



---

COURSE SYLLABUS

**Regional Studies: Governance of Natural Resources in Africa**

**Lecture Times:** Mondays and Thursdays, 15:30 – 16:50 in Clearihue Building A216

**Office Hours:** Thursdays, 10:00 to 11:00 in DTB B324 or by appointment

---

**Territory Acknowledgement**

*We acknowledge and respect the lək̓ʷəŋən peoples on whose traditional territory the university stands and the Songhees, Esquimalt and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.*

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Africa has often been sidelined from reaping the benefits of its own natural resources. From oil to minerals, forests, and land for agriculture, Africa has many of the world's 'resource-richest' countries. However, many countries on the African continent have been described as having a 'resource curse,' where the more natural resources a country is endowed with, the less likely that country is to experience stable democracy and socioeconomic development. In this course, we will unpack this paradox to better appreciate the opportunities and challenges facing people living on the African continent.

**Introduction: Unpack your stereotypes and place the continent on a map**

At the beginning of this course, we will talk about some of our basic stereotypes of Africa and how these preconceptions might influence our implicit perspective of the continent. Many of our images of Africa are of famine, corruption, civil war and ethnic hatred, and whilst these issues are crucially important, these images often obscure more than they reveal about contemporary Africa. In parallel with examining our preconceptions about the continent, you will gain a basic understanding of African geographies from a natural resource perspective and be able to place some of the human and physical geography landmarks on a map.

**An in-depth look at natural resources governance in Africa: from science to practice**

The course readings will help you engage with scientific literature that theorizes and explains human-environment interactions within and beyond Africa. You will also read and hear from Africans themselves. You will learn that the 'problems' facing Africa do not stem from within the continent alone, but historical and modern-day global processes continue to impact the situation in almost all areas of Africa, rural and urban. We will critically examine and contest dominant discourses about the continent and bring in various worldviews including from African scholars.

From our perspective in Victoria, BC, Africa seems incredibly distant. Through this course, you will recognize that you actually are very much connected to the African continent, from a historical, economic, and cultural perspective. We will apply the concept of Global Value Chains as a main approach through which to understand and appreciate the various ways that you and other people living in Canada rely on Africa's natural resources on a daily basis.

### **Student engagement and ‘learning by doing’**

This course integrates multiple opportunities for experiential learning, where you will interact with your community in Victoria, the University, and your classroom peers to discuss historic and contemporary topics related to the sustainable use of natural resources in the diversity of African contexts. Through case studies, you will learn to see how the theoretical knowledge gained in this course can be applied by practitioners and policy makers in real-life settings. The course draws on examples from a wide range of countries, and students are encouraged to develop their knowledge of both continent-wide trends and specific countries and regions, recognizing the diversity of the continent. Through readings, class discussions, and student-led excursions, you will be encouraged to think and work independently.

### **A bit about your instructor**

Please call me Sophia Carodenuto, Dr., or Professor Carodenuto. Whatever you are comfortable with. This is how my name is pronounced: so-FEE-uh car-o-den-OO-toh (see phonetic guide [here](#)). I use she/her pronouns (learn more about pronouns [here](#)).

I have lived and worked in over a dozen countries in Africa since 2012. I spent the most time in Cameroon, where I lived for over two years. I also spent significant amounts of time in Ethiopia, Zambia, Côte d’Ivoire, and Ghana. In these diverse settings, I supported developing country governments, donors (e.g. World Bank, German Development Agency), civil society, and the private sector to jointly develop viable solutions to climate change and sustainable development that fit the specific context. I look forward to sharing these experiences with you and am happy to discuss career options both inside and outside academia. At UVic, I am responsible for both teaching and research. I always strive to integrate my research into my teaching, so you can expect to learn about my research and be exposed to policy issues that are highly relevant to the current situation. My research focuses on forest governance, with particular attention to how land use decisions affect forests and the communities that live there, including how global food supply chain sustainability policies can be more effective and equitable. Please find more information about me and my research at my website: [sophiacarodenuto.com](http://sophiacarodenuto.com). If you’re interested in pursuing higher education through a Master’s degree, I encourage you to check out my website to find out about opportunities for you to get involved in research.

---

### **COURSE INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES**

By the end of this course, you will:

- Identify key natural resources (forests, water, minerals, land for agriculture) in sub-Saharan Africa and their distinct physical, cultural, social, economic, and political geographies.
  - Describe different forms of environmental governance as discussed in class and how these have been adapted to African contexts.
  - Actively apply critical thinking skills in discussing the relationship between natural resource use in Africa and the global economy.
  - Carefully articulate your perspectives and opinions about the policy solutions currently being discussed surrounding global value chains and how these affect people and ecosystems on the African continent.
- 

### **REQUIRED READING**

Each week you will be responsible for reading, understanding, and engaging with the assigned material. A significant amount of the learning in this course is self-directed, meaning that you learn outside of the lecture by engaging with scholars and diverse voices (including African voices) to understand how other people have thought about the problems and issues we are discussing. Please keep up to date with the readings and come to class prepared with your notes from the readings.

This course does not have a textbook, but rather the reading list is provided below. You can find the links or pdfs on Brightspace. Although you will be expected to read some “classics,” I make an effort to ensure that you are reading relevant and current material, which means that some readings may change as the course progresses. If this happens, I will keep you updated.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

**Additional required readings** are posted on Brightspace. Please keep up to date with the readings and come to class prepared with your notes from the readings.

| WEEK | TOPIC COVERED   | Readings   |
|------|---|--|
| 1    | Introduction to course:<br><br>Why Africa? Trends in natural resource use and global implications     | <b>Sept. 8:</b> This syllabus ☺  |
| 2    | African geography: Natural resources governance at the intersect between human and physical geography | <b>Sept. 12:</b> <a href="https://www.binyavanga.com/">Binyavanga Wainaina</a> , How to write about Africa ( <a href="https://www.binyavanga.com/">goo.gl/h33NYD</a> )<br><br><b>Sept. 15:</b> Ferguson, James. Chapter 1: Introduction. In <i>Global shadows: Africa in the neoliberal world order</i> . Duke University Press, 2006.<br><br><b>Note:</b> Please familiarize yourself with the countries on the continent by playing a few online map games. For example: <a href="https://online.seterra.com/en/vgp/3163">https://online.seterra.com/en/vgp/3163</a> |
| 3    | History and colonial legacies   | <b>Sept. 19:</b> Collier, P. (2006). Africa: geography and growth.<br><br><b>Sept. 22:</b> Parker, J. and Rathbone R. Colonialism in Africa. Chapter 5 in <i>African History: A Very Short Introduction</i> . <a href="https://doi-org.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/10.1093/actrade/9780192802484.003.0005">https://doi-org.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/10.1093/actrade/9780192802484.003.0005</a>  |
| 4    | Defining value chain governance in the context of Africa  | <b>Sept. 26:</b> Ferguson, James. Chapter 8: Governing Extraction. In <i>Global shadows: Africa in the neoliberal world order</i> . Duke University Press, 2006.<br><br><b>Sept. 29:</b> Zoogah, B. D. (2022). Maatian Philosophy, Sustainability, and Global Value Chains. In <i>Africa and Sustainable Global Value Chains</i> (pp. 3-23). Springer, Cham.   |
| 5    | Global Value Chains: How are YOU connected to Africa?   | <b>Oct. 3:</b> Gardner et al. (2019). Transparency and sustainability in global commodity supply chains. <i>World Development</i> , 121, 163-177.<br><br><b>Oct. 6: <u>Map quiz</u></b>  |
| 6    |   | <b>Oct. 10: Thanksgiving, no class</b>   |

|    |  |   |
|----|--|---|
|    | Food value chains for inclusive development                                      | <b>Oct. 13:</b> Feyaerts, H., Van den Broeck, G., & Maertens, M. (2020). <a href="#">Global and local food value chains in Africa: A review</a> . <i>Agricultural Economics</i> , 51(1), 143-157.   |
| 7  | Corporate perspectives: The business model behind sustainable sourcing practices | <b>Oct. 17:</b> Hofstetter, J. S., McGahan, A. M., Silverman, B. S., & Zoogah, B. D. (2022). Sustainability and global value chains in Africa: Introduction to the Special Issue. <i>Africa Journal of Management</i> , 8(1), 1-14.<br><br><b>Oct. 20:</b> <i>Outside the Classroom: Student-led excursions to discover Africa on Vancouver Island</i>                                    |
| 8  | Voices from the Continent: What do Africans think?                               | <b>Oct. 24:</b> <i>Outside the Classroom: Student-led excursions to discover Africa on Vancouver Island</i><br><br><b>Oct. 27:</b> Leissle, K. (2013). Invisible West Africa: The politics of single origin chocolate. <i>Gastronomica: The Journal of Food and Culture</i> , 13(3), 22-31.   |
| 9  | Behind the Wrapper: Greenwashing in the Chocolate Industry                       | <b>Oct. 31:</b> Special lecture: <i>How to celebrate Halloween with ethical chocolate</i> , Please watch the Netflix documentary "Bitter Chocolate" from the series <a href="#">Rotten</a> .<br><br><b>Nov. 3:</b> <a href="#">Africa Making It</a> : A UK business perspective (2014).   |
| 10 | Trade over aid? Unpacking the arguments and evidence for trade-based development | <b>Nov. 7: Guest lecture</b> Dr. Colette Salemi (UVic Economics, please visit her <a href="#">website</a> ) <b>Reading</b> , please read Introduction and Results in the following: Salemi, 2021, Refugee camps and deforestation in Sub-Saharan Africa, <i>Journal of Development Economics</i> . Available <a href="#">here</a> .<br><br><b>Nov. 10:</b> <i>Reading Break, no class</i> |
| 11 | The state's perspective: Bringing the government back into governance            | <b>Nov. 14: Guest lecture</b> The Corporate Respect for Human Rights and the Environment Abroad Act, Canadian Network on Corporate Accountability (CNCA). Available <a href="#">here</a> .<br><br><b>Nov. 17:</b> <i>Class time will be used to receive feedback on GVC projects</i>  |
| 12 | Student presentations of GVC project   | <b>Nov. 21 and Nov. 24:</b> <i>Student presentations</i>  |
| 13 | Course conclusions   | <b>Nov. 28:</b> Summarizing the challenges and opportunities of GVCs for development<br><br><b>Dec. 1:</b> <i>Special Event: Chocolate Tasting with <a href="#">The Chocolate Project</a></i>   |

*(Disclaimer: The above schedule, policies, procedures, and assignments in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances, such as changing schedules of our high-level guest speakers).*

## **GUEST SPEAKERS**

One of the functions of the course is to engage students with information and ideas presented by people with experience (often called experts) in a particular area. These are highly sought-after individuals who have taken precious time out of their busy schedules to inspire you and share their knowledge. Each of the invited speakers will present a specific point of view on a given issue.

One of the key learning outcomes of this course is that you become better able to analyze the information you hear/read/view and clearly articulate a thoughtful response to that information. Therefore, please pay special attention to the readings in advance of guest speakers and be sure to 'google' them so you are informed about who they are. Since you will likely only see this person once, taking full advantage of the class means you need to come to class prepared to discuss your reading for that week and ask questions of the guest speaker.

---

## **EVALUATION**

The evaluation for this course is mainly based on written assignments, oral presentations, and in-class discussions as this helps you to build critical skillsets that will be valuable in any profession. Note that students must complete all evaluation components to obtain credit. Failure to complete an any evaluation component without permission from the instructor, will result in an 'N' grade, which equals a Grade Point Value of 0. Your final grade will be based on the following calculation:

### **Class participation: 20%**

10% of this grade category will be evaluated based on your personal contribution to a 10-minute opening discussion that will be completed either alone or in groups. Beginning in week 2, each student will be assigned a date to lead an opening discussion by presenting a news piece from or playing a piece of music that relates to this topic of natural resources management in Africa.

Normally, this class has been designed with the expectation that students attend every lecture. However, I am aware that we are living in highly uncertain times and in-person gatherings in classrooms may pose risks. Therefore, I will not be taking and attendance. However, if you wish to be successful in this class, then I highly recommend that you make the effort to show up and engage with your instructor and peers.

Much of your learning in this course revolves around interaction with your peers. Classes are designed to help you understand the complex materials, cases, and literature we will cover, and they are an important part of your learning experience. Lectures will also contain important guidance on the assignments. Students are expected to come prepared and to engage fully with the activities. If students have particular learning requirements, difficulties, or prior commitments that cause problems for attendance then please come and speak to me or email me as soon as possible.

The other 10% of this grade category will be evaluated based on the submission of two personal journal entries based on your "Experience Africa in Victoria" student-led excursion **due October 31**

### **Map quiz: 10%**

### **Assignments: 70%**

More detailed information about these assignments is on Brightspace.

*Assignment 1: Country brief (15%) due **October 15***

*Assignment 2: Film essay: Africa in the movies (15%) due **November 19***

*Assignment 3: Global Value Chain Report Card (40%) due **December 10***

## GRADING SYSTEM

As per the Academic Calendar:

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

## COURSE COMMUNICATION

For general questions regarding this course, please either ask during class or use the “Questions to the Professor” discussion on the Content page of Brightspace. The reason that I prefer this is because **many of you will have the same questions**, so I am hoping that all can benefit from my response. For personal matters that you would not like to share with your classmates, please come to office hours or email me directly. I will do my best to respond to all questions within 24 hours, except on weekends and holidays. Please aim to **ensure the professionalism of your email** communication. If you need help understanding professional communication, please have a look at this humorous post, which is actually pretty helpful: <https://medium.com/@lportwoodstacer/how-to-email-your-professor-without-being-annoying-af-cf64ae0e4087#.k6bv7tyt>

## BRIGHTSPACE

Brightspace will serve as the main avenue of communication in this course. Please monitor the page on a regular basis for course announcements, readings assignments and lecture handouts. If you are having difficulty logging in or password problems, contact the Computer Help Desk Email: [helpdesk@uvic.ca](mailto:helpdesk@uvic.ca), Tel: 250-721-7687

---

## POLICY ON LATE ASSIGNMENTS

To ensure **fairness** towards those of you who have made the effort to hand in assignments on time, I will deduct 15% per day (including weekends and holidays) for assignments that are handed in late.

## POLICY ON ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to attend all class sessions in person. Due to the important nature of student participation in this class, you are expected to have assigned readings done before the scheduled class

period so that you can gain the most out of class discussions and lectures. Frequent absences will make it difficult to stay on top of the material and negatively affect your learning.

### **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. I reserve the right to use plagiarism detection software or other platforms to assess the integrity of student work. Plagiarism is the submission of work that is not your own. To present the work of others as your own is dishonest. All sources must be attributed, or there will be strict penalties.

Please familiarize yourself with the following:

Policy on Academic Integrity: [web.uvic.ca/calendar/undergrad/info/regulations/academic-integrity.html](http://web.uvic.ca/calendar/undergrad/info/regulations/academic-integrity.html)

If you have any questions or doubts, talk to me, your course instructor. For more information, see [uvic.ca/learningandteaching/cac/index.php](http://uvic.ca/learningandteaching/cac/index.php).

### **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 ([uvic.ca/services/cal/](http://uvic.ca/services/cal/)). The CAL 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 AND SAFETY**

The University of Victoria is committed to promoting, providing and protecting a positive and safe learning and working environment for all its members. To ensure that all class members feel welcomed and equally able to contribute to class discussions, we will all endeavor to be respectful in our language, our examples, and the manner in which we conduct our discussions and group work. If you have any concerns about the climate of the class, please contact me.

### **COURSE EXPERIENCE SURVEY (CES)**

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 online 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.

### **COPYRIGHT STATEMENT**

All course content and materials are made available by instructors for educational purposes and for the exclusive use of students registered in their class. The material is protected under copyright law, even if not marked with a ©. Any further use or distribution of materials to others requires the written permission of the instructor, except under fair dealing or another exception in the Copyright Act. Violations may result in disciplinary action under the Resolution of Non-Academic Misconduct Allegations policy (AC1300).

### **Student Support services**

[Learn Anywhere](#) is the student support portal for a full range of student academic and support services. Services include: [Centre for Academic Communication](#), [Math & Stats Assistance Centre](#), [Health Services](#), [Library](#), and [Computer Help Desk](#).

### **Online Conduct**

The University of Victoria is committed to promoting critical academic discourse while providing a respectful and supportive learning environment. All members of the university community have the right to this experience and the responsibility to help create such an environment. The University will not tolerate racism, sexualized violence, or any form of discrimination, bullying or harassment. Please be advised that, by logging into UVic's learning systems or interacting with online resources, and course-related communication platforms, you are engaging in a university activity. All interactions within this environment are subject to the university expectations and policies. Any concerns about student conduct may be reviewed and responded to in accordance with the appropriate university policy.

To report concerns about online student conduct: [onlineconduct@uvic.ca](mailto:onlineconduct@uvic.ca)

### **Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response at UVic**

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](http://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](mailto:svpcoordinator@uvic.ca)

Web: [uvic.ca/svp](http://uvic.ca/svp)

### **University of Victoria Student Society**

The [UVSS](#) is a social justice based non-profit run by students, for students and is entirely separate from UVic. As an undergrad student, you are already a member! We work on issues affecting students such as affordability, public transit, sexualized violence, sustainability, student employment, and much more. We fund clubs and course unions and have several advocacy groups. We also have a Food Bank and Free Store, a Peer Support Centre, and run your health and dental plan. We are here to support you, so please reach out to us at [uvss.ca](http://uvss.ca)!

### **NOTE:**

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.* <https://www.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.* <http://www.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 <https://www.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.*  
<https://www.uvic.ca/services/indigenous/students/programming/elders/index.php>