



University
of Victoria

POLI 458: Issues in Environmental Politics

Instructor Fall 2022: Dr. Jamie Lawson

Course delivery: POLI 458 will be delivered on campus and face-to-face.

Course description: Through consideration of concrete case studies and analytical reflection, this course invites students to consider major fossil-fuel extractive industries and industrial farming chains as “commodity” or “value” chains, “global production networks”, “staples”, and similar conceptions. We will consider some alternatives. What sets the course apart in using these frameworks, is we will consider the role of chains or networks as “terrains” for strategic intervention, particularly in relation to anthropogenic climate disruption and other ecological impacts. How and to what extent can reform to these chains and through these chains enhance environmental governance and campaigns for social justice? What difference does it make to study chains or networks in particular ways? The course also reflects on the wider reciprocal impacts of climate disruption on humans, their societies and institutions. It extends the discussion to the wider range of humanity’s geological impacts, a conversation generally centred on the debates surrounding the “Anthropocene”.

Prerequisites: None

Course outcomes/objectives:

- Develop writing and seminar presentation skills
- Explore the relationship between power and accountability and environmental politics
- Engage critically with texts and ideas related to a variety of concepts and issues
- Develop engagements through in-class discussions and written assignments

Topics may include:

Materials economy
Anthropogenic climate disruption
Commodity chains
Energy and extractivism

This summary provides an overall sense of the course and is not an official course outline. Detailed course outlines will be available for all registered students on the first day of class.