Geography/Environmental/International Studies 477
Comparative Environment and Development Studies: A Seminar in Cultural and Political Ecology
Fall Semester, 2019

Class Time and Location: 1:20-2:50 PM, Tuesdays & Thursdays, Rm Carnegie 105
Instructor: Bill Moseley
Office: Rm 104d, Carnegie Hall
Office Hours: 1:30-2:30pm Mon and Wed, 3-4pm Tues and Thurs, or by appointment
Phone: 651-696-6126
Email: moseley@macalester.edu

Course Description and Objectives
A concern for the relationship between nature and society has been one of the pillars of geographic inquiry, and has also been an important bridge between other disciplines. By the 1960s, this area of inquiry was referred to variously as ‘human ecology’ or ‘cultural ecology.’ Over the last two decades certain forms of inquiry within this tradition have increasingly referred to themselves as ‘political ecology.’ Much of the empirical work within these two traditions has been conducted in social and physical environments that might in some sense be called ‘marginal.’ They have been areas of environmental fragility, aridity and resource constraint; areas of socio-economic poverty; regions of indigenous populations; and local communities confronting rapid modernization and commodification.

The purpose of this seminar is to review major works within the traditions of cultural and political ecology; examine several areas of interest within these fields (e.g., agricultural modernization, environmental narratives, conservation, sustainable development); and explore nature-society dynamics across a range of geographical contexts. Towards the end of the course we will explore how one might begin to think in practical terms about facilitating development in marginal environments.

As a junior-senior level seminar, there will be considerable emphasis placed on writing, reading and discussion in this course. This is a good thing because I truly believe that, in a few years time, you will have forgotten most of what I have said in lecture. My hope, however, is that you will remember what you have discovered on your own by reading about it, writing about it, and discussing it inside and outside of class.

Format
The class will meet twice a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Most class periods will be devoted to discussion, interspersed with occasional lectures. Discussions will be led by students and focused on a related set of readings. In addition to a significant amount of out-of-class time devoted to reading, students will prepare and present a major research paper.

This is your class, and I want to know how it's going. Please let me know if you would like to see changes, from lecture topics to grading. You are welcome to speak with me after class or to visit me in my office. The surest way to contact me is to send me e-mail (moseley@macalester.edu), which normally will be responded to promptly during normal business hours.
Disabilities
I am committed to providing assistance to help you be successful in this course. Reasonable accommodations are available for students with documented disabilities. Please meet with the Director of Disability Services, Melissa Fletcher, who serves as the coordinator for services for students with disabilities. It is important to meet with her at the beginning of the semester to ensure that your accommodations are approved and in place to begin the semester successfully. The director may be reached in the Kagin Commons, Rm 125, by phone at 651-696-6974, or email disabilityservices@macalester.edu.

Health and Wellness
You are encouraged to make your health and well-being a priority throughout this semester and during your career at Macalester. Taking care of yourself will help you engage more fully in your academic experience. Remember that beyond being a student, you are a human being carrying your own experiences, thoughts, emotions, and identities with you. It is important to acknowledge any stressors you may be facing, which can be mental, emotional, physical, cultural, financial, etc., and how they can have an impact on your academic experience. I encourage you to remember that you have a body with needs. In the classroom, eat when you are hungry, drink water, use the restroom, and step out if you are upset and need some air. Please do what is necessary so long as it does not impede your or others’ ability to be mentally and emotionally present in the course. Outside of the classroom, sleeping, moving your body, and connecting with others can be strategies to help you be resilient at Macalester. If you are having difficulties maintaining your well-being, please don’t hesitate to contact me and/or find support from Health & Wellness Center. I have included contact information for health and wellness resources on the course moodle page.

Academic Misconduct
Plagiarism and cheating are both academic crimes. Never (1) turn in an assignment that you did not write yourself, or (2) turn in an assignment for this class that you previously turned in for another class. If you do so, it may result in a failing grade for the class, and possibly even suspension from the college. Please see me if you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism. Anyone caught cheating on an exam will be reported to the provost in line with recognized college procedures.

Texts

In addition to the texts, there are a number of readings available electronically via the course moodle page (see reading list below).

Assignments
Reading: The amount of reading required for this course is substantial. Reading assignments related to discussion sessions are listed on the outline of topics that follows. Students are expected to have done all assigned reading before coming to class, and be prepared to discuss it.

Participation and Discussion: The course will be oriented towards discussion about three-quarters of the time (see schedule). The purpose of discussion is to facilitate critical analysis of key works within the field of cultural and political ecology. Class participation accounts for
roughly a third of your grade in this course and the majority of class participation points will be
derived from your comments in discussion. Participation points are relatively easy to obtain if
you keep up with the reading and speak up during discussion. Please see me if you have
difficulty speaking in class.

In my opinion, the best discussions are those in which: 1) students listen (and learn) from one
another and build on what each other is saying; 2) the discussion is focused on understanding the
main argument of each reading and breaking down and analyzing this argument to see if it makes
sense; 3) making connections between readings (when several are assigned on the same day) by
identifying where authors agree and disagree; and 4) relating insight gained from reading and
discussion to other texts or real life events. In sum, I want you to approach discussion as an on-
go ing scholarly debate in which we (as a community of scholars and learners) are attempting to
advance our collective knowledge.

Discussion Leaders: Two student discussion leaders will be assigned to facilitate each discussion
session. Students will lead approximately three discussion sessions during the semester
(depending on class size). Discussion leaders will be expected to summarize the main points of
each reading and to have prepared discussion questions on more debatable aspects of each
article.

Capstone Paper
A major component of this seminar is to undertake a research paper. This will entail posing an
interesting problem or question related to environment and development studies, and then setting
out to answer this question through library research, and in some instances, the analysis of
relevant data sets. You will be graded for content and ideas as well as effectiveness of writing
(organization, clarity, citations, spelling, punctuation). In order to facilitate the research and
writing process, and limit the possibility of a last minute effort, a number of intermediary due
dates have been established, including: submission of potential research topic; expanded research
proposal and preliminary bibliography, research paper draft, peer review exercise, and final
research paper. Late assignments will be penalized 10% per day.

The expanded research proposal should include your research question, plus a summary of your
thesis and a paper outline. It should also include your preliminary bibliography of references
and, in some instances, data sources. We will have a special session with a research librarian to
help address any problems you may have encountered in collecting materials related to your
research question.

Your final research paper should not exceed 30 double-spaced pages. All projects must be
typed. Projects should be organized, written clearly and free of errors. Include citations within
the paper as well as references for supporting maps, figures and tables. All sources used in
preparing your paper must be cited, including data sources. Use standard citation and
presentation forms (e.g., Kate Turabian’s Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and
Dissertations). Examples of past student papers may be found at:
http://www.macalester.edu/geography/courses/geog488/moseley/f06_capstone.htm

Peer Review Exercise:
In addition to receiving feedback on your draft paper from the course instructor, each of you will
receive comments from at least three other class members (and you, in turn, will provide three
students with feedback). Peer review will occur in class on November 30. The guiding
principles for a useful peer review are as follows: 1) engage at the level of ideas; 2) back up your
comments with specific examples from the draft; and 3) be precise when giving advice.

Research Presentation
You will be asked to share your research paper findings with the class through a conference style
presentation. You will have 20 minutes to make your presentation, followed by a 3-5 minute
question and answer period. Use of visual aids is recommended. Because asking informed and
interesting questions of a speaker is an important component of attending conferences, the other
class members will be required to come up with questions for each presenter. In class time for
presentations is scheduled for Tues, Dec 3, Thurs, Dec 5 and Tues, Dec 10.

Semester Overview and Important Due Dates
Please note that this is tentative and subject to change.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wk</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Important Due Dates, Other events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PART I: ENVIRONMENT/DEVELOPMENT STUDIES IN GEOGRAPHY &amp; EMERGENCE OF CULTURAL/POLITICAL ECOLOGY</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3-5 Sept</td>
<td>Course business, Introductions</td>
<td>1. Geography and the Social-Natural Science Divide</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>24-26 Sept</td>
<td>No collective class. Meet with Bill individually to discuss research topics</td>
<td>Library session for capstone paper.</td>
<td>Research proposal due Sun, 9/29 @10pm via moodle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PART II: INVESTIGATION OF SELECTED ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT THEMES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>15-17 Oct</td>
<td>10. Agriculture and Hunger</td>
<td>11. Water &amp; Commons</td>
<td>Outline &amp; prelim bibliography due Wed, 10/23 @ 10pm via moodle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>22-24 Oct</td>
<td>12. Environmental Narratives, Forest Cover &amp; Desertification</td>
<td><strong>No class – Midterm break</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PART III: ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT PRAXIS: WHAT TO DO?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>5-7 Nov</td>
<td>15. Alternative Development Paradigms</td>
<td>No class. Writing Day</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>12-14 Nov</td>
<td>16. Field work, Development and Scholarship</td>
<td>Lecture: Participatory Development Practice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>19-21 Nov</td>
<td>Lecture and Discussion: “Life after Macalester”</td>
<td>Peer review in class</td>
<td>Research paper draft due Wed, 11/20, at noon via moodle to Bill &amp; peers via email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>26-28 Nov</td>
<td>No collective class. Meet individually w/ Bill to discuss draft paper</td>
<td><strong>No class. Thanksgiving</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>3-5 Dec</td>
<td>Research Presentations</td>
<td>Research Presentation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>10 Dec</td>
<td>Research Presentations</td>
<td>Final Research Paper (Wed, 12/11, 4pm hardcopy)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Components</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seminar Participation</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Leadership</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Proposal</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expanded Proposal &amp; Bibliography</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Draft</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Review of Paper Draft</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Presentation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Final grades are based on a weighted average for the term. Grade cutoff points (in terms of percentage) are as follows: A = 93-100%; A- = 90-92%; B+ = 87-89%; B = 83-86%; B- = 80-82%; C+ = 77-79%; C = 73-76%; C- = 70-72%; D+ = 67-69%; D = 63-66%; D- = 60-62%; NC = < 60%.

Detailed Lecture and Discussion Schedule

PART I: ENVIRONMENT/DEVELOPMENT STUDIES IN GEOGRAPHY & THE EMERGENCE OF CULTURAL/POLITICAL ECOLOGY

Tuesday, September 3
Introductions, Overview of Course, Possible discussion leader assignments

Thursday, September 5
1st Discussion: Geography and the Social-Natural Science Divide


Optional Reading (especially for those who have not had these in a previous geography course)


Tuesday, September 10
Short Lecture: The Study of Human Environment Interactions in Geography: Traditions, Tensions and Debates

2nd Discussion: The Place of the Human-Environment Tradition in Geography


**Optional:**


**Thursday, September 12**
Short Lecture: Cultural Ecology

3rd Discussion: Cultural Ecology (concepts and theory)


**Optional:**
**Tuesday, September 17**

4th Discussion: Cultural Ecology (classic case studies)


Optional:


**Thursday, Sept 19**

Short Lecture: Political Ecology

5th Discussion: Political Ecology I (concepts and theory)


Optional:


**Tuesday, Sept 24**

No class. Meet with Bill individually to discuss research topics

**Thursday, Sept 26**

Library session to prepare for capstone research. Library Rm 206.

**Sunday, Sept 29**

Capstone research proposal due at 10pm via moodle

**Tuesday, October 1**

6th Discussion: Political Ecology II (early case studies)


Optional:
Blaikie, P.M. 1985. *The Political Economy of Soil Erosion in Developing Countries*. London: Longman. Chapter 7 (pp. 117-137)


**Thursday, October 3**

7th Discussion: Political Ecology Criticism and Extension


**Tuesday, October 8**

8th Discussion: First World & Urban Political Ecology


Optional:

Thursday, October 10

9th Discussion: Feminist Political Ecology


Optional:

PART II: INVESTIGATION OF SELECTED ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT THEMES

Tuesday, October 15

10th Discussion: Agriculture and Hunger


Optional


Thursday, October 17

11th Discussion. Water Resources and Commons Management


**Tuesday, Oct 22**

12th Discussion: Environmental Narratives : Forest Cover and Desertification


Optional:


**Wednesday, October 23**

Expanded research proposal, outline and preliminary bibliography due at 10pm via moodle

**Thursday, October 24**

No class. Midterm break.

**Tuesday, October 29**

13th Discussion: Wildlife Conservation & Ecotourism


Optional:


**Thursday, October 31**
14th Discussion: Political Ecology and Education


**PART III: ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT PRAXIS: WHAT TO DO?**
**Tuesday, November 5**
15th Discussion: Alternative Development Paradigms

Gibson-Graham, J.K. 1996. Selections from Preface (pp.vii-xi) and Ch. 1 (pp.1-11). *The End of Capitalism (as we know it): A feminist critique of political economy.*


**Thursday, November 7**
No class. Writing Day

**Tuesday, November 12**
16th Discussion: Fieldwork, Development and Scholarship


**Thursday, November 14**  
Lecture: Participatory Development Praxis

Background reading for lecture


**Tuesday, November 19**  

**Thursday, November 21**  
Peer review in class

**Tuesday, November 26**  
Meet one-on-one w/ Bill to review paper draft

**Thursday, November 28**  
No class. Thanksgiving holiday

**Tuesday, December 3**  
Student Presentations

**Thursday, December 5**  
Student Presentations

**Tuesday, December 10**  
Student Presentations and course evaluations

Due: Final Research Paper by 4pm on Wednesday, Dec 11 (hard copy in Bill’s office mailbox)

*Welcome to the course! I look forward to working with you this semester.*