contributing your ideas (respectfully asking questions, providing comments and examples, seeking clarification, adding to and amending the points of others) and listening to the contributions of others (attentively, without distraction). It might be helpful to keep the following questions in mind in preparing for class:

- What are the central points or arguments being made in the readings?
- What evidence and methods have they used to support their arguments?
- How do the week's readings relate to other material examined in the course?

Blackboard

We will use Blackboard in this class, and I expect all students to check the site regularly. Some information, including additional assignment instructions, may be posted on Blackboard, and you are responsible for checking this site and reading email announcements. All assignments will be submitted through Blackboard (for your draft paper you will *also* bring a hard copy to class).

Deadlines and late penalties

I anticipate that all assignments will be submitted on time, and that examinations will be written when scheduled. However, some students may find themselves with valid conflicts and challenges. In these cases, it is best to speak with me in advance about alternate arrangements and accommodations. I am less likely to be sympathetic on the eve of a deadline or once a deadline has passed. In general, late assignments and term papers will be penalized at a rate of **5% per day**, including weekends (unless otherwise noted in the assignment description – note that your draft term paper and your critical reading reflection will not be accepted late).

Some students find that they must wait to contact and secure approval from Accessibility Services for various concerns: in these cases, you should still contact me in advance, to let me know you might require accommodations for assignments.

Backups and rough drafts

You are strongly advised to keep rough drafts and backup copies of all assignments and essays you submit for this class. Also, please take a minute at the start of the term to set yourself a backup strategy. Whether it's a backup external hard drive, a web-based cloud service like Dropbox or Google Drive, or some other option, it's important that you have multiple copies of your work in the case of a hard drive failure or computer problem. No extensions will be provided due to computer problems.

Email and communication

I will hold weekly office hours, and I will be very glad to meet with you at those times to discuss readings, assignments, and more. I have also listed my email address in the contact information at the start of the syllabus; however, please consider several things when reaching out to me by email:

- You are expected to write from your University of Toronto email account;
- For more substantive concerns, please come to my office hours;
- I will do my best to respond to your messages, but please don't expect a rapid response. I will not be responding daily to emails, and may not check my email on evenings and weekends. As such, please plan ahead if you need to reach out to me;
- If you write to request an extension or accommodation the night before an assignment is due, I am unlikely to accommodate your needs or offer assistance;
- Please treat emails as a professional form of communication: I expect proper grammar, sentences, and greetings/sign-offs in your messages; you can expect the same from me.

Names

If the name on the official course registration list does not, for any reason, match the name by which you would like to be addressed (and under which you would like to submit assignments and sign emails) please let me know. I am not able to change official course lists, but I can certainly address you by your preferred name. Also, if you have pronouns by which you would like to be addressed, please let me know. In general, how you sign your emails is how I will address you in email replies, so if you have a preferred name/nickname, please use that.

Exceptions and Assistance

The University has many resources to help students who are in need of assistance for any number of reasons, both in and outside of the classroom, including library resources, academic resources, and health and counseling services. The University also is committed to providing allowances for religious observances.

If you are struggling or anticipate needing help with your coursework for academic and/or personal reasons, or you encounter unanticipated challenges or crises during the term, please seek the support you need as early as possible. If you do not know the options, do not hesitate to ask. If you will need accommodation from me for any reason, in the classroom or on coursework and assignments, please let me know as soon as you can. A few helpful resources:

- <http://life.utoronto.ca/just-for-you/for-students-with-a-disability/>
- <http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/>
- <http://healthandwellness.utoronto.ca/>
- <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres>
- <http://uoft.me/religiousaccommodation>
- <https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/gradlife/Pages/Grad-Wellness.aspx>
- <https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/currentstudents/Pages/Writing-Centre.aspx>

Some students find themselves facing challenges unexpectedly. If you find yourself in a difficult situation, even if you have not yet gone through all the official channels, it is best to let me know right away that you are seeking university assistance, and may need accommodations (you do not need to disclose the details of your situation to me). There is more flexibility and forgiveness ahead of time than afterwards.

Academic integrity

Academic integrity is essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship in a university, and to ensuring that a degree from the University of Toronto is a strong signal of each student's individual academic achievement. As a result, the University treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously, seeing these as serious academic offenses.

Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.

All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following procedures outlined in the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, you are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from your instructor or from other institutional resources, including Writing at the University of Toronto.

- <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>
- <https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/facultyandstaff/Pages/Academic-Integrity.aspx>
- <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources>
- <http://www.utoronto.ca/academicintegrity/>

Potential offences include, but are not limited to:

- Using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement
- Using someone else's words without using quotation marks
- Submitting your own work in more than one course without instructor permission
- Making up sources or facts
- Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment.
- Looking at someone else's answers during an exam or test
- Falsifying institutional documents or grades
- Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University

The seriousness of academic integrity really cannot be stressed enough. When you use ideas, evidence, or direct words from another scholar, you must cite that scholar. If you use someone else's words, these must be in quotation marks, with the page number indicated. If you use someone else's data, the citation must also include the page number for that information. If you use someone else's ideas, summarized or paraphrased in your own words, you must cite that source. Changing a few words, or substituting synonyms is not the same as paraphrasing: you must substantially change the way in which an idea is expressed. Please consult the library resources, and seek help from the librarians and/or writing centre when working on your assignments and papers.

Class topics and readings

WEEK 1 (JANUARY 9): PROBLEM DEFINITION – GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS AND THE POLITICS OF SACRIFICE

This week, we set the stage for the term, beginning with problem definition—especially what are global environmental challenges? What are the environmental politics of sacrifice? What is the field of “global environmental politics”?

Required reading:

- Meyer, John M., & Maniates, Michael. 2010. Must we sacrifice? Confronting the politics of sacrifice in an ecologically full world. Chapter 1, pp. 1-8 in Michael Maniates and John M. Meyer, eds., *The environmental politics of sacrifice*, MIT Press.
- Burke, Anthony, Fishel, Stefanie, Mitchell, Audra, Dalby, Simon, & Levine, Daniel J. 2016. Planet politics: A manifesto from the end of IR. *Millennium*, 44(3): 499-523.
- Book review: Iles, Alastair. 2011. Review of Meyer & Maniates’ ‘*The environmental politics of sacrifice*.’ *Global Environmental Politics*, 11(2): 127-129.

Recommended reading:

- Moser, Susanne C. 2008. What is asked of us: A clarion call to scientists at an urgent time. *IHDP Update Extra* (Newsletter of the International Human Dimensions Programme on Global Environmental Change): 37-40.
- Dauvergne, Peter, & Clapp, Jennifer. 2016. Researching global environmental politics in the 21st century. *Global Environmental Politics*, 16(1): 1-12.

WEEK 2 (JANUARY 16): ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES

In this week, we consider various ways of understanding environmental challenges and values. We consider different worldviews, including indigenous perspectives, on the nature of environment, land, and wilderness. To understand trade-offs and sacrifices, we must understand what is valued, by unpacking the philosophical underpinnings of the world and ourselves, place-based belonging, ethical judgements, and commitments to humans and non-humans.

Required reading:

- Hall, Cheryl. 2010. Freedom, values, and sacrifice: Overcoming obstacles to environmentally sustainable behaviour. Chapter 4, pp. 61-86, in Meyer & Maniates.
- Clapp, Jennifer, & Dauvergne, Peter. 2010. Peril or prosperity? Mapping worldviews of global environmental change. Chapter 1, pp. 1-18, in *Paths to a green world: The political economy of the global environment, 2nd ed.*, MIT Press.
- Simpson, Leanne Betasamosake. 2014. Land as pedagogy: Nishnaabeg intelligence and rebellious transformation. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society*, 3(3): 1-25.
- Cronon, William. 1992. A place for stories: nature, history, and narrative. *The Journal of American History*, March: 1347-1376
- Meloy, Ellen. 1999. Prologue. Pp. 3-8 in *The last cheater’s waltz: Beauty and violence in the desert southwest*, University of Arizona Press.

WEEK 3 (JANUARY 23): ENVIRONMENTAL OPTIMISM & TECHNOLOGICAL FIXES

Is technological progress enough to solve our problems? This week, we consider whether technological advances can remove the question of sacrifice, through innovation and system design.

Required reading:

- Wapner, Paul. 2010. Sacrifice in an age of comfort. Chapter 3, pp. 33-59, in Meyer & Maniates.
- Shellenberger, Michael, and Ted Nordhaus. 2004. *The death of environmentalism: Global warming politics in a post-environmental world*. The Breakthrough Institute, http://www.thebreakthrough.org/images/Death_of_Environmentalism.pdf
- McDonough, William, and Michael Braungart. 2002. Introduction: This book is not a tree and Chapter 1: A question of design. Pp. 3-44 in *Cradle to cradle: Remaking the way we make things*, North Point Press.
- Lomborg, Bjorn. 2001. Part I: the Litany. Pp. 3-43 in *The skeptical environmentalist: Measuring the real state of the world*, Cambridge University Press.

WEEK 4 (JANUARY 30): THE SHADOWS OF TECHNOLOGY

Book for book review must be selected by this week

In some of the readings last week, scholars flagged concerns with the approaches of (largely American) environmentalism, and highlighted concerns about rejecting the material desires of society in the search for sustainability. However, the readings also raised concerns with the idea that there might be “costless” options for addressing environmental challenges. We turn more fully to such critiques this week, looking at the externalities and “ecological shadows” of proposed environmental solutions and of resource-based activities.

Required reading:

- Nicholson, Simon. 2010. Intelligent design?: Unpacking geoengineering’s hidden sacrifices. Chapter 12, pp. 271-292, in Meyer & Maniates.
- Dauvergne, Peter. 2010. Introduction: The ecological shadows of rising consumption, Chapter 1: An unbalanced global political economy, and Chapter 2: Dying of consumption. Pp. 1-32 in *The shadows of consumption: Consequences for the global environment*, MIT Press.
- Leach, Melissa, James Fairhead, and James Fraser. 2012. Green grabs and biochar: Revaluing African soils and farming in the new carbon economy. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 39(2): 285-307.
- Swanson, Heather Anne. 2015. Shadow ecologies of conservation: Co-production of salmon landscapes in Hokkaido, Japan, and southern Chile. *Geoforum*, 61: 101-110.

WEEK 5 (FEBRUARY 6): ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE: MAKING SACRIFICE VISIBLE

Reflection paper on unplugging due – 10%

Following on last week's discussions of ecological shadows and displaced costs, we delve even further this week into questions of environmental justice. Rather than asking whether sacrifice could take place, we look closely at the sacrifices that are already being made, and ask: who is making sacrifices? And who and what is *being* sacrificed?

Required reading:

- Lifin, Karen. 2010. The sacred and the profane in the ecological politics of sacrifice. Chapter 6, pp. 117-143, in Meyer & Maniates.
- Nixon, Rob. 2011. Introduction. Pp. 1-44 in *Slow violence and the environmentalism of the poor*, Harvard University Press.
- Martinez-Alier, Joan. 2009. Social metabolism, ecological distribution conflicts, and languages of valuation. *Capitalism Nature Socialism*, 20(1): 58-87.
- Shade, Lindsay. 2015. Sustainable development or sacrifice zone? Politics below the surface in post-neoliberal Ecuador. *The Extractive Industries and Society*, 2: 775-784.
- McKinnon, J.B. Illusions of nature. Chapter 1, pp. 1-16, in *The once and future world*, Random House Canada.

WEEK 6 (FEBRUARY 13): HOW TO ORGANIZE SACRIFICE: FROM ABOVE/FROM BELOW

Critical book review/blog post due – 25%

If trade-offs must be made, how should they be organized within and across communities and countries? This week, we consider international agreements, government regulations, and sub-state approaches to setting rules and establishing environmental limits.

Required reading:

- Gunster, Shane. 2010. Self-interest, sacrifice, and climate change: (re-)framing the British Columbia carbon tax. Chapter 9, pp. 187-215, in Meyer & Maniates.
- Cannavo, Peter F. 2010. Civic virtue and sacrifice in a suburban nation. Chapter 10, pp. 217-246, in Meyer & Maniates.
- Andonova, Liliana B., and Ronald B. Mitchell. 2010. The rescaling of global environmental politics. *Annual Review of Environment and Resources*, 35: 255-282.
- Betsill, Michele M., & Bulkeley, Harriet. 2004. Transnational networks and global environmental governance: The cities for climate protection program. *International Studies Quarterly*, 48(2), 471-493.
- Gordon, David J. 2013. Between local innovation and global impact: cities, networks, and the governance of climate change. *Canadian Foreign Policy Journal*, 19(3), 288-307.

READING WEEK (FEBRUARY 20): NO CLASS

WEEK 7 (FEBRUARY 27): HOW TO ORGANIZE SACRIFICE: MARKETS AND CSR

We return to the discussion from week 6 on how to organize sacrifice, considering the role of market-based mechanisms and corporate social responsibility in shaping and incentivizing trade-offs. Our readings query both the legitimacy and limits of the private sector in addressing environmental challenges.

Required reading:

- Princen, Thomas. 2010. Consumer sovereignty, heroic sacrifice: two insidious concepts in an endlessly expansionist economy. Chapter 7, pp. 145-164, in Meyer & Maniates.
- Bernstein, Steven, and Cashore, Benjamin. 2007. Can non-state global governance be legitimate? *Regulation and Governance*, 1(4): 347-371.
- Lister, Jane. 2011. Chapter 1: Introduction. Pp. 1-14 in *Corporate social responsibility and the state: International approaches to forest co-regulation*, UBC Press.
- Van der Ven, Hamish. 2014. Socializing the C-suite: why some big-box retailers are “greener” than others. *Business and Politics*, 16(1): 31-63.
- McAfee, Kathleen. 1999. Selling nature to save it? Biodiversity and green developmentalism. *Environment and Planning*, 17: 133-154.

Recommended reading:

- Maniates, Michael F. 2001. Individualization: Plant a tree, buy a bike, save the world? *Global Environmental Politics*, 1(3): 31-52.

WEEK 8 (MARCH 6): NATURE FOR PEOPLE? TRADING OFF ENVIRONMENT AND LABOUR

This week, we consider the ways in which action for the environment can come at the expense of those involved in labour. While this is often imagined as the loss of resource sector jobs (forest protection vs logging jobs; renewable energy vs oilfield jobs), or as siting disputes in marginalized communities (windfarms or biofuels displacing farmers), we also consider the more hidden ways in which the costs of environmental improvements can be offloaded onto labour.

Required reading:

- Meyer, John M. 2010. A democratic politics of sacrifice? Chapter 2, pp. 13-32, in Meyer & Maniates.
- Dauvergne, Peter, and Genevieve LeBaron. 2013. The social cost of environmental solutions. *New Political Economy*, 18(3): 410-430.
- Elder, Sara D., and Peter Dauvergne. 2015. Farming for Walmart: the politics of corporate control and responsibility in the global South. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, DOI: 10.1080/03066150.2015.1043275
- Uzzell, David, and Nora Räthzel. 2012. Mending the breach between labour and nature: A case for environmental labour studies. Chapter 1 in Nora Räthzel and David Uzzell, eds., *Trade unions in the green economy: Working for the environment*, Routledge.

- Seagle, Caroline. 2012. Inverting the impacts: Mining, conservation and sustainability claims near the Rio Tinto/QMM ilmenite mine in Southeast Madagascar. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 39(2): 447-477.

Recommended reading:

- Barrientos, Stephanie, and Sally Smith. 2007. Do workers benefit from ethical trade? Assessing codes of labour practice in global production systems. *Third World Quarterly*, 28(4): 713-729.

WEEK 9 (MARCH 13): PEER REVIEW SESSION

Draft essay due before start of class – 5%

Required reading: this involves a peer-reviewed published paper as well as several stages of its review process.

- Neville, Kate J., and Erika Weinthal. 2016. Mitigating mistrust? Participation and expertise in hydraulic fracturing governance. *Review of Policy Research*.
- To be posted: initial submitted paper, reviews, revised paper, response to reviewers

WEEK 10 (MARCH 20): SACRIFICE AS GAIN: LOGIC OF SUFFICIENCY

Peer reviews due – 10%

Rather than suggesting that environmental action requires no sacrifice, as examined in week 3, in this week we consider the ways in which we can understand the gains that can be achieved through sacrifice. The readings this week address ways of understanding quality of life in terms beyond consumption and the cash economy, with alternate logics (“sufficiency”) and social organization (eco-villages and community).

Required reading:

- Maniates, Michael. 2010. Struggling with sacrifice: Take Back Your Time and Right2Vacation.org. Chapter 13, pp.293-312, in Meyer & Maniates.
- Solnit, Rebecca. The most radical thing you can do. *Orion Magazine*. <https://orionmagazine.org/article/the-most-radical-thing-you-can-do/>
- Princen, Thomas. 2003. Principles for sustainability: From cooperation and efficiency to sufficiency. *Global Environmental Politics*, 3(1): 33-50.
- Litfin, Karen. 2013. Living a new story. Chapter 1 in *Eco-villages: Lessons for sustainable community*, Polity Press.

WEEK 11 (MARCH 27): ALTERNATE ECONOMIES

Continuing with alternate conceptions of quality of life, we further delve into the roles of embedded values (social relations), as well as other ways of understanding economies.

Required reading:

- Todd, Zoe. 2016. “This is the life”: Women’s role in food provisioning in Paulatuuq, Northwest Territories. Chapter 8, pp. 191-212, in Nathalie Kermoal and Isabel

Altamirano-Jiménez, eds., *Living on the land: Indigenous women's understanding of place*, AU Press.

- Freeland Ballantyne, Erin. 2014. Dechinta Bush University: Mobilizing a knowledge economy of reciprocity, resurgence and decolonization. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society*, 3(3): 67-85.
- Bina, Olivia. 2013. The green economy and sustainable development: an uneasy balance? *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy*, 31: 1023-1047.
- Liverman, Diana. 2004. Who governs, at what scale and at what price? Geography, environmental governance, and the commodification of nature. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 94(4): 734-738.

WEEK 12 (APRIL 3): RIGHTS, ETHICS, AND VALUES: REFRAMING THE DEBATE

Final paper due – 30%

In this week, we return to the question of the human-nonhuman interface, with renewed attention to intersections of gender, race, environment, and indigeneity, along with alternate worldviews that position environmental protection not as sacrifice but as necessity for knowledge, security, and the well-being of all—especially the marginalized.

- Anguelovski, Isabelle, & Martínez Alier, Joan. 2014. The 'Environmentalism of the Poor' revisited: Territory and place in disconnected glocal struggles. *Ecological Economics*, 102: 167-176.
- Kuokkanen, Rauna. 2011. Indigenous economies, theories of subsistence, and women: Exploring the social economy model for Indigenous governance. *The American Indian Quarterly*, 35(2): 215-240.
- Speth, James Gustave, and Thompson III, J. Phillip. 2016 (April 14). A radical alliance of black and green could save the world. *The Nation*.

Assignment details

I. Critical reading reflection and discussion – 20% - no late submissions accepted

For each class, several students will be assigned critical reading reflections and responsibility for the class discussion (more than one student will be assigned to each class, so you will share discussion responsibilities). Your reading reflection must be uploaded to Blackboard no later than 8pm on the Sunday night before the Monday class to which you are assigned. No late submissions will be accepted.

For your assigned week, you are responsible for providing the class with a critical summary of an assigned reading (300-400 words). Your summary should: 1) identify the central argument in the reading (a brief summary); 2) discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the article; and 3) raise 2-3 questions for the class discussion. You must be prepared to help lead discussion in class, by asking questions and making comments. For (2), on strengths and weaknesses, you may wish to consider the internal logic and strength of the argument (whether the reading is logically consistent, well-argued, supported by evidence, based on appropriate methods) and/or the contribution of the reading to the field (whether the argument is innovative, speaks to other debates in the literature, offers critiques of other readings, etc.). In general, your written submission will be worth 10%, and your in-class discussion role 10%; however, your contributions will be taken in concert, and excellent contributions in one form could help offset less strong contributions in the other. Further, if you earn a lower grade on this assignment, but demonstrate excellent participation in all other classes, this may be taken into consideration.

II. Unplugged challenge and reflection paper – 10%

For this assignment, I offer a challenge: unplug from screens for 24 hours. You will choose a day of your choice over the first month of class to unplug from all screens (computers, tablets, phones, televisions, and other devices). For many, this will be a challenge and a sacrifice. For some, this may be a relief. You will write a 500-word reflection on this exercise, linking your thoughts on the challenge with the concept of sacrifice, drawing on *at least one course reading* in the paper. You should write from your personal experience, but using an analytic lens to understand the challenge in a broader context.

III. Critical book review/blog post – 25%

For this assignment, graduate students will write a critical book review, and undergraduate students may choose between writing a critical book review or an academic/policy blog post. For the book review, I anticipate this will be a scholarly book that you will use to inform your term paper. You must have your book choice approved by me no later than week 5 (February 6).

Critical book review – 800-1200 words

Your book review must be in the format of book reviews in the journal *Global Environmental Politics* or an equivalent relevant environmental politics journal. You will choose a scholarly/academic book that will inform your term paper, and address some or all of the following questions:

- What is the central thesis or argument(s) of the book?
- What are the cases or major evidence presented by the author(s)
- What methodological approach/tools is/are used by the author(s)? Would other methodologies/tools add or change anything about the analysis?

- Does the book use evidence well to back up its arguments? Could the same evidence be used to support an argument that is different than the one the author makes? Are competing explanations considered?
- Could another perspective or any concepts not considered also explain the outcomes the book investigates just as well or better than those utilized by the author(s)?
- What are the contributions of the book to the field? Is the book's argument a useful advancement, addition, or critique?
- How significant a contribution do you think the author(s)'s arguments make when compared to other texts on the topic?
- How would you evaluate the style and writing (structure, flow, engaging writing, etc)?

Undergraduate alternate assignment option – critical blog post – 800-1000 words

Undergraduate students may opt to instead write a critical commentary on current environmental research, in the style of a blog post for an academic/policy outlet such as New Security Beat (<http://www.newsecuritybeat.org/> — see blog for sample posts). The goal of this assignment is to practice translating academic debates and ideas into more accessible language and formats. You may choose to write about a specific academic article or compare and contrast different research findings on a topic of interest. This must be an *analytic* post, not simply an opinion piece.

Your blog post will be 800-1000 words, and must 1) clearly and succinctly describe the topic/issue; 2) accurately and fairly summarize the research findings and/or debates; 3) clearly explain the significance of the research to a broader community (e.g., policy-makers, general public); 4) provide citations (as footnotes or endnotes, not in-text citations); and 5) be well-written and accessible. The content will be academic and analytic, but you should use a direct, conversational tone (rather than one that is formal and academic). It is typical to use an inverted pyramid structure, in which you begin with an interesting lead, follow with substantive information about the core argument, and then fill in background information.

IV. Research project (multi-stage) – 45%

This staged assignment consists of a paper and presentation on a topic of your choosing related to the themes of our course. You will write this as though it were an article for submission to a journal (some options are listed, but this is not an exhaustive list). Your paper format (approach, tone, citation style, etc) will depend on the target journal you choose (examples below) – this must be clearly indicated in a cover page for each stage of your research paper (if the journal word count falls short of/exceeds the course limit, you are still bound by the course limit).

Graduate students: 6000-8000 word paper – sample target journals

- *Global Environmental Politics* research articles: original contribution to research on global environmental politics
- *Environmental Politics* research articles: original research papers on environment, sustainability, environmental politics, and international relations
- *Review of Policy Research* research or review articles: *research*: reveal and analyze public policy processes and evaluate the outcomes of particular policies related to science, technology and environmental issues; *review*: scholarly reviews of science, technology, and environmental issues, themes or related theory, aiming to provide a comprehensive overview of the state of knowledge of an issue, while also advancing arguments about ways that knowledge can be enhanced in future.

- *Regulation and Governance* research or research forum articles: *research*: original contributions to studies of regulatory governance; *research forum*: review articles on major lines of research in the field.

Undergraduate students: 2000-3000 word paper – sample target journals

- *Global Environmental Politics* forum articles: short commentaries that stimulate thought, discussion, and debate
- *Review of Policy Research* viewpoints and perspectives articles: these aim to generate debate on science, technology, and environmental issues, while advocating policy and research directions.

In general, papers will be graded in three categories: analysis, writing, and mechanics:

- *Analysis*: the use of evidence (primary or secondary data) to construct a credible analytical argument. The argument must be clearly stated in your paper, and must be supported by research evidence and organized in a coherent, logical manner. Your analysis should display: broad understanding of the subject matter; insight into the aspect of the subject you focus on; awareness of counter-arguments; and originality of thought.
- *Writing*: clarity of expression. This involves using a formal writing style, terminology that will be understood by the reader, and a structure that ensures the reader can follow the development of the argument. Organizing the paper into paragraphs and sub-sections can often help the reader follow the argument more closely.
- *Mechanics*: details of writing and formatting, including punctuation, spelling, tables and figures, referencing (according to the journal style), and absence of minor factual errors.

a) Submission of draft essay to peers – 5%

For this stage, you are expected to submit a draft of your research paper. The marks for this draft paper are based on you submitting a complete rough copy on time – these will not be accepted late. You are expected to provide a full draft of your paper – I will not provide feedback to you on your draft, but I expect that it will have a thesis, evidence, analysis, conclusion, and reference list. The more complete/polished a draft you can submit, the more useful the peer feedback will be. Each student will submit their paper to Blackboard before class on March 13 (by 11am) and bring a hard copy of the paper to class.

b) Peer review – 10%

The goal of this assignment is to practice reading and critically evaluating other scholars' work. This will help your peers improve their writing, and should also help you to better assess the quality of your own essays. In your review, you should indicate to the writer the major strengths of the paper, areas for improvement, and comments on the mechanics of the work (logical flow of ideas, grammar and sentence structure, formatting and completeness of citations, etc.). Please ensure that you provide the author with both *positive* reinforcement and *constructive* criticism. It helps to begin a review with an overview, and then provide more detailed comments.

You will complete a review for one peer. Your peer review should be 400-600 words. Peer reviews should include comments on the following:

- Summary of argument: identify and rephrase the thesis of the paper
- Summary of evidence: briefly list the main points of support for the main argument

- Most/least effective parts of paper: provide comments on what the writer has done most/least successfully—and *why* you see these aspects as effective/ineffective
- Clarity and coherence of ideas: provide specific comments on the content of the essay
 - are ideas completely/clearly explained? is evidence clearly connected to and consistent with research question and purpose? does evidence support the analysis? is further evidence and research needed?
- Organization of ideas: provide specific comments on the structure of the paper
 - is the flow of ideas logically organized? does the writer offer a good balance of background material and original arguments? is the writing clear, coherent, engaging, and free from grammatical errors?

c) Final research paper – 30%

The final paper will be 6000-8000 words for graduate students, and 2000-3000 words for undergraduate students (cover letter not included in the word count). This final paper is a revised version of your draft paper, taking into account the feedback from your peers. For all papers:

- provide a short cover letter (max 400 words) that indicates how you have responded to the peer reviews;
- ensure the topic you have chosen is appropriate for your target journal;
- provide a focused thesis statement that offers your proposed argument;
- indicate to the reader the structure for how you organize your evidence and discussions;
- provide clear evidence for the claims you make;
- include a conclusion that synthesizes the ideas of your paper; and
- ensure your reference list is properly documented and follows your target journal style