

University of Manitoba  
Clayton H. Riddell Faculty of Environment, Earth and Resources  
Department of Environment and Geography

GEOG 2630  
**Geography of Culture and the Environment**  
Fall 2015, Tue/Thur 10:00-11:15, St. John's 114

---

**Instructors:**

Bruce Erickson  
Email: bruce.erickson@umanitoba.ca  
Office: 252 St. John's College  
Office Hours: Wednesdays, 10:00-12:00.

Julia Laforge  
Email: julia.laforge@umanitoba.ca  
Office: 303 Wallace  
Office Hours: Tuesday, 12:30-1:30

Kate Turner  
Email: umturn22@myumanitoba.ca  
Office: 220G Sinnott  
Office Hours: Tuesday, 12:30-1:30

**Course Description:**

This course critically examines the relationship between culture and the environment through the field of cultural geography. At the heart of the course is the understanding that culture and nature are complex, yet connected, aspects of our lives. Culture is not simply inherited from the past, it is shaped and contested every day. Similarly, nature is not simply the space outside of human impact, but is shaped (physically and conceptually) by culture. Emphasis in the course will be put on how cultural geography, as the study of how people and place interact, illustrates the relationships of power that are embedded within our use and understanding of nature.

The course is divided into six sections that address major issues in the study of nature and culture: Culture and Environment; Production and the Environment; Consumption and the Environment; Social Nature; Political Ecology; and Environmental Crisis and Modernity. In these sections, a sustained focus will be on the relationship between nature, identity and capitalism in different spaces. The course will be lecture format, but will include many in-class discussions and activities.

**Goals and Objectives**

This course is founded upon the premise that culture and nature are central concepts to understanding the contemporary world. Thus, the goals of the course are aimed at a critical investigation of the study of culture and nature. In particular, our purpose in this course is to survey how geographers and related scholars have approached the study of culture and nature. As a course that places a high value on the analytical approach, this course will encourage students to develop analytic skills that provide a deeper understanding of the relationship between people, power and nature. Students will: (1) become familiar with important analytic models within cultural geography and the study of nature (through lectures and readings); (2) be able to apply those models to case

studies and to their own experiences (through class discussions and assignments); (3) critically evaluate those theoretical perspectives and their advantages for understanding culture and the environment.

### **Course Requirements:**

This course covers topics that may often fall close to home, debating issues and problems that we often feel very strongly about. They are certainly important discussions to have, and the goal is to expand our understanding of both the issues and the different perspectives surrounding them. To help ensure the success of the course, the following ground rules are necessary:

- *Arrive to class having done all of the readings and be ready to comment on them.*
- *Engage with the class – respect your peers, but feel free to challenge their ideas*
- *Remain focused in class – if you use a laptop, use it only for class-related activities.*

Like all courses, there is a significant amount of work required by students outside of the classroom time. Readings, assignments and preparation for the courses should take approximately an extra 4 hours a week throughout the course.

### **Required Readings:**

Readings will be made available on the **UMLearn** website for the course. It is advised that you download all of the readings in advance of the weeks they are required to avoid any last-minute technical difficulties.

### **Grading:**

Participation and Reading Quizzes	- 15%
Landscape Assignment	- 20%
Mid-Term	- 20%
Article Synthesis	- 20%
Take Home Exam	- 25%

#### *Participation and Reading Quizzes*

Your presence and participation in the course is vital to your success. Class lectures are mandatory, as is your engagement in the discussion and exercises in the class. This mark will be based upon random attendance checks and active participation (5%) and reading quizzes (10%). Each week 2-3 questions based on the next week's readings will be posted to the **UML** site. You may be asked to answer those questions in class.

#### *Landscape Assignment – Due October 6<sup>th</sup>, in class*

The task of this assignment is to be able to read different landscapes for the meaning that is held within them. In particular, you are going to be looking at images to see how the same landscape can be given conflicting and sometimes contradictory meanings. Students will provide two separate images of one landscape. In a short written essay (750-1000 words), you will describe the relevance of these two perspectives on the landscape and how they illustrate the landscape as a produced space. Further details will be provided in class.

*Mid-term – October 22<sup>nd</sup>, in class.*

The mid-term will be based on material covered in class and will contain definitions and short answer questions. A detailed study guide will be given in class.

*Article Synthesis – Due November 24<sup>th</sup>, in class*

Drawing from cultural geography journals, you will provide a synthesis of three articles on a related topic. You can choose the articles from any post-2009 issue of: *Antipode*, *Environment and Planning*, *Gender, Place and Culture*, *Social and Cultural Geography*, and *Cultural Geographies*, all of which can be accessed electronically through the U of M library. Your purpose is to identify the underlying commonality between the three articles and illustrate the value of such an approach to the issues at hand. This is not simply a report on the articles; it is a **synthesis** of their content. The paper will be between 750-1000 words and follow proper academic formatting.

*Take Home Exam – Due December 15<sup>th</sup>*

The take home exam will consist of a long answer question that will cover course material. The question will be handed out in class on December 8<sup>th</sup>.

### **Grading, Assignment Submission, Lateness Penalties and Missed Tests**

*Grading:* The grading scheme for this course is as follows:

A+	(90-100%) is Exceptional
A	(80-89%) is Excellent
B+	(75-79%) is Very Good
B	(70-74%) is Good
C+	(65-69%) is Satisfactory
C	(60-64%) is Adequate
D	(50-59%) is Marginal
F	(0-49%) is Failure

*Assignment Submission:* Proper academic performance depends on students doing their work not only well, but on time. Accordingly, assignments for this course must be received on the due date specified for the assignment unless other arrangements are made. Assignments are to be handed in at the beginning of class on the due date.

*Lateness Penalty:* Assignments received later than the due date will be penalized 5% for every 24 hour period that it is late. Exceptions to the lateness penalty for valid reasons such as illness, compassionate grounds, etc., may be entertained by the Course Instructor but will require supporting documentation (e.g., a doctor's letter). Please make every effort to contact the instructor *prior* to your assignment being late to make such arrangements.

*Missed Tests:* Students with a documented reason for missing a course test, such as illness, compassionate grounds, etc., which is confirmed by supporting documentation (e.g., doctor's letter) may request accommodation from the Course Instructor. Further extensions or accommodation will require students to submit a formal petition to the Faculty.

*Feed Back:* Evaluative Feed will be provided by the voluntary drop deadline of November 12 (Specifically on the Landscape Assignment and the Mid-Term).

## Class Communication

The University requires all students to activate an official University email account. For full details of the Electronic Communication with Students please visit: [http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/media/Electronic\\_Communication\\_with\\_Students\\_Policy\\_-\\_2014\\_06\\_05.pdf](http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/media/Electronic_Communication_with_Students_Policy_-_2014_06_05.pdf)

Please note that all communication between myself and you as a student must comply with the electronic communication with student policy ([http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/governing\\_documents/community/electronic\\_communication\\_with\\_students\\_policy.html](http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/governing_documents/community/electronic_communication_with_students_policy.html)). You are required to obtain and use your u of m email account for all communication between yourself and the university.

## Class Schedule and Required Readings:

Reading listed for each week should be read for Monday's class

<b>Intro to Culture and Environment (Bruce Erickson)</b>	
<i>Sept 15 &amp; 17</i>	<i>Nature and Landscape geography.</i>
<b>Required Reading:</b>	Don Mitchell, (2012). "Landscape" In D. Atkinson, P. Jackson, D. Sibley & N. Washbourne (eds) <i>Cultural Geography: A critical dictionary of key concepts</i> , , p. 49-56.
<i>Sept 22 &amp; 24</i>	<i>Hegemony and landscape</i>
<b>Required Reading:</b>	Jody Baker, (2002). "Production and Consumption of Wilderness in Algonquin Park" <i>Space and Culture</i> . Vol 5, No 3, 2002, p. 198-210.
<b>Production and the environment (Julia Laforge)</b>	
<i>Sept 29 &amp; Oct 1</i>	<i>Knowing Nature</i>
<b>Required Readings</b>	Peluso, N. (2012). What's Nature Got to do with It? A Situated Historical Perspective on Socio-natural Commodities. In <i>Development and Change</i> , 43(1).
<i>Oct 6 &amp; 8</i>	<i>Production, Industry and Nature</i>
<b>Required Readings:</b>	Li, F. (2013). Contesting Equivalences: Controversies over Water and Mining in Peru and Chili. In <i>Social Life of Water</i> , John Wagner (Ed) p. 18-35.  Thorpe, J. (2011). Temagami's Tangled Wild: The Making of Race, Nature, and Nation in Early-Twentieth-Century Ontario. In Andrew Baldwin, Laura Cameron, and Audrey Kobayashi (Eds.) <i>Rethinking the Great White North: Race, Nature, and the Historical Geographies of Whiteness in Canada</i> . Vancouver: UBC Press.
<b>Consumption and the Environment (Kate Turner)</b>	
<i>Oct 13 &amp; 15</i>	<i>Food systems and consumption</i>
<b>Required Readings:</b>	Cook, I. et al. (2004). Follow the thing: Papaya. <i>Antipode</i> , 36(4): 642-664.  Jaffee, D. (2007). A movement or a market? Chapter 1 in, <i>Brewing Justice: Fair Trade, sustainability and survival</i> . Berkeley: University of California Press. Pp. 11-36.

Oct 20	Biocultural diversity, heritage and consumption
<b>Required Viewing:</b>	BBC World. Series 2. "One sexy tuber": <a href="http://www.natureinc.org/series.htm">http://www.natureinc.org/series.htm</a> . (Video, approx. 22 min.)
<b>Mid Term - October 22</b>	
<b>Social nature (Kate Turner)</b>	
Oct 27 & 29	<i>Ontologies of Nature &amp; Resource Management</i>
<b>Required Readings:</b>	<p>Davidson-Hunt, I. &amp; Berkes, F. (2003). Nature and society through the lens of resilience: Towards a human-in-ecosystem perspective. Chapter 3 in F. Berkes, J. Colding, and C. Folke (ed.), <i>Navigating social-ecological systems: Building resilience for complexity and change</i>. New York: Cambridge University Press. Pp. 34-53.</p> <p>Tyrrell, M. (2007). Sentient beings and wildlife resources: Inuit, beluga whales and management regimes in the Canadian Arctic. <i>Human Ecology</i>, 35:575-586.</p>
Nov 3 & 5	<i>Wilderness, Social Justice and Indigenous Peoples</i> (Including guest lecture, Dr. Julián Idrobo)
<b>Required Readings:</b>	<p>Cronon, W. (1995). "The Trouble with Wilderness, or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature." In W. Cronon (ed.), <i>Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature</i>, New York: W. W. Norton &amp; Co., pp. 69-90</p> <p>Idrobo, C. J., Davidson-Hunt, I. J., &amp; Seixas, C. S. (2015). Produced natures through the lens of biodiversity conservation and tourism: the Ponta Negra Caiçara in the Atlantic Forest Coast of Brazil. <i>Local Environment</i>, (ahead-of-print), 1-19.</p>
<b>Political ecology (Julia Laforge)</b>	
Nov 10 & 12	<i>What is Political Ecology</i>
<b>Required Readings:</b>	<p>Blaikie, P., &amp; Brookfield, H. (1987). Land degradation and society. London: Methuen. <i>Chapter to be determined</i></p> <p>Escobar, A. (1996). Construction nature: Elements for a post-structuralist political ecology. <i>Futures</i>, 28(4), 325-343.</p>
Nov 17 & 19	<i>Nature, Justice, and Development</i>
<b>Required Readings:</b>	<p>Kosek, J. (2004). Purity and Pollution: Racial Degradation and Environmental Anxieties. In <i>Liberation Ecologies: Environment, Development, Social Movements</i>. Richard Peet and Michael Watts (Eds.) London: Routledge.</p> <p>Goldman, M. J. and Turner, M. T. (2011) Introduction. In M. J. Goldman, P. Nadasdy, and M. D. Turner (Eds.), <i>Knowing Nature: Conversations at the Intersection of Political Ecology and Social Science</i>. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.</p>

<b>Environmental Crisis and Modernity (Bruce Erickson)</b>	
Nov 24 & 26	<i>Environmentalism, Nationalism and Geopolitics</i>
<b>Required Reading:</b>	<p>Comaroff, J., &amp; Comaroff, J. L. (2001). Naturing the nation: aliens, apocalypse, and the postcolonial state. <i>Social Identities</i>, 7(2), 233-265.</p> <p>Dodds, K. (2011). We are a northern country: Stephen Harper and the Canadian Arctic. <i>Polar Record</i>, 47(04), 371-374.</p>
<i>Article synthesis Due Nov 24<sup>th</sup></i>	
Dec 1 & 3-	<i>Neoliberalism, Climate Change and Environmentalism</i>
<b>Required Readings:</b>	<p>Beck, U. (2015). Emancipatory catastrophism: What does it mean to climate change and risk society? <i>Current Sociology</i>, 63(1), 75-88.</p> <p>Scott Prudham, "Pimping Climate Change: Richard Branson, global warming and the performance of green capitalism." <i>Environment and Planning A</i>, 41, p, 1594-1613 (2009).</p>
Dec 8	<i>Review and take home exam</i>

## Student Support and Conduct

### Writing and Study Skills Support

The Academic Learning Centre (ALC) offers services that may be helpful to you as you fulfill the requirements for this course. Through the ALC, you may meet with a study skills specialist to discuss concerns such as time management, reading and note-taking strategies, and test-taking strategies. You may also meet one-on-one with a writing tutor who can give you feedback at any stage of the writing process, whether you are just beginning to work on a written assignment or already have a draft. Writing tutors can also give you feedback if you submit a draft of your paper online. (Please note that the online tutors require 48 hours, from Mondays to Fridays, to return your paper with comments.)

All Academic Learning Centre services are free for UofM students. For more information, please visit the Academic Learning Centre website at [umanitoba.ca/student/academiclearning/](http://umanitoba.ca/student/academiclearning/)

You can also talk to a member of the Academic Learning staff by calling 480-1481 or by dropping in at 201 Tier Building.

### Student Accessibility Services

Student Accessibility Services (SAS) provides support and advocacy for students with disabilities of all kinds: hearing, learning, injury-related, mental health, medical, physical or visual. Students with temporary disabilities such as sprains and breaks are also eligible to use our services. SAS acts as a liaison between students and the faculty and staff of the University of Manitoba as well as support agencies within the province of Manitoba. Please phone: 474-6213 (voice) or 474-9690 (TTY) for service.

### Student Counselling Centre

Student Counselling Centre (SCC) offers individual, couple or family counselling in individual and groups formats. Please phone: 474-8592 or visit SCC at 474 University Centre.

### Policy on Respectful Work and Learning Environment

[http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/governing\\_documents/community/566.html](http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/governing_documents/community/566.html)

*Inappropriate and Disruptive Student Behaviour*

[http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/governing\\_documents/students/279.html](http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/governing_documents/students/279.html)

*Accessibility Policy for Student with Disabilities*

[http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/governing\\_documents/students/281.html](http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/governing_documents/students/281.html)

*Withdrawal from class*

[http://umanitoba.ca/student/records/leave\\_return/695.html](http://umanitoba.ca/student/records/leave_return/695.html)

### **Academic Dishonesty: Plagiarism, Cheating and Examination Impersonation**

Plagiarism or any other form of cheating in examinations, term tests or academic work is subject to serious academic penalty (e.g. suspension or expulsion from the faculty or university). Cheating in examinations or tests may take the form of copying from another student or bringing unauthorized materials into the exam room (e.g., crib notes, pagers or cell phones). Exam cheating can also include exam impersonation. (Please see Exam Impersonation, found in the Examination Regulations section of the General Academic Regulations). A student found guilty of contributing to cheating in examinations or term assignments is also subject to serious academic penalty.

To plagiarize is to take ideas or words of another person and pass them off as one's own. In short, it is stealing something intangible rather than an object. Plagiarism applies to any written work, in traditional or electronic format, as well as orally or verbally presented work. Obviously it is not necessary to state the source of well known or easily verifiable facts, but students are expected to appropriately acknowledge the sources of ideas and expressions they use in their written work, whether quoted directly or paraphrased. This applies to diagrams, statistical tables and the like, as well as to written material, and materials or information from Internet sources.

To provide adequate and correct documentation is not only an indication of academic honesty but is also a courtesy which enables the reader to consult these sources with ease. Failure to provide appropriate citations constitutes plagiarism. It will also be considered plagiarism and/or cheating if a student submits a term paper written in whole or in part by someone other than him/herself, or copies the answer or answers of another student in any test, examination, or take-home assignment. Working with other students on assignments, laboratory work, take-home tests, or on-line tests, when this is not permitted by the instructor, can constitute Inappropriate Collaboration and may be subject to penalty under the [Student Discipline By-Law](#).

An assignment which is prepared and submitted for one course should not be used for a different course. This is called "duplicate submission" and represents a form of cheating because course requirements are expected to be fulfilled through original work for each course.

When in doubt about any practice, ask your professor or instructor.

The Student Advocacy Office, 519 University Centre, 474-7423, is a resource available to students dealing with Academic Integrity matters.

- From the 2014-15 Undergraduate Calendar