

**THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO**  
**THE DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN'S STUDIES AND FEMINIST RESEARCH**  
**GSWS 9466B/4464G Gender and the Environment**

**WINTER 2022**

**Instructor:** Professor Bipasha Baruah

Western University is situated on the traditional land of the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Lenape and Attawandaron peoples who have longstanding relationships to the region of southwestern Ontario and the City of London. Within proximity to Western, there are 3 First Nations communities: the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames, and Munsee Delaware Nation. In the region of southwestern Ontario, there are 9 First Nations and a growing Indigenous urban population. Western recognizes the significant historical and contemporary contributions of local and regional First Nations and all 11 of the Original peoples of Turtle Island (North America) to the development of Canada.

**Class: Mondays** 10:30 am - 1:30 pm

**Classroom:** Stevenson Hall 3166

**Instructor Office:** Lawson Hall 3244

**Phone:** (519) 661-2111 ex. 86316

**Email:** bbaruah@uwo.ca

**Office Hours:** Mondays 1:30 to 3:00 pm, or by appointment.

**Course Description:**

This course will focus on the linkages between gender, economy, environment, human development, race, class, sexuality, environmental racism and environmental justice. We will examine key contemporary environmental issues such as climate change, food security, the "green" economy, low-carbon development and degrowth; access to water, sanitation, and energy; pollution; and biodiversity conservation from feminist perspectives. Feminist and queer theory will also be used to question and destabilize binary categories such as natural/unnatural, nature/culture, normal/abnormal as they relate to our understandings of "the environment." The course will explore how racism, sexism, classism, heterosexism, colonialism, imperialism, and other forms of oppression have shaped and continue to shape environmental discourses. Course materials will include academic and non-academic literature (including policy and journalistic literature), activist texts, case studies, fiction, and film.

**Course Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes**

This course seeks to enable students to accomplish the following objectives:

1. To demonstrate an understanding of how gender, race, class, sexuality, development and environmental justice are related to one another;
2. To challenge binary representations and interpretations of nature and culture;

3. To understand how racism, classism, sexism, heterosexism, imperialism and other forms of oppression shape popular environmental discourse;
4. To understand contemporary environmental issues from feminist perspectives;
5. To optimize learning through academic and non-academic course readings, lectures, films, case studies, guest speakers, debates, written and verbal participation;
6. To provide students with the opportunity to relate course content to their daily lives, future studies, and careers.

### Course Texts and Resources:

- Susan Buckingham, 2020, *Gender and Environment* (**Second edition**), Routledge. **Available online from Western libraries.**
- Amitav Ghosh, *The Hungry Tide*

Links to some readings are included in the syllabus, others are posted as PDFs on OWL, and some are accessible online from Western libraries.

### Student Assessment:

Book Review – *The Hungry Tide*: 20%

Research Paper: 25%

Policy Brief and Presentation: 30% (15% each)

Blog, Op-ed, or Popular Article: 15%

Attendance and participation: 10%

*Book Review:* Students are expected to write a review of *The Hungry Tide*. Please look under Assignments on OWL for a set of questions to use as guidelines for writing the book review.

*Research Paper:* The purpose of the research paper is to encourage in-depth research as well as clear and systematic argument on a topic of interest to the student and of relevance to the course. Papers are expected to be **no longer than 5,000 words** (inclusive of title, abstract, footnotes and bibliography) and referenced in APA style. *The bibliography must include at least 15 references to scholarly and/or practitioner literature.* The paper should follow the format of **Title, Abstract (100 words), Keywords (3-5), Introduction** (including objectives and rationale for the research and selected background literature), **Methodology** (explain which databases searches were conducted in, what the inclusion and exclusion criteria were, why the scholarly and/or practitioner literature included in the paper were selected, and how they were analyzed (inductive or deductive thematic analysis, for example), **Results/Findings, Discussion, Conclusion** and **Bibliography**. Look under Assignments on OWL for an example of a research paper based on Literature Review and Knowledge Synthesis.

*Policy Brief:* Policy briefs are useful tools for presenting research and recommendations to a non-specialized audience. They serve as a vehicle for providing evidence-based policy advice to help readers make informed decisions. A strong policy brief distills research findings in plain

language and makes clear policy recommendations. The best policy briefs are clear and concise stand-alone documents that focus on a single topic: <https://www.idrc.ca/en/how-write-policy-brief> (Please look under the Assignments tab on OWL for the template for the 1,000 word policy brief you will use for this course as well as a sample policy brief).

*Presentation:* Students are expected to prepare 10-12-minute max. in-class presentations of their research project, to answer questions about their research, and to carry out peer evaluation of presentations.

*Blog, Op-ed or Popular Article:* The purpose of this assignment is to enable students to gain experience writing about environmental issues and social justice for public audiences. Students may choose to prepare their 1,000-word article in the style of a popular journalistic/non-academic forum such as the *Globe & Mail*, *Toronto Star*, *Huffington Post*, *The Conversation*, *Western News* or *Policy Options*. Several articles from these sources already appear on the syllabus as examples.

*Attendance and Participation:* I may lecture occasionally but this is a seminar, so it is primarily focused on discussion. The purpose of student participation is to allow students to take an active part in learning as well as to foster mutual understanding and debate. Active participation refers to regular attendance in classes and frequent participation in discussion and debates. Qualitative participation refers to informed discussion, based on close analysis of assigned readings and critical analysis of the topic of the day, and to the student's ability to interact with classmates in a respectful manner.

***I do not always agree with the readings I assign. You are not always expected to agree with them either. The readings are assigned to enable you to think critically and form your own opinions. Learning to read critically doesn't mean that you always have to be critical of what you're reading. It means engaging with and articulating both the strengths and weaknesses of the arguments presented.***

As part of their participation grade, graduate students are also expected to lead the discussion of one course reading. Undergraduate students are expected to participate actively in class discussion and to contribute discussion questions for different course topics.

**There is no final examination for this course.**

### **Course Policies:**

**Attendance Requirement:** Students are expected to attend all classes.

Failure to attend classes, present material in class, or participate in group activities, in the absence of a documented medical reason, will be reflected in the student's final grade.

**Laptop and Electronics Policy:** I reserve the right to ask any student to refrain from using their laptop computer in class. Students must not access social media during class. Mobile phones and other devices must be switched off during class.

**Late Papers:** Late assignments will be penalized at the rate of 10% of the assignment grade per day. In other words, if an assignment is worth 20 points, you will lose 2 points for every day that it is late. Students are encouraged to assess their own time commitments well ahead of time.

The university regulations require that the following plagiarism information be included on course syllabi:

### **Scholastic Offences:**

“Scholastic offences are taken seriously, and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following website:

<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholoff.pdf>

<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/exam/crsout.pdf>

### **Specifically on Plagiarism:**

***“Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offense (see the ‘Scholastic Offense Policy’ in the Western Academic Calendar).***

Plagiarism checking: The University of Western Ontario uses software for plagiarism checking. Students may be required to submit their written work in electronic form for plagiarism checking.” --- U.W.O. Senate statement on plagiarism

**Prerequisites:** There are no prerequisites for this course.

### **SUPPORT SERVICES**

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

## **Winter 2022 Course Schedule<sup>1</sup>**

### **Week 1: 3 January 2022**

#### **Introduction to the course**

Op-ed. Bipasha Baruah. Development Unplugged (for the Canadian Council for International Co-operation): Reconciling Economic Security, Environmental Protection and Social Justice. *Huffington Post*. April 1, 2016. [http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/development-unplugged/reconciling-economic-security\\_b\\_9583020.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/development-unplugged/reconciling-economic-security_b_9583020.html)

Op-ed. Damian Carrington, Why the Guardian is changing the language it uses about the environment. *The Globe & Mail*. 17 May, 2019. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/may/17/why-the-guardian-is-changing-the-language-it-uses-about-the-environment>

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<sup>1</sup> Readings marked with an asterisk (\*) have been uploaded on the OWL course website.

Kusnetz, Canada's Tar Sands: Destruction So Vast and Deep It Challenges the Existence of Land and People. *Inside Climate News*. November 21, 2021.  
<https://insideclimatenews.org/news/21112021/tar-sands-canada-oil/>

### **Week 2: 10 January 2022: Gender and Environment: Key Issues**

Buckingham, Linking Gender and the Environment (Chapter 1)

Radel, Natures, Gendered\*

Ghosh, The Nutmeg's Curse: Parables for a Planet in Crisis (Chapter 8: Fossilized Forests) \*

### **Week 3: 17 January 2022: Gender and Climate Change**

Seager, Rachel Carson Died of Breast Cancer: The Coming of Age of Feminist Environmentalism\*

Buckingham, Conceptualizing Gender-Environment Relationships (Chapter 3)

Men, Masculinities and Climate Change: A Discussion Paper:

<http://menengage.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Men-Masculinities-and-Climate-Change-FINAL.pdf>

Hartmann and Barajas-Roman: The Population Bomb is Back: With a Global Warming Twist:  
[http://www.isiswomen.org/phocadownload/print/isispub/wia/wia2009-2/2wia09\\_17features\\_betsy.pdf](http://www.isiswomen.org/phocadownload/print/isispub/wia/wia2009-2/2wia09_17features_betsy.pdf)

### **Week 4: 24 January 2022: Gender, Climate Change, Green Economy**

Terry, No climate justice without gender justice\*

Wilson, Gendering Oil Tracing Western Petrosexual Relations\*

Baruah, B. 2016. Renewable inequity? Women's employment in clean energy in industrialized, emerging and developing economies. *Natural Resources Forum* 41(1): 18-29.

Baruah, There's A Gender Gap in The Global Renewable Energy Workforce:  
[https://www.huffpost.com/archive/ca/entry/renewable-inequity-global\\_b\\_9402854](https://www.huffpost.com/archive/ca/entry/renewable-inequity-global_b_9402854)

Baruah and Biskupski-Mujanovic, Closing the Gender Gaps in Energy Sector Recruitment, Retention and Advancement\*

Baruah, B. and S. Biskupski-Mujanovic. 2021. Gender Analysis of Policymaking in Construction and Transportation: Denial and Disruption in the Canadian Green Economy. In Magnusdottir G.L. & A. Kronsell (eds.) *Gender, intersectionality and climate institutions in industrialised states*. London and New York: Routledge. pp. 143-163.

Baruah and Gaudet, Confronting the gender gap in Canada's green transition:  
<https://news.westernu.ca/2016/09/baruah-gaudet-confronting-gender-gap-canadas-green-transition/>

Research Videos on gender equality in the green economy:  
[https://publish.uwo.ca/~bbaruah/publications/research\\_videos.html](https://publish.uwo.ca/~bbaruah/publications/research_videos.html)

Ferroukhi, R., López, C. & B. Baruah. 2021. Global Trends in Women's Employment in Renewable Energy: Continuities, Disruptions, Contradictions. In Williams, A. & I. Luginaah (eds.) *Gender Matters Globally: Geography, Health and Sustainability*. London and New York: Routledge. pp. 56-78.

### **Week 5: 31 January 2022: Green economy versus degrowth**

Gallant, Deliberate Degrowth: <https://this.org/2020/08/06/deliberate-degrowth/>

Baruah, Degrowth in the post-COVID economy: <https://youtu.be/vQqmRso0Bfk>

Baruah, What does degrowth say about gender equality and social justice?\*

Malcolm Harris, An Indigenous Critique of the New Green Deal:

<http://www.wrongkindofgreen.org/2019/04/18/an-indigenous-critique-of-the-green-new-deal/>

### **Week 6: 7 February 2022: The Future of Work**

Buckingham, Work (Chapter 5)

Tim Smedley, How shorter workweeks could save Earth. *BBC Worklife*.

<https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20190802-how-shorter-workweeks-could-save-earth>

Maddy Savage, Why Finland leads the world in flexible work. *BBC Worklife*.

<https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20190807-why-finland-leads-the-world-in-flexible-work>

Corinna Dengler and Birte Strunk. 2018. The Monetized Economy versus Care and the Environment: Degrowth Perspectives on Reconciling an Antagonism. *Feminist Economics* 24(3): 160–183.

Eicker and Keil, Who cares? A convergence of feminist economics and degrowth:

<https://www.exploring-economics.org/en/discover/who-cares/>

### **Week 7: 14 February 2022: (Blog/Popular Article Due)**

#### **Environmental Justice and Racism**

Baldwin, Cameron and Kobayashi, Introduction: Where Is the Great White North? Spatializing History, Historicizing Whiteness\*

Buckingham, Gender and waste: a synthesis (Chapter 7)\*

Unigwe, It's not just Greta Thunberg: why are we ignoring the developing world's inspiring

activists? <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/oct/05/greta-thunberg-developing-world-activists>

### **Week 8: 21 February 2022: SPRING BREAK NO CLASS!**

### **Week 9: 28 February 2022: Class Discussion of *The Hungry Tide***

Tenhunen, Living with climate change in Sunderbans, India: [www.endissa.net/cyclone-aila/living-with-climate-change-in-sundarbans-india/](http://www.endissa.net/cyclone-aila/living-with-climate-change-in-sundarbans-india/)

National Geographic, This vanishing forest protects the coasts—and lives—of two countries:  
<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/magazine/2019/07/sundarbans-mangrove-forest-in-bangladesh-india-threatened-by-rising-waters-illegal-logging/>

Bengal Tigers May Not Survive Climate Change:  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/06/science/tigers-climate-change-sundarbans.html>

Mostafa and Bose, The narrow focus on climate change in Bangladesh often reproduces exploitation and vulnerability rather than addressing it:  
<https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/southasia/2016/10/24/the-narrow-focus-on-climate-change-in-bangladesh-often-reproduces-exploitation-and-vulnerability-rather-than-addressing-it/>

### **Week 10: 7 March 2022: (BOOK REVIEW DUE)**

#### **Queer Ecology**

Sturgeon, Penguin Family Values: The Nature of Planetary Environmental Reproductive Justice\*

Gosine, Non-white Reproduction and Same-Sex Eroticism: Queer Acts against Nature\*

Gosine, *Nature's Wild: Love, Sex, and Law in the Caribbean*: Introduction:  
<https://www.dukeupress.edu/natures-wild>

*And Tango Makes Three*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WyPjUa908hM>

### **Week 11: 14 March 2022: Climate Change, Migration and Livelihoods**

Guest Lecturer: Jemima Baada

Baada, J., B. Baruah and I. Luginaah. 2019. 'What we were running from is what we're facing again': examining the paradox of migration as a livelihood improvement strategy among migrant women farmers in the Brong-Ahafo Region of Ghana. *Migration and Development* 8(3): 448-471.

Najjar and Baruah, "Even the Goats Feel the Heat:" Gender, Livestock Rearing, Rangeland Cultivation, and Climate Change Adaptation in Tunisia\*

Najjar and Baruah, Beer, Barley, Livestock, and Milk: Who Adopts Agricultural Innovations in Rural Rajasthan?\*

### **Week 12: 21 March 2022: Ecological Grief**

Cunsolo and Ellis, Ecological grief as a mental health response to climate change-related loss\*

Cunsolo and Ellis, Hope and mourning in the Anthropocene: Understanding ecological grief:  
<https://theconversation.com/hope-and-mourning-in-the-anthropocene-understanding-ecological-grief-88630>

Comtesse et al, Ecological Grief as a Response to Environmental Change: A Mental Health Risk or Functional Response?\*

**Week 13: 28 March 2022: Student Presentations (POLICY BRIEFS DUE)**

**RESEARCH PAPER DUE: April 22**