

# Work and the Environment

Fall 2022

LABRST 4F03 / ENVSOCTY 4LW3

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Note: please indicate 4F03 in Subject Heading

BSB 138

Wed 8:30-11:20

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## Course Description

Nature is the basis for our economic system, yet we often overlook the dynamic ways that it interacts with the economy and people’s livelihoods. Instead, questions about nature and environmental protection are often separated from questions about work, inequality and social justice. This separation often forecloses the ability to imagine economies that are both socially equitable and environmentally sustainable. Given the prevalence and urgency of environmental and social problems in the world it is critical that we consider the complex relationships that exist between the economy, labour, nature and environmental protection. This course adopts a broad understanding of both labour and environment to explore these connections. We will move from the global to the local and back again to explore how environmental degradation relates to economic inequality, the economy and work.

Some of the questions we will address in this course include: What is nature and how is it related to the economy? How is work in nature based sectors different from work in other sectors? Why have labour unions been in conflict with environmental groups? How can environmental justice movements address environmental racism? And what is degrowth and how will it affect workers in the global south?

## Learning Objectives

Expected learning outcomes include:

- the ability to critically evaluate competing theories and explanations about labour, the environment and resource industries;
- the ability to clearly communicate a well-supported argument orally in front of others and in written form;
- the ability to work collaboratively with other students;
- a deepened awareness of historical and contemporary way that class, colonization and racization relate to environmental degradation.

## Required Materials and Texts

All course materials will be made available on Avenue to Learn

## Course Evaluation Breakdown

Formal evaluation	% of final grade	Due date
Participation	25	In class (see below)
Active Learning Task/Case study	25	*sign-up for date
Article critique	20	*sign-up for date
Take home exam	30	Nov 24-Dec 1st

\*Students must complete either their presentation or article critique by February 17<sup>th</sup>.

## Student Participation

Student participation will be evaluated on the basis of:

- class preparation (assessed by oral contributions and hard-copy submission of weekly notes)
- participation in class discussions
- participation in small group activities
- attendance for entire class

### Class preparation

In a seminar course, the readings are the course. As such, students need to bring a hard copy of their reading notes to each class that include:

- A. At least five important words/concepts from each reading and your best attempt at a definition
- B. The main argument of each reading in your own words (1-4 sentences)

- C. A short description of the evidence/results provided (2-4 sentences)
- D. One discussion question

### Small group discussion and activities

Each week you will meet with a small group of other students to help one another understand concepts and main arguments that you identified in your individual reading notes.

For each reading – the group will identify: 1) what they consider to be the three most important concepts; 2) the main argument of each reading; and, 3) two thoughtful questions for the class.

### **Each group should take notes and be prepared to share their responses with the class**

Students will also be asked to participate in various student and instructor led active learning exercises that will often involve small group work.

### Participation in class discussions

The final way that student participation will be assessed is through participation in class discussion. A small number of insightful comments about more than one reading is sufficient for an A grade. Comments should demonstrate knowledge of the content of the readings as well the ability to critically engage with the reading material.

### Attendance

**Note:** Disruptive behaviour or speech, **missing classes, coming to class late or leaving early**, and/or the **use of cell phones**, iPads, iPods, mp3 players, or any electronic devices to do things other than participate in course material **will negatively affect participation grades**.

It is our collective responsibility to foster an open, welcoming, and inclusive learning environment and discussion space. As such, we must commit to honest and critical engagement with the course materials and competing theoretical perspectives, while remaining respectful to each other and our space. Towards this end, this seminar has a zero-tolerance policy on rude, disrespectful, intolerant, and/or offensive behaviour and/or speech.

### **Case study/active learning task**

In pairs or small groups, students will choose one week where they will prepare a presentation/ active learning activity that helps to solidify course concepts from the previous week.

After class on the wednesday one week before prior to their presentation date the assigned group will meet with the instructor to present in hard copy:

- A comprehensive description of your planned case study or active learning activity including your sources and descriptions and questions for the class

The case study presentation (with questions for students) or learning activity should be between 30 and 40 minutes in length.

Grades will be based on:

- Summary and meeting with instructor (Have all of the worked together to understand the key concepts and arguments? Has the group met to plan their learning activity. If the group is planning a case study, have they identified specific sources?)
- Organization and delivery of active learning task or case study. (Has the group thought through all of the details and planned for all possible scenarios, is the presentation/activity well organized and timely)?
- Quality of active learning task. Did the task prompt higher order thinking (evaluation, critique) amongst the students? Did the task help students engage with the material? Was the activity creative and did it engage students?
- Quality of case study. Was the case study thoroughly researched? Was it specific and did it prompt higher order/nuanced thinking about the chosen topic or course topic?

Note: It is imperative that you practice your presentation or activity before delivering it to the class!

Some ideas:

- Find a current newspaper story by searching Canadian newspapers (for example using proquest) and then conduct further research to contextualize the case.
- Have students work through an example by dividing the class into groups and providing each group with detailed information to bring together to solve a task.
- Have students visualize a concept by creating a map, using sticky notes or writing on a whiteboard.
- Create a structured debate about a specific question.

Learning task resources:

- [Queen's University resources](#)
- [Duke university resources](#)
- [CRTLE resources](#)

\*Note, all members of the group must be prepared to deliver the presentation in case of technical disruptions.

## **Article Critique**

Students will submit an article critique on a topic that is different from that of their presentation. The article critique is due at the beginning of class on the day where the class is discussing the readings that you have chosen to write about. See the article critique handout for further details.

## **Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings**

### **Part 1: Work and the environment: What are the Issues?**

#### **Week 1: September 7<sup>th</sup> - Introduction**

Why should labour scholars care about the environment?

\*For next week: take a picture of something that represents the environment to you. Paste your photo to the google slides document at this link by Monday, January 17:

[https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1L9Si18RG7yJ1qq\\_TbddTgY1xTyI4W\\_CQXju45SXGom0/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1L9Si18RG7yJ1qq_TbddTgY1xTyI4W_CQXju45SXGom0/edit?usp=sharing)

#### **Week 2: September 14<sup>th</sup> – Nature and work**

White, R. 1995 “Are you an environmentalist or do you work for a living?” Work and nature IN: Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature, New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 69-90.

Cronon, William. 1996. The trouble with wilderness IN: Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature, New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 69-90  
[http://www.williamcronon.net/writing/Trouble\\_with\\_Wilderness\\_Main.html](http://www.williamcronon.net/writing/Trouble_with_Wilderness_Main.html)

Tobias JK and Richmond CAM. 2014. “That land means everything to us as Anishinaabe..”: Environmental dispossession and resilience on the North Shore of Lake Superior. Health and Place 29: 26-33.

#### **Week 3: September 21<sup>st</sup> - Workers versus environmentalists**

Foster, John Bellamy 1993. The Limits of Environmentalism Without Class: Lessons from the Ancient Forest Struggle of the Pacific Northwest. *Capitalism, Nature, Socialism* 4(1): 11-41.

Savage, Larry and Dennis Soron 2011. Organized Labor and the Politics of Nuclear Energy: The Case of the Canadian Nuclear Workers Council. *Capitalism Nature Socialism* 22(3): 8-29 doi: 10.1080/10455752.2011.593873

Satheesh, S. 2021. Environmental movements in the global south. In *Diversity and inclusion in environmentalism* (pp. 51-62). Routledge.

## **Part 2: Working with nature**

### **Week 4: September 28<sup>th</sup> – Resource industries and communities**

Parlee, B. L. (2015). Avoiding the Resource Curse: Indigenous Communities and Canada's Oil Sands. *World Development*, 74(Complete), 425–436.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2015.03.004>

Storey K and Hall H. .2018. Dependence at a distance: Labour mobility and the evolution of the single industry town. *The Canadian Geographer* 62: 225-237.

*Mazer, Katie. 2013. Making Maritimers Mobile: How a Well-Planned Crisis is Funneling Workers Westward. Briarpatch. Nov 1<sup>st</sup>.*

### **Week 5: October 5<sup>th</sup> - Nature, work and identity**

Dorow S. 2015. Gendering Energy Extraction in Fort McMurray. In: Shrivastava M and Stefanick L (eds) *Alberta Oil and the Decline of Democracy in Canada*. Edmonton: Athabasca University Press, 275-292.

Dunk, Thomas, 1991. It's a Working Man's Town. Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press. Chapter 3 The Regional Setting (45-64)

Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada. 2021 Addressing Inuit Women's Economic Security and Prosperity in the Resource Extraction Industry. Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada: Ottawa 64 pp.

### **Reading Week: October 12<sup>th</sup>, no class**

## **Part 3: Equity and the environment**

### **Week 6: October 19<sup>th</sup> – Environmental justice and work**

McGregor, Deborah 2018. Mino-Mnaamodzawin: achieving Indigenous Environmental Justice in Canada. *Environment and Society: Advances in Research* 9 (2018): 7–24.

Bick, R., Halsey, E. and C. Ekenga. 2018. The global environmental injustice of fast fashion. *Environment and Health*: 17:92 <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12940-018-0433-7> retrieved December 15, 2021

Pellow, David, N. 2005. The next revolutionary stage: recycling waste or recycling history? In: King, Leslie and Deborah McCarthy (eds.) *Environmental Sociology: From Analysis to Action*. Toronto: Roman & Littlefield Publishers Inc.

### **Week 7: October 26<sup>th</sup> – Climate change, unions and colonialism**

Sultana, Farhana In Press. The unbearable heaviness of climate coloniality. *Political Geography*.

Räthzel, Nora and David Uzzell 2011. Trade unions and climate change: The jobs versus environment dilemma. *Global Environmental Change*21(4):1215-1223.

*Anote's Ark 2018* Rytz, Matthieu, director, producer, screenwriter.; Documentary Channel (Television network : Canada), production company.; EyeSteelFilm (Firm), production company.

[https://mcmaster.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/fulldisplay?docid=alma991032881126507371&context=L&vid=01OCUL\\_MU:OMNI&lang=en&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=OCULDiscoveryNetwork](https://mcmaster.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/fulldisplay?docid=alma991032881126507371&context=L&vid=01OCUL_MU:OMNI&lang=en&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=OCULDiscoveryNetwork)

## **Part 4: Strategies to build just and sustainable economies**

### **Week 8: November 2<sup>nd</sup> - Green jobs**

Curley, A. (2018). A failed green future: Navajo Green Jobs and energy “transition” in the Navajo Nation. *Geoforum*, 88(Complete), 57–65.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2017.11.012>



Nugent, James 2011. Changing the Climate: Ecoliberalism, Green New Dealism, and the Struggle over Green Jobs in Canada. *Labor Studies Journal* 36(1): 58-82. DOI: 10.1177/0160449X10392528

Cheryl Teelucksingh (2018): Diverse environmentalism and inclusivity in Toronto's Green Economy, *Environmental Sociology*. 2325-1042

Carlota Perez 2018. *Techno-economic paradigm shifts – video 18:44*  
<http://www.carlotaperez.org/media?s=vid&l=en>

## **Week 9: November 9<sup>th</sup> - Just transition**

MacNeil, R. and Beaman, M. 2022. Understanding resistance to just transition ideas in Australian coal communities. *Environmental Innovation and Societal Transitions* 43: 118-126.

Newell, Peter and Dustin Mulvaney 2013. The political economy of the 'just transition'. *The Geographical Journal*. 179(2):132-140.

Nikki Luke (2022): Just Transition for All? Labor Organizing in the Energy Sector Beyond the Loss of "Jobs Property", *Annals of the American Association of Geographers*, DOI: 10.1080/24694452.2022.2079471

*Voices from under a dark cloud: Towards a Just Transition in the coalfields of South Africa.* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rRQkl-SEVho>

United Nations 2021. *COP 26: Together for our planet*  
<https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/cop26> retrieved on January 12, 2022.

## **Week 10: November 16<sup>th</sup> – Degrowth**

Martinez-Alier, Joan 2009. Socially Sustainable Economic De-growth. *Development and Change* 40(6): 1099–1119. DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-7660.2009.01618.x

Rodríguez-Labajos, Beatriz, et al. "Not So Natural an Alliance? Degrowth and Environmental Justice Movements in the Global South." *Ecological Economics*, vol. 157, no. Complete, Mar. 2019, pp. 175–184, doi:10.1016/j.ecolecon.2018.11.007.

*CBC Ideas. The Degrowth Paradigm. December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2013:*  
<http://www.cbc.ca/ideas/episodes/2013/12/10/the-degrowth-paradigm/>

## **Week 11: November 23<sup>rd</sup> – Labour/environment coalitions**

Senier, Laura, Mayer, Brian, Brown, Phill and Rachel Morello-Frosch 2007. School Custodians and Green Cleaners: New Approaches to Labor-Environment Coalitions. *Organization & Environment* 2007; 20: 304-324. Doi: 10.1177/1086026607305740

Obach, Brian 2004. New labor: slowing the treadmill of production? *Organization and environment* 17(3): 337-354. doi: 10.1177/1086026604267939

## **Week 12: November 30<sup>th</sup> – Take home exam (Thursday Nov 24-Thursday Dec 1)**

## **Week 13: December 7<sup>th</sup> – Self-assessment course review and exam recap**

### **Course Policies**

#### **Submission of Assignments**

Weekly reading notes and article critiques will be submitted **in hard copy in person during class**. All assignments must include the word count at the top and be 1.5 spaced or double spaced. Final exams will be submitted via avenue to learn.

#### **Grades**

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

<b>MARK</b>	<b>GRADE</b>
90-100	A+
85-90	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-
57-59	D+
53-56	D
50-52	D-
0-49	F

## **Late Assignments**

There is no allowance for late assignments except in extenuating circumstances.

## **Absences, Missed Work, Illness**

Students may be absent for one class without it affecting their participation grade. If further absences are required, students must contact the instructor for accommodation. All other absences will affect a student's participation grade.

## **Avenue to Learn**

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

## **Turnitin.com**

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically to Turnitin.com and in hard copy so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work to Turnitin.com must still submit a copy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, etc.). To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please to go [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).

## **Academic Dishonesty:**

<http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity/students/index.html>

Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, specifically Appendix 3, located at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

***NEW.....Instructors, should remove this paragraph if not applicable:***

In this course, we will be using a software package designed to reveal plagiarism. Students will be required to submit their work electronically and in hard copy for this purpose.

### **Department/University Policies:**

Labour Studies staff does not date-stamp assignments, nor do they monitor the submission or return of student papers. All papers should be submitted/returned in-class, in tutorials or during Professor/TA office hours. Instructors who utilize Avenue to Learn will provide instructions on that preference.

### **Absence Reporting:**

<http://www.mcmaster.ca/msaf/> On-line self-reporting tool for Undergrad students only – illness lasting **less than 3 days**. Can only be used once per term. Instructors are not allowed to accept medical notes! These must be submitted to your Faculty office. In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”. Please also communicate with the course instructor.

### **Code of Conduct:**

<http://studentaffairs.mcmaster.ca>

“McMaster University is a community dedicated to furthering learning, intellectual inquiry, the dissemination of knowledge and personal and professional development. Membership in this community implies acceptance of the principle of mutual respect for the rights, responsibilities, dignity and well-being of others and a readiness to support an environment conducive to the intellectual and personal growth of all who study work and live within it.”

### **Computer Use:**

Computer use in the classroom is intended to facilitate learning in that particular lecture or tutorial. At the discretion of the instructor, students using a computer for any other purpose may be required to turn the computer off for the remainder of the lecture or tutorial.

### **Course Modifications:**

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the

opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check their McMaster email AND Avenue to Learn (if used by instructor) regularly during the term to note any changes.

## **Email Communication Policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences:**

All e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own **McMaster University e-mail account**. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor/TA receives a communication from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion. **Please always include student name, ID, course # and TA name (if applicable) in messages.**

## **Evaluations (Online):**

<http://evals.mcmaster.ca>, and log in via MACID – undergraduate only.

These help faculty and the School of Labour Studies to meet our goal of continually improving teaching effectiveness. All students in the course are invited and encouraged to complete the evaluation.

## **Student Accessibility Services:**

<http://sas.mcmaster.ca/>

**Location: MUSC – B107**

**Contact: 905-525-9140 extension: 28652**

*NOTE: Disclosure of disability-related information is personal and confidential.*

Student Accessibility Services offers various supports for students with disabilities. We work with full time and part time students. SAS provides or assists students with their academic and disability-related needs, including: Learning Strategies, Assistive Technologies, Test & Exam Administration, Note-Taking Programs, and Classroom Accommodations. \*Please inform the instructor if there are disability needs that are not being met.

## **McMaster University Policy on Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities & McMaster University Anti-Discrimination Policy**

- <http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicAccommodation-StudentsWithDisabilities.pdf>

**Student Success Centre:** <http://studentsuccess.mcmaster.ca/>  
**GH-110 905-525-9140 x24254**

Some services include: student orientation, academic skills, volunteerism, educational planning, employment and career transition. Writing Support:  
<http://studentsuccess.mcmaster.ca/students/academic-skills/writing-support-services.html>

**Student Wellness Centre:** <http://wellness.mcmaster.ca/>  
**PGCLL-201 905-525-9140 x27700**

Provides services in: Personal and Psychological Counselling, Mental Health Support, Medical and Health Services

### **Turnitin.com**

In cases where assignments are submitted online, this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically to Turnitin.com so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work to Turnitin.com must still submit a copy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, etc.). To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please to go [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).

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### **University Policies:**

## CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities (the “Code”). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, whether in person or online.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students’ access to these platforms.

## ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or [sas@mcmaster.ca](mailto:sas@mcmaster.ca) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University’s Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities policy.

## REQUESTS FOR RELIEF FOR MISSED ACADEMIC TERM WORK

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF): In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”.

## ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION FOR RELIGIOUS, INDIGENOUS OR SPIRITUAL OBSERVANCES (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office normally within 10 working days of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

## COPYRIGHT AND RECORDING

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, including lectures by University instructors

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized

distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

#### EXTREME CIRCUMSTANCES

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email