

NRSM 570: Graduate Seminar in Political Ecology

Instructor Info:

T/Thu 9:40-11, Native American Center 014

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Course Description

Political ecology is a field of study for understanding social and environmental change, problems and solutions. It is one of many social science approaches that have emerged to understand environmental change as importantly involving social forces and processes. The introduction to a new edited volume on political ecology (Perreault et al., 2015, 7-8) states that political ecology is distinguished from other “social-environmental” approaches by its three key commitments to: (1) a *theoretical commitment* to critical social theory and a post-positivist understanding of nature and the production of knowledge about it, which views these as inseparable from social relations of power; (2) a *methodological commitment* to in-depth understandings often involving mixed qualitative and quantitative methods, and place-based, historically situated analyses (which also involve “chains of explanation” involving “bottoms up” considerations of broader, non-place based social and environmental forces); and (3) *political commitment* to social justice and structural political change (i.e., change of economic, political and institutional systems which influence (not determine) individual behavior, attitudes and values). As such political ecology is a “normative” project which from its beginnings has highlighted the struggles, interests and plight of marginalized populations including peasants, indigenous peoples, ethnic and religious minorities, women, and the poor; and has sought not only to understand social and environmental (linked) processes via alternate, critical analyses but *to improve it* for the mutual benefit of people and ecological processes and conditions.

Some of the earliest works in political ecology focused on generating alternative understandings of environmental degradation in the tropical developing world. However, the political ecology approach has been widely applied to environment and development issues in industrialized as well as to developing country contexts. Importantly these studies illuminate that the “first”, “second” and “third” worlds are inextricably linked in an increasingly interconnected, globalized world. This happens through *both* the *material* circuits of production and exchange of goods, commodities, labor and environmental pollutants, as well as through the world of *ideas*, ideology and meaning systems. Both realms are also closely linked and we will examine how they further shape the *practical* realm of making environmental policy, plans and practice.

In this seminar we will explore core concepts and “mid-level” theories that political ecologists have created and applied to conduct their analyses. They are called “mid-level” because they suggest how some forces may operate in social and environmental change; we emphasize “may” to signal their indeterminacy, or that the historical and temporal “*situatedness*” demands they be examined within particular contexts at particular moments in time to actually know how they operate. This indeterminacy is also referred to as “*contingencies*” and constitute the details regarding how political ecological “theories” play out in real places on the ground. This is extremely important for demonstrating the limitations of such theories for predicting and generalizing, outcomes typically associated with scientific (i.e., positivistic) approaches.

Graduate students taking this seminar in the past have found the approach to be extremely useful but also extremely difficult. The latter is closely linked to your knowledge and experience with social science theory, especially in the political economy of development/agrarian change and Marxian theory which has been influential especially to early political ecology. We will be highlighting those related to understanding (1) capitalism, markets, and commoditization, (2) the nation-state and neoliberalism, (3) resource access and control, property, livelihood, and community, (4) marginalization, class, gender, race, and power, (5) culture, meaning and discourse, and science and knowledge, and (5) conservation, development, and environmental governance.

Please be aware that NRSM 570 is not a comprehensive survey of social theories utilized in environmental and natural resource social science but those affiliated with the sub-field of political ecology. It is also not a comprehensive survey of the field of political ecology that has literally exploded in the last decade or so. In this class, you will learn how the sub-field has evolved, how particular social theory operates within the theoretical, methodological and political commitments of political ecology, and how the political ecology “toolbox” of mid-level theories can inform your own critical examination of social and environmental subjects, issues and practical concerns.

Learning Outcomes

Students who successfully complete this course will:

- Understand key moments in the history, evolution, and contemporary concerns of political ecology
- Gain insight into how social- environmental transitions, challenges, problems and potential solutions are explained within the political ecology approach
- Understand some major concepts and tools used by political ecologist in both international and domestic contexts
- Build your own critical analytic skills through in-depth application of the political ecology framework to a particular topic
- Develop and refine critical reading and thinking skills, as well as writing skills.

Prerequisites:

Only registered graduate students are permitted to enroll in this seminar. *No exceptions.* Background in environmental/natural resource social science is very helpful; if lacking, students are expected to take initiative to ask the instructor for further clarification in class and do background reading independently.

Seminar Format and Focus

NRSM 570 is a graduate seminar, which means that students are responsible for contributing to the content of the course through engaged participation, discussion, and project presentations. In fact, the success of the course depends on a collective dialogue about the meaning and implications of the readings. Students are expected to carefully and thoroughly read *all* assigned readings prior to class and come to class prepared to discuss, examine, analyze, and critique each reading. The course is reading intensive, especially at the outset. The instructor will begin the semester with short lectures to build a common theoretical foundation amongst course participants. However, there after classes will be more student-led and discussion-oriented. In class discussions, please participate by following the thread or theme of the discussion, rather than the queue (who is next in line to speak).

The final section of the course will be comprised of student presentations. Each student will present on the topic of their choice (the same topic for their final paper for this class). Presentations provide students with the opportunity to engage the class on their topic and to garner suggestions and feedback from the group.

Do not take this class unless you are prepared to read, think, and take responsibility for your learning – this is a graduate seminar, not an undergraduate lecture class!

“Engaged participation” does not refer to the number of comments you make during class or your level of expertise, but rather describes the sort of thoughtful, meaningful, prepared (meaning you *actively* read the assignments) questions and comments that further your own intellectual development and that of the group. A willingness to work on the material at hand, and consider its application to the field is critical. Please be prepared to spend time looking up new terms and becoming familiar with the vocabulary of the field. **Civility and respect for different views and ideas are highly expected.**

Readings

There is no text. All required readings are available from either (1) UM Moodle ([Moodle Login Page](#) -- login with your username/password and listed under NRSM 570) or (2) check out the CD from the Mansfield Library Reserve Desk (labeled *NRSM 570 Sp2016 readings*).

If you want to purchase a text on political ecology I would recommend the following:

- (1) Robbins, P. 2012. *Political Ecology: A Critical Introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell
- (2) Neumann, R.P. 2005. *Making Political Ecology*. Hodder Arnold Press.

We will be reading chapters from the edited volume noted in the introduction which is excellent but very expensive (~\$250). I will have the UM library copy available on reserve (Perreault, T., Bridge, G., and McCarthy, J. 2015. *The Routledge Handbook of Political Ecology*. Oxon and N.Y., Routledge.)

Other Resources on Political Ecology

- Social Science Research Network [Social Science Research Network Web Page](#)
- Political Ecology Society (PESO) [Political Ecology Society Web Page](#)
- University of Kentucky Political ecology Working Group [University of Kentucky Web Page](#)
- The Center for Political Ecology [Center for Political Ecology Web Page](#)
- Cultural and Political Ecology Specialty Group of the Association of American Geographers (CAPE-AAG) [Association of American Geographers Web Page](#)
- Environment and Technology (section in the American Sociological Association) [Environment and Technology Web Page](#)
- Network of Political Ecology [Network of Political Ecology Web Page](#)
- Journal of Political Ecology: Case Studies in History and Society (JPE) [Journal of Political Ecology Web Page](#)

Assignments, Evaluation and Due Dates

- Class participation 10% throughout the semester
- Reading response 20% as scheduled (email to class)
- Project abstract and bibliography 5% 2/18 (email to Jill)
- Mid-term assignment 20% 3/8 (word doc, email to Jill)
- Project presentation 10% as scheduled
- Final paper 35% 5/11 (word doc, email to Jill)
- Total 100%

Identifying and Committing to Your Project Topic

Please begin as early as possible to identify and commit to a specific topic for your final paper, since you will also address this topic in your midterm and class presentation. The topic should be relatively specific/well-defined and related to environmental change, conservation, or natural resource management domestically or internationally. Your topic might be more theoretically oriented or it might involve applying theory to a particular case study. Students are encouraged to select topics that relate to their thesis/professional paper. You must, however, examine the topic through the lens of political ecology (even if that is not the theoretical focus for your thesis work). All papers must involve a rigorous engagement with political ecology. Please remember that your work for this class must be new and original (i.e. you cannot turn in a chapter you have already written for your thesis or a paper written for another course but you can revise and rethink the topic in light of political ecology).

Class Participation (10%)

Regular attendance and engaged participation is expected. As noted above, “engaged participation” refers to your role in the seminar as coming to class having read the material, and prepared to discuss, ask questions and share your observations and comments; and in a civil and respectful manner.

Reading Response (20%)

Beginning the third week of class, each student will be responsible for preparing a reading response for readings assigned for a particular class period (response should not focus on readings titled “background”). These should be emailed to the instructor and all class members at the latest one hour before class (we can decide if we want hard copies too). The purpose of preparing reading responses is to facilitate student participation and assistance with developing rigor of analysis appropriate to a graduate seminar. The reading response should follow this format (1-2 pages): 1) complete citation for each reading, 2) a **summary** of the major points of each reading including identification of key theories and terms referred to in the reading (see “background” readings for assistance – background readings should not be the focus of the response); 3) a **response** which includes your sense of the paper’s *theoretical* insights or debates suggested by the reading; and 4) raise at least three further **questions**. Questions can address tensions or contradictions in the readings (theory or method), raise alternative interpretations or indicate gaps/missing pieces.

Project Topic/Abstract (5%)

Identify the topic that you will develop in this class and that you will use for your midterm and final project. Include a preliminary title, a 1- 2 paragraph description of the major question you are examining, and a brief justification for why this topic is important, and at least 5 references relevant to the topic (that you will read later). Please do not change topics after the abstract has been submitted.

Mid-term Assignment (20%)

The midterm assignment is located on the last page of this syllabus. The purpose of the mid-term is to give you the opportunity to think and begin to apply the political ecology approach to your project topic. It asks you to select five concepts from the political ecology “tool box” to suggest questions and lines of inquiry related to your chosen topic but to not provide answers; the latter will come in your final paper. The midterm will also enable the instructor to assess individual student learning and address areas of confusion up to this point in the semester.

Project Presentation (10%)

Each student is required to make a class presentation on the topic of your final paper (the topic outlined in your project abstract and explored in the midterm). Presentations offer students the opportunity to engage the class

in their topic prior to writing/finalizing their final paper. Students should provide the class with a short reading or background information prior to the presentation. During the third week of class, students will sign up for presentation dates. There will be a projector and laptop during presentations for students who wish to use this technology. If you plan to use power point, please bring your presentation on a flash drive. Presentations will be followed by seminar-like critical discussion. Presentations will be evaluated based on your ability to effectively convey key aspects of the topic and concepts involved, application of theory, original analysis, and clarity of material.

Final Paper (35%)

Final papers should be 10-15 pages (including references), typed in double-spaced, times new roman, 12-point font, and properly referenced (any social science style is acceptable so long as it is followed consistently). They should provide a clear, detailed, in-depth analysis of the topic. Please briefly introduce the topic and the question that drives the paper. Then provide a few pages of background information, focusing on the details necessary to understand the topic as it relates to the question (the introduction and background should not be more than 20% of your paper). The majority of the paper should be a political ecological analysis of your topic. In other words, papers should focus on applying social theory, as conceptualized in the field of political ecology, to a specific topic. Identify 1-3 main points (or political ecology concepts/approaches) or a central thesis for your paper. Build your paper around this question or limited set of themes and make it clear how different sections relate to the thesis/themes. Please provide “evidence” or support for your arguments/analysis. To make a compelling case for a particular interpretation or analysis, you’ll need to illustrate through data, history, examples, facts and figures, quotes, etc. Please cite your sources in text (last name of the author and the year is fine, include page number if using a direct quotation) and in the bibliography. If you are just beginning your graduate program, treat the final paper like a portion of your proposal and focus on a critical literature review and explanation of how the political ecology framework will guide your inquiry. In this case, you might offer more speculative findings. If you are further along in your project (you have data or have extensively reviewed the project/topic), please offer specific findings from a political ecological perspective. Papers will be evaluated based on the quality of writing, depth of understanding of political ecology, clarity of argument, original analysis and insightfulness, and overall ability to apply the political ecology framework to the topic.

Course Schedule

1/26 Course Introduction

Overview of course syllabus, student introductions, and background for next two classes.

1/28 Origins and Concerns of Political Ecology

- Robbins, P. 2012. *Political Ecology: A Critical Introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell Pub. chaps. 1-2.
- Neumann, R.P. 2005. *Making Political Ecology*, chaps. 1-2

Foundational Texts:

- Blaikie, P. 1985. A New Approach – With New Problems. In *The Political Economy of Soil Erosion in Developing Countries*. Longman Science and Technology (selections on reserve)
- Blaikie, P. and H. Brookfield. 1987. Approaches to the study of land degradation. In: *Land Degradation and Society*. New York: Methuen Press (selections on reserve)

2/2 Overview of Critical Concepts and “Theories”

- Robbins, P. 2012. *Political Ecology: A Critical Introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell Pub. Chaps. 3-4.
- Neumann, R.P. 2005. *Making Political Ecology*, chap 3.

Other recommended readings

- For why historical approaches (including discussion of historical classics) are so important in political ecology see Davis, D.E. 2015. Historical approaches to political ecology. In: Perreault, T., Bridge, G., and McCarthy, J. 2015. *The Routledge Handbook of Political Ecology*. Oxon and N.Y., Routledge. Chap 20, 263-275.

2/4 “Fruitful Frictions”: Science/Ecology in Political Ecology

- (background) Zimmerer, K. S. 2015. Methods and environmental science in political ecology. In: Perreault, T., Bridge, G., and McCarthy, J. 2015. *The Routledge Handbook of Political Ecology*. Oxon and N.Y., Routledge. Chap 11, 150-168.
- Belsky, J.M. and S.F. Siebert. 2015. A Socio-Ecological Analysis of an Historic Forest Land Use and Livelihood in Bhutan: Lessons for Forest Conservation and Development. DRAFT Report, Global Programme on Global Economics and Social Science, IUCN, Gland Switzerland.
- Cote, M. and A.J. Nightingale. 2012. Resilience Thinking Meets Social Theory: Situating Social Change in Socio-Ecological Systems (SES) Research. *Progress in Human Geography* 36(4):475–489.

2/9 Power, Politics, Social Change

- Wisner, B. 2015. Speaking truth to power: a personal account of activist political ecology. In: Perreault, T., Bridge, G., and McCarthy, J. 2015. *The Routledge Handbook of Political Ecology*. Oxon and N.Y., Routledge. Chap 3, 53-63.
- Gaventa, J. 2006. Finding the spaces for change: a power analysis. *IDS Bulletin* 37:23-33.
- *Other recommended readings*
- Kepe, T, J.Bissonnette, and D.J. Roberts. 2008. Why are students attracted to political ecology? *Environment and Planning A*. 40: 2 - 254.
- *To see where political ecology fits within conservation social sciences review the following:*
Download: [Roth Reading Web Page](#) (see Roth, p50-55, on political ecology).

Key Themes and Core Concepts**2/11 Colonialism and Struggles Over Resources and Representations**

- Moore, D.S. 1993. Contesting Terrain in Zimbabwe's Eastern Highlands: Political Ecology, Ethnography, and Peasant Resource Struggles. *Economic Geography* 64: 380-401.
- Neumann, R.P. 2003. The Production of Nature: Colonial Recasting of the African Landscape in Serengeti National Park. In *Political Ecology: An Integrative Approach to Geography and Environment-Development Studies*. K.S. Zimmerer and T.J. Bassett (eds.). New York: The Guilford Press. Pgs. 240-255.

2/16 Discourse and the "Production of Nature"

- Leach, M. and J. Fairhead. 2000. Fashioned Forest Pasts, Occluded Histories? *International Environmental Analysis in Western African locales*. *Development and Change* 31: 35-59.
- Castree, N. Capitalism and the Marxist Critique of Political Ecology. In: Perreault, T., Bridge, G., and McCarthy, J. 2015. *The Routledge Handbook of Political Ecology*. Oxon and N.Y., Routledge. Chap 21, 279-292.

2/18 Socio-Ecological Transformations in the U.S. West**(DUE Project abstract and bibliography; email to Jill/WORD DOC)**

- Sayre, N. 1999. The Cattle Boom in Southern Arizona: Towards a Critical Political Ecology, *Journal of the Southwest* 41:239-261.
- McCarthy, J.P. 2002. First World Political Ecologies: Lessons from the Wise Use movement. *Environment and Planning A* 34:1281-1302.

2/23 Property Relations and Arrangements

- (Background) Vandergeest, P. 1997. Rethinking property. *Common Property Resource Digest*. 41, p.4-6.
- Beitzl, C.M. 2012. Shifting policies, access and the tragedy of enclosures in Ecuadorian mangrove fisheries: towards a political ecology of the commons. *Journal of Political Ecology* 19: 94-113. [Journal of Political Ecology Web Page](#)
- Yung, Laurie and Jill M. Belsky. Private Property Rights and Community Goods: Negotiating Landowner Cooperation Amidst Changing Ownership on the Rocky Mountain Front. *Society & Natural Resources* 20: 689-703.

2/25 Gender and Feminist Political Ecology

- (background) Elmhurst, R. 2015. Feminist Political Ecology In: Perreault, T., Bridge, G., and McCarthy, J. 2015. The Routledge Handbook of Political Ecology. Oxon and N.Y., Routledge. Chap 40: 519-530.
- Schroeder, R. 1997. Re-claiming land in The Gambia: Gendered Property Rights and Environmental Intervention. *Annals of the Assoc. of Amer. Geographers*. 87: 487-508.
- Kerr, R.B. 2014. Lost and Found Crops: Agrobiodiversity, Indigenous Knowledge, and a Feminist Political Ecology of Sorghum and Finger Millet in Northern Malawi, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 104:3.

Other recommended readings

- Colfer, C. and R.D. Minarchek. 2013. Introducing the “the gender box”: a framework for analyzing gender roles in forest management. *International Forest Management* 15: 411-425.

3/1 Livelihoods: Sustaining what for whom and how?

- (background) Carr, E.R. 2015 Political Ecology and Livelihoods. In: Perreault, T., Bridge, G., and McCarthy, J. 2015. The Routledge Handbook of Political Ecology. Oxon and N.Y., Routledge. Chap 25, 332-342.
- Natcher, D.C., C.G. Hickey and S. Davies. 2004. The Political Ecology of Yukon Forestry: Managing the Forest as if People Mattered. *International Journal of Sustainable Development and World Ecology* 11 : 343-355.
- Marschke, M and F. Berkes. 2006. Exploring strategies that build livelihood resilience: a case from Cambodia. *Ecology and Society* 11: 42.

3/3 Local Ecological Knowledge

- (background) Horowitz, L.S. 2015. Local Environmental Knowledge. In: Perreault, T., Bridge, G., and McCarthy, J. 2015. The Routledge Handbook of Political Ecology. Oxon and N.Y., Routledge. Chap 18, 235-248.

- Birkenholtz, T. 2008. Contesting expertise: The politics of environmental knowledge in northern Indian groundwater practices. *Geoforum* 39: 466-482.

3/8 Nation-State Dynamics

DUE: Mid-Term Assignment (WORD DOC email to Jill)

- (Background) Robertson, M. 2015. Environmental Governance: Political Ecology and the State. In: Perreault, T., Bridge, G., and McCarthy, J. 2015. *The Routledge Handbook of Political Ecology*. Oxon and N.Y., Routledge. Chap 35, 457-466.
- Peluso, N. 1993. Coercing Conservation? The politics of state resource control. *Global Environmental Change* 3: 199-217.
- Li, Tania Murray. 2008. Beyond “the State” and Failed Schemes. *American Anthropologist*. 107: 383-394.

3/10 Neoliberalisms at Play

- (background) Bakker, K. 2015 Neoliberalization of nature. In: Perreault, T., Bridge, G., and McCarthy, J. 2015. *The Routledge Handbook of Political Ecology*. Oxon and N.Y., Routledge. Chap 34, 446-456.
- Kull, C.A., X.A de Sartre, M. Castro-Larranaga. 2015. The political ecology of ecosystem services. *Geoforum* 61: 122-134.
- Lave, R, Doyle, M. and Robertson, M. 2010. Privatizing stream restoration in the US. *Social Studies of Science* 40:677-703.

3/15 Global Environmental Governance

- (background) Valdivia 2015 Eco-Governmentality. In: Perreault, T., Bridge, G., and McCarthy, J. 2015. *The Routledge Handbook of Political Ecology*. Oxon and N.Y., Routledge. Chap 36, 467-480
- Eden, Sally 2011. The politics of certification: Consumer knowledge, power, and global governance in ecolabeling. In *Global Political Ecology* (eds. R. Peet et al): 169-184. London: Routledge.
- Bumpus, A. G. & Liverman, D. M. 2011. Carbon colonialism? Offsets, greenhouse gas reductions and, sustainable development. In: *Global Political Ecology* (eds. R. Peet et al): 203-224. London: Routledge.

3/17 Adapting to Uncertainty, Building Resilience

- Wyborn, C; Yung, L; Murphy, D and Williams, D.R. Situating adaptation: how governance challenges and perceptions of uncertainty influence adaptation in the Rocky Mountains. *Reg Environ Change*
- DOI 10.1007/s10113-014-0663-3
- Yeh, E.T., Nyima, Y., Hopping, K.A. and J.A. Klein. 2014. Tibetan Pastoralists' Vulnerability to Climate Change: A Political Ecology Analysis of Snowstorm Coping Capacity. *Human Ecology* 42:61-74.

Other recommended readings

- Birkenholtz, T. 2011. Network Political Ecology: Method and Theory in Climate Change Vulnerability and Adaptation Research. *Progress in Human Geography* 36: 295–315 ... see next page.
- Watts, M.J. 2015. Now and then: the origins of political ecology and the rebirth of adaptation as a form of thought. In: Perreault, T., Bridge, G., and McCarthy, J. 2015. *The Routledge Handbook of Political Ecology*. Oxon and N.Y., Routledge. Chap 2, 19-50.

3/22 Science and Technology Studies (STS) and Political Ecology**Guest presentation by Dr. Wylie Carr, University of Montana**

- Jasanoff, S. 1996. Is science socially constructed-And can it still inform public policy? *Science and Engineering Ethics* 2: 263-276.
- Wynne, B. 1989. Sheepfarming after Chernobyl: A Case Study in Communicating Scientific Information. *Environment* 31: 11-39.

3/24 Community-Based Conservation (CBC)/Natural Resource Management (CBNRM)

- (Background) Dressler, W; Buscher, B; Schoon, M; Brockington, D; Hayes, T; Kull, C.A.; McCarthy, J.; and Shrestha, K. 2010. From hope to crisis and back again? A critical history of the global CBNRM narrative. *Environmental Conservation* 37: 5-15.
- Belsky, Jill M. 1999. Misrepresenting communities: the politics of community-based rural ecotourism in Gales Point Manatee, Belize. *Rural Sociology* 64:641-666.
- Li, Tania Muray. 2002. Engaging simplifications: community-based resource management, market processes and state agendas in upland Southeast Asia. *World Development* 30: 265-283.

Other recommended readings

- Few, R. 2001. Containment and counter-containment: planner/community relations in conservation planning. *The Geographical Journal* 167: 111–124.
- Belsky, J.M. 2015. Comparative Perspectives from Bhutan and Montana: Market Forces in Community Forestry. *Forest Policy and Economics* 58:29-36.
- Dressler, W. and B. Buscher. 2008. Market triumphalism and the CBNRM 'crises' at the South African section of the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park. *Geoforum* 39: 452–465.

3/29 Politics of Collaborative/Participatory Conservation

- Walker, P.A. and P.T. Hurley. 2004. Collaboration Derailed: The Politics of Community-based Resource Management in Nevada County. *Society and Natural Resources* 17:735-751.
- Bixler, R.; J Dell'Angelo, O.Mfune and H. Roba. The political ecology of participatory conservation: institutions and discourse. *Political Ecology Journal* 22: 164-182.

3/31 The Promise and Peril of “Participatory” Methods/ Research

- (Background) Long, Jonathan; Ballard, Heidi; Jill M. Belsky. Questions that Won't Go Away in Participatory Research. *Society and Natural Resources*. 0:1–14.
- Mosse, D. 1995. Authority, gender and knowledge: theoretical reflections on participatory rural appraisal. *Economic and Political Weekly* 30: 569-571+573-578.
- Bryan, J. 2015. Participatory Mapping. In: Perreault, T., Bridge, G., and McCarthy, J. 2015. The Routledge Handbook of Political Ecology. Oxon and N.Y., Routledge. Chap 19, 249-262

Spring Break. April 4-8. No classes

Student Presentations

4/12 Preparing for Student Presentations

4/14 Student Presentations _____

4/18 Student Presentations _____

4/21 Student Presentations _____

4/26 Student Presentations _____

4/28 Student Presentations _____

Final papers are due May 9 or sooner.

Please email final papers to jill.belsky@umontana.edu. Comments and final grade will be emailed back to you.

Have a great summer.

Mid-term Assignment, Due 3/8 - please submit (WORD DOC) electronically to Jill

The objectives of this midterm are twofold: 1) for you to clarify and solidify your knowledge of political ecology through writing about it and 2) to apply these assumptions to a topic of your choice. The total assignment should be completed in 5-7 pages or less (typed and double-spaced), not including citations.

PLEASE FOLLOW THIS FORMAT:

Select *five* of the following concepts associated with political ecology (pick those that you think are most relevant to your final paper topic/question):

- 1) commoditization, marketization, neoliberal nature and environments
- 2) power, authority, marginality and disenfranchisement /displacement
- 3) property
- 4) livelihood
- 5) gender roles and relations
- 6) nation-state policies and dynamics, colonialism
- 7) politics of knowledge production, science, traditional knowledge and practice
- 8) discourse and discursive strategies/symbolic regimes
- 9) environmental governance, governmentality, community-based conservation
- 10) political and social/environmental movements (e.g. environmental justice; indigenous rights)
- 11) socio-ecological system dynamics and processes (e.g. biodiversity, sustainability, resilience)
- 12) other? (please discuss with instructor first)

For each of the five concepts you selected, first briefly (few paragraphs) summarize its key meaning. Then briefly suggest how each of the concepts you chose could be applied to your topic. By this I mean how each concept/theme raise a particular way of looking at your topic? What further question(s) does each concept raise? Aim for about one page for each concept (both description and application/questions it inspires).

For instance, if your topic is about conservation and development issues in a particular protected area, and one of the above you selected is property. First, you would begin with defining what is property, some key types and then suggest how a property lens would suggest questions related to your topic, such as what is the history of property in this protected area? Second, begin to ask questions related to how property could be related to your topic about conservation and development in this protected area, such as is it a history of continued communal use, ownership, state or nationalization, confiscation, displacement or insecurity? How might lack of property ownership/security influence land use or conservation; or social movements? How might it affect conservation strategies? You only need to raise questions for each concept/theme for the assignment; you are not expected to answer these questions now (save that for your presentation/final paper). The midterm is an opportunity for you to think about/raise questions related to your topic through the lens of political ecology -- especially how this research approach leads you to address your topic in a way that you may not have thought of earlier, and raises certain kinds of questions.