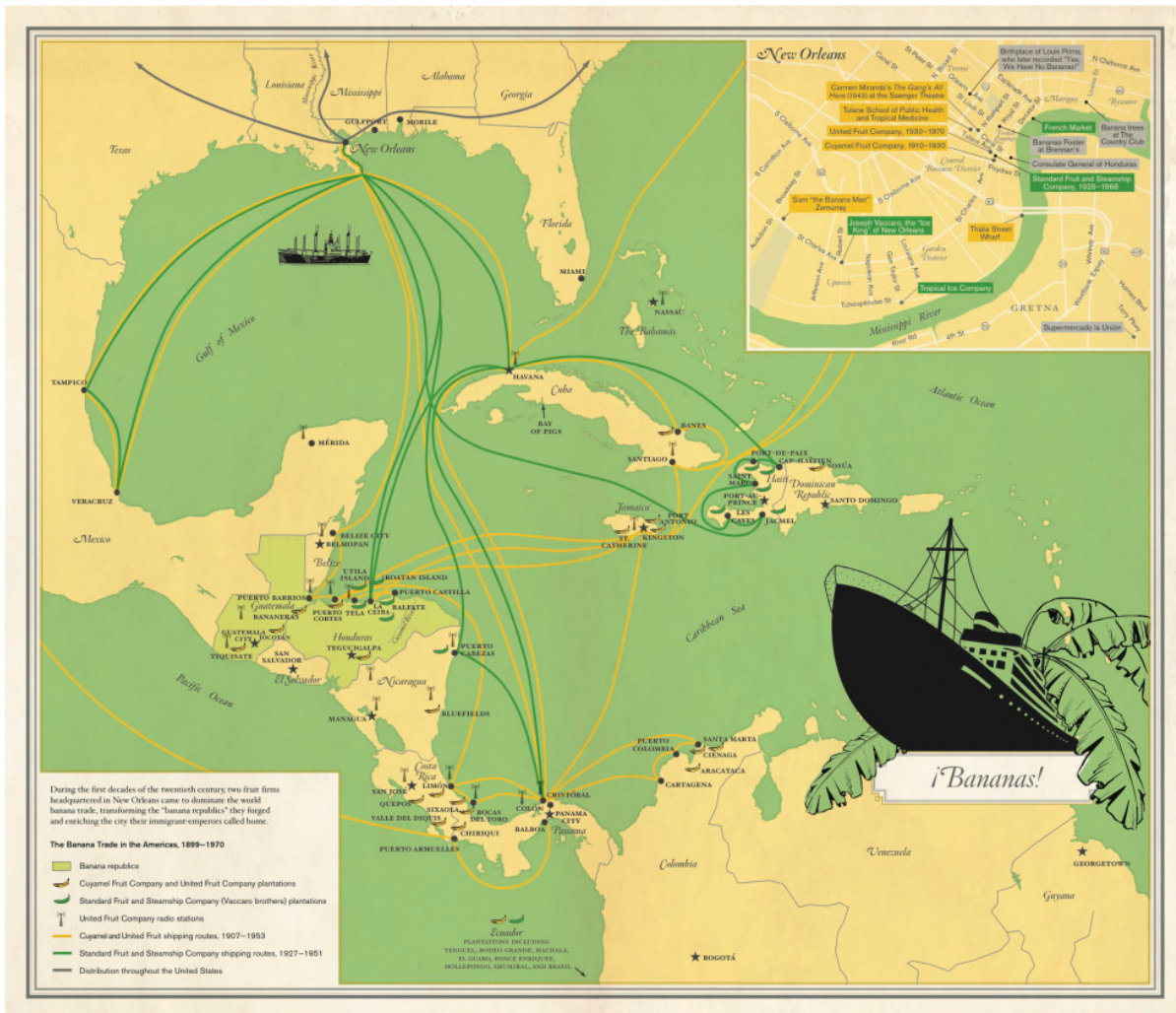


NRSM 475: Environment and Development



From [*Unfathomable City: A New Orleans Atlas*](#)

Fall 2023

T, Th 3:30-4:50

Liberal Arts 205

Instructor: **Hilary Faxon**

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:30-3 or by appointment

Office: CHCB 460a

Land Acknowledgment

The University of Montana acknowledges that we are in the aboriginal territories of the Salish and Kalispel people. Today, we honor the path they have always shown us in caring for this place for the generations to come. In this course, we will discuss the ways in which histories of colonization in and beyond the United States have impacted environment and development and how we can learn from indigenous knowledge of and relations with land.

Course Description

Why are some countries rich and other countries poor? Who gets to decide how natural resources are used, measured and valued? What constitutes “conservation” or “sustainability”? How have the uneven process of global development influenced who wins and who loses, especially in light of current challenges wrought by climate change?

This class explores these and other questions, examining how particular histories, framings and assumptions have led to different understandings of environmental and social problems and their solutions. Another way of saying this is in this class we will pay close attention to the *politics* of sustainable development. We will examine key social forces that influence how individuals, groups, and nation-states understand and live with their bio-physical environments, including processes related to capitalism, globalization, culture, class, and power relations. We will pay close attention to how both indigenous and introduced environmental values and practices in particular places variably impact people of different races, classes, genders, cultures, and livelihood practices. And we will trace the implications of these processes for current efforts to transition to clean energy, conserve biodiversity, and feed the world.

The emphasis in this course is on learning ***to understand, think, and write critically*** about social forces in environment and development. Lectures, class activities, and assignments will link theory with grounded case studies to engage with ongoing, “real” environment and development initiatives occurring all over the world today. While the course will not cover all major environment and development issues, you will gain analytical tools to understand diverse problems and pursue a particular issue or topic of your own choosing in your final paper.

After completing this course, you will be able to:

- I. ***Describe*** key social forces influencing society-environment-development-conservation interactions and their historical context;
- II. ***Analyze*** different theories and perspectives on the causes, consequences and potential solutions to a selection of environment and development issues today;
- III. ***Evaluate*** the opportunities and challenges of different strategies, programs and policies to reconcile tensions between environment and development, and their variable costs and benefits for different social groups and ecologies.
- IV. **Demonstrate enhanced writing and public speaking proficiency** through the various assignments.

Course Structure and Expectations

This is a 3-credit, letter grade course.

Attendance is mandatory. If you are unable to attend class due to illness, an emergency, cultural or religious observance, or a school activity, it is your responsibility to notify me as soon as possible. Everybody gets a free pass for ***one*** unexcused absence during the semester. You will be responsible for getting notes for missed classes and doing make-up work.

Readings are mandatory. Some are challenging. It is imperative that you read and think about the material before each class so you are prepared to contribute to professional discussion. To prepare for each class, please consider:

- 1) what questions do you have about this reading?
- 2) how does this reading challenge your assumptions?
- 3) how does this reading connect to other readings in this course?

All readings for this course will be available on Moodle at least one week in advance.

You are expected to actively participate in class. Ask questions. All views are welcome but they must be communicated in a civil and never hostile manner.

I allow the computer use in class for notetaking. I will dock points and re-consider this policy if internet becomes a distraction. Please put away your phone in class.

All written assignments should be your own, original work. Please type in 12-point Times New Roman font. Set your margins to 1 inch. Number pages. Make sure to include your first and last name at the top of the first page. Cite references appropriately (we will talk about this). Proofread and spellcheck. Submit via Moodle.

Grading & Assignments

Assignment	Percent of Grade	Due Date
Participation	10%	Ongoing
Opening survey & reflection	5%	9/1/23
News presentation	5%	1 time
Exam #1 (Essay Exam)	15%	9/28/23
Braiding sweetgrass / stolen waters summit reflection	10%	One week after the event.
Exam #2 (Oral Exam)	20%	10/26-10/27
Spotlight (group presentation)	15%	1 time
Final project abstract and references	5%	11/6/23
Final project presentation	15%	11/30/23-12/7/23

All assignments are due at 11:59pm on the date listed. All written assignments should be submitted via Moodle.

Final course grades will be determined based on the following scale:

93-100 A	73-77 C
90-92 A-	70-72 C-
88-89 B+	68-69 D+
83-87 B	63-67 D
80-82 B-	60-62 D-
78-79 C+	59- F

The following provides an overview of course assignments. More details will be provided in class and on Moodle.

Participation includes attendance, punctuality, attentiveness, effort, completing all readings prior to class, and offering your thoughts, ideas, opinions, and questions during discussion. Your participation grade is not based on knowing the "right" answers or the quantity or length of your comments but rather your willingness to contribute, evidence that you have completed and thought through material presented in the reading, and the increasing quality of your contributions. (10%, ongoing)

Opening Reflection: Complete the entry survey on Moodle, which will include a written reflection assignment. Sign up for your news presentation and spotlight. (5%, 9/1/23)

Braiding Sweetgrass or Stolen Waters Reflection: Complete a 2-3 page written reflection assignment based on Robin Wall Kimmerer's talk on October 10 or a talk at the Stolen Waters Summit on November 1-3. Details about these events will be provided in class. The reflection is due one week after the event. (10%, Oct 17 or Nov 10)

Environment & Development News Presentation: Once in the semester, post a news article that covers current events relating to environment and development. The story should be from a reliable news agency (good places to look include the international pages of [The Guardian](#) and [The Washington Post](#), or the main sites of [Al Jazeera](#) and [Mongabay](#)). Your story should be international, and you should be prepared to give some context about the place it comes from. Post the article on Moodle before class. In class, you will have 5 minutes to summarize the story and explain how it relates to the themes of this course. (5%, 1 slot)

Spotlight Presentation: You will prepare and deliver a group presentation in class on one key social movement, policy, or court case in the latter part of the course. The presentation will require independent research on the topic (but I can help get you started). Delivery should consist of a 15-minute PowerPoint presentation that includes: 1) an attractive image related to the topic 2) a summary of the main points of the topic; 3) a list of three references you consulted to learn about the topic 4) how this topic connects to key readings and ideas in the course; and 5) two or three questions for discussion. (15%, 1 slot).

Essay Exam: Complete an online essay exam remotely via Moodle during the class period that will require you to summarize, synthesize, reflect on, and apply key ideas from readings, lectures, and class discussions (15%, 9/28/23)

Oral Exam: Complete an in-person oral exam testing your understanding of key concepts, approaches, and tensions in environment and development. This exam is cumulative. (20%, 10/26-10/27)

Final Project: Case Study Analysis and Evaluation In pairs, students will select an ongoing "real" initiative or organization involved in responding to the tensions between environment and development and conduct independent research. You and your partner will select a topic related to your interests and use it to apply concepts and historical knowledge and interpretation from class to assess its approach and effectiveness at resolving tensions between environment and development, or working towards creating "sustainable" and/or "resilient" societies and environment. You are required to submit an abstract with a preliminary title and five references (5%) and submit your slides and notes for, and present, a 10 minute PowerPoint presentation in class, followed by Q&A (15%).

Tentative Course Schedule

The Course Schedule will be updated on Moodle as we progress. Readings and more details will be available on Moodle at least 1 week prior to the class period for which they are assigned.

Date & Topic	Readings
<p style="text-align: center;">Unit 1: What is Development?</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>This unit provides an overview of the history, important theories, and key institutions of development.</i></p>	
Aug 29 Course introduction	Rist. 'Development as a buzzword.'
Aug 31 Development debates	Podcast: If you're reading this, you're probably WEIRD (Please listen to the first 24 minutes. You are welcome, but not required, to continue)
Sep 5 Colonization	McMichael. Chapter 2 in <i>Development and Social Change: A Global Perspective</i> . Pick one animal from Animalia, read, and be prepared to share in class.
Sep 7 Institutionalization	McMichael. Chapter 3 in <i>Development and Social Change: A Global Perspective</i> . President Harry Truman's inaugural speech from 1949.
Sep 12 Globalization	McMichael, Chapter 4 and 5 in <i>Development and Social Change: A Global Perspective</i> . (selections) NY Times. ' Why it Seems Everything We Knew about the Global Economy is No Longer True. '
Sep 14 Sustainability	Sneddon et al. 'Sustainable development in a post-Brundtland world' Gavin. ' What's Behind the DRC's Decision to Auction off some of its Rain Forest? '
Sep 19 A 'Fieldtrip' to the Amazon	Watch <i>Crude</i> . Take notes and prepare for class discussion.
Sep 21 Gender	Leach et al. 'Sustainable Development: A gendered pathways approach,' in <i>Gender equality and sustainable development</i> .
Sep 26 Power & Participation	Shackleton et al. 'Navigating power in conservation.'

	Chambers. 'Ideas for Development: reflecting forwards.' Part 1, p. 1-15. <i>Visit from the Writing Center</i>
Sep 28	In-class essay exam.
<p style="text-align: center;">Unit 2: Approaches & Solutions <i>This unit surveys different ways of understanding and addressing key problems in global sustainable development.</i></p>	
Oct 3 Population & Scarcity	Robbins et al. Chapter 2 in <i>Environment & Society: A Critical Introduction</i> NYTimes. 'How a Vast Demographic Shift will Reshape the World.'
Oct 5 Solutions	Mann. Prologue and chapter 1 in <i>The Wizard and the Prophet: Two Remarkable Scientists and their Visions for Tomorrow's World.</i> (selection)
Oct 10 Indigenous Knowledge	Kimmerer. 'The Gift of Strawberries' and 'Learning the Grammar of Animacy' in <i>Braiding Sweetgrass</i> . Farrell et al. 'Effects of land dispossession and forced migration on Indigenous peoples in North America.' If you can, attend Robin Wall Kimmerer's talks.
Oct 12 Special guest	TBA
Oct 17 Markets	Robbins et al. Chapter 3 in <i>Environment & Society: A Critical Introduction</i> Fletcher. 'How Neoliberal Conservation Fails Forward.'
Oct 19 Anti-Capitalism	SPOTLIGHT 1: DEGROWTH Patel and Moore. 'Introduction' in <i>A History of the World in Seven Cheap Things: A Guide to Capitalism, Nature, and the Future of the Planet.</i>
Oct 24 Governance	Robbins et al. Chapter 4 in <i>Environment & Society: A Critical Introduction</i> Meinzen-Dick et al. 'Understanding Property Rights.' Malchik. 'Who owns the earth'

Oct 26	Oral exams
<p style="text-align: center;">Unit 3: Problems <i>This unit considers key case studies in environment & development today.</i></p>	
Oct 31 Feeding the World	Holt-Giménez, <i>Can We Feed the World Without Destroying it?</i> SPOTLIGHT 2: FOOD SOVEREIGNTY
Nov 2 Feeding the World	Virtual visit with Dr. Ryan Nehring, International Food Policy Research Institute If you can, attend the Stolen Waters Summit
Nov 7 Biodiversity	Readings TBA SPOTLIGHT 3: GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK
Nov 9 Biodiversity	Readings TBA
Nov 14 Just Transition	Readings TBA SPOTLIGHT 4: THE INFLATION REDUCTION ACT
Nov 16 The Nature of Data	Goldstein & Nost (eds). <i>The Nature of Data: Environments, Infrastructures, Politics.</i> - Choose 1 chapter to read
Nov 21 Oil, Grain and the War in Ukraine	Readings TBA
Nov 23	No Class – Thanksgiving break
Nov 28 Climate Justice	Klein. This changes everything (selections) SPOTLIGHT 5: HELD V. MONTANA
Nov 30 Climate Justice	Solnit. ‘Difficult but not impossible,’ in <i>Not too Late.</i> Student presentations

Dec 5 Final presentations	Student presentations
Dec 7 Final presentations & wrap-up	Student presentations

Course Policies

Please familiarize yourself with, and follow, the student conduct code:

<https://www.umt.edu/student-affairs/community-standards/default.php>

Attendance Policy

Students with more than three unexcused absences will result in a zero in participation (and thus a 10% reduction in the student's final grade). More than six unexcused absences will automatically result in an F in the course, with no options to do make-up assignments.

HOWEVER, in cases where students have family or medical emergencies, or other legitimate reasons for missing class, I am willing to make alternative arrangements for make-up assignments on a case-by-case basis. Please communicate with me if something is interfering with your attendance so we can troubleshoot!

Late Assignments

Points will be deducted (the later you turn them in, the more points you will lose), but better late than never definitely applies (i.e. it's better to get some credit for an assignment rather than none at all). If you have a family or medical emergency, or another legitimate reason to submit assignments late, please talk with me as soon as possible.

Cultural Leave Policy

Cultural or ceremonial leave allows excused absences for cultural, religious, and ceremonial purposes to meet the student's customs and traditions or to participate in related activities. To receive an authorized absence for a cultural, religious or ceremonial event the student or their advisor (proxy) must submit a formal written request to the instructor. This must include a brief description (with inclusive dates) of the cultural event or ceremony and the importance of the student's attendance or participation. Authorization for the absence is subject to approval by the instructor. Appeals may be made to the Chair, Dean, or Provost. The excused absence or leave may not exceed five academic calendar days (not including weekends or holidays). Students remain responsible for completion or make-up of assignments as defined in the syllabus, at the discretion of the instructor.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

All students must practice academic honesty. That means, among other things, that any work submitted by a student in this course must be the student's own work, not ChatGPT's. You are encouraged to study together and to discuss information and concepts covered in lecture and the sections with other students, but permissible cooperation should never involve copying.

Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the [Student Conduct Code](#). Please be aware that plagiarism is a violation of the student conduct code and

will not be tolerated in this course. If a student plagiarizes, their course grade will be impacted and the UM Dean of Students will be notified. If you aren't entirely certain what constitutes plagiarism is, please see these excellent resources:

[Plagiarism Web Link](#)

[Writing Center Link](#)

[Owl English Purdue Link](#)

[Owl English Purdue Resource Link](#)

Resources for Students

Advising

I encourage you to come to my office during office hours or email to set up an appointment. Talk with me as soon as you have questions or difficulties with the material. Do not wait until the day before an exam or an assignment is due.

Important Dates Restricting Opportunities to Drop a Course Fall 2023

Please see this webpage for information on drop deadlines:

<https://www.umt.edu/registrar/calendar/autumn.php>

Tutoring

There are many resources on campus for tutoring to provide support for courses:

<https://www.umt.edu/oss/for-students/tutoring.php>

Writing Support

The University of Montana Writing Center welcomes all students in all disciplines to take advantage of free support as they write for any course. To make an appointment and learn more about The Writing Center's by-appointment and drop-in hours, visit:

<https://www.umt.edu/writing-center//>

Equal Access to Instruction and Office of Disability Equity

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and the Office for Disability Equity (ODE). If you anticipate or experience barriers based on disability, please contact the ODE at: (406) 243-2243, ode@umontana.edu, or visit www.umt.edu/disability for more information. Retroactive accommodation requests will not be honored, so please, do not delay. As your instructor, I will work with you and the ODE to implement an effective accommodation, and you are welcome to contact me privately.

Mental Health Resources

University of Montana provides resources to support your mental health and wellbeing through Curry Health Center. Check out this link to see a full list of resources:

<https://www.umt.edu/wildlife-biology/resources/mental-health-resources.php>

Career Readiness

The Franke College of Forestry and Conservation is committed to the career success of our students and encourages you to participate in [ElevateU](#) – UM's signature career readiness program – to ensure that you graduate career-ready, with the education, skills, and tools needed

to launch, carry-on, and pivot your post-graduation career. Participation in ElevateU is free and can be started at any time, no matter where you are in your academic or career journey. Get started by creating a profile on [Handshake](#) to search for jobs and internships or by [scheduling an appointment](#) with an [Experiential Learning and Career Success \(ELCS\)](#) career coach or advisor.

Food and Housing Insecurity

Any student who faces challenges securing food or housing, and believes that this could affect their performance in this course, is urged to contact any or all of the following:

Food Pantry Program

UM offers a food pantry that students can access for emergency food. The pantry is open on Tuesdays from 12 to 5 PM and Fridays from 10 AM to 5 PM. The pantry is located in UC 119 (in the former ASUM Childcare offices). Pantry staff operate several satellite food cupboards on campus (including one at Missoula College). For more information about this program, email umpantry@mso.umn.edu, visit the [UM Food Pantry website](#) or contact the pantry on social media (@pantryUm on twitter, @UMPantry on Facebook, um_pantry on Instagram).

ASUM Renter Center

The Renter Center has compiled a [list of resources](https://medium.com/griz-renter-blog) (<https://medium.com/griz-renter-blog>) for UM students at risk of homelessness or food insecurity. Students can schedule an appointment with Renter Center staff to discuss their situation and receive information, support, and referrals.

TRiO Student Support Services

TRiO serves UM students who are low-income, first-generation college students or have documented disabilities. TRiO services include a textbook loan program, scholarships and financial aid help, academic advising, coaching, and tutoring. Students can [check their eligibility](#) (www.umn.edu/trioss/apply.php) for TRiO services online.

Legal Support

Students can get free legal advice. To learn more: <https://www.umn.edu/asum/agencies/legal/>

Office of Equal Opportunity and Title IX

The Office of Equal Opportunity and Title IX supports UM's commitment to diverse and inclusive working and learning environments free from all forms of discrimination, harassment, and sexual misconduct. We work to eliminate barriers inhibiting individuals from achieving their full potential in education, employment, and other programs at the University. To learn more: <https://www.umn.edu/equal-opportunity-title-IX/>