University of Victoria

COURSE OUTLINE
INTRODUCTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT
(August, 2025 version, subject to revision)

In grateful acknowledgement of the L'kwungen & WSÁNEĆ peoples upon whose territories we are able to live and learn.

Lecture: M/Th 11:30-12:50 in DTB A102
Office hours: M 14:00-16:00 in DTB B210
Contact: Cam Owens camo@uvic.ca

* Please review this courses outline and resources on Brightspace before reaching out. I receive a high volume of messages and am often not able to respond immediately. I will aim to reply within 24 hours (not including weekends). *Please do not leave important matters to the last minute.*

Course Description
This course investigates the various ways we attempt to manage environments during a time of multiple, intersecting socio-ecological crises. It examines current management practices, identifying both challenges and opportunities for achieving more sustainable outcomes.

Structured around three comprehensive units, the course begins by asking essential questions about the who, what, where, when, why, and how of environmental management. It then provides an on-the-ground perspective, incorporating insights from a diverse range of professionals working in the field. Finally, it encourages students to reflect on environmental management in the context of their own lives.

The course draws on relevant local, national, and international case studies. Given British Columbia's unique circumstances, it maintains a consistent emphasis on management in the context of ongoing extractivism, colonialism, and Indigenous resurgence.

Embracing a critically optimistic approach, Geog 209 encourages students to carefully interrogate existing practices while exploring innovative pathways for addressing socio-ecological crises, inspired by political ecologist Paul Robbins' (2004) metaphor of the hatchet and the seed. With the "hatchet" we reveal the dynamics of the dominant paradigm that has had such devastating effect, "cutting and pruning away the stories, methods and policies that create pernicious social and environmental outcomes." With the "seed" we seek to understand creative ways for collectively realizing more restorative, regenerative, and socially just ways of being.

Labs
All students must be registered in both lectures and labs. The lab component of Geog 209 is intended to complement lectures, affording you the opportunity to further engage with course material in a more intimate setting; to integrate and apply knowledge; and to develop specific skills through assignments. Each lab is led by a teaching assistant (TA) in coordination with the instructor. More information on Labs can be found in the Lab Manual and other resources on [Brightspace](#).

Location: DTB B311

B01, Tuesdays	12:30-14:20	TA: John Mba-Wuni Wuntah jmwuntah@uvic.ca
B02, Wednesdays	10:30-12:20	TA: John Mba-Wuni Wuntah jmwuntah@uvic.ca
B03, Wednesdays	12:30-14:20	TA: Megan MacDonald meganmacdonald@uvic.ca
B04, Fridays	8:30-10:20	TA: James Roszel jroszel@uvic.ca
B05, Fridays	12:30-14:20	TA: Megan MacDonald meganmacdonald@uvic.ca

Evaluation
You will be evaluated on the following required elements:
1. **Lab assignments (5)** + **engagement mark** (50%)
2. **Midterm** on Oct 16th (20%)
3. **Final Exam** scheduled by registrar in December (30%)

See Brightspace for more info

Grading System
as per the Academic Calendar:

Grade	Grade point value	Grade scale	Description
A+ A A-	9 8 7	90-100% 85-89% 80-84%	Exceptional, outstanding and excellent performance. Normally achieved by a minority of students. These grades indicate a student who is self-initiating, exceeds expectation and has an insightful grasp of the subject matter.
B+ B B-	6 5 4	77-79% 73-76% 70-72%	Very good, good and solid performance. These grades indicate a good grasp of the subject matter or excellent grasp in one or more areas balanced with satisfactory grasp in the other areas.
C+ C	3 2	65-69% 60-64%	Satisfactory, or minimally satisfactory. These grades indicate a mere satisfactory performance and knowledge of the subject matter.
D	1	50-59%	Marginal Performance. A student receiving this grade demonstrated a superficial grasp of the subject matter.
F	0	0-49%	Unsatisfactory performance. Wrote final examination and completed course requirements; no supplemental.
N	0	0-49%	Did not write examination or complete course requirements by the end of term or session; no supplemental.

Readings & Other Materials
Geog 209 does not have a required textbook, however there are a number of mandatory readings including journal articles, book chapters, videos, podcasts, and other sources that you will access online (i.e. through [Brightspace](#) or the [UVic Library](#)).

Please ensure you have access to the relevant readings (or your notes on them) during class and lab sessions.

Reading effectively is absolutely essential for success in this course. Along with lecture and lab material, assigned readings will be tested on the midterm and final. Be mindful that simply reading without engaging with the material is essentially useless in that the material has no chance of moving from short to long term memory. It is critical to mark up, highlight, take notes, and critically reflect while reading anything. While it seems cliché, investing time and effort in the short time you are here will pay off in often unexpected ways. Make a commitment to focus this semester!

Learning Outcomes
This course presents an opportunity to learn about environmental management, but more importantly an opportunity to develop certain skills and cultivate good habits. Specifically, disciplined and focused students will leave this course with:
1. Develop a comprehensive understanding of the historical, cultural, and political context of environmental change and environmental management / governance with a focus on BC and Canada
2. Analyze the roles of colonialism and Indigenous resurgence in shaping environmental governance
3. Critically assess and synthesize various conceptual frameworks and approaches to environmental management and governance, recognizing and analyzing multiple perspectives, values, and assumptions (including one's own).
4. Enhance critical thinking and analytical skills by evaluating debates, defining problems, making interconnections, and formulating defensible positions on environmental management issues.
5. Improve skills in research, focused reading, video and narrative analysis, group collaboration, creative and effective communication through practical lab work.
6. Foster a deeper appreciation of critical environmental education and its significance for personal well-being, civic responsibility, and one's role in addressing socio-ecological challenges.
7. Cultivate positive habits such as discipline, focus, intentionality, consistency, organization, confidence, courage, conscientiousness, empathy, and dedication.

Course Schedule
subject to revision; please check Brightspace for latest information, readings, & links to materials

Unit 1 Introducing Environmental Management		
Week 1 Thu, Sep 4	1- Intro	No Labs
Week 2 Mon, Sep 8	2- What? – defining the field	**Lab 1** – Introductions, Assignment #1 "Scholarly Autobiography" introduced
Thu, Sep 11	3- Why? – purpose, rationales, motivations	
Week 3 Mon, Sep 15	4- Who? – actors, interests, responsibilities, power	**Lab 2** – Video "Amazay: A Film About Water" & Discussion + Assignment #1 due
Thu, Sep 18	5- Who? - Indigenous peoples & environmental management in BC	
Week 4 Mon, Sep 22	6- Who? - Indigenous peoples & environmental management in BC	**Lab 3** – Assignment #1 discussion + Assignment 2 "AI & Enviro Mgmt" introduced
Thu, Sep 25	7- How? - processes, tools, technologies	
Week 5 Mon, Sep 29	**8-** Guest Speaker: Sid Tobias (BC Enviro Ass. Office) on AI and environmental management	No labs
Thu, Oct 2	9- Where? – geography, scale	
Week 6 Mon, Oct 6	10- When? – temporality, timing, urgency, historic context	**Lab 4 -** Video & Discussion: + Assignment #2 due & Assignment #3 "Taking Action" & 4 - "Infographic" introduced
Thu, Oct 9	11- Recap first half	
Week 7 Mon, Oct 13	**No Class: Thanksgiving Day**	
Thu, Oct 16	**Midterm**	No labs
Part 2 Environmental Management on the Ground		
Week 8 Mon, Oct 20	12- Welcome to the 2nd Half	**Lab 5** – "Taking Action" participation lab (Assignment #3)
Thu, Oct 23	13- Guest speaker (TBD)	
Week 9 Mon, Oct 27	14- Guest speaker (TBD)	**Lab 6 -** Assignment #4 due / discussion + Assignment #5 - "Presentations" introduced
Thu, Oct 30	15- Debrief guest presentations	
Week 10 Mon, Nov 3	16- Guest speaker (TBD)	
Thu, Nov 6	17- Guest speaker (TBD)	**Lab 7** – TBD
Part 3 Managing Your Own Environment		
Week 11 Mon, Nov 10	**No Class: Reading Days**	No Labs
Thu, Nov 13	TBD	
Week 12 Mon, Nov 17	18- Debrief Guest Speaker Presentations; Managing One's Own Environment	
Thu, Nov 20	19- Urban Sustainability	**Lab 8** –Assignment #5 Presentations

Week 13 Mon Nov 24	20- Guest Speaker - TBD	**Lab 9** –Assignment #5 presentations & lab wind-down
Thu, Nov 27	21- Guest speaker - TBD	
Week 14 Mon, Dec 1	22- Looking Back, Looking Forward	No Labs

Geography Department Info
- Geography Department website: uvic.ca/socialsciences/geography/
- Geography Department Chair: geogchair@uvic.ca
- Geography Undergraduate Advising: geogadvising@uvic.ca

Brightspace
You will access the Brightspace site for important announcements, to submit assignments, and to access information handouts, instructor slides, readings, your grades, and other stuff. Guidance for navigating Brightspace is available.

Expectations of Behaviour
I will do everything I can to create an effective, engaging learning environment. I invite you to be part of something special. Please be punctual, respectful, compassionate, and attentive.

Policy on Late Assignments
Policies on late assignments will be discussed in the lab section.

Academic Integrity
It is every student's responsibility to be aware of the university's policies on academic integrity, including policies on cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized use of an editor, multiple submission, and aiding others to cheat. If you have any questions or doubts, talk to me, your course instructor. For other resources on writing see the Centre for Academic Communication.

Accessibility
Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a documented disability or health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL) as soon as possible. The RCSD staff is available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals, and arrange appropriate accommodations. The sooner you let us know your needs, the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

Positivity & Safety
The University of Victoria is committed to promoting, providing and protecting a positive and safe learning and working environment for all its members.

Sexualized Violence Prevention & Response
UVic takes sexualized violence seriously, and has raised the bar for what is considered acceptable behaviour. We encourage students to learn more about how the university

defines sexualized violence and its overall approach by visiting uvic.ca/svp. If you or someone you know has been impacted by sexualized violence and needs information, advice, and/or support please contact the sexualized violence resource office in Equity and Human Rights (EQHR). Whether or not you have been directly impacted, if you want to take part in the important prevention work taking place on campus, you can also reach out:

> Where: Sexualized violence resource office in EQHR; Sedgewick C119
> Phone: 250.721.8021
> Email: svpcoordinator@uvic.ca Web: uvic.ca/svp

Resources for International Students

The University of Victoria offers a number of resources to support international students as they pursue their studies. UVic's International Centre for Students is the primary office supporting international students on campus at the university-wide level and provides various supportive program through the UVic Global Community Initiative, including a Mentorship Program and Conversation Partner Program. For academic advising-related questions, students in the Geography Department are also encouraged to meet with the Geography Undergraduate Advisor (geogadvising@uvic.ca) as well as an academic advisor in the Academic Advising Centre early in their studies to help map out a plan to declare a major and complete university program requirements. Other resources include the Centre for Academic Communication and the Math and Stats Assistance Centre. International students are also encouraged to contact the International Student Liaison in Geography (Prof. CindyAnn Rose-Redwood, cindyann@uvic.ca), who can assist in making connections with other international and domestic students in the Geography Department and share opportunities for getting involved in departmental activities more broadly.

Policy on Intellectual Property

According to the university's Intellectual Property Policy (GV0215), professors and instructors are the authors of their original course materials, lecture notes, and lecture presentations. Accordingly, they own the copyright in these materials. A lecture constitutes an instructor's intellectual property. A student must get permission to record the lecture from their instructor. Any material for the course (e.g., lecture notes, PowerPoints, syllabus, including a recording of a lecture) is made solely for the use of the student registered in the course for research and private study only. These materials must not be posted online or shared with other students without the instructor's permission. In some cases, a student with a perceptual disability will be eligible for an academic accommodation to record a lecture. Please visit the Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL) website for more information. You should be aware that there are policies and legislation regarding academic accommodation. Should you have any questions, please contact the Copyright Office.

Course Experience Survey

I value your feedback on this course. Towards the end of term, as in all other courses at UVic, you will have the opportunity to complete an anonymous survey regarding your learning experience (CES). The survey is vital to providing feedback to me regarding the course and my teaching, as well as to help the department improve the overall program for students in the future. The survey is accessed via MyPage and can be done on your laptop, tablet, or mobile device. I will remind you and provide you with more detailed information nearer the time but please be thinking about this important activity during the course.

Self-Care
A note to remind you to take care of yourself. Do your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle this semester by eating well, exercising, getting enough sleep and taking some time to relax. This will help you achieve your goals and cope with stress. All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. You are not alone.

Counselling Services - *Counselling Services can help you make the most of your university experience. They offer free professional, confidential, inclusive support to currently registered UVic students.* uvic.ca/services/counselling/

Health Services - *University Health Services (UHS) provides a full service primary health clinic for students, and coordinates healthy student and campus initiatives.*
uvic.ca/services/health/

Centre for Accessible Learning - *The CAL staff are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations* uvic.ca/services/cal/*. The sooner you let us know your needs the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.*

Elders' Voices - *The Office of Indigenous Academic and Community Engagement (IACE) has the privilege of assembling a group of Elders from local communities to guide students, staff, faculty and administration in Indigenous ways of knowing and being.*
uvic.ca/services/indigenous/students/programming/elders/index.php

Policy on AI Use in Class

In this course, we recognize AI as a potentially helpful tool in educational and professional settings, including environmental management. Like past innovations (e.g., word processing, search engines), AI is poised (for better or worse) to revolutionize our approach to problems and tasks, including those in environmental management. Our goal is to thoughtfully integrate AI into our learning processes, providing students with opportunities to engage with these tools and understand their potential in academic and professional contexts. However, it's crucial for students to use AI judiciously, acknowledging both its strengths and limitations.

Effective communication remains a fundamental skill in higher education, even as the nature of communication evolves. It's important to understand that AI generates content through advanced pattern recognition, which can produce articulate yet sometimes inaccurate or insufficiently nuanced outputs. Students must develop a critical eye when assessing AI-generated content and learn when it is appropriate to use AI as a tool.

Part of the coursework will involve exploring AI applications and limitations in environmental management. Students will critically assess outputs from AI tools, including at least one lab assignment focused on describing the AI process used and evaluating its results. This will help students understand the underlying mechanics of AI technologies and their practical applications.

It's essential for students to cultivate uniquely human skills that are unlikely to be replicated by AI. These include ethical reasoning, context-specific knowledge, the ability to view issues from multiple perspectives, creativity, empathy, interpersonal skills, and self-reflection. The course will emphasize developing these skills, which complement AI's capabilities.

Our aim is to prepare students for the future of technology in professional and academic contexts while ensuring a balanced development of both technological proficiency and critical human faculties. By integrating AI into our studies, particularly in environmental management, we equip students with the knowledge to collaborate effectively with AI, using it as a tool to enhance learning, decision-making, and professional development.

What You Can Do with AI:

1. **Use AI for to kickstart research and for organizational assistance:**
   - You may use AI tools (such as ChatGPT) to brainstorm ideas, explore topics, and generate initial drafts or summaries. Make sure to critically assess the information for accuracy and relevance, and recognize that conventional research approaches – eg. using UVic library or other academic search engine to access quality sources remains essential
2. **Use AI for editing help:**
   - AI can help provide editing help, but once again, be sure to critically assess its output. Sometimes AI can appear to produce something articulate but upon careful examination the content is flawed.
3. **Participate in AI-related Activities:**
   - Actively engage in coursework activities that involve AI tools, such as lab assignments where you will describe your use of AI and critically evaluate its outputs.

What You Cannot Do with AI:

1. **Do Not Submit AI-Generated Content as Your Own Work:**
   - You must not submit any content that is entirely generated by AI, and any extensive AI content without proper attribution. All work submitted must represent your own understanding and original thought.
2. **Do Not Rely Solely on AI for Core Learning Tasks:**
   - Avoid using AI tools to perform fundamental tasks that are meant to develop critical skills (e.g., writing essays, conducting primary research, or solving complex problems) without your direct engagement and understanding.
3. **Do Not Use AI for Misrepresentation or Plagiarism:**
   - Any use of AI that results in academic dishonesty, such as using AI to rewrite or paraphrase existing content without acknowledgment, is strictly prohibited.

Final Word

In summary, this policy encourages students to view AI as a collaborative tool in environmental management, enhancing their ability to make informed decisions and engage with complex issues. This balanced approach ensures that while students become proficient in using advanced technology, they also uphold the values and skills that define our humanity.

Study / Learning Tips
1. **Leverage Self-Testing**: The latest research strongly indicates that the most crucial aspect of effective studying is testing yourself soon after encountering new material (see Huberman Lab podcast link below). Self-directed test-taking right after learning can significantly enhance your ability to learn, apply, and retain new knowledge. Simply reviewing notes without self-testing is far less effective.
2. **Limit Distractions**: Create a study environment with minimal distractions. Turn off notifications, set a specific study time, and use tools like noise-canceling headphones to maintain focus.
3. **Use Active Learning Techniques**: Engage with the material actively by summarizing concepts in your own words, teaching them to someone else, or discussing them in study groups.
4. **Chunk Study Sessions**: Study in focused, manageable chunks of time (e.g., 25–30 minutes) followed by short breaks. This approach, often called the Pomodoro Technique, helps maintain concentration and prevents burnout.
5. **Set Clear Goals**: Break down your study sessions into specific, achievable goals. Knowing what you aim to accomplish helps keep you on track and provides a sense of progress.
6. **Use Multi-Sensory Learning**: Engage multiple senses while studying. For example, read aloud, create diagrams, or use flashcards. Combining visual, auditory, and kinesthetic inputs can enhance memory retention.
7. **Apply the Material**: Find ways to apply what you're learning to real-life scenarios or problems. This contextualizes the information and makes it more memorable.
8. **Prioritize Sleep**: Ensure you get sufficient sleep, as it's vital for memory consolidation and cognitive function. Aim for 7–9 hours of quality sleep per night to support learning.
9. **Stay Hydrated**: Keep yourself hydrated throughout the day. Dehydration can impair cognitive function, so make water a constant companion during study sessions.
10. **Practice Mindfulness Meditation**: Incorporating short mindfulness meditation sessions can help improve concentration, reduce stress, and enhance memory. Even just 5–10 minutes of focused breathing can be beneficial.

Reference: For more on these study strategies, see the Huberman Lab Podcast episode:
"Optimal Protocols for Studying & Learning".