

# Geography of Natural Resources 2520

University of Manitoba  
Department of Environment and Geography

Tuesday and Thursday 1:00-2:15pm

Room: St. Paul's College 258

Instructor: Dr. Owen Toews

[otoews@gmail.com](mailto:otoews@gmail.com)

Office hours: Tuesday and Thursday 11:00am-1:00pm (or by appointment)

Office: 212 Sinnott Building



## Course Description

From the Greek “geo” (Earth) and “graphia” (writing), geography literally means “earth-writing”. This course will introduce students to a variety of ways that human beings have written about and practiced a relationship to the natural world, drawing on concepts from across the social sciences and humanities while remaining rooted in the discipline of geography. We will focus on a selection of major social, political, economic, and ideological debates that have shaped the way we relate to the earth and distribute its resources today. Three pressing contemporary resource challenges set the context for the course: mounting climate crisis; the rapidly widening gap between the rich and the poor; and escalating Indigenous resurgence to protect land and water. As such we will give special attention to two global forces – capitalism and colonialism – that have disproportionately shaped our current relationship to the earth. We will focus primarily on the Canadian context, with attention to both the historical and contemporary resource debates that have shaped and are shaping Canada and the Prairie West.

## Course Objectives

1. To introduce a range of theoretical writings about nature and natural resource governance.
2. To think critically about how capitalism and colonialism have shaped the way we relate to the earth and its resources.
3. To survey major historical and contemporary resource struggles in Canada.

### **Assignments and Exams**

#### **1. Weekly News Briefing, oral presentation, pick a week (5%)**

Natural resource conflicts are constantly in the news. For each class, two students will be responsible for briefing us on current natural resources-related news from Canada and/or around the world. Briefings should be 5 minutes in total (2.5 minutes each) plus questions from the class. Read the websites of the *Winnipeg Free Press*, *Globe and Mail*, *The Guardian*, *New York Times*, or other news outlets, or do a Google News search. Choose one story you find particularly interesting or important and summarize it for us. (Each student assigned to a given week should choose a different topic – communicate with each other to make sure you're not covering the same topic – but topics may be duplicated from one week to the next if there are new developments).

#### **2. Family History Journal Entry, 300 words, due September 27 (15%)**

Natural resources are the root of everyone's survival. Reflect on how natural resources have shaped your family history. Start by brainstorming a list of the sources of wealth – property, a job in a particular industry, etc. - that your family has or has not had access to. Then make a list of the natural resources – land, water, fish, forests, oil, hydroelectricity, etc. – that this wealth (or lack thereof) stems from. Pick one resource to write about. How did your ancestors gain or not gain access to this resource? What social, political, cultural, and/or economic events, processes, and/or structures influenced your family's access to this resource? Be creative. There is no wrong answer.

#### **3. Mid Term Exam, October 25 (20%)**

This will be an in-class short-answer exam that will cover key terms and concepts from the first half of the course. Hint: definitions of most key terms are in the *Dictionary of Human Geography*.

#### **4. Public Meeting Report, 500 words, due any time before November 10 (20%)**

Winnipeg is a hub of natural resources activism and decision-making. Attend a natural resources related event and write a report about what took place. Ideally, the event would be one day (for at least two hours) of the National Energy Board's hearings on TransCanada's proposed Energy East pipeline, tentatively scheduled for October 25-28, 2016 (location TBA one week prior). However, the hearings have been mired in

controversy and may be cancelled altogether. If the hearings do not happen, or if you cannot attend them, you need to find another natural resources-related event. There should be several listed on the Groundwork for Change calendar <http://www.groundworkforchange.org/events-calendar.html> but it is your responsibility to find one – start looking now. An expanded assignment guideline will be provided.

#### **5. Final Research Paper, 1000 words, due December 8 (25%)**

This assignment is designed for you to pursue in greater depth a natural resource issue that you are particularly interested in. Choose either:

- A) Commodity chain paper: Describe and analyze the commodity chain for a particular natural resource that you use. For an introduction to commodity chains, <http://www.followthethings.com/> is a good starting point. (An expanded assignment guide will be provided).
- B) Resource conflict paper: Describe and analyze a particular instance of resource conflict in Canada, past or present. (An expanded assignment guide will be provided).

#### **6. Class participation (15%)**

Classes will have a significant seminar component in addition to lectures. You will be expected to read the assigned texts for the day in advance and come to class prepared to discuss them. We will practice 'generous reading'. This does not mean 'uncritical reading' - it means that we will take the time to figure out how a given text works. What are its different components and how do they function together? For each text, consider:

- What is the setting of the work?
- What are its key questions?
- What evidence does it use?
- What are its main arguments?
- What works for you?

Once we have answered these questions then we can assess the text's effectiveness:

- What doesn't work for you, and why?
- Does the evidence justify the argument?
- What does it ignore or fail to take into account?
- What may the intended or unintended consequences of such an argument be?

Please note: none of these questions asks about the author's "objectivity". We will read with the assumption that no author or researcher can be totally objective and that every

author brings a unique set of commitments, assumptions, and biases to their work.

### **Grading at a glance**

Weekly News Briefing (5%)  
Class participation (15%)  
Family History Journal Entry (15%)  
Public Meeting Report (20%)  
Mid Term Exam (20%)  
Final Research Paper (25%)

### **Grading Standard**

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

### **Required Books**

In an effort to make this course as affordable as possible, there will be no textbook or course pack. Many assigned readings are available online for free, and I will make the others available as PDFs on UM Learn. There are three required books for this course, the first of which – *Dictionary of Human Geography* – is available as an ebook on the University of Manitoba Library website. The other two are each under \$20 and are good books for anyone to have in their library. Please order them ASAP.

1. Gregory, Derek, et al. 2009. *The Dictionary of Human Geography* (fifth edition). Wiley-Blackwell.

Available as an ebook on the University of Manitoba Library website:

<http://umanitoba.ca/libraries/> > search "Dictionary of Human Geography" > "View 6 versions" > "Get it UML" (yellow button)

2. Perry, Adele. 2016. *Aqueduct: Colonialism, Resources, and the Histories We Remember*. Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring Press.

Buy online for \$14.95: <https://allitup.ca/books/A/Aqueduct>

3. Dumont, Marilyn. 2015. *The Pemmican Eaters*. ECW Press.

Buy online for \$18.95: <http://ecwpress.com/products/pemmican-eaters>

### **Class Schedule**

#### **Class 1: Introductions. Thursday September 8**

#### **Class 2: Nature. Tuesday September 13**

Ginn, Franklin and David Demerit. 2009. "Nature: A Contested Concept." In *Key Concepts in Geography*, Clifford et al (eds). London: Sage Publications.  
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265007577\\_Nature\\_A\\_Contested\\_Concept](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265007577_Nature_A_Contested_Concept)

DHG definitions of "nature" and "environment".

#### **Class 3: Resources. Thursday September 15**

Bridge, G. 2009. "Material worlds: Natural Resources, Resource Geography and the Material Economy." *Geography Compass* 3/3.

Harvey, David. "The Political Implications of Population-Resources Theory".  
<http://climateandcapitalism.com/2010/05/23/david-harvey-the-political-implications-of-population-resources-theory/>

DHG definitions of "resources", "natural resources", and "population theory".

#### **Class 4: Commodification. Tuesday September 20**

Cook, Ian. 2004. "Follow the Thing: Papaya" *Antipode* 36.4.

Smith, David and Phil Evans. 1982. "Commodities" in *Marx's Kapital for Beginners*. New York: Pantheon Books.

DHG definitions of "commodity" and "commodity chain".

#### **Class 5: Terra Nullius. Thursday September 22**

Locke, John. 1689. "On Property" Chapter 5 of *The Second Treatise of Governance*  
<http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/locke1689a.pdf>

DHG definition of "terra nullius".

### **Class 6: Property. Tuesday September 27**

Blomley, Nicholas. 2004. "Welcome to the Hotel California." In *Unsettling the City: Urban Land and the Politics of Property*. New York: Routledge.

DHG definition of "property"

**\*\*\*Family History Journal Entry due (15%)\*\*\***

### **Class 7: Indigenous ontologies. Thursday September 29**

Deloria Jr., Vine. 2001. "Power and Place Equal Personality." In *Power and Place: Indian Education in America*, Deloria Jr. and Wildcat (eds.). Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing.

### **Class 8: Indigenous legal orders. Tuesday October 4**

Todd, Zoe. 2016. "From Fish Lives to Fish Law: Learning to See Indigenous Legal Orders in Canada." *Somatosphere*. <http://somatosphere.net/2016/02/from-fish-lives-to-fish-law-learning-to-see-indigenous-legal-orders-in-canada.html>

### **No class (Fall Term Break) – Thursday October 6**

### **Class 9: The commons. Tuesday October 11**

Animated short: *The Commons* by Laura Hanna  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L7jaSjkd0jM>

Linebaugh, Peter. "Some Principles of the Commons." In *Stop, Thief! The Commons, Enclosures, and Resistance*. Oakland: PM Press.

Ostrom, et al. 2002. "The Drama of the Commons." In *The Drama of the Commons*. Washington: National Academies Press.

### **Class 10: Primitive accumulation. Thursday October 13**

Melamed, Jodi. 2015. "Racial Capitalism." *Critical Ethnic Studies* 1.1.

DHG definitions of "primitive accumulation", "enclosure", "privatization", and "neoliberalism".

### **Class 11: The body as natural resource. Tuesday October 18**

Federici, Sylvia. "The Great Caliban: The Struggle Against the Rebel Body" in *Caliban and the Witch*. Brooklyn: Autonomedia.

**Class 12: The future of the commons. Thursday October 20**

Harvey, David. 2011. "The Future of the Commons." *Radical History Review*, Issue 109 (Winter 2011).

Audio interview with Glen Coulthard on Indigeneity and the commons: <http://vancouver.mediacoop.ca/audio/commons-conference-2012-glen-coulthard-indigeneity-education-and-media/9541>

**\*\*\*Class 13: Mid Term Exam. Tuesday October 25\*\*\***

**National Energy Board Energy East Pipeline hearings October 25 - 28**

**Class 14: The loss of the commons in Western Canada. Thursday October 27**

Spry, Irene. 1995. "The Tragedy of the Loss of the Commons in Western Canada." As *Long as the Sun Shines and Water Flows*, Getty and Lussier (eds). Vancouver: UBC Press.

Larocque, Emma. 2001. "My Hometown Northern Canada South Africa." In *Manitowapow: Aboriginal Writings from the Land of Water*. Winnipeg: Highwater Press.

**Class 15: Fantasies of Sovereignty. Tuesday November 1**

Gaudry, Adam. 2016. "Fantasies of Sovereignty: Deconstructing British and Canadian Claims to Ownership of the Historic North-West." *Native American and Indigenous Studies* Vol.3, No.1.

**Class 16: Dominion Land Survey. Thursday November 3**

Dumont, Marylin. 2015. *The Pemmican Eaters*. ECW Press.

**Class 17: Dominion Land Survey II. Tuesday November 8**

Bantjes, Rod. 2005. "Groundwork: The Dominion Survey." In *Improved Earth*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Film: *Manufactured Landscapes*

**Class 18: Canada's staples economy. Thursday November 10**

Bourassa, Carrie. 2004. Colonization, Racism and the Health of Indian People. *Prairie Forum* 29, no.2 (Fall 2004): pp. 207-224.

**\*\*\*Public Meeting Report due (15%)\*\*\***

**Class 19: Aqueduct. Tuesday November 15**

Perry, Adele. 2016. "Aqueduct". In *Aqueduct*. (p.45-84)

**No Class (American Studies Association Annual Meeting) – Thursday November 17**

**Class 20: All about oil. Tuesday November 22**

Harvey, David. "All about Oil." In *The New Imperialism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Guest speaker: Astitwa Thapa, Divest Manitoba (fossil fuel divestment at UM)

**Class 21: Extractivism. Thursday November 24**

Leanne Simpson interviewed by Naomi Klein. 2013.

<http://www.yesmagazine.org/peace-justice/dancing-the-world-into-being-a-conversation-with-idle-no-more-leanne-simpson>

**Class 22: Indigenous women, Indigenous lands. Tuesday November 29**

Palmater, Pamela. "Corporate Conquistadors Rape Indigenous Lands and Bodies."  
<http://www.telesurtv.net/english/opinion/Corporate-Conquistadors-Rape-Indigenous-Lands-and-Bodies--20160816-0011.html>

Smith, Andrea. "Rape of the Land" in *Conquest: Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide*. Boston: South End Press.

**Class 23: Resources in the city. Thursday December 1**

Coulthard, Glen. "Thesis Three: Dispossession and Indigenous Sovereignty in the City", *Red Skin White Masks*, p.173-176. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Lee, Erica Violet. "Feeding the Heart of the City: A Love Letter at the Closing of Our Grocery Store." <https://moontimewarrior.com/2016/02/01/feeding-the-heart-of-the-city/>

**Class 24: Manitoba Hydro. Tuesday December 6**

Young, Doris. "Northern Manitoba Hydroelectric Projects and Their Impact on Cree Culture". In *Manitowapow*, p.171-175.

**Class 25: Readings TBA Thursday December 8**



**\*\*\*Research Paper due (25%)\*\*\***

## **Course Policies and Miscellaneous Information**

### **Late Assignments**

Students will not be permitted to write a make-up exam, except for documented medical or compassionate reasons. Students may hand in assignments late but will be assessed a late penalty if they do so (– 2 marks per day including weekends).

### **Academic Dishonesty**

Students should acquaint themselves with the University’s policy on plagiarism and cheating and examination impersonation (see University of Manitoba General Calendar). Please submit your own unique work. Consult the U of M Calendar “academic regulations” for more information on plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. I will talk about proper citation methods when we get closer to assignment due dates. Please see me if you have any questions about sources, citations or academic/research ethics.

### **Disability Services**

If you are experiencing difficulties with your studies or assignments, or have a disability or illness which may affect your course of study, you should discuss these issues with your instructor and/or one of the following Student Affairs offices as soon as possible. You are not required to disclose your disability to the instructor.

**Disability Services**, 155 University Centre, 474-6213 (voice), 474-9690 (TTY)

**Student Counseling and Career Centre**, 474 University Centre, 474-8592

**University 1**, 205 Tier Building, 474-6209

**Learning Assistance Centre**, 201 Tier, 480-1481

**A Note on Email:** I will happily answer email queries that you might have about course administration or other housekeeping duties – but I will only be checking email during regular office hours (i.e. not on evenings and weekends). If your questions are more substantive (requiring a longer answer or explanation) I will ask you bring them to me before/after class or during office hours. Feel free to stop me in the halls or to make an appointment to see me. In general, personal face-to-face communication is much preferred over email. Please put the course title and course number – i.e. Geography of Natural Resources 2520 – as the email subject line on every message you send.

**Cell Phones and Computers:** Many students prefer to take notes on laptops. This is fine as long as you don’t use the computer for other purposes (i.e. using facebook, writing emails, etc.). This is disruptive for your classmates. Cell phones should be turned off at the beginning of class and texting is a big-time breach of classroom etiquette. Please do not text during class.

## Schedule “A”

Schedule “A” is the new requirement passed by the University of Manitoba Senate in 2016 that requires that a mandated list of supports for services plus contact information for students. *While this information is important and useful, should you require advice and support, I am happy to meet with you and discuss issues and concerns.*

**Writing and Learning Support.** The Academic Learning Centre (ALC) offers services that may be helpful to you throughout your academic program. Through the ALC, you can meet with a learning specialist to discuss concerns such as time management, learning strategies, and test-taking strategies. The ALC also offers peer supported study groups called Supplemental Instruction (SI) for certain courses that students have typically found difficult. In these study groups, students have opportunities to ask questions, compare notes, discuss content, solve practice problems, and develop new study strategies in a group-learning format.

You can also meet one-to-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. If you are interested in meeting with a writing tutor, reserve your appointment two to three days in advance of the time you would like to meet. Also, plan to meet with a writing tutor a few days before your paper is due so that you have time to work with the tutor’s feedback.

These Academic Learning Centre services are free for U of M students. For more information, please visit the Academic Learning Centre website at:

<http://umanitoba.ca/student/academiclearning/>

You can also contact the Academic Learning Centre by calling 204-480-1481 or by visiting 201 Tier Building.

**University of Manitoba Libraries (UML).** As the primary contact for all research needs, your liaison librarian can play a vital role when completing academic papers and assignments. Liaisons can answer questions about managing citations, or locating appropriate resources, and will address any other concerns you may have, regarding the research process. Liaisons can be contacted by email or phone, and are also available to meet with you in-person. A complete list of liaison librarians can be found by subject: <http://bit.ly/WcEbA1> or name: <http://bit.ly/1tJ0bB4>. In addition, general library assistance is provided in person at 19 University Libraries, located on both the Fort Garry and Bannatyne campuses, as well as in many Winnipeg hospitals. For a listing of all libraries, please consult the following: <http://bit.ly/1sXe6RA>. When working remotely, students can also receive help online, via the Ask-a-Librarian chat found on the Libraries’ homepage: [www.umanitoba.ca/libraries](http://www.umanitoba.ca/libraries).

**Mental Health.** For 24/7 mental health support, contact the Mobile Crisis Service at 204-940-1781.

**Student Counselling Centre.** Contact SCC if you are concerned about any aspect of your mental health, including anxiety, stress, or depression, or for help with relationships or other life concerns. SCC offers crisis services as well as individual, couple, and group counselling. Student Counselling Centre:

<http://umanitoba.ca/student/counselling/index.html>

474 University Centre or S207 Medical Services (204) 474-8592

**Student Support Case Management.** Contact the Student Support Case Management team if you are concerned about yourself or another student and don't know where to turn. SSCM helps connect students with on and off campus resources, provides safety planning, and offers other supports, including consultation, educational workshops, and referral to the STATIS threat assessment team. Student Support Intake Assistant

<http://umanitoba.ca/student/case-manager/index.html>

520 University Centre (204) 474-7423

**University Health Service.** Contact UHS for any medical concerns, including mental health problems. UHS offers a full range of medical services to students, including psychiatric consultation. University Health Service <http://umanitoba.ca/student/health/>  
104 University Centre, Fort Garry Campus (204) 474-8411 (Business hours or after hours/urgent calls)

**Health and Wellness.** Contact our Health and Wellness Educator if you are interested in information on a broad range of health topics, including physical and mental health concerns, alcohol and substance use harms, and sexual assault.

Health and Wellness Educator <http://umanitoba.ca/student/health-wellness/welcome.html>

Katie.Kutryk@umanitoba.ca

469 University Centre (204) 295-9032

**Live Well @ UofM.** For comprehensive information about the full range of health and wellness resources available on campus, visit the Live Well @ UofM site:

<http://umanitoba.ca/student/livewell/index.html>

**Copyright.** We will use copyrighted content in this course. I have ensured that the content I use is appropriately acknowledged and is copied in accordance with copyright laws and University guidelines. Copyrighted works are made available for private study and research and must not be distributed in any format without permission. Do not upload copyrighted works to a learning management system (such as UM Learn), or any website, unless an exception to the *Copyright Act* applies or written permission has been confirmed. For more information, see the University's Copyright Office website at <http://umanitoba.ca/copyright/> or contact [um\\_copyright@umanitoba.ca](mailto:um_copyright@umanitoba.ca).

**University and Unit policies, procedures, and supplemental information available on-line:**

**Your rights and responsibilities.** As a student of the University of Manitoba you have rights and responsibilities. It is important for you to know what you can expect from the University as a student and to understand what the University expects from you. Become familiar with the policies and procedures of the University and the regulations that are specific to your faculty, college or school.

**The Academic Calendar.** <http://umanitoba.ca/student/records/academiccalendar.html> is one important source of information. View the sections University Policies and Procedures and General Academic Regulations. While all of the information contained in these two sections is important, the following information is highlighted.

- If you have questions about your grades, talk to your instructor. There is a process for term work and final grade appeals. Note that you have the right to access your final examination scripts. See the Registrar's Office website for more information including appeal deadline dates and the appeal form  
<http://umanitoba.ca/registrar/>
- You are expected to view the General Academic Regulation section within the Academic Calendar and specifically read the Academic Integrity regulation. Consult the course syllabus or ask your instructor for additional information about demonstrating academic integrity in your academic work. Visit the Academic Integrity Site for tools and support  
<http://umanitoba.ca/academicintegrity/> View the Student Academic Misconduct procedure for more information.

**Respectful Work and Learning Environment.** The University is committed to a respectful work and learning environment. You have the right to be treated with respect and you are expected to conduct yourself in an appropriate respectful manner. Policies governing behavior include the:

- **Respectful Work and Learning Environment**
  - [http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/governing\\_documents/community/230.html](http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/governing_documents/community/230.html)
  - **Student Discipline**  
[http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/governing\\_documents/students/student\\_discipline.html](http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/governing_documents/students/student_discipline.html)
  - **Violent or Threatening Behaviour**  
[http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/governing\\_documents/community/669.html](http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/governing_documents/community/669.html)

**Sexual Assault.** If you experience Sexual Assault or know a member of the University community who has, it is important to know there is a policy that provides information about the supports available to those who disclose and outlines a process for reporting.

- The Sexual Assault policy may be found at:  
[http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/governing\\_documents/community/230.html](http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/governing_documents/community/230.html)
- More information and resources can be found by reviewing the Sexual Assault site <http://umanitoba.ca/student/sexual-assault/>
- For information about rights and responsibilities regarding Intellectual Property view the policy  
[http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/media/Intellectual\\_Property\\_Policy\\_-\\_2013\\_10\\_01.pdf](http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/media/Intellectual_Property_Policy_-_2013_10_01.pdf)

**Academic Programs and Regulations.** For information on regulations that are specific to your academic program, read the section in the Academic Calendar and on the respective faculty/college/school web site <http://umanitoba.ca/faculties/>  
Contact an Academic Advisor within our faculty/college or school for questions about your academic program and regulations <http://umanitoba.ca/academic-advisors/>

**Student Advocacy.** Contact Student Advocacy if you want to know more about your rights and responsibilities as a student, have questions about policies and procedures, and/or want support in dealing with academic or discipline concerns.

<http://umanitoba.ca/student/advocacy/>

520 University Centre 204 474 7423

[student\\_advocacy@umanitoba.ca](mailto:student_advocacy@umanitoba.ca)