SOCI 438/520

Corporate power, fossil capital, climate crisis

Course Description

This course forms the core of the Corporate Mapping Project’s (CMP) third Summer Institute. It combines the sociology of corporate power with the political economy of fossil capital and the political ecology of climate crisis. The course does not require a specialized academic background in these areas, and is open to students in sociology and related fields. Topics include:

a) the sociology, political economy and political ecology of fossil capital and carbon democracy as a distinct way of life now in global crisis;

b) modalities of corporate power, ranging from networks of capital ownership and governance, through practices and discourses of corporate hegemony in civil society, media and state, to carbon commodity chains and Indigenous and popular resistance at flashpoints along them; and

c) an examination of the social forces and policy frameworks for a managed wind-down and just transition from carbon capitalism, as embodied in Indigenous resistance and resurgence, engaged social movement scholarship, and the nurturing of cross-movement alliances for climate justice.

Our work in the course will centre to some extent upon the case of Canada, but will also extend to other national cases and to the transnational level.

After two online webinar sessions in late April and early May, our time together will be concentrated within three weeks (May 10-28), during which CMP team members – both academic and community-based – will serve as panelists, presenting insights from their research and activism. The Summer Institute is directed by CMP Co-Director Bill Carroll. We greatly appreciate the support of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, the UVic Vice President-Academic and Dean of Social Sciences, and the UVic Sociology Department, which is hosting this course.

Course Materials

Readings are available as pdfs or weblinks on our Brightspace website.

Teaching Assistant

Nick Graham
njgraham@uvic.ca

Department of Sociology

May 10-28, 2021
10.00 am – 12 pm
Delivered online via Zoom

Instructor: Bill Carroll
Email: wcarroll@uvic.ca
Phone: (250) 592-3715
Office: Cornett A338
Office Hours: by appointment (virtual)
Course Evaluation

Each student will write a reflective journal based on your Institute experience, worth 25% of your final grade. The journal should be no longer than 2000 words (not including references) and it should draw on both experience in the Summer Institute and course readings. The journal is due at the close of the day on June 11 and should be handed in to the Brightspace dropbox for this assignment.

The assessed quality of student participation in SOCI 438/520 sessions will form 25% of your final grade. This includes an overall assessment of your participation throughout the Institute (10%) and an assessment of the workshop your small group presents (15%), with the latter applying equally to all members of your group.

The term paper will count for 50% of your final grade. It should be focused on a theme and topic within the scope of the Summer Institute. For students taking the course as SOCI 520, the paper should be no longer than 6000 words; for students taking the course as SOCI 438, it should be no longer than 4000 words (not including references). In the weeks following the Institute, students will complete these papers, which are due by 2 July 2021. Term papers should be handed in to the Brightspace dropbox for this assignment.

This course will help students to deepen their knowledge of the issues at the heart of the Project. There will also be an opportunity, after the Institute, for students to publish term papers on the CMP website (www.corporatemapping.ca), which is the Project’s online venue for knowledge mobilization.
Corporate Mapping Project Summer Institute 2021
Sessions

Pre-Institute Sessions

April 28, 10 am
Welcome and orientation
Wednesday

May 5, 10 am
Two perspectives on climate crisis and fossil capital
Wednesday

Week 1 (May 10-14)

Political economy/ecology of fossil capital: the development of contemporary capitalism and its deep dependence on fossil fuels
MONDAY

The role of imperialism, colonialism, land grabs in fossil capital development: past & present
TUESDAY

Corporations, class and corporate power.
WEDNESDAY

Corporate hegemony and the battle for hearts and minds, 1. Corporate reach into culture and politics.
THURSDAY

Corporate hegemony and the battle for hearts and minds, 2. Denialism, its history and current state of play, the rise of extractive populism, Indigenous rights denialism.
FRIDAY

Week 2 (May 17-21)

Carbon commodity chains and flashpoints. Analysis of resistance and contention along the chains.
MONDAY

Indigenous resistance and resurgence in the face of big carbon
TUESDAY
Course Schedule (see reading list below)

strong alliances for climate justice - A conversation and discussion
WEDNESDAY

Changing the narrative: investigative journalism and independent media
THURSDAY

Divestment campaigns and corporate climate accountability
FRIDAY

**Week 3 (May 25-28)**

Managed Wind-Down
First Student Group Presentation/Workshop
TUESDAY

Just Transition (energy democracy, workers’ rights)
Second Student Group Presentation/Workshop
WEDNESDAY

Righting Relations: Winning a Just Transition in So-called Canada (focus on Land Back)
Third Student Group Presentation/Workshop
THURSDAY

Global climate justice
Fourth Student Group Presentation/Workshop
FRIDAY
Corporate Mapping Project Summer Institute 2021 SOCI 438/520:
Reading List

Note: readings for each section of the Institute, are designated as ‘core,’ ‘shorter online’ and ‘suggested’ (time permitting). Asterisks indicate required readings. Other readings may be helpful in preparing term papers and group presentations. All of the shorter online works are written for fairly wide readerships. The core and shorter online works are available on the SOCI 438/520 Brightspace website, or are chapters within Regime of Obstruction. The readings are presented below in the order of the sessions that make up the Institute.

Political economy/ecology of fossil capital

Core readings


Shorter online pieces


Suggested readings


Imperialism, colonialism, land grabs in fossil capital development – past & present

Core readings


Shorter online pieces


Suggested readings


Capital, class and corporate power


Shorter online pieces


Suggested readings


**Corporate hegemony and the battle for hearts and minds, 1**

*Core readings*


*Shorter online pieces*


Suggested readings


Corporate hegemony and the battle for hearts and minds, 2

Core readings


Shorter online pieces


Suggested readings


Carbon commodity chains and flashpoints

Core readings


**Shorter online pieces**


Candler, Craig, Rachel Olson and Steven DeRoy. 2010. *As Long as the Rivers Flow: Athabasca River Knowledge, Use and Change*. Parkland Institute. ([http://www.parklandinstitute.ca/as_long_as_the_rivers_flow](http://www.parklandinstitute.ca/as_long_as_the_rivers_flow)). Suggested to only read the Media Release, but could read the full report if desired.


**Suggested**


12


**Indigenous resistance and resurgence in the face of big carbon**

**Core readings**


Shorter online pieces


Building strong alliances for climate justice

Core readings


Shorter online pieces


Suggested


**Changing the narrative: investigative journalism and independent media**

**Core readings**


**Shorter online pieces**


**Divestment Campaigns and Corporate climate accountability**

**Core readings**


**Shorter online pieces**


**Suggested**

Managed wind-down

Core readings


Shorter online pieces


Just Transitions (energy democracy, workers rights)

Core readings


Managed Phase Out.” *Climate Policy*, 20, 1–19.


**Shorter online pieces**


**Suggested**


**Righting Relations: Winning a Just Transition in So-called Canada (focus on Land Back)**

**Core readings**


**Shorter online pieces**


**Global climate justice**

**Core readings**


**Shorter online pieces**


## Official Grading Standards

### University of Victoria, 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passing Grade</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Grade Point Value</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>90 – 100</td>
<td></td>
<td>An A+, A, or A- is earned by work which is technically superior, shows mastery of the subject matter, and in the case of an A+ offers original insight and/or goes beyond course expectations. Normally achieved by a minority of students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>85 – 89</td>
<td></td>
<td>A B+, B, or B- is earned by work that indicates a good comprehension of the course material, a good command of the skills needed to work with the course material, and the student’s full engagement with the course requirements and activities. A B+ represents a more complex understanding and/or application of the course material. Normally achieved by the largest number of students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>80 – 84</td>
<td></td>
<td>A C+ or C is earned by work that indicates an adequate comprehension of the course material and the skills needed to work with the course material and that indicates the student has met the basic requirements for completing assigned work and/or participating in class activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>77 – 79</td>
<td></td>
<td>A D is earned by work that indicates minimal command of the course materials and/or minimal participation in class activities that is worthy of course credit toward the degree.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>73 – 76</td>
<td></td>
<td>COM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>70 – 72</td>
<td></td>
<td>Complete (pass). Used only for 0-unit courses and those credit courses designated by the Senate. Such courses are identified in the course listings.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Failing Grades</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Grade Point Value</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0-49</td>
<td></td>
<td>Conditional supplemental. Supplemental examinations are not offered by all departments and the allowable percentage may vary by program (e.g. 35-49). Students will be advised whether supplemental will be offered and if the percentage range varies when assessment techniques are announced at the beginning of the course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0-49</td>
<td></td>
<td>F is earned by work, which after the completion of course requirements, is inadequate and unworthy of course credit towards the degree.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0-49</td>
<td></td>
<td>Did not write examination or complete course requirements by the end of term or session; no supplemental.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/X</td>
<td>Excluded Grade</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Did not complete course requirements by the end of the term; no supplemental. Used only for Co-op work terms and for courses designated by Senate. Such courses are identified in the course listings. The grade is EXCLUDED from the calculation of all grade point averages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F/X</td>
<td>Excluded Grade</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Unsatisfactory performance. Completed course requirements; no supplemental. Used only for Co-op work terms and for courses designated by Senate. Such courses are identified in the course listings. The grade is EXCLUDED from the calculation of all grade point averages.</td>
</tr>
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University Course Policies

Examination and Assignment Policy
As per university policy, absence is only permitted in cases of illness, accident, family affliction, or religious obligations. Missing an exam for other reasons will result in an “F.” Students are responsible for providing official documentation to justify their absence, e.g. a doctor’s note. In cases of justified absences, the student has the right to request a make-up exam. Please note that exams will not be rescheduled to accommodate students’ personal circumstances, including travelling plans. There are no exceptions to this policy.

Grading
In accordance with Senate Regulations, grading on the curve is not permitted. The grades students receive in this course reflect their performance in relation to specified academic expectations. Students should retain a copy of all submitted assignments (in case of loss) and should retain all their marked assignments in case they wish to apply for a Review of Assigned Standings. Students have the right to view their marked examinations with their instructor, providing they apply to do so within a month of receiving their final grades. All exams remain the property of the University of Victoria.

Attendance
As per university policy, attendance to all classes is mandatory. Students who are unavoidably absent because of illness, accident or family affliction should report to the instructor as soon as possible. Absences that cannot be justified in accordance with university policies will be subject to penalty at the discretion of the instructor. If you are absent for reasons other than those specified under university policies, then it is not the responsibility of the instructor or the TA to help you catch up with missed lecture material.

Academic Integrity
The Department of Sociology fully and rigorously enforces the Senate Policy on Academic integrity. It is of utmost importance that students who do their work honestly be protected from those who do not. Because this policy is in place to ensure that students carry out and benefit from the learning activities assigned in each course, it is expected that students will cooperate in its implementation. Students caught cheating in the course will be expelled and reported to the Chair of the Department of Sociology and the Dean of Social Sciences for disciplinary action.

Plagiarism and Cheating
Students must note the statement on “Plagiarism” in the UVic Calendar, and all regulations under the “Policy on Academic Integrity.” Quotes and citations must be used for any material longer than 5 words in succession that is not the student’s original work.

Harassment
The Department of Sociology supports the University’s policies on harassment, and is committed to ensuring that all students, staff, and faculty are able to exercise fully their rights to participate in activities at the University without fear of harassment.
Accommodations
The University of Victoria accommodates students with disabilities who have registered with
the Disability Resource Centre. The University accommodates students whose religious
obligations conflict with attendance, submitting assignments, or completing scheduled tests
and examinations. Please let your instructor know in advance, preferably in the first week of
class, if you will require any accommodation on these grounds. As per university policy,
students who plan to be absent for varsity athletics, family obligations, or other similar
commitments, cannot assume they will be accommodated, and should discuss their
commitments with the instructor before the drop date.

Classroom Etiquette
Distractions can easily hinder the difficult process of conveying knowledge. Please observe
standard classroom etiquette. Entering the classroom after the instructor’s presentation has
started can be distracting both to the instructor as well as to other students. While occasional
lateness may be unavoidable, your dedication to being on time is greatly appreciated. The
use of electronic communication devices is also a distraction to both the instructor and
classmates. This includes texting and surfing the internet. Please turn off your electronic
communication devices before entering the classroom and refrain from using them during
class. If there is a justifiable reason for using your device during class (e.g., expecting an
urgent call related to health or illness), please notify the instructor ahead of time, keep the
device on vibrate, and exit the room if you must receive a message.

Commitment to Inclusiveness and Diversity
The University of Victoria is committed to promoting, providing and protecting a positive and
safe learning and working environment for all its members. The Department of Sociology is
committed to inclusiveness and to a welcoming, friendly learning and working environment.
We condemn sexism, ageism, racism, ethnocentrism, homophobia and inappropriate
behaviour toward people with a disability.